THE NEW TECHNOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT: THE IMPLICATIONS FOR INFORMAL

EDUCATIONAL YOUTH WORK THEORY AND PRACTICE. A STUDY OF YOUTH WORK

PROVIDERS IN THE NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND.

By

Marc Husband

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the

University of Sunderland for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

November 2016

Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. I authorise the

University of Sunderland to lend this thesis to other institutions or

individuals for the purpose of scholarly Research.

Acknowledgements

I would firstly like to thank all of the young people and youth work practitioners who took the time to be involved in this study, without whom this thesis would not have been possible. Thanks to my wonderful supervisors Dr. Ilona Buchroth and Prof. Peter Rushton for always finding time for me. The Community and Youth work team, the Centre for Applied Social Sciences group (CASS) and the Graduate Research School at the University of Sunderland. I would also like to extend my thanks to the late Aline Bellion and the rest of the student support team at the University of Sunderland. A particular thanks to Dr. Ciara Cremin, and Dr. Rick Bowler without whom I perhaps would have never believed that I could undertake such a task. Dr. Wendy Podd for her insightful comments and her formatting wizardry. To Rebecca Ellis for her support and positivity.

A special thanks to my wonderful wife; Lisa, and my beautiful children, Amy, Charlie, and Maisie. Thanks also to my parents, my sister Donna, and her partner Paul for all the support you have sustained through good times and bad. I would also like to say thanks to all the friends who have helped me during this journey.

Abstract

Innovations such as the internet and devices such as Smartphones have revolutionised the way individuals communicate, interact, play, and access knowledge. The impact of this innovation has resulted in a fundamental change in human communicational culture. As a result, individuals increasingly layer social tasks, interacting in co-presence and through technology simultaneously. Young people now inhabit new social spaces which straddle 'real' and virtual' worlds and use technologies to communicate in new ways which are more suitable to their preference. While the literature suggests that technologies are having a significant impact on the co-present face-to-face ritual interactions which bond our solidarity as humans, the youth work field has, as yet, failed to express how the profession should respond to these changes. What has been produced from the field essentially offers guidance of how practitioners can utilise new technologies to enhance practice and increase young people's media literacies. This guidance does not, however, critically consider the impact of new technologies on the fundamental values, methods, and philosophies of youth work, which suggest that supportive interaction in co-presence is essential for young people's social education. This critical empirical study examines the experiences of youth workers and young people in youth work

settings. The research entails both quantitative and qualitative methods, including a survey of youth work providers in the North East of England, in-depth interviews with practitioners from these organisations, and focus groups with young people who attend youth provision. In the light of the findings, it is clear that new technologies have become a significant part of young people's lives, their identities, and are central to their communicative behaviours. Relationships are sustained through a combination of constant communication via a variety of technologies and through face-to-face interaction. It has been established that new technologies are impacting on the interactions and relationships between youth workers and young people in youth work settings. New technologies such as smartphones offer a multitude of immersive communicative options, games, and activities. Their use is reducing the time, space and opportunity for youth workers to interject and engage with young people. It is concluded that this has significant implications for youth work, as this creates an environment of distraction and increasingly reduces the space and time for sustained dialogue between young people and youth work practitioners and therefore affects the quality and focus of the social educative opportunities inherent in youth work. Challenging these behaviours has also become a difficult issue to negotiate as young people increasingly view devices as an extension of the capacity of the self. Good practice was evident when practitioners critically analysed and problematised young people's unsociable use of

technologies to create philosophical discussion and established ground rules. Problematising other aspects of this new culture is also encouraged as new issues of addiction, manipulation, surveillance and control are becoming evident. It is also evident that communication through technologies is preferable to more introverted individuals, and practices should be developed to encourage communication which enables these individuals to have a voice. While the research suggests that young people still value youth provision, overall the research confirms a significant cultural shift in communication and social interaction in youth work practice. The study recommends that practice confronts the risks and opportunities of the new technological environment with critical approaches which consider the fundamental 'traditional' social goals of youth work.

Book chapter

Buchroth, I. and Husband, M. (2015) *Youth work and the voluntary sector* in Bright, G. ed 2015. *Youth work, histories and context*. Routledge.

Publications and conference presentations

Husband, M. (2015) *Youth identities, and new ways of being in the new technological environment*. Paper presentation at Maynooth University, Ireland 'Youth on the move' conference June (2015).

Husband, M. (2015) *The New technological environment. The implications for informal educational youth work theory and practice*. Durham University 3 Minute thesis competition June (2015).

Husband, M. (2014) *The New technological environment. The implications for informal educational youth work theory and practice*. Sunderland University Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) Seminar series February (2014).

Husband, M. (2013) *The New technological environment. The implications for informal educational youth work theory and practice*. University of Sunderland Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) Poster presentation conference July (2013).

Glossary of terms

- BBM: BlackBerry Messenger

- Co-presence: as opposed to virtual presence. Also see unmediated.

- EE: Emotional energies

- Entrainment: An element of Collins (2005) Interaction Ritual Chains theory. The building of EE, collective effervesces in social actors during and after an IR. The actors carry within their body (central nervous system) aroused emotions, which influences their desire to return to IRs.

- IR: Interaction rituals

- IAD: Internet Addiction Disorder

- LGBT: Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual and Transgender

- Mediated: communications through technologies, devices such as smartphones, laptops, and applications such as SMS texts and social network sites.

- MSN: Windows messenger service

- New Technologies: Technologies which generally utilise the internet including devices such as smartphones, iPods, iPads, laptops, tablets, desktop computers. This also includes mobile phones, calls and Short Message Services. Applications accessed through these devices such as Facebook, BlackBerry Messenger, YouTube, snap chat, Xbox live.

- PIU: Problematic Internet Use

- Practitioner/ worker: Professional youth worker

- Personal technologies: Mobile phones, Smartphones, tablets. This also refers to personalised applications software such as SNS accounts.

- Real: for the purpose of this thesis 'real' will refer to co-presence in traditional forms of physical space.

- SMS: Short message service (Text)

- SNS: Social Network Site

- Unmediated: general term for face-to-face co-present communication or communication not through technology.

- Virtual: referring to cyberspace, online environments through social networks and gaming environments.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This study will consider the implications for the pedagogical practices of youth work practitioners in the North East of England in light of recent changes in technological innovation. This empirical investigation will build on research from several fields of study. Firstly, this investigation will add to the theoretical understanding currently emerging from the field of digital youth work. Recent research in this area explores the opportunities and risks offered by social media, and their potential for engaging young people online (Davies and Cranston, 2008; Bonnici, 2011; Székely and Nagy, 2011). Secondly, the research will consider and build on literature from Wells Brignall III and Van Valey (2005), Collins (2005), Farman (2012), Ling (2008) (2009), Krackhardt (1992), Mohseni, Dowran, Haghighat (2008), Nie and Hillyligus (2002), Turkle (2011), Withers & Sheldon, 2008) which suggests that new technologies have complex and often paradoxical social effects which are changing relationships and communicative behaviours of the young and old. While holding the potential for sociability and convenient communication, new technologies can also displace people from social situations, and distract and disrupt co-present face-to-face interactions. The research will consider the significance of this disruption and its impact on human interaction within youth provision and will consider the effect this has

on the relationships and communications between young people and youth work practitioners. The study will also critically consider how these technologies help or hinder practitioners in realising youth work's informal educational underpinning theories and core values.

Aims of the research

This study will focus on the experiences of youth work practitioners and young people within youth work settings. The research considers the technological environment within practice and how technologies such as computers, mobile phones and software applications are affecting the interaction, communication and relationship between young people and practitioners. Survey data were initially captured through a large-scale sample of the North East of England. This was used to elicit general information regarding the extent to which technologies were being used and were impacting on practice. This was also used as a recruitment method for the qualitative phase of the research. In this stage, 13 practitioners articulated their experience through in-depth interviews. The experiences of young people were captured through focus groups, and 21 young people took part from 4 different organisations. Highlighting how certain technologies help and hinder the methods, values and principles of youth work practice. Through thematic analysis the research gives an in-depth description of the youth work environment from both the perception of

young people and practitioners. This study focuses on young people in the age range of 11-25. This is not a randomly defined range, but the range of the young people who attend the projects which are to be studied (The concept of 'youth' will also be discussed in detail in Chapter 2).

Rationale

The rationale for the research derives from my own practice experience of working in the youth work field in the early part of the millennium when I became aware that the relationship young people were having with technology was changing. Where once the computer was used as a tool in practice, social network sites had made them the new site of interaction and communication. I started to see that young people were deeply immersed in the technology and that this immersion had implications for the face-to-face social aspects of youth work practice. In this environment, the youth workers were often ignored by the young people as they played online, watched videos and communicated with each other through the computers. The negative body language and the effect of the general atmosphere in the youth work setting was counter to what I had experienced in the past. (These experiences will be discussed in detail in the methodology chapter). Over time young people's (and older people's) relationship with new technologies has intensified, and now smartphones are the main point of access to the internet for young people. Research suggests that the use of

technologies has intensified to a point that the mass use and consumption of data, devices and software application is the norm in western society today (Castells, 2009 a, b, 2010; Ofcom,2014, 2015). The introduction of new technologies has changed and continues to change our communicative culture.

To conclude; I hypothesise that new technologies are impacting on the way young people and youth workers communicate and interact socially in youth work settings and that this has significant implications for the 'traditional' methods, values and philosophies of youth work.

Initial questions

- How are youth workers and young people experiencing this new environment?

- How are new technologies impacting on the relationship between youth workers and young people? Do youth workers feel redundant in this new environment?

- Is face-to-face interaction becoming less important to young people, and if so what are the implications for practice? What does this mean for the social education elements of youth work?

Before addressing these questions, we need to understand the traditions and philosophical foundations of youth work, and the literature relating to the impact of new technology on society more generally. This task will be presented in the next Chapter (Chapter 2). Detailed questions will be presented on pages 127-128.

Original contribution

This timely study will widen the theoretical discussion currently available in the youth work, and 'digital' youth work field, widening the critical thought, and theory base currently available. The research offers new insight into the youth work field by examining the impact of new technologies particularly on the essential co-present social and communicative aspects of youth work practice. This empirical research expands current thought regarding new technologies by a critical consideration of research and literature from outside of the youth work field; including education, sociology, psychology, cultural studies, communications, health and media. The study begins to consider what the new social environment means for the fundamental aspects of youth work's theory and practice and raises new questions for the philosophical aspects of the profession.

Overview of this thesis

The thesis will begin in Chapter 2 (Youth work history and theory) with a detailed definition of youth work, its histories, values, and principles. It will also focus on the political issues which impact on youth work practice and the policy context in which it is situated. Chapter 3 will review the relevant literature, regarding the technological environment. It will begin with a macro description of the global context and describe how new technological innovations have changed and developed the structures of global communications, business, and nation-states. It will also briefly consider how this informs the culture and identity of individuals. Focusing down to how these changes impact our relationships and interactions as human subjects. Gaps in the literature are identified and questions are developed to answer the overall research question. Chapter 4 (Methodology) will discuss, examine and identify the methods to be used for the data collection. Chapter 5 (Survey results) presents the findings from the quantitative phase of the research. Chapter 6 (Findings from the practitioner's interviews) presents the findings and brief analysis from the first qualitative phase of the study. Chapter 7 (Findings from the Young people's interviews) presents the findings and brief analysis of the second qualitative phase of the study. Chapter 8 (Discussion) is a comprehensive analysis of the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the research and discusses the literature in light of the new data. Chapter 9

(Conclusion) concludes the research and makes recommendations for further research and new practices.

Chapter 2

Youth work, history and theory

British youth work theory builds on a long history of informal educational practice, in which organisations and their programmes encourage collaboration, friendship, and association (Jeffs and Smith, 2008). Gilchrist, Jeffs, Spence, and Walker (2009) assert that the history of 'Youth work' spans back over 200 years. It was the Church and their Sunday schools that originally gave birth to the idea of what is now known as 'youth work'. Christian charity and philanthropy were central to 'youth work' at this time. Philanthropic movements such as the Settlements materialised in the late 19th century as a response to concerns about the moral degradation and appalling living conditions of the working classes at this time (Smith, 2002). 'Ragged schools' also emerged and provided informal education to children and young people from poor backgrounds, and those who were excluded from other available forms of schooling due to poverty (Green, 2010). Those involved in delivering these opportunities worked for free, and this voluntary role was the basis of the welfare work that followed for years, and, is indeed still evident today. The idea of informal 'schooling', or, what might be described as 'informal education' was therefore in place before the beginnings of compulsory, professionally staffed, formal education.

Childhood, adolescence and youth

Although there are some claims that these concepts were evident in the pre-industrial society (Seccombe, 1986), terms such as 'young people', and 'adolescents' were more significantly developed with the rise of capitalism (Thane, 1982). In feudal times 'infants' would grow to an age of maturity and work with their families and communities. Serf families would have lived off the land, often surviving hand to mouth. With the rise of capitalist production families and communities became displaced and dispersed as many people moved to cities for employment. The development of farming machinery and mass production seriously impacted on traditional work practices and artisan trades. This supported the development of new markets and new ways of working (Gleeson, 1999). Changes in the family unit developed as a result of this process. The introduction of waged work helped to strengthen patriarchal power in society. Generally, men became the main source of income for the family and women assumed the (unpaid) homemaking and nurturing role (Seccombe, 1986). With the development of new production processes societies became capable of producing a surplus of food and goods. Therefore, the need for workers became less of a necessity. In this process women, children and young people became less required in the work arena (ibid). Consequently, new categories of childhood and adolescence emerged. While school was available for some,

by the 19th century the management and control of young people was a concern for the 'respectable classes' and ruling elites at this time.

> The need for this politically motivated intervention was caused by a growing concern that working-class young people did not have the necessary respect for middle-class order or for the church taught ideals (Rose, 1997: p.1)

Schools and residential homes were the main mechanisms used to control the behaviour and to develop the moral standards of young people in the late 19th Century. Concerns about the issue of young people's unfocused, unsupervised time were raised, and this led to the introduction of compulsory schooling in 1870 (Smith, 1988). Issues of the control of young people continued to dominate the focus of youth policy through the 20th Century and continues to be evident in the priorities of recent policy around those not in education, employment or training – NEETS - (Every Child Matters HM Government, 2003, Transforming Youth Work, 2002, Youth Matters, 2005 and Jeffs, Banks, 2010).

The YMCA was founded in 1844 and stands as the first organisation with the sole intention of facilitating education with young people, with the aim of improving '…. the spiritual and mental conditions of young men' (YMCA 1987: p.4 in Banks 1999: p.77). In 1853 the YWCA began, followed by uniformed groups such as the Boys' Brigade. In the early years, there was a separation between girls' and boys' clubs, and it was the cultural changes

brought about at the end of the second world war which encouraged the birth of mixed clubs (Butterfield and Spence, 2009). At the turn of the 20th century, the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides were established offering educational activities, underpinned by evangelical Christian philosophies. Interestingly Roberts (2015) asserts that young people began to wear uniforms in youth organisations to indicate that they were doing something authorised and organised by adults (Roberts, 2015: p.127). For many years it was in this voluntary domain that youth work existed, and it was not until 1939 when 'the needs of youth' were considered in government documentation. The Albemarle Report (HMSO, 1960) introduced the beginnings of the statutory youth service. The new youth service aimed to encourage young people to develop a sense of fellowship and enable them to 'make sound judgements' and promote 'mutual respect and tolerance' (HMSO 1960: p.37). Spence states that the new statutory youth service was born out of 'contradictory concerns' of control and enlightenment (Spence,1990).

Many of the pioneering voluntary youth work organisations openly expressed their desire to encourage specific values and virtues in young people. This was particularly true in the case of uniformed groups which encouraged obedience, discipline, punctuality, public service and a commitment to God, Queen and country (Roberts, 2015)

Although some of the elements in the work of the pioneers are still evident today, ideas which underpin modern youth work theory come more from an 'enlightened', rational, philosophy. For state-sponsored youth work, there has been a significant, move away from religious concern (Ledwith, M. & Campling, 2005). However, it has been suggested that religious groups and, faith-based youth and community organisations were fundamental to the formation of the welfare state and youth service (Smith, 2002).

Youth and power in society

Castells defines power as

> "… the capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favour the empowered actor's will, interests and values. Power is exercised by the means of coercion (or the possibility of it) and/ or by the construction of meaning on the basis of the discourses through which social actors guide their actions" (Castells, 2011: p.10).

Steven Lukes (1974) presents 3 faces of power in which power is expressed and experienced as a multi-dimensional concept. Firstly, in a basic form power is experienced in terms of winners and losers, or, who wins an argument on an issue has the power. Young people are rarely put into positions in which they can challenge or argue against power in real terms. Secondly, the power to set an agenda. Young people are rarely in the position to influence the agenda in decision-making processes on local

and national level. Thirdly, the power of manipulation of the views of others.

Lukes argues that if people learn to accept their situation and assume there

is no alternative, then they will not have grievances regarding being

oppressed. He points out that hierarchies of power are promulgated via

schooling and other institutions, and that these discourses are engrained

through mass media. Through this promulgation, public opinion is likely to

be informed, and even the opinion of young people themselves is likely to

be adapted leading to them being more accepting of their position in

hierarchies of power, and in their own oppression. If young people have not

been informed that they should have grievances about their oppressed

position, or that there are alternatives "...then they have no interests that are

harmed by the use of power" (Lukes, 1974: p. 28).

Youth work asserts a position that young people are not equal in society

and is concerned with addressing this power imbalance (Davies, 2005).

Young people are held in this position by coercion or the threat of it (this is

evident in compulsory schooling and youth justice), and by persuasion

(evident in youth policy and media discourses). Young people have been

acted upon in terms of policy systematically since the 19th century. The lack

of young people's participation in the political system has been the concern

of some in the youth work field such as Podd (2010) and Davies (2008).

Those young people who do have access, and are active in decision-

making processes are often from more affluent, well-educated backgrounds

which suggest further layered issues of classism (Podd, 2015). Although youth participation has been evident in the rhetoric of recent youth policy, much of what has been presented is tokenistic (Batsleer, 2008). Young people's participation is often driven by policy priorities, and not any 'real' attempt to include young people into discussion making processes for the long term (Podd, 2015).

As mentioned, power also emanates through discourse and this is evident in the media's representation of 'youth' (Foucault, 1971). Stereotypes of delinquency, vandalism and violence have pervaded the public discourse around youth since the 19th century, and have fueled moral panics about the behaviours and potential of young people (Cohen, 1980). This has in turn informed problem-focused policy regarding young people. Ord (2016) states that the Albemarle(HMSO, 1960), report was developed to head off the 'dual threats' of the emergence of 'youth culture' evident in the "Teddy boys and girls" in the late 1950s, and later in the "Mods and Rockers" gangs, and to address racial tensions manifesting as a result of the large-scale immigration at the end of the second world war.

All of these faces of power combined to compound the status quo.

> These hegemonies are sustained through ideas, texts, theories and language. These are embedded in networks of social and political control that Foucault called 'regimes of truth' (1980). Regimes of truth operate to legitimize what can be said, who

has the authority to speak, and what is sanctioned as true
(Adam, Bell, Griffin, 2007: p.11).

In the current context, the body of 'youth' is therefore inscribed with discourses of deviance and delinquency (Foucault, 2010). Young people have very little power to alter these representations of 'youth'. Philosophies of youth work have been developed over the last century which consider the disempowered position of young people. These philosophies endeavour to make visible the processes and structures which limit young people's ability to participate in political life and the decision-making which affects their lives.

Power will also be discussed in Chapter 3 of the chapter in relation to new technologies.

Core philosophy

Banks (2010) sees the values and ethical principles of youth work as in the tradition of both Kantianism and utilitarianism. In Kantianism, we see a concern for the individual, their freedoms, rights and autonomy. In 'utilitarianism' there is a concern with the greater good of society (ibid).

For Smith (1999) and Young (2006), it is the philosophies of Aristotle, Dewey, Habermas and Freire that are at the heart of youth work. They state that local educators (youth workers) should cultivate a moral disposition

toward 'human flourishing' and the 'good life' generally. For them, a concern with cultivating a disposition toward moral virtue, or moral agency is seen as vital for meaningful educative youth work.

Young (2010) suggests that by using the Socratic method of dialogue, youth workers and young people will internalise virtues such as, "listening, openness, reflection, practical reasoning, patience, trusting one's doubts, suspending judgements". She claims that Socratic dialogue is "the art of teaching not philosophy but philosophising, the art not of teaching about philosophers but of making philosophers"(Young, 2010: p.98).

Young 2006 refers to the 'Art of youth work' as a disposition of an autonomous, considered thinker who encourages rational thought and judgement through conversational dialogue. The task of effective practice is also the basis of this reflective contemplation in a continuous chain of reflection and action or, what Freire calls 'Praxis' (Freire, 1993). As Aristotle's states, "it is not enough to know the nature of virtue; we must endeavour to possess it, and to exercise it, and to use whatever other means necessary for becoming good." (Welldon, J. 1987: p.351).

Aristotle argued that it was essential that people concerned themselves with ethical and political development. A disposition of working towards what is good and right. For him, this required commitment and a balanced development. He believed

that body and mind should be exercised through physical training, and through practicing dialogue and debate (Welldon, J. 1987).

In essence, youth work's core purpose is to support young people in asking the question; 'how should one live?' This is a process of an exploration of values, and morals which encourage young people to reflect and consider new thoughts and ideas. This, in theory, will help them make informed choices on the basis of rational judgement (Young, 2006). Young reiterates that youth work is not a mechanical or a mindless indoctrinating process. It is dependent on young people's concern with the kind of society they want to inhabit. This task then is best achieved through a 'meaningful' relationship with a 'morally good person' who engages with the young person, on their terms, and with their conscious consent (ibid). As Brew states; "If we are not in youth work because of our love of our fellow man we have no business there at all" (Brew, 1957: pp.112-113 in Gilchrist et al. 2009: p.205).

Sociologist and philosopher Jurgen Habermas is associated with the neo-Marxist thinkers of the Frankfurt school. Habermas worked closely with critical theorists Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse and Max Horkheimer. Habermas (2006) was concerned with how power is contained in communication. His work has focused on the 'systematic distortion of communication' and how dominant ideologies are absorbed by subjects from birth, and how an individual's experience informs their opinion, and the

discourses which they support. His theory of communication critiques the role that lobby groups, large corporations and media play in shaping discourse in society and the public sphere (Habermas's ideas in Cukier, Ngwenyama, Bauer, & Middleton, 2009).

Habermas (2006) suggested that people (in this case youth workers) should create 'ideal' speech situations in which individuals have an equal chance to speak and be heard, they have the same time to express themselves and they are open to rational argument. Habermas believed that rational dialogue would ultimately change individuals and society to a more rational and democratic function. Habermas's (2006) work links heavily to Freud's psychoanalytic ideas of a 'talking cure', which he developed in the late 19th Century (Steven, 2013). Unlike Freud who focused on the psycho-analysis of individuals, Habermas (2006) was more concerned with the way in which the established structures of societies could be changed 'for the better' through dialogue. This, in turn, would heal society's ills, free people from their repression and establish a culture of self-expression and rationality.

Habermas (1991), also discussed the concept of the 'public sphere', at its basis is the idea that rational critical debate would be used in society as a check to domination and power. He discusses the way civil society could use the public sphere to further its interests. This was the idea that discussion and debate in the public arena (such as that in youth work settings) about current affairs, and the issues which affected people's lives,

would inform public opinion, and this would, in turn, inform a more democratic society in which the concerns and ideas of all groups would be heard and rationalized. Increasingly, media informs public ideas and dominates opinion. Habermas (2006) argued that mass media has limited the public sphere and has resulted in a lack of plurality as there are fewer voices discussing issues in society (Susen, 2011). In Habermas's (2006) view new technologies and social networking might give rise to new useful ways of expressing individual views, but he is pessimistic regarding the potential of the quality and process of the debate in this new arena. Critics of Habermas point out that although he gives a useful account of the public sphere, he puts too much hope in people in society to carry out communicative rationality (Rienstra, & Hook, 2006).

Critical education and dialogue

This idea of checking power and power-conscious education is also mirrored by the work of Freire (1993, 2013) and Dewey (1938) who see dialogical conversation as crucial to the transformation of the individual and society (Tiffany, 2007. Freire's (1993, 2013) work highlights the power of dialogue as being transformative in changing the world. Both Freire and Dewey were dismissive of 'traditional' forms of education and the processes used as being ideological and oppressive. Freire (1993) in particular criticised the 'banking system' of formal education in which students were

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fed information by a teacher and were encouraged to memorise and store without any critical discussion of subject or content. In this sense that teacher is the jug full of knowledge and the student is the pot or the vessel which is filled with the information. In these situations, dialogue is not encouraged and the teacher is viewed as the unquestioned expert. For Freire, it is this monologic process which encourages a culture of false expertise, unquestioned beliefs, and ultimately the oppression of students' understanding of education and knowledge.

John Dewey (1939), focused on the importance of learning through problem posing, and reflection on experience. Dewey's work was highly influential in the development of reflective education throughout the 20th Century and is evident in the work of Donald Schön's (1983) *the reflective practitioner*. This, in turn, has influenced much of youth work's professional education and the practices of youth work organisations (Boud and Miller, 1997; Jeffs and Smith, 2010; Kolb, and Kolb, 2005; Scheff, 1990).

For Brew (1968) the aim of youth work should be the development of the 'educated man'. Therefore, the educator themselves should be an active learner who has had a varied life experience. They should be capable of creating meaningful learning environments while also being accommodating, flexible and relevant to the young people with whom they are working.

All of these educational philosophers have a fundamental concern with finding ways to transform oppressed people's situations. We can see 'young people' as oppressed actors within the distorted discourse of youth. Discourses of youth have been developed and presented by adults. The majority of young people do not have access or opportunity to redress this imbalance. Youth workers must then recognise their privilege and power in their relationships with young people (Smith, 1999). This is essential in any kind of transformative dialogue or practice. Youth workers must want to change existing systems of power and be active in supporting young people to have a critical understanding of the political system and the mechanisms which support their oppression. Therefore, as Davies claims;

> Youth work deeds have to match words. Behaviour has to model principles. Action has to be put where the mouth is. Power balances between worker (adult) and young person have to prefigure in the manner that youth workers wish to see them develop in the wider world (Davies, 2010: p.5).

As Freire argues "…dialogue cannot occur between those who want to name the world, and those who do not want this naming; or between those who have been denied the right to speak, and those who deny the right" (Freire 1972: p. 61).

Social interaction, environment and education

As the research will be focused heavily on the social interaction, and social education elements of youth work I will discuss these concepts in detail.

Davies (1999) suggests that youth work has many connecting elements yet at its core is the simple promotion of human interaction. Whether this is interpreted as a concern with conversation, group work, or social education, for him it is youth work's 'hidden curriculum' and its central aim (Davies in Murphy and Shaw, 1999). Ideas of young people learning how to 'be together' has a long history in youth work. Baker, (1919), and Hemming, (1949) promoted the idea that work with children and young people should foster socialization which intended to instil particular values and behaviours in young people. In 1940s Germany the term social pedagogy became prominent and inspired similar work in North America and in England in the 1960s (Smith 2002).

The Albemarle Report (HMSO, 1960) is noted as being the main site of reference to ideas of civil responsibility and social education in Britain. Davies and Gibson promoted particular values and attitudes which

> … enhances the individual's understanding of how to form
> mutually satisfying relationships, and so involves a search for
> the adult for ways of helping a young person to discover how to
> contribute to as well as take from his associations with others.
> (Davies and Gibson, 1967: p.12).

For Button Social education is:

> … about helping people in their growth and development, in their
> social skills, in their personal resource and in the kind of
> relationships they establish with other people. Social skills can be
> learnt only in contact with other people and it is the purpose of
> group work to provide the individual with opportunities to relate to
> others in a supportive atmosphere, to try new approaches and to
> experiment in new roles (Button, L.1974: p.1).

Early ideas of social education suggested that young people should be
educated to maturity so they can become 'publicly active' (DES, 1969).
Davies (1999 a), claims that from the 1960s onwards governments have
systematically attempted to narrow the educational aims of youth work
away from critical philosophical outcomes to 'life skills' and as a way of
preparing young people for the world of work. For him, this is directed
more at individual than collectives, at one's own responsibilities and risks.

More recently social skills, and, social and personal development have
been promoted in much of the policy which has influenced the last 2
decades of youth work. Young people's positive contribution has been
the focus of policy such as Every Child Matters, (2003); Youth Matters,
(2005); and Positives for Youth (2011). The focus often being,
guarding against, or correcting anti-social behaviours. "We want to
develop young people who add value to their social surroundings

rather than subtracting through anti-social behaviour" (DfEE 2001: p.13).

Social education is, therefore, a contested term, which in the recent governmental discourse focuses on individual's development of social skills and 'social' behaviours which could be seen as being more about control than education. Smith (1988) argues that to categorise social education is problematic as all education adds to one's internal change and will change and affect the way individuals understand the world and interact socially within it. Also, that maturity is ambiguous as people continue to learn throughout their lives. For him, the term narrows the complexity of education in youth work. In short, it is too simple, perhaps dangerous, to suggest that by promoting 'good' social behaviours, learning rules of interaction of social cues and manners, that this will improve society and the lives of young people. Smith (1999), and others such as Young (2006), and Brew, (1957), suggest that it is only through a 'fully human' education, with a critical and political understanding that society can be transformed to one which is more equitable to young people. Learning social skills is then a part of learning about equality and democracy through group work, and the processes that are involved. How to promote fairness, how to have a conversation, how to think reflectively and act towards human flourishing are all skills acquired in a much larger learning process (Smith, 1999, Jeffs and Smith, 2010).

For the purpose of this thesis, social education is referred to as a process which involves young people learning from the experience of being together, to interact socially in supportive ways with each other, in which they share and reciprocate certain interaction rules and rituals (these will be explored further in chapter 3). This may lead to young people being given opportunities to interact with peers, with adults and professionals. Skills learned from this social education may range from being able to make and sustain eye contact, becoming a good listener through to having an understanding of political and social processes. This might result in individuals having confidence to interact in 'public spheres', committees and in more formal political settings (Smith, 1999). It may be useful to conceptualise this by considering these elements in a hierarchy of learning. In youth work, young people can learn: basic social interaction, learning how to be with others, which might lead to them learning skills and interacting with adults and professionals. Leading through time to an understanding of social and political processes, and having skills and confidence to interact in these spheres. It is argued that fundamental to this learning, at the most basic level are conducive settings and situations for successful interaction rituals (Goffman, 1959, Collins, 2005, Smith, 1999). This argument will be further explored in the following chapter in relation to how new technologies impact on co-present settings and situations.

Power and the voluntary relationship

Central to all youth work theory and practice is the concept of the voluntary participation of young people in youth work activities, and the voluntary relationship between young people and youth workers. Historically young people have engaged with youth work provision 'in their own time', the perception of youth work is therefore somewhat in contrast to the compulsory or formal parts of their day-to-day lives. In theory at least the idea of the voluntary relationship is at the heart of youth work and is perhaps the distinguishing feature of the profession (Davies 2005; Jeffs & Smith 2008).

Davies states that

> The basis for this is not simply theoretical or ideological, as has sometimes been asserted – 'conservative' or bloody-minded youth workers holding onto a belief which has passed its sell-by date. Rather, it is rooted in the historical fact, and it is a fact, that such 'voluntaryism' has from the start shaped the development of the practice and especially its process. This was true even in periods when provision was largely dependent on the patronage of the privileged, and it continues to be true today within a state-dominated Youth Service (Davies, B. 2005: p.8).

Young people enter into a relationship with youth workers on their own terms and hold a degree of power in this sense. They hold the power to enter, and also the power to leave the relationship as they wish (Banks, 1999). However, once the young person enters this relationship this power

is limited particularly when entering youth work provision. Buildings are often run and controlled by adults. Therefore, the youth worker must engage the young person by negotiation, working together through dialogue to advance the relationship beyond the start point (Davies 2005). The extent to which youth workers then control, or use power means they are continually faced by ethical dilemmas. Judgements are made on how much influence they should exercise without compromising the freedom of the young person. This balance is another unique feature of youth work as a public provision (Banks 1999).

While Davies (2005), and Smith (1999) argue that this voluntary participation is fundamental to the theory and practice of youth work, Jon Ord asserts that this premise is more complex and problematic. For him,

> Voluntary participation may be a very important dynamic which youth work abandons at its peril, but it is not the 'holy grail' of youth work, and should not be used as the yardstick by which interventions and approaches are permitted into the realm of youth work (Ord, 2009: p. 47).

Ord argues that to describe voluntary participation as the defining feature of youth work would suggest that any leisure activity which a young person participated in voluntarily as youth work. Indeed, young people may well enter into youth work settings of their own will, but once within provision they may come under pressure to participate in activities. Alternatively,

young people may have no choice over their attendance, as in the case of youth work in schools, in Pupil Referral Units or Prisons, yet they may voluntarily participate in activities in these settings. Therefore, when considering these power issues Ord argues that we should start to consider voluntary and involuntary attendance and participation separately.

Other issues may also affect young people's decisions to participate, including peer pressure (Ord, 2009). Subtler implicit and explicit power may also inform one's behaviours, for example, the recent 'culture of fear' and the discourse of youth as a 'problem', and 'anti-social behaviour' prevalent under the New Labour government may well motivate young people (and their families) to not want to be found on the streets at 'risk' of being labelled anti-social or being seen as a problem (Davies, 2005). Therefore, they may participate (or not) for these reasons. Parental pressure will also inform the behaviours of young people. Youth workers also feel pressures to engage and 'get' young people to participate. Pragmatic pressures and organisational agendas must be viewed as very real priorities for youth workers in the current climate. Increasingly contacts and participation targets have become a fundamental aspect of the majority of funding requirements, particularly those tied to local authorities (Ord, 2014). So even though some may be able to be creative in the reporting of such targets they are a significant factor in the minds of youth workers, as highlighted in the literature relating to the commissioning of youth work

service in Sunderland (Sunderland.Gov, 2011). So there are always issues of persuasion power in the interplay between workers and young people.

Persuasion through rewards and incentives have also become a factor in the process of participation, such as the incentive to have a safe, warm dry place to be, through to the offer of specific trips and activities. The opportunity of accreditation and certificates may also be influential in the motivations of young people to participate (Flint, 2005).

In many respects, this work might be perceived as exploitative. To guard against these practices, Ord (2009) suggests that youth workers should endeavour to sustain an 'adult to adult' relationship with young people. This will counter the inherent power relationships experienced by young people. In this relationship, young people will learn to express themselves more freely.

Gormally and Coburn assume the position that,

> 'tipping the balance' does not mean that adults give up power in favour of young people or that young people take power from adults. This negative view of power, suggests that power is exercised when people, who are regarded as superior, take control over others. Alternatively, viewing power positively is much more fluid, as control shifts from adult to young person and back again through their interactions with each other (Hill et al., 2004). 'Power is a positive concept and is about having the ability or capacity to act' (O'Brien & Moules, 2007, p. 397), thus power may be exercised from both top down and bottom up (Gormally, Coburn, 2015) p.206).

Although this may be a useful way of viewing power, the relationship between young people, state, society and youth worker is an extremely complex overlay of historic, contextual and pragmatic power relations which are never neutral and as a result have encouraged radical and pragmatic responses (Wylie, 2015; Cooper, Gormally, Hughes, 2015). For the purpose of this thesis the voluntary relationship must be considered and analysed with this complexity in mind.

Equality, social justice and the emancipation of young people

As mentioned, youth work is "…primarily concerned with creating conditions for a fairer, more equal society by challenging the status quo and discrimination that young people face" (Coburn, 2010: p.44). Emancipatory praxis, anti-discriminatory practice, equality, and social justice are key elements which have underpinned youth work's aim and purpose for decades (Coburn and Gormally, 2015; Jeffs and Smith, 2010; Thompson, 2012). Ageism could be viewed as the key oppressive factor which underpins youth work practice. This is further layered by factors such as sexism, racism, disability and islamophobia. Youth work has promoted activism and counter hegemonic work since the end of the 1960s. This includes feminist work, which challenges male dominance in youth work settings and wider society. Batsleer, (2013), states

Current activisms continue to offer challenges to patriarchal controls of capitalist commodification of young women's bodies, spirits and minds through the pathways offered to them whether inside schools or through popular culture (Batsleer, 2013: p.151).

Youth work settings often reflect wider society in terms of patriarchy and male domination (Spence, 1990). Feminist youth work then "recognises the subordinate position of women" and "refuses to accept this as naturally ordained" (Spence, 1990: p.82). This work recognises masculinity as a privilege. The aim of feminist work is to attempt to change elements of the youth service which excludes young women, developing single sex work and educating all young people. Girls groups have become an important mechanism in guarding against male domination in youth work spaces and challenging patriarchy (ibid).

Youth work has a long history of supporting anti-racist campaigns (Aluffi-Pentini, 1996, Hanbury, Lee, Batsleer, 2010). Anti-racist work developed in the late sixties and was a response to tough immigration policy in Britain, and also inequalities in working conditions (and discrimination) in public services. For Imam and Bowler

The task of the youth worker, is to facilitate the process through which young people are able to evaluate and identify the values that are fundamental to their welfare. What is important, then, is the ability of workers to move between different social and

cultural systems, to relate to different constituencies of people: black and white, disabled and able-bodied, lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, women and men, and across different social classes. In other words, they have to become what Giroux (1994: pp.167-168 has termed 'boarder crossers' (Imam, U, F. Bowler, R. 2010: p.152).

Bell states that social justice is a process and a goal. The goal being the "full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs" (2007 p.1). The process involves the development of individuals who have a sense of agency and a sense of social responsibility. According to Ledwith, (2007) this requires youth work providers to engage in critical work which identifies local and global aspects of political life. She argues that "unless we have an analysis of power, of the structures of oppression in the world that reach into our local communities and impact on personal lives, our practice is likely to be tokenistic at best" (Ledwith, 2007: p.1).

Although this is evident in theory, Coburn (2012) has argued that there is little or no policy concerning the interest and needs of young people in terms of equality. For example, when considering gender specific work, recent policy focuses on 'teenage pregnancy, personal safety and anti-obesity healthy eating practices' not critical work which endeavors to question male dominance in society (Batsleer, 2013: p.

52). Therefore, in practice the central principles of equality and social justice which inform the theory of youth work practice are countered by the general policy discourse (Newman & Clarke, 2009).

In this policy context youth work which focuses on issues of equality and social justice might be viewed as radical. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the agendas and priorities of the political elites are not often in tune with those of young people and discourses focus on prevention of anti-social behaviours, ignoring the complexity of the political and social factors which affect the lives of young people. "Social and economic patterns of racism, sexism, classism and homophobia are some of the main problems confronting youth today" (McDaniel, M, 2015: p. 41).

Radical youth workers focus on taking these issues seriously, inspiring activism with the goal of change. Tania de St Croix asserts that radical youth work is

> … informed by political and moral values; opposition to capitalism and authoritarianism, belief in equality and respect for the environment. They question 'common sense' and reflect critically on their work. They are aware that practicing their beliefs will involve debate and struggle, but try to have fun too! (de St Croix, 2012: p.69).

This radical youth work (or youth work which focuses on social justice) might be seen as particularly important today. Events such as 9/11

and the 7/7 terror acts have resulted in policy agendas such as 'Preventing Violent Extremism' (Imam and Bowler, 2010). While the rhetoric suggests a focus on community cohesion what has resulted is an Islamophobic discourse (Ibid). More recently events in Iraq and Syria have resulted in the mass displacement and migration of individuals and families fleeing the war-torn region, many of these people now seek asylum in Europe and the UK. The government and the mass media position on this issue have for some, such as Jones (2015) encouraged a culture of fear and nationalism. As a result, nationalistic, far-right groups such as UKIP (the UK Independence Party) have gained strength, and now hold positions in the European Parliament (Jones, 2015). Youth work has, and, can play an important role in opposing these discourses by counter-hegemonic youth work which challenges myths and negative representations of the religion encouraging social cohesion, to specific work with young Muslims (Belton, 2010, Khan, 2006).

In conclusion to this section, it is evident that the media plays a central role in informing public opinion, attitudes and prejudges regarding issues of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religious belief, and ability (Adam, Bell, Griffin, 1997). Youth work plays an important role in challenging hegemonies which support the status quo (Imam, Bowler, 2010). It is therefore viewed important to consider how minority groups

use new technologies to see if there is any difference or preference of use and also how 'new media' may play a part in practice and in young people's lives. It will also be interesting to see how practitioners are educating young people on issues of equality and how this relates to their use of technology.

Youth work professional Education

The core values and philosophies of youth work are, to some extent, reflected in the ethical principles which underpin the youth work profession and its education as we experience it today. The Professional Validation and Curriculum Requirements state:

All those engaged as Youth Workers have a commitment to:

- treat young people with respect, valuing each individual and avoiding negative discrimination;

- respect and promote young people's rights to make their own decisions and choices, unless the welfare or legitimate interests of themselves or others are seriously threatened;

- promote and ensure the welfare and safety of young people, while permitting them to learn through undertaking challenging educational activities;

- contribute to the promotion of social justice for young people and in society generally, towards encouraging respect for difference and diversity and challenging discrimination. (NYA 2009)

The National Occupational Standards in youth work present a benchmark for the subject area and underpins the Higher Education of youth work. The Standards were developed by representatives of the youth work sector in conjunction with Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) and further informed by documents such as:

- Transforming Youth Work – Resourcing Excellent Youth Services 2002,

- Youth Work Values - The National Youth Agency / DfES 2003,

- Model for effective practice – DENI 2003,

- National Youth Work Development Plan 2003-2007 – DES 2003,

- Statement on the nature and purpose of Youth Work – YouthLink Scotland 2005,

- Education and Inspections Act 2006,

- Equipping, The Education Division of the Archbishops' Council 2006,

- The Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales 2007,

- Young people, Youth work, Youth Services – National Youth Service Strategy for Wales 2007,

- Moving Forward: A National Youth Work Strategy (Scotland) 2007,

- Strategy for the Delivery of Youth Work in Northern Ireland 2005 – 2008. (LLUK, 2008).

These Standards also indicate that youth work practitioners will develop

knowledge, skills and understanding, so that they can effectively:

> 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 (NYA, 2008: p.3).

The 2009 QQA subject Benchmark in Youth and Community Work suggest

> "Programmes of study should encourage students to develop inclusive and anti-oppressive practice in their own settings as well as in wider social context of education. They should equip students with ability to deal with complex ethical issues through sound moral reasoning, including an understanding of how values are explored and expressed in informal contexts" (QAA, 2009 in Batsleer, 2013: p. 179).

Policy context and the problems for practice

Many argue that statutory funded youth work, and much of Voluntary sector

youth work today is not a true translation of the theories which underpin the

professional practice. (Davies, 1999a, 1999b; 2008; Jeffs & Smith 2008;

Spence 2004; Young, 2006). Theory and practice issues have undermined

the validity of the profession for many years. Youth work aims are often

aspirational and often what is evident are significant gaps between rhetoric

and reality. Some such as Banks (1999), Ledwith (2007), Smith (1999), and Taylor (2009), suggest that this is down to a number of issues, including the anti-intellectualism inherent in the youth work field, workers lack of understanding of the political system and context, financial pressures, and workers having to deal with self-protective management, all of which impact on the priorities of practice (Jeffs and Smith, 1989).

Taylor states that youth work's values and its core purpose has been under attack since the 1980s. He points out that the conservative governments of the 1980s and 1990s made attempts to impose life skills and even a national curriculum within youth work. These were attempts to instrumentalise this educational practice, to improve skills and attitudes of a future global workforce. These attempts were resisted. It was New Labour who made major changes by giving the youth work profession the recognition that it may have deserved, but also making significant changes to its priorities (Smith, 2003). This has raised concerns for many, who now see an increasing focus on surveillance, targets, and the general bureaucratisation of practice as a wider assault on the core values of the profession (de St Croix, 2010; Taylor, 2010). As mentioned, under New Labour there was a significant focus on the problematic nature of 'youth' and this was evident in the research and policy relating to young people. Not in education, employment or training (NEET), anti-social behaviour orders (ASBO), youth offending and curfews quickly became a part of the

language related to 'youth' and youth work. Under the banner of 'youth work' these policies ignored the process of youth work and made attempts to add predetermined priorities to the practice.

> In England documents such as Every Child Matters (HM Government 2003, Transforming Youth Work (Department for Education and Skills 2002) and Youth Matters (HM Government 2005), in Wales Young people, Youth Service (Welsh Assembly Government 2007), and in Scotland Moving Forward (Scottish Executive 2007) had none of the depth and rationale of their predecessors. They were simply prospectuses for the delivery of mostly already agreed priorities and policies. The twin priorities were public safety and economic productivity (and, thus, private profit). The needs of the market had come to dominate. Significantly, the one paper in recent years that had a fuller discussion and exploration, the English Aiming high for young people (HM Treasury 2007) did not have youth work as its focus but rather 'positive activities' for young people (Jeffs & Smith 2008).

Under New Labour, youth work was valued because of the practitioners' ability to engage, interact, and work with young people. Significant financial support was injected into the profession during the New Labour years. With the development of the Connexions Service, we witnessed the individualisation of youth support as individuals were allocated, personal advisors. Significant financial support was offered to the Voluntary Sector through commissioning, and this was often attached to specific priorities linked to the ECM agenda (Davies, 2008). Every Child Matters focused on

children and young people from the ages of 0-19. With the (seemingly innocent) 5 key outcomes of:

- be healthy;

- stay safe;

- enjoy and achieve;

- make a positive contribution;

- achieve economic well-being.

(http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/aims, 2008)

For many, this document played a powerful role in changing the discourse around youth in Britain, and in doing so informed the focus and priorities of youth work practice in the UK for 12 years.

> Inherent in Every Child Matters is a seductive and powerful potential to enmesh formal and informal educators in an obedience and passivity that may run contrary to our vocation and calling: to participate in a favoured way of thinking that glosses over, or institutionalises the invisibility of deep structural inequalities in contemporary English society (Hoyle, 2008).

In the current context of accountability, best value economics, and outcome-driven practice, it could be argued that it has become increasingly difficult to engage young people in meaningful educative youth work based on the core values which have been described earlier in the chapter. In fact, it might be suggested that in the current climate it would be considered subversive to do so (Spence, 2004).

Under the coalition government, and the current Conservative government there has been a void in terms of youth policy, and a general continuation of the values of New Labour's policies but without the financial support or infrastructure to deliver it. 'Positives for Youth' stands as the only major policy contribution from the Coalition governments first term in office, with a focus on the personal and social development of young people (Positives for Youth 2011).

Positives for Youth' stresses throughout that, 'Government cannot realise this vision on its own' (DfE, 2011: p.13). Buckland (2013) suggests that communities and individuals will have to ensure that their own needs are met as the government continues to remove financial support from youth services. David Camerons' 'Big Society' idea was presented as a positive move to empower communities, suggesting a redistribution of power, taking from the top and giving to the bottom. However, Ransome (2011) suggests that it is, in fact, little more than a brand idea which takes attention from the massive cuts to public services and a rolling back of the welfare state. The former Archbishop of Canterbury refers to David Cameron's 'Big Society Agenda' as "aspirational waffle designed to conceal a deeply damaging withdrawal of the state from its responsibilities to the most vulnerable." (Williams, R. in Helm and Coman, 2012).

The crippling cuts introduced by David Cameron's government have all but dismantled the majority of statutory youth services in England (NYA, 2016).

For what remains we have seen a fight for survival and a general continuation of the ideology, of outcome-driven practice, and youth work organisations have had to diversify, carrying out outcome specific work (Ord, J. 2014), often straying into what might be categorised as targeted youth work which follows the agenda of the funder or political priority. This might be described as work with youth. The practice realities are heavily informed and driven by the pragmatic response of the youth work providers to fit funders' needs, instead of the needs of young people. The core elements of youth work become secondary to the concerns of the youth worker and youth work organisations. Over the past two decades, there has been a substantial reduction in work-based training in youth work and an increase in voluntary and unqualified workers taking up positions in the field (Buckland, 2013). These workers often uncritically accept roles in practice which they see as 'youth work'. As increasingly statutory and voluntary providers mutate in tune with priorities of the ruling elite, Smith argues that "like Pavlov's dogs" youth work organisations "are now trained to respond to the bell activated by financial incentives and government pressure" (Jeffs and Smith, 2004).

In recent years, many theorists and practitioners have become more active in retracing and documenting the history of 'youth work' in an attempt to; highlight its value (Gilchrist, 2009). More energy has gone into compiling a clear description of its core values so that the practice might gain a

stronger, and more professional, identity (Bradford 2007; Davies 2005, 1999a, b, 2008; Gilchrist 2009; Taylor 2010). Some such as Nicholls (2012) and Belton (2010) assert that youth workers should take a radical stand against the current policy context and stay true to the philosophies of youth work. In response to the barrage of 'youth' policy over the last two decades, and in an attempt to clarify the values, and purpose of youth work, Davies presents a 'Manifesto for Our Times' in which he offers a useful set of guidelines which workers and their organisations should be asking themselves when considering using the term youth work in practice. Davies (2005) asks:

- have young people chosen to become involved – is their engagement voluntary?

- Is the practice proactively seeking to tip balances of power in young people's favour?

- Are young people perceived and received as young people rather than, as a requirement, through the filter of a range of adult-imposed labels?

- Is the practice starting where young people are starting – particularly with their expectation that they will be able to relax, meet friends and have fun?

- Is a key focus of the practice on the young person as an individual?

- Is the practice respectful of and actively responsive to young people's peer networks?

- Is the practice respectful of and actively responsive to young people's wider community and cultural identities and, where young people choose, is it seeking to help them strengthen these?

- Is the practice seeking to go beyond where young people start, in particular by encouraging them to be outward looking, critical and creative in their responses to their experience and the world around them?

- Is the practice concerned with how young people feel and as well as with what they know and can do? (Davies 2005: p 7).

Individualism

Further to the direct youth policy which has significantly impacted on the youth work profession over the last two decades is the indirect neo-liberal policy which has encouraged a culture of globalisation, competitiveness, risk and individualism. Jeffs and Smith (2004) argue that this has had severe implications for youth work. They assert that it is the rise of individualism that is eroding youth work's social aims, and the individual's motivations to interact in groups and communities. It was the industrial revolution which created the conditions from which youth work was required. Late modernity is characterised by the rise of globalization, risk and individualism (Giddens, 2013). Globalization is the process through which the planet has become more compressed through an ever-increasing series of efficient technologies, network communications, and with the development of transportation. This is economically driven and ever-expanding (Castells, 2009a). Societies and cultures integrate as the world becomes smaller and ever more accessible, trade flows trans-nationally, creating global markets and competition. Globalisation then creates a world

which is characterised by insecurity (Coker, 2014, Giddens 2013).

'Traditional' work and the idea of employment for life has gone. Žižek points

out that whole nations now face the reality of long term unemployment and

are viewed as 'worthless, and 'superfluous'. Students enter university with

the understanding that it is very likely they will not have a job at the end of

their degree. Žižek refers to these groups and societies as 'disposable life'

(Žižek, 2014). Large scale employment opportunities in societies often

come through the investment of large trans-national companies who seek

out the most efficient and least expensive workforces in the global market,

but they are not tied to any particular nation or region and they always have

the opportunity to bargain and exploit. Therefore, individuals in this global

marketplace become more self-focused, constantly in competition with one

another and always at risk of unemployment. The concept of risk is,

therefore, a significant factor in people's lives. The priority is then for people

to make the right choices, be the right sort of person. The pressure to be

flexible, multi-skilled and employable is great.

> Poor health becomes the result of a failure to exercise, eat properly or adopt a 'healthy lifestyle'; unemployment is seen as a result of a lack of skills, the wrong attitude or laziness. Risk never leaves one's side: failure awaits at every turn. Risk, like danger may be a good teacher, but the lessons learnt may not be those that make for a 'good society' or 'virtuous life' (Jeffs and Smith 2004).

Jeffs and Smith (2004) and Livingstone (2005) state that Globalisation and risk have in turn encouraged the rise of 'Individualism'. The idea of fixed identity in this environment is gone as individuals have to be willing to diversify as the economy requires. Individuals may feel a sense of liberty as a side-effect of this, as they are no longer bound to traditional structures of family and local community. They freely transcend traditional cultural borders which might have had a significant impression on their identity. Groups and democracy increasingly become less of a concern for individuals in the completive global marketplace (Livingstone, 2004).

In the light of this increasingly individualistic world, youth work, in theory at least, has stayed true to its aims and purpose. It is the rise of global markets, the commodification of culture and the development of new technologies which present the new challenge for practice. New technologies could be seen as a further extension of late modernity, postmodernity and further examples of how capitalism can extend its reach into every corner of people's lives (Prodnick,2014).

Jeffs and Smith argue that in this global capitalistic system, if

> … 'youth' becomes a commodity which can be purchased and that seemingly stretches into the mid- to late 30s, where can the youth be found, how can they be categorised? … youth culture and identity are being speedily eroded to the extent that young people no longer relate in traditional ways to sub-cultural groups. For the group is no longer the central focus for the individual but rather one of a series of foci or sites within which the individual

can live out a selected, temporal role or identity before relocating to an alternative site and assuming a different identity. It follows then that the term group can also no longer be regarded as having a necessarily permanent or tangible quality, the characteristics, visibility and lifespan of a group being wholly dependent upon the particular forms of interaction which it used to stage (Jeffs and Smith1999: p.605).

Conclusion

The literature indicates that youth works' theory and core values are clear, they underpin the professional education of the subject, and the philosophies are almost universal among the prominent theorists. Youth work is a practice (in theory) that has slowly developed from its beginnings, holding on to the concept of voluntary participation and, over time, has self reflectively built a strong concern with anti-discriminatory practice, social justice and the emancipation of young people. It has been argued that the main concern for a youth worker is to build relationships and encourage human interaction in which power is contemplated systematically at personal, social and political levels. It is a practice where relationships are valued, where young people are 'worked with' and not upon, and this is facilitated through dialogic conversation, not a monologic process or a dispensation of information as evident in other forms of education (Coburn, 2010; Freire, 1993; Giroux, 2011; Smith, 1999). In youth work association, community and democracy are encouraged, and there is a concern with the

locality and the decision making which affects the lives of the young people who inhabit it.

It has been established that how this translates into practice heavily depends on the political context and the funders' agenda, and how individual youth workers interpret theory. The current policy context is fundamentally at odds with the theory of youth work, creating a practice environment in which youth work's transformative ethos seems radical and subversive. Perhaps there will always be issues of justifying a practice which values process over outcomes, and where specific measurements of learning are often intangible. What has been suggested within the literature is that youth work's outcomes slowly manifest through the young person's identity, values and actions at various points of the person's life cycle.

From its beginnings through to today, youth work has taken on the positive influences of emancipatory educational theories and Greek philosophies of reason. However, since youth work took its place as a statutory service back in the 1960s it has carried with it ideological priorities of the ruling elite. As stated, youth work practice has in the past actively resisted ideological control to some extent, however, as Althusser tells us "there is no practice except by, and in, an ideology" (Althusser, 1994: p128) and with this, youth workers will have to continue to battle with the goals of government whose concerns, it might be argued, lie with the economy (Taylor, 2010). This is in sharp contrast with youth work, which Young states, is a

> …practice based not on the need to address current social problems and political priorities, but a commitment to developing the truly lifelong goals of rational judgement and authentic human existence (Young, 1999: p.112).

Next steps

The next chapter will present a consideration of the technological context in which youth work manifests itself. Further, there will be a consideration of the impact of new technologies on global culture, individuals and their social process and interactions.

Chapter 3

Literature review

In this chapter research from a number of fields of study which highlight the impact of new technologies on society will be considered. (1) The literature review considers the statistical information which highlights the extent to which technologies are being adopted into our daily lives. (2) The research highlights some of the drivers for the take-up of new technologies and assesses the policy context. (3) the literature will consider the impact of new technologies on global, structural and social levels through discussion of various theories. (4) The review will focus on the impact of technologies on the human mind, communication, education and face-to-face social interaction. (5) The review will then conclude by considering what this means for youth work practice. Gaps will be identified and questions developed for the next phase of the research.

Usage of new technologies

New technologies now play a significant part in the lives of young people (Buckingham, 2000, 2003, 2008; Livingstone, 2005, 2009). Recent statistical research highlights the extent of young people's media usage. In 2014 research undertaken by Ofcom indicated that 88% of children and young people aged 3-15 have access to the internet at home, 71% have a tablet, an increase of 20 percentage points since 2013. 65% have their own

Smartphone, a further 13% of 12-15-year-olds owned a (non-smartphone) mobile. 41% have a games console in their bedroom, a further 34% have a games console belonging to the household. (Ofcom 2014). Considering access outside the home, Ofcom's research highlights: 99% of UK schools have an internet connection, 92% of children and young people have used the internet at school, and 64% of children have accessed the internet outside home or school (Ofcom, 2006).

When considering the use and attitudes to new technologies today generally there seems very little difference in terms of gender. However, women are more likely to use Smartphones, and men are more likely to use a desktop PC for surfing and browsing the internet (Ofcom, 2015). Gaming is one of the activities which males have dominated over recent history although there has been an increase in female take-up of gaming since 2006 (Statista, 2016). In terms of social media usage, women are heavier users of sites such as Facebook and Instagram (Anderson, 2015).

Although statistically there is only a slight variation in attitudes and usage between the genders, some argue that there is a perception that there is a male dominance in terms of the use of technologies generally, as in the 'boys and their toys' discourse, which according to Horowitz (2013) and Lohan, and Faulkner (2004) stems from male dominance in the work place, and the relationship to work and engineering of such products. Lohan, and Faulkner suggest,

> …there is a strong case that the male dominance of engineering, for example, is sustained in part by a wider cultural marking of technology as masculine (Lohan, M. Faulkner, W. 2004: p. 320).

However, companies such as Apple have started to address the lack of diversity in the workplace regarding gender, and last year alone employed 11000 women globally (Fortune, 2015).

Longitudinal research carried out by the Kaiser Family Foundation (2004) in the US found that children and young people between the ages of 8 to 18 were spending 6 hours 21 minutes a day with media. The same study found that through multitasking, and the use of several media devices consumed 8 hours 33 minutes a day, seven days a week. The same research was repeated in 2009, and the results indicated that young people were spending 7 hours 38 minutes a day with interacting with media, and packed 10 hours 45 minutes of content through multiple devices into a day (The Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010).

Young people use a diverse set of online and mediated services to communicate. In recent years there has been a significant move from Short Messaging Services (SMS) text to free messaging services. In 2011 an American study showed that young people sent and received on average 3200 SMS texts per month (Smith, 2011). Text messaging has reduced since this point as free messaging services have become the central site of communication for young people. Services such as Facebook messenger

and Whatsapp are the most popular form of communication for young

people, and young adults (Statista, 2015), with a staggering 30 billion

messages sent globally per day via Whatsapp alone;10 billion more than

through SMS text (Price, 2015). Although there is currently no accurate data

which considers young people's communication over 'all' platforms, recent

research from Tecmark (2014) suggests that the average Smartphone user

in the UK checks their phone 220 times per day. The research also

highlights:

- the average user reaches for their phone at 7:31 am in the morning.
  These users check personal emails and Facebook before they get
  out of bed;

- many of us pick up our phones more than 1,500 times each week;

- average owners use their phone for three hours and sixteen minutes
  a day;

- almost four in ten users admitted to feeling lost without their
  device (Woollaston, 2014).

50% of e-commerce is now facilitated through mobile phones and 60% of

global users use mobile phones as the primary site for accessing the

internet (Textmarketer, 2015).

Policy context

The popularity and the trends in technological innovation have become the central site of new market economies. New technologies have become central to the political strategies of governments and nation-states (Castells, 2009a, 2011). Current and future markets depend upon computerised systems linked by the internet. With the decline of heavy industry and manual labour, we have seen a vast rise in service sector work, web-based services, and e-commerce (Hardt and Negri, 2000). Having a thriving technology industry, and an able, media literate, workforce is therefore seen as essential for nation-states in a competitive global market. Technological innovation is one of the biggest global businesses with Apple currently the world's most profitable company with a current market value of £741Bn (Forbes, 2015); a valuation which exceeds the GDP of most nations (Taylor, 2014).

The importance of the consumption and production of new technologies is evident in government policy and spending. In 2009 the New Labour government indicated their concerns over the population's media literacy and Britain's position in a global market. The Digital Britain Report (2009), indicated the government's ambition to ".... secure the UK's position as one of the world's leading digital knowledge economies" (Ibid). This was further confirmed in 2010 by the announcement that the coalition government

would commit £830m to ensure that the UK has the best and fastest broadband network in Europe, with 90% of the population being connected by 2015 (Wood, 2010). The current opposition party, Labour, argue that from the start of the UK coalition government, through to the current conservative government, little or nothing has been done to consider the planning of our digital futures (Onwurah, 2014). In response the Conservatives highlight the fact that the UK is, on average, the largest e-commerce consumer market in the world. The internet economy contributes £120bn per year to the UK economy (ONS, 2014).

Medium theories

"Medium theory" refers to the examination of the impact of a particular medium of communication, rather than the information that that medium communicates. The introduction of a new medium creates a new communicative environment which initiates socio-cultural change (Meyrowitz, 1985, 1993). Medium theorists and Media Ecologists have, for many years, considered the impact of new technologies on human societies (McLuhan 1962, Innis 1951, Postman 1985, Putnam 2001, and Strate, Jacobson, and Gibsons 1996). The impact of various technologies have, throughout history, made significant changes to our social realities and the human experience. Manuel Castells (2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011) suggests that the introduction of the internet has had the most profound impact on

human culture since the industrial revolution. The introduction of the internet as a medium has changed global economies, nation-states, work and culture and is changing our ideas of time, promoting new forms of social organisation, relationships and social identity. This global networked society enables the whole planet to share information in new ways, where communication is immediate, and all knowledge is (potentially) available (Ibid).

Castells explains the complex effects of the new medium on culture:

> The potential integration of text, images, and sounds in the same system, interacting from multiple points, in chosen time (real or delayed) along global networks, in conditions of communication. And communication decisively shapes culture, because as Postman writes, "we do not see… reality…as 'it' is, but as our languages are. And our languages are our media. Our media are our metaphors. Our metaphors create the content of our culture. Because culture is mediated and enacted through communication, cultures themselves-that is, our historically produced systems of beliefs and codes-become fundamentally transformed, and will be more so over time…The emergence of a new electronic communication system characterized by its global reach, its integration of all communication media, and its potential interactivity is changing and will change for ever our culture (Castells, 2009: pp.356-357).

Marshall McLuhan (1962, 1967) recognised that when considering new technologies 'the medium is the message' and that we often get caught up in the content or information shared through the media without recognising

the impact, or the wider effects of the medium itself. The introduction of radio and television for example completely changed the speed at which information could be shared regionally, nationally and eventually globally, forming new markets, cultures, identities, and presenting new methods of influence and control. The social influence of these technologies was also significant and became central to the way individuals and their families organised and ordered their lives. Over time their use has become increasingly naturalised, automatic, and habitual (ibid).

New communication and power

For Taylor (2014), and Castells (2011) the open networks enabled by the internet have the potential to flatten traditional hierarchical structures and processes offering a revolutionary transformation in power relations between institutions and the individual.

> The old closed, hierarchical, institutional model is being replaced by a decentralized, networked system open to all. Barriers of entry have been removed, gatekeepers have been demolished, and the costs of creating and distributing culture have plummeted (Taylor, 2014: p.46).

In this environment parameters of time and space collapse, new internet networks work beyond material borders as information flows freely between nodes and nations in 'timeless time' (Castells, 2009a). This system is still in

its infancy but yet it is forcing change upon traditional institutions and sites of power and authority.

> The democratic network is a completely horizontal and deterritorialised model. The Internet, which began as a project of DARPA (the U.S. Defense Department Advanced Research Projects Agency), but has now expanded to points throughout the world, is the prime example of this democratic network structure. An indeterminate and potentially unlimited number of interconnected nodes communicate with no central point of control; all nodes regardless of territorial location connect to all others through a myriad of potential paths and relays. The Internet thus resembles the structure of telephone networks, and indeed it generally incorporates them as its own paths of communication, just as it relies on computer technology for its points of communication (Hardt and Negri, 2000: p.299).

Castells states that there is resistance to these changes in power relationships from historic authorities and sites of power such as nation-states, but ultimately they will have to adapt to the network logic to be visible, present and relevant in this new world.

Young people may have more power in this new world as technology may offer new spaces to bypass traditional sites of power. They can present themselves in new ways, even as adults and act out new personas (Brignall and VanValey, 2005; Castells, 2011). It will be interesting to see if this is evident in the data from this study.

> Everybody and everything finds a way of existence in this intertwined, multimodal, interactive communication text, so that

any message external to this text remains an individual experience without much chance of being communicated. Because our brains' neural networks are activated through networked interactions with their environment, including their social environment, this new communication realm, in its variegated forms, becomes the main source of signals leading to the construction of meaning in people's minds. Since meaning largely determines action, communicating meaning becomes the source of social power by framing the human mind (Castells, M. (2011): p.136).

The capture and framing of the mind then becomes the central aim of those institutions which wish to establish and hold power in this new world. Cyberspace becomes 'the' site of influence, the new market place, the place to be seen, and the place to be found as the economy increasingly invests its power in this domain (ibid).

For Postman, the constant development and innovation of technologies has led to a world which is dominated by a technological determinist hegemony. He refers to this domination as a "Technopoly". For him, this is nothing less than a 'totalitarian technocracy as

> Technopoly eliminates alternatives to itself in precisely the way Aldous Huxley outlined in Brave New World. It does not make them illegal. It does not make them immoral. It does not even make them unpopular. It makes them invisible and therefore irrelevant (Postman, N. 1993: p.49).

He argues that we are failing to recognise the adverse effects of technology, and this will, if unchecked, lead to the erosion of human values, and our historic social institutions such as schools and Universities. He sees these institutions as central to our civilization, socialisation, our ideas of democracy, and our solidarity as humans.

It is interesting to consider that Postman's book *Technopoly* was written in 1993, well before the full diffusion of the internet throughout the western world, before broadband, and the mass take up of mobile and Smartphones, and before the norms of mass texting, messaging, and mass-mediated social networking were established. Even at that point in time Postman was concerned with the idea that the internet would seduce us with the ability to access an endless supply of information. For him, this is a smokescreen. Postman insists that even before 1993 we had access to more information than we could ever consume. In this sense information for Postman was not powerful, but an ever-increasing 'glut' (Postman, 1993). For Postman technological innovation is about business, which fails to self reflectively consider its own cultural impact, and its social effects.

> With its emphasis on progress without limits, rights without responsibilities, and technology without cost. The Technopoly story is without a moral center. It puts in its place efficiency, interest, and economic advance. It promises heaven on earth through the conveniences of technological progress. It casts aside all traditional narratives and symbols that suggest stability and orderliness, and tells, instead, of a life of skills, technical expertise, and the ecstasy of consumption (Postman, 1993: p.179).

To date, the youth work field has failed to offer a critical response to the new technological environment and has only offered what might be seen as deterministic guidance on how to use technologies in practice (Davies and Cranston, 2008; Székely and Nagy, 2011).

The extent to which capitalistic Technopoly has penetrated western culture is evident in the fact that business has been able to mimic and commodify our communication and community. This is evident in the increasing preference toward mediated messaging and the huge expansion of SNS communities. Prodnick (2014) describes this as a 'seeping' commodification. The markets have managed to reach into areas of our lives once thought impossible. With the commodification of communication and community, there is now a cost attached to every mediated interaction.

> There seems to be a broad consensus that commodification is a fact, the capitalist market has become increasingly powerful, pervasive and hegemonic, the logic of the capitalist market colonises and destroys the logic of community, and that the market swallows more and more areas and aspects of life that hitherto have not been regulated by monetary measurement and monetary exchange (Wittel, 2013: p.315).

Taylor (2014) suggests that although traditional hierarchies will be affected by the new system, new forms of power are becoming evident in this new world and far from encouraging equity the internet has encouraged even greater gaps between haves and have-nots, and are establishing new

power elites. She argues the democratic potential of the internet is therefore problematic, to say the least.

> The internet was supposed to be free and ubiquitous, but a cable cartel would rather rake in profits than provide a universal service. It was supposed to enable small producers, but instead it has given rise to some of the most mammoth corporations of all time. It was supposed to create a decentralised media system, but the shift to cloud computing has recentralised communications in unprecedented ways. It was supposed to make our culture more open, but the companies that dominate the technologies are shockingly opaque. It was supposed to liberate users but instead facilitated all-invasive corporate and government surveillance" (Taylor, A. 2014: p.231).

Online surveillance has become a major topic in recent years as the USA's National Security Agency (NSA) and the UK's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) domestic spying programmes have been brought to light by Wikileaks (RT, 2010) and later by Edward Snowdown (Citizen four, 2014). The leaks reveal the extent to which these organisations have the power to access information and 'tap' new technologies. Snowdon points out that: "In the UK there is a system of regulation where anything goes. They collect everything that might be interesting" (Cadwalladr, 2014). While these agencies claim their interest is in simple metadata, there is evidence that they can access any person's personal computer at any time, even utilising the camera functions on some Smartphones, and have recordings of every mobile phone call made in the last 10 years.

As well as authoritarian surveillance new technologies have created environments for self-surveillance. Applications such as Facebook encourage a performative surveillance as individuals self-regulate their online performance as they are aware that they are constantly being watched by others (Westlake, 2008). This idea of constant surveillance also links to Foucault's (1991) description of the panopticon prison in which, prisoners are visible to the prison guards all of the time. This has a significant impact on the social behaviours and self-regulation of performance by individuals.

> Social networking users demonstrate Foucault's internalized Panopticon, the point where individuals police their own behaviour based on a set of naturalized ideas about what is correct, the place where the panoptic gaze operates within the narrowest range possible (Westlake, 2008: p. 16).

Trottier (2014) extends these ideas, and highlights that people have little room for mistakes in these environments as they 'risk' spoiling their online identities which has consequences for all other areas of their lives. Mistakes in this environment could lead to what Goffman (1963) termed social 'stigma'.

Surveillance for young people then becomes not only an issue of adults gathering of information on them in the unmediated parts of their lives as suggested in chapter 2. It entails the potential for self-policing, and constant surveillance by each other online through social networks, and the threat of

a coercive authority through wider surveillance programmes. Therefore, the consequences of acting in unreflective ways in these new environments have become extremely 'risky'. Spoiling one's self-image or behaving and presenting oneself in a way that violates the norms of online, groups and communities could have consequences for online friendships and relationships. This could lead individuals to be excluded from social networks and potentially affect their access to social capital. This could have implications for employment, as increasingly employers check potential employee's online presence to make decisions about their suitability. The Telegraph recently reported that 'Half of employers 'reject potential workers after looking at their Facebook page' (Telegraph, 2008). This subject will be re-visited later in this chapter, with a discussion of Wells Brignall III and Van Valeys' (2005) work on the online behaviours of young people.

From the alphabetic mind, to the computerised mind

Castells (2011) considers the impact of the Internet on the human mind by building on the ideas of Marshall McLuhan (1962, 1967) comparing its diffusion to that of the alphabet.   Developed in Greece around 700BC, the alphabet can be seen as a conceptual technology which enabled speech to be detached from the speaker. This produced the subsequent evolution of the alphabetic mind, which, in turn, led to the development of sciences and

philosophies which construct our world today. Mass literacy developed slowly over centuries and was further developed into mass culture by the introduction of the printing press in the fifteenth century (Castells, 2009a; Carr, 2010). Castells argues that written language and literate culture has enjoyed a place at the top of the social hierarchy for centuries. During this period audiovisual culture has been relegated to the arts. However, within the twentieth century, we have seen the return of the audio-visual through the development of innovations such as radio, film, and television. This return has created a "tension between noble, alphabetic communication and sensorial, non-reflective communication" which is for Castells an underlying agenda in most intellectual critiques of mass media culture" (Castells, 2009a: p356). Castells' reference to the alphabet as a conceptual technology gives some indication of the slow evolution and the time period in which technological innovations impact on human development. Many see these kinds of changes happening significantly more quickly as the internet presents a fundamental change in both the process of learning, and communication (Buckingham, 2003; Drotner, 2008; Livingstone, 2005; Prensky, 2001; Small & Vorgan, 2008; and Tapscott, 1998).

Prensky (2001), along with Small & Vorgan (2008), and Tapscott (1998) have stated that the internet is actually changing the way our brains work. The 'Net generation' inhabit a world where their early life and developmental experience is significantly different to those of generations

before. In this sense, the internet is a part of the every day for children and young people, not the novelty which their parents enjoy. For Prensky children and young people are digital natives, and their parents are, digital immigrants. Prensky's neurological based research suggests that the sheer volume of young people's interaction with new technologies means that the "way they think and process information is fundamentally different to their predecessors" (Prensky, 2001: p.1). While there may be some evidence to support the fact that in general the younger generation are some of the heaviest users of technology (Ofcom, 2006, 2014), these discourses do not reflect the "…diversity and complexity to be found in real lives" (Selwyn, 2003 p. 368 in Jones, C. 2012: p.3). For Selwyn there is a danger in these discourses and as a result, they may inform social policy and with the false idea of difference between groups in society. Helsper and Enyon (2010) argue that although significant changes are happening in terms of learning for all, these changes are not related in any significant way to age.

Although the neuroscience argument linked to age have proven over time to be weak (ibid), what is evident is that the increased use of technologies is changing the way individuals think, act and behave in the ways McLuhan (1962) Postman (1993) and Castells (2009 a, b) have suggested. This raises concerns for some who highlight the potential for manipulation, surveillance, and control through new technology today. As

> …we increasingly think like computers, while communication technologies and their model of interaction are becoming more and more central to laboring activities… Interactive and cybernetic machines become a new prosthesis integrated into our bodies and minds and a lens through which to redefine our bodies and minds themselves. The anthropology of cyberspace is really a recognition of the new human condition (Hardt, M. and Negri, A. 1998: p.291).

Keen (2012) suggests that through the increasing use and reliance on new technologies we are all becoming schizophrenic. Keen refers to the work of Eco and Baudrillard and claims that our dual experience of online and offline lives is becoming increasingly blurred, leading us to a transparent 'hyperreal' in which "… we are simultaneously nowhere and everywhere, absolute unreality is real presence, and the complete fake is also the completely real". Keen plays with René Descartes philosophical statement, stating that, in this hybrid world, "I UPDATE, THEREFORE I AM" (Keen, A. 2012, pp.14-15). Keen stipulates that the hybrid world requires significant investment in one's presentation of self. To be visible is everything in this new world. For Keen, this is becoming more important than existence in the 'real' world.

Castells refers to this as a culture of 'real virtuality'. The effects of this technological revolution are an increasing blended symbolic environment of 'real' and 'virtual' realities. As

> …reality itself is entirely captured, fully immersed in a virtual image setting, in the world of make believe, in which appearances are not just on the screen through which experience is communicated, but they become the experience (Castells, M. 2010a: p.404).

In real virtuality, virtual actions have real effects. For Slovaj Žižek (2009) this is problematic. For him we are increasingly seduced by the idea of 'interactivity' but in many cases, we are dealing with a reality of 'interpassivity'.

> The term 'interactive' is an over-simplification of the dynamics of the user-interface relation that situates the user in a utopian discourse of active agency in dialogue with technology (Žižek's ideas in Wilson, L. 2003: p.1).

For Žižek, (and Freud before him) technologies are making us "prosthetic gods". New technologies increasingly offer us a short-circuit between thought and action. This for him has the potential for a radical change in human communication, interaction and being. For him, it is in this gap between thought and action where humanity plays out, Žižek argues that increasingly we use technologies in passive ways and replace 'real' action with virtual, encouraging what he refers to as 'interpassivity' (Žižek, 2009, 2014). The technology, the online identity, the avatar does the work for us, freeing us of the requirements and problems of our traditional face-to-face interactions. It offers the impression that we can bypass the emotions, problems and the inefficient nature of our relationships. For Žižek this is a

potentially apocalyptic closure of our being, and has grave ramifications for our humanity.

Nicolas Carr believes that we are increasingly becoming the tools of the technology. "The computer screen bulldozes our doubts with its bounties and conveniences. It is so much our servant, that it would seem churlish to notice that it is also our master" (Carr, N. 2010: p.4). Carr suggests that the internet is encouraging a change in human development making us more distractible, and potentially 'shallow' of thought, and being. We simply do not have the time to digest all the information on offer so the brain organises and prioritises like a computer.

> The Net's cacophony of stimuli short-circuits both conscious and unconscious thought, preventing our minds from thinking either deeply or creatively. Our brains turn into simple signal-processing units (Carr, N. 2010: p.119).

New technologies encourage an environment in which we are required to think quickly, move between tasks and increasingly layer activity. Daniel Kahneman (2012) suggests that humans operate in two very different modes of thought, "System 1, and System 2. System 1 is fast; it's intuitive, associative, metaphorical, automatic, impressionistic, and it 'cannot' be switched off. Its operations involve no sense of intentional control, but it is the "secret author of many of the choices and judgements you make" (Strawson, 2011). It is in this system that we usually operate and this is

particularly true when in cyberspace. While system 2 is slow, deliberate, effortful. Its operations require attention. It is evident that Kahneman's ideas have become the logic of selling in the mediated world as attention becomes the battleground for the new economy. Keeping people in System 1, in a state of distraction, therefore, becomes advantageous for modern business. We see the exploitation of this in suggestive internet searches, behavioural tracking, and customised advertising (Dooley, 2011; Eyal, 2014; Van Praet, 2014).

With this in mind, it is interesting to consider how advertising and marketing of these technologies have influenced individuals' consumer behaviours within society. Over the last 30 years, we have seen an unprecedented rise in the use of advertising and the hand of business in the shaping of popular culture (Storey, 2006). Nir Eyal (2014) believes it is because of this innovation, branding and advertising that we are now addicted to new technologies, and their use has become so normalized in society that we increasingly experience their use as habitual. For Eyal we are all *Hooked*, on technology and are fair game for exploitative business, selling and control. The expectation of technological consumption has become a norm in most western societies, and the expectation of being bound from 'cradle to grave' to mobile contracts is as much a reality as paying an electricity or gas bill. Mobile phones, in particular, have become an essential item, and it is no accident that they have not only

become a source of status, but a safety device, a fashion accessory, as well as a life organizer, an identity as well as a phone (Juhlin, & Zhang, Y. 2011; Vanden Abeele, Antheunis, 2014). The relationships people have with their personal technologies has changed significantly in recent years. Where once computers and mobile phones were seen as practical tools for everyday tasks, they are now viewed and experienced as part of the self (Farman, 2012). Steve Jobs (C.E.O of Apple) once stated that his goal was to make people fall in 'love' with their personal technologies. Apple's branding, advertising, innovation and influence has been instrumental in creating and sustaining this intimate relationship people have with modern technologies and is the model which most technology companies follow today (Steve Jobs, 2015; Whatley, 2014).

Gamification has also become a major motivational factor in young people's consumer behaviours and in their learning (Kapp, 2012; Huang, Soman, 2013; Nadezhda, Lina, 2015; Muntean 2011). Games consoles such as Xbox and PlayStation have revolutionized young people's gaming experience with social aspects through technologies such as Xbox Live. Gaming via applications on Smartphones and tablets have also become hugely popular over the last decade and are big business for technology companies and software developers.

Media and new technologies are the conduits for powerful, persuasive selling and influence. Increasingly commerce, through predictive tailored

advertising, is placed on SNS, sharing sites and general internet searches (Mathews-Hunt, 2016). Gaming companies increasingly encourage consumption through free games with 'in-game' purchases, 'extension packs', and memberships (Hanner, and Zarnekow, 2015). To some extent these techniques of selling and influencing could be viewed as exploitative, although this is not the focus of this study, it will be interesting to see whether this influence is implicitly evident within the findings. How are youth workers and young people contemplating the influence of these powerful corporations? Is this an issue that youth work should be addressing as a part of young people's media literacies?

Communication preference

The ever increasing take-up and use of technologies cannot be attributed to advertising alone, and it is the innovation of powerful computer chips, beautiful devices, high definition touch screens, user-friendly applications that has made the act of using technologies increasingly intuitive (Brynjolfsson, 2014). Web 2.0 technologies played an important role in creating an immersive interactive environment (Umesha, and Shivalingaiah, 2008). The development of SNS and messaging services has made the act of communicating extremely easy and for many this has become second nature. Research by Madell & Muncer (2007) suggests that young people are now choosing to communicate through text, e-mail and SMS instant

messaging services, as a preference rather than communicating face-to-face. They indicate that this is because these media promote greater control over their interaction and allow for time to consider and reflect and respond. Oksman and Turtiainen's (2004) research suggests that young people choose relevant media to furnish their lifeworld allowing them to communicate through different media according to the specific context. "The media landscapes serve to articulate young people's personal space, identity and relationships to others" (Oksman, V. Turtiainen, J. 2004: p.1). In general terms, the internet and SMS texting services offer interaction in horizontal power relations and allow individuals to bypass traditional communicative hierarchies, interpersonal conflicts and enable people to hide their vulnerabilities (Castells, 2011). SNS and gaming enable young people to present themselves, or multiple selves, and identities in new ways. However, there are vast possibilities for misuse. Wells Brignall III and Van Valeys' (2005) research highlights how young people were willing to;

> misrepresent themselves by feigning a different gender, skin colour, sexual orientation, physical condition, or age. Other differences in observed behaviours include the open display of group norm violations such as aggressive behaviour, racism, sexism, homophobia, personal attacks, harassment, and a tendency for individuals to quickly abandon groups and conversations, refusing to deal with issues they find difficult to immediately resolve (Wells Brignall III and Van Valey (2005): p.336).

Research from Blais, Craig, Pepler and Connolly (2008) argues that this online world is far more attractive to 'introverted' young people rather than 'extroverts' and "they were far more likely to choose online communication for their interactions with friends" as online communication fostered a space for expression which differs from the face-to-face. (Ibid: p.534).

For some the internet offers sites where people become obsessed with their own self-image, vanity, and behaviours of superiority. Pearse (2012) suggests that these are the traits of Facebook narcissism, as "Facebook provides a platform for people to self-promote by changing profile pictures and showing how many hundreds of friends you have" (Ibid: p.1).

Overuse and addiction

It has been established that young people (and old) are investing significant parts of their lives in virtual worlds. Weinstein, Feder, Rosenberg, Dannon (2014) suggest that people are becoming addicted to the internet, and the devices they use to access it. The terms internet addiction disorder (IAD) and Problematic Internet Use (PIU) have been in the public lexicon for over 15 years now, but have been problematic in their definition and diagnosis. This is most likely down to the changing pervasive nature of technological innovation. Weinstein, Feder, Rosenberg, Dannon (2014) have recognised that;

Phenomenologically, there appear to be at least three IAD subtypes: excessive gaming-gambling, sexual preoccupations (cybersex), and socializing or social networking, including e-mail and messaging. Internet addicts may use the Internet for extended periods, isolating themselves from other forms of social contact, and focus almost entirely on the Internet rather than broader life events" (Weinstein, A. Curtiss Feder, L. Rosenberg, K. Dannon, P. (2014), p. 99).

Mobile overuse, gaming and internet addiction has become a huge issue globally and several tragic cases have been highlighted lately[1].

Self-learning

Technologies offer us the opportunity to access knowledge instantly. Mobile devices allow the potential for this information to be accessed and consumed anywhere and at any time. This is a completely new advancement in human culture. Research suggests that the effect of this is

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[1] Man dies after playing online games for three days, lies dead for hours in internet café (Russon, M, A. 2014) http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/south-korean-man-let-baby-son-starve-death-due-internet-gaming-addiction-1444903

South Korean Man Let Baby Son Starve to Death Due to Internet Gaming Addiction http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/south-korean-man-let-baby-son-starve-death-due-internet-gaming-addiction-1444903

A US study suggests at least 23% of auto collisions involved the use of a mobile phone (http://classic-archived-site-111361.web10.hubspot.com/texting-and-driving-stats/ 2011).

(Griffiths, M, D. (2010 2010a, 2010b).

Lemmens, J. S., Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2009, 2010)

that young people (the Net generation) have a disposition toward self-learning, using various technologies to fulfil their own learning needs. They have learned to learn' through the internet and gaming. Prensky and others believe that young people now lack the patience and motivation which traditional educational establishments and their curricula require (Prensky, 2001; Shaffer, Squire, Halverson, Gee, 2004). Raising the question of whether this is also true for informal education establishment such as youth work providers.

The 'Hole in the wall' projects developed by Sugata Mitra has added weight to the argument that the internet stimulates individual, and group learning. Mitra's projects have successfully encouraged self-learning in the Indians Slums. Mitra found that, with a minimal amount of guidance, individuals who were offered open access to internet enabled computers could learn the software and general computer skills quickly and effectively (Mitra 2005; Mitra, Dangwal, Chatterjee, Jha, Bisht, Kapur, 2005). The success of these projects has made Mitra concerned about the future of learning and knowledge,

> could it be that we are heading towards or maybe in a future where knowing is obsolete? But that's terrible. We are homo sapiens. Knowing, that's what distinguishes us from the apes. But look at it this way. It took nature 100 million years to make the ape stand up and become Homo sapiens. It took us only 10,000 to make knowing obsolete" (Mitra, S .2013: 12mins.59sec).

Relationships and community

Smith (2001) argues that Community continues to be associated with the warm images of 'the good old days' where those in the locality would come together in solidarity, looking after each other's interests. In this sense community is often linked to locality or place, other forms of community involved communities of interest in which people come together because of a common interest, this might be dancing, painting or a religious interest. Collins (2005) points out that communities require boundaries to outsiders. Communities often offer a sense of belonging and attachment (Cohen, 1985). Communities can also be viewed as negative and restrictive, as they can be held together by strong cultural values which may limit the members, for example, a community's cultural norms may restrict the educational aspirations of young women, or working-class men (Smith, 1999).

The Internet offers the opportunity of new forms of social interaction and community, through communication innovations such as e-mail, messenger applications and in particular, through SNS. Some suggest the 'nature' of these communication innovations encourage the acquisition of new ambiguous relationships, or 'weak ties', at the expense of existing strong ones (Rainie, Horrigan, Wellman, Boase, 2006). Social network sites such as Facebook encourage the acquisition of 'friends', with most people forming 'friendship communities which include hundreds of group members.

The extent to which these members participate within each community will vary significantly. Relationships between those who communicate regularly through the medium and perhaps have material bonds in 'reality' can be classed as strong ties. Those who communicate irregularly or, not at all but remain within the group can be seen as weak ties. Granovetter (1973) states that the strength of ties is characterised by certain features including, the emotional investment in the relationship, and the time spent together. The confinement of information between people, family and close friends could be seen as strong 'embedded' ties. Weak ties are characterised by a lack of these elements. As Granovetter states there is value in these weak ties in the sense that individuals and groups have an expansive network and wider access to share social capital. Pénard, and Poussing (2014) use the term social capital in the contexts of having access to potential networks in which people may acquire a job or a training opportunity.

A brief examination of the concept of social capital

Robert Putnam (2001) discussed social capital in the sense of something that western societies are increasingly lacking. He suggests that progressively, people are failing to engage in social intercourse, through social activity and this has resulted in people disengaging from civil conversation and grassroots political activity. For him, this is the symptom of an ailing civil democracy. Putnam argues that people are increasingly

pursuing individual activities. In this sense, people are becoming more individualised and atomised, less willing to come together in interest communities and less likely to discuss issues which affect the lives of those communities (2000). Putnam's concern with the decline of civil engagement and the negative social consequences of this decline has informed progressive democratic thought and policy in the US and the UK in recent decades (Smith, 2001, 2007).

Smith (2001) gives three main reasons why it could be useful to analyse social capital in Putnam's terms.

> One: we can see that the simple act of joining and being regularly involved in organized groups has a very significant impact on individual health and well-being. Working so that people may join groups – whether they are organized around enthusiasms and interests, social activity, or economic and political aims – can make a considerable contribution in itself.

> Two: informal education's longstanding concern with association and the quality of life in associations can make a direct and important contribution to the development of social networks (and the relationships of trust and tolerance that is usually involved) and the strengthening of democracy.

> Three: there is a very strong argument here against those who wish to concentrate the bulk of resources on groups and individuals who present the strongest social problems (currently the received thinking among many policymakers – see, for example, the Connexions strategy in England). If we follow Robert Putnam's analysis through, then we can see that, for example, crime can be reduced, educational achievement enhanced and better health fostered through the strengthening of social capital (Smith, 2001,2007).

For Gilchrist (2004) and Woolcock (2001), social capital is about 'bonding, bridging, and linking'.

> Bonding in this context refers to the links that groups develop among themselves; bridging refers to links between groups; and linking captures the relationships that go beyond peer boundaries and immediate spheres of influence (Gilchrist's, 2004 ideas in Buchroth, 2010: p.71).

Pierre Bourdieu developed the term "social capital" to describe social space. Bourdieu (1986) uses the term to describe how individuals can access resources. His ideas of social capital is linked with three further categories 'economic capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital' (ibid). This concept can be useful when considering power relationships between young people and their relationships with communities, their relationships with youth workers and with society. Young people 'often' lack the money (economic capital) that adults do and therefore have less access to opportunities and activities that require money. Working-class young people may lack the cultural capital required to be successful in schools. Schools curricula favour a certain (middle class) culture and therefore those (and the families) who do not operate in this culture will be at a disadvantage (Bourdieu, 1986). Symbolic capital might refer to having possessions such as particular brands of clothes or artefacts like an Apple iPhone, these symbols suggest a certain status and association with success. These

concepts are multidimensional and interdependent of each other. For example, the symbol of the iPhone implies a certain economic capacity (iPhones are expensive) this also associates people with popular and celebrity culture.

Individualism and community

For Postman (1993), Putnam (2000), and Livingstone (2005) media technologies are furnishing the world of young people and are increasingly supporting an individualised experience. Many are reassessing the idea of locality, traditional community, and the implications for identity formation. Lash (1994) considers the post-traditional society, and he asserts that in the light of the changes in communication we need,

> ... to question today the old dichotomy between "community" and "association"-between mechanical and organic solidarity. Lash suggests that we are generally witnessing a move away from "Tonnies organic, reciprocal, tradition-oriented Gemeinschaft to the more "contractual" and rational Gesellschaft society (Lash's (1994) ideas in Ling 2008: p.185).

Some suggest that innovations in communication technologies have, in fact, been the result of the changing needs of individuals and that mobile technologies, in particular, enable people to maintain and consolidate their various communities (Castells, Fernandez-Ardevol. Linchuan Qiu, Say, 2007; Ling, 2008).

New situations inside the family, such as divorce, one-parent families and the forming of stepfamilies place demands on organizing everyday life. The mobile phone is used to narrow or bridge the gap between family and working life: contact between family members' remains, even when the parents are at work. The mobile phone can even serve to unite a 'dispersed' community: it can function as 'social adhesive' between family members (Oksman, V. Turtiainen, J. 2004: p.332).

Barry Wellman refers to this as "networked individualism". People, increasingly, rely less on their immediate communities for social capital. In today's world individuals are able to, and are often required to seek out appropriate resources and people for various situations. Therefore, although social networks assume community, they actually are simply gatherings of autonomous individuals actively attending to existing networks, and seeking out social capital from others (Raine, Horrigan, Wellman, Boase, 2006).

From displacement to distraction

As people submerge into virtual worlds, investing in new forms of community there have been growing concerns that new technologies are affecting people's sociability in 'real' life. The exponential growth in usage and uptake of new technologies has led to significant changes in social behaviours. Some are concerned that excessive use of technologies has a detrimental effect on co-present social interactions. Both of these

arguments come from two schools of thought, firstly the "Displacement Hypothesis" suggests that media has a displacing effect on the time spent and social interaction with friends, family and others. Nie, & Hillygus's (2002) study used time-diary data to identify how the participants' internet use affected sociability and time spent within face-to-face interactions. The findings from the research support the displacement hypothesis and indicate that internet use had a significant impact on the time spent with family, friends, and in social activities.

The "Stimulation Hypothesis" suggests that the internet encourages sociability through the medium itself; text messaging, e-mail and SNS stimulate communication and are important in the maintenance and consolidation of relationships. Research suggests that the internet "can have a positive impact on well-being, and can also serve to heighten the well-being of people who are feeling lonely, by allowing them to socially compensate through use of online connections" (Valkenburg, Peter, 2007: p.1). The "Stimulation Hypothesis" indirectly confirms the Displacement Hypothesis by highlighting the time spent using technologies. However, this research considers internet use from a fixed station i.e. home, work or internet cafe. Internet-enabled mobile technologies add a new dimension to the Displacement Hypothesis argument. As Ishii (2004) suggests, people become more mobile and less tied to place and therefore less physically displaced from co-present social interactions.

In her book, *Alone Together* Sherry Turkle (2011) focuses on this communication paradox created by advancements in technology. Turkle's research spans 15 years and includes interviews from all age ranges and considers the social consequence of technological advancement. Turkle explores our fascination with technologies and the addictive properties they hold. For her our love affair with technology has created a culture of distraction, suggesting that through the act of multi-tasking we are becoming more anxious, and stressed, as the crossover between work and home life becomes increasingly blurred. We are becoming maximising machines,

> Our networked devices encourage a new notion of time because they promise that one can layer more activities onto it. We text each other at family dinners, while we jog, while we drive, as we push our children on swings in the park. We don't want to intrude on each other, so instead we constantly intrude on each other, but not in real time (Turkle 2011: p.164).

For Turkle, technologies have made us 'pausable'. Our conversations are increasingly interrupted by our devices. Turkle states that we are starting to see a change, 'a push back' against innovation, however, as she suggests "...the net has become intrinsic to getting an education, getting the news, and getting a job" (ibid: p.161). Suggesting that, to be cut off from these connections would be an extreme disadvantage for individuals, a 'risk' with severe consequences. Faced with this dead-end Turkle suggests that we

have to learn to live with technological innovation, and that our relationship with new technologies is only in its infancy. Interestingly Turkle talks about the importance of reclaiming face-to-face conversation as a central value of what it is to be human.

As mentioned, the increasing use of technologies is leading to multi-tasking behaviours (The Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). Recently, multi-tasking has been viewed as an important skill to be acquired. However, Neuroscience now tells us that multi-tasking is a 'diabolical illusion' which has implications for health and wellbeing:

> Multitasking has been found to increase the production of the stress hormone cortisol as well as the fight-or-flight hormone adrenaline, which can overstimulate your brain and cause mental fog or scrambled thinking. Multitasking creates a dopamine-addiction feedback loop, effectively rewarding the brain for losing focus and for constantly searching for external stimulation. To make matters worse, the prefrontal cortex has a novelty bias, meaning that its attention can be easily hijacked by something new – the proverbial shiny objects we use to entice infants, puppies, and kittens. The irony here for those of us who are trying to focus amid competing activities is clear: the very brain region we need to rely on for staying on task is easily distracted. We answer the phone, look up something on the internet, check our email, send an SMS, and each of these things tweaks the novelty- seeking, reward-seeking centres of the brain, causing a burst of endogenous opioids (no wonder it feels so good!), all to the detriment of our staying on task. It is the ultimate empty-caloried brain candy. Instead of reaping the big rewards that come from sustained, focused effort, we instead reap empty rewards from completing a thousand little sugar-coated tasks. (Levitin, D, J. 2014).

This gives rise to the argument as to whether the heavy use of technology is increasingly an addictive habit perpetuated by a neurological 'dopamine-addiction feedback loops', or the preference of the individual to communicate in a particular way, or is it a mixture of both. It is important to begin to understand the motivations for the changes in communicative preference, if only to be aware of the powers which are being used to shape this new culture.

Symbolic ritual and interaction

Erving Goffman is well known for his observational research of face-to-face interactions (1959, 2003). Goffman coined the terms dramaturgy, impression management, front stage, back stage, prop, face-work, crosstalk, face, and wrong face. Goffman's microanalysis of the norms of face-to-face interaction is useful when understanding encounters in public and private space. His work on 'dramaturgy' suggested that people present a particular ideal version of themselves in social situations and hide parts of the 'authentic' self. In a way there is no authentic self, we are different presentations of the self in each social situation. Goffman's theory of symbolic interaction considered individuals as social actors. Actors in this sense, behave in specific ways according to their audience. Public social spaces might be seen as the 'front stage' in which individuals act out roles and apply a specific social persona in which symbolic rituals are shared.

'Back stage' refers to when actors are away from social situation and they relax their social persona. Back stages are places where actors can discuss, polish, or practice their performances without revealing themselves to the same audience. Micro social rituals such as saying hello, making eye contact and shaking hands are important ritual acts which bond actors' social solidarity. Goffman's work on *the presentation of the self in everyday life* helped develop a common language in the realm of symbolic interaction and has become the basis of much of the recent literature which examines the impact of new technologies on social interaction, and the analysis of self-presentation and identity in social network site environments. Many have utilised Goffman's themes to understand how people present in online spaces including; Hewitt and Forte (2006), Lewis, Kaufman, and Christakis (2008) Tufekci (2008), Ling (2008), Menchik and Tian (2008), Mendelson and Papacharissi (2010), Hogan (2010) to name but a few.

The task-layering which new technologies encourages has stimulated significant changes in social situations. The unsociable or 'rude' use of mobile technologies, in particular, has become the focus of many who have investigated how these devices impact on symbolic interactions. Humphreys (2005) analyses this by considering Goffman's theories of interaction described in the modern context. We are now faced with a new social reality in which, in Goffman's terms, we are increasingly becoming aware of feelings of social insecurity and vulnerability. For Goffman, there

are two categories in social settings 'singles' and 'withs'. Singles are far more vulnerable to social scrutiny and suspicion, and therefore often develop strategies to protect themselves from the critical gaze of others. The technology (or the mobile phone in Humpreys, 2005, example) 'acts' as a prop. in this environment and indicates that the individual is not a loner and is 'with' somebody or communicating with somebody via the mobile phone. 'Crosstalk' is when one of the 'withs' is suddenly engaged by (for example) a mobile call. Leaving the other 'with' momentarily 'single' and vulnerable. This 'single' then may pick up their mobile phone as a prop. to mark 'themselves' 'with'. The research highlights new social hegemonies as people experience the social pressure to answer calls and reply to text messages immediately. Humpreys, 2005 uses Hoppers (1992) theory of caller hegemony to demonstrate this.

> The social norm is that when a landline phone is ringing, someone will answer it. Even in an extreme situation where someone is involved in a passionate argument with a loved one, Hopper found overwhelmingly that people will answer their telephone. Inevitably, the face-to-face encounter is superceded by the mediated interruption of the summoning telephone. Such evidence of normative telephone use can be helpful in exploring how people respond to cellphones in public spaces (Humpreys, 2005: p. 822).

This analysis provides a useful way of explaining and understanding the increasing trends in mobile use and behaviours of individuals in social situations (Humphreys, 2005). While Humphrey's study focused on mobile

phones, Ictech's (2014) research on Smartphones focused solely on the

Millennial generation (i.e. those born between 1980-2000, and immersed in

new technologies). Ictech develops Goffman's theory further, suggesting

> … there are three types of smartphone crosstalk: exclusive,
> semi-exclusive, and collaborative. With the addition of
> smartphone play and solo smartphone activity, interactants can
> engage in five different types of smartphone use during a social
> encounter. Smartphones can both disrupt and facilitate face-to-
> face encounters at any given time (Ictech,O, B. 2014: viii).

Exclusive crosstalk might be seen as the use of the Smartphone which

interrupts face-to-face interaction in which the social actor with the

phone begins to ignore their co-present interactions, focusing on the

activity on the phone. Semi-exclusive refers to the actor with the

Smartphone attempting to multitask and interact with the phone and in

the presence of others. Collaborative crosstalk might involve one actor

answering a call but involving those that are present, this might also

involve watching a video together with others on a Smartphone. In this

sense, the phone interrupts the co-present interaction but acts as a

point of mutual focus for those present. Smartphone play involves a

shared social activity, for example, taking turns at playing a game on

the Smartphone with those co-present. Solo Smartphone activity could

involve the use of using the phone to listen to music or watch a film.

An activity which involves immersion into the Smartphone and is in a

sense not conducive to co-present social interaction. Ictech suggests

some positive social aspects to Smartphones use; for example,

collaborative use of watching videos or photographs together, which

might stimulate conversation in co-present situations. Rich Ling

(2008) suggest that technologies are generally having a negative

impact on traditional social interactions as they affect the social 'rituals'

which for him are the symbolic, cohesive foundations which human

relationships are built upon. Focusing mainly on mobile technologies

Ling refers to the work of Durkheim (1995), Goffman (1959) and

Collins (2005) to suggest that the shared rituals such as shaking

hands, saying good morning and thank you, are being disturbed by

mobile use, and therefore the relationship between those that are co-

present are potentially weakened. For Ling and his predecessors,

human social cohesion relies on a "....shared repertoire of signals.

These are a part of our cultural ballast that have been developed,

refined, and re-energized through common use" (Ling, 2008: p.5).

Ling's research focuses on mobile phone use alone, however he

conceptualises the way in which individuals use these artefacts and how

they affect co-present situations. His empirical research also builds on the

observational work of Goffman and describes everyday interactions of

people interacting with co-present others while using mobile phones. Ling

reflects on the profound change in social behaviours and how people are

using mobile phones (and internet-enabled devices) with such intensity. He states that when social actors are interacting within co-presence with others through mobile communication, they often perform on two front stages. Therefore, the individual's interactions become less focused and potentially weaker as they are lacking the regularity and quality of the rituals which Durkheim, Goffman, Collins and Ling claim, 'bond our solidarity'. "Knowing these rituals and being able to play a proper front stage role is crucial in order for individuals to get along with others" (Wells Brignall III and Van Valey, 2005: p.338).

Ling, using Collins' (2005) theory of *Interaction Ritual Chains,* gives an example of when he was at his front door saying goodbye to some guests he had staying at his home, when a plumber he was expecting turned up. The plumber was talking on his mobile phone, and without any real acknowledgement walked straight into Ling's home, taking off his shoes, and proceeded to head to the kitchen. This, for Ling, was a significant moment and a realisation that things were changing socio-culturally. The everyday ritual of saying hello, making eye contact and being welcomed into someone's home had been bypassed through the plumber's immersion in his call.

Collins states that at the centre of all group interaction rituals "is the process in which participants develop a mutual focus of attention and become entrained in each other's bodily micro-rhythms and emotions" (Collins, R.

2005: p. 47). 'Authentic' solidarity can only be sustained through co-present

interactions. These interactions generate 'emotional energies' (EE), opening

the possibilities of the acquisition of positive or negative outcomes.

Confidence and enthusiasm are affected by face-to-face interactions,

requiring individuals to consider behaviours and prepare strategies for

social situations. In this sense, the acquisition of interaction skills is vital in

the development of any relationship, and only come through practice and

prolonged exposure to these conditions (Wells Brignall III and Van Valey,

2005). The time spent away from these experiences therefore has a

detrimental effect on the acquisition of skills (as suggested in displacement

theory). These rituals require a certain set of ingredients;
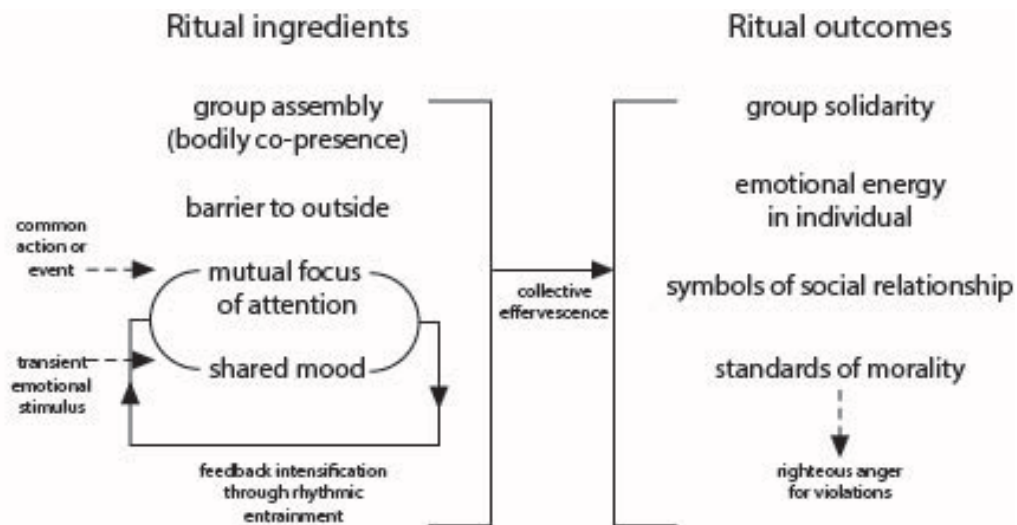
FIGURE 1: INTERACTION RITUAL CHAINS INGREDIENTS

1. Two or more people are physically assembled in the same place, so that they affect each other by their bodily presence,

2. There are boundaries to outsiders so that participants have a sense of who is taking part and who is excluded.

3. People focus their attention upon common objects or activity, and by communicating this focus to each other become mutually aware of each other's focus of attention.

4. They share a common mood or emotional experience. (Collins, R. 2005: p. 48)

Using this model, we can analyse my experience which became the motivation for this research study (described in the introduction chapter and expanded in the methodology chapter). The youth work setting could be viewed as the ritual space, in which, in my previous experience, had been the place of 'common activity', 'mutual focus', and 'shared mood', a place where a 'group assembled' and there were 'barriers to outsiders' (in a sense that not everyone could walk into the session, and there were barriers in terms of the physical walls). In my past experience, when the ritual was successful there were outcomes of 'group solidarity' which was evident in positive emotional energies EE, e.g. smiles on people's faces, 'group effervescence'. After the introduction of the internet-enabled computers there was a lack of 'mutual focus' as young people focused on their own

individual activity. There were fewer 'barriers to outsiders' as the young

people interacted with others outside of the project via Social Network Sites.

There was not a 'shared mood' as everybody was having different

experiences through their activity on their screen. This affected the 'group

solidarity' as the youth workers had acquired 'standards of morality' through

their prior experiences, and in this sense the new behaviours were a

'violation of the 'traditional youth work ritual'. For the young people, they

may have been taking part in a new positive ritual through the technology

but in the co-presence this had a negative effect.

Collins points out there are positive and negative rituals which share or lack

these ingredients. 'Formal rituals' include a "set of stereotyped actions:

reciting verbal formulas, singing, making traditional gestures, wearing

traditional costumes" (Collins, R. 2005: p. 49). Examples might include a

religious event or activities which might take place in schools. 'Natural

rituals' are rituals which generate EE and mutual focus without the formal

stereotype activity, these ritual interactions are more spontaneous, an

example might be an informal activity which takes place in a youth work

setting, or the interaction of a group in a nightclub (although there are

stereotyped activities, i.e. focus on music, there is space for choice and the

natural buildup of EE. Collins offers further examples of 'Failed rituals'

which lack EE, where there is no feeling of group 'effervescence'. Empty

rituals and 'forced rituals' are characterised by un-natural feelings, self-

conscious activity, instead of the EE coming naturally they have used their energy to give an impression that they are focused.

So to review, youth work settings could be seen as a site of traditional social rituals which is, due to the introduction of new technologies, being fundamentally reorganized. When young people have access to other communities via technologies (SNS for example) in the presence of other (youth workers for example) young people are negotiating two social situations at once. Two front stages, and as Ling (2008) argues, this results in weak interaction rituals. This choice between negotiated relationships with (what can be quite challenging) interactions with youth workers and their organisations' agendas, or the choice of interaction in cyberspace in which they may interact with what they want whenever they please, (not to suggest that online interaction cannot be challenging) may result in young people taking the path of least resistance. This model of interaction ritual chains developed by Collins (2005), along with Goffman's (1959) ideas of 'dramaturgy' will be used in the analysis of the data elicited from the field research. Interaction ritual ingredients (or the lack of) will be identified to recognise similarities and differences in others' experiences.

While Ling's (2008) discourse sees technologies as wholly problematic, Jason Farman (2012) contests these claims and describes Ling's argument as too simplistic. Farman suggests that Ling's assumption that face-to-face

co-presence is the primary site for engagement should be examined further. Farman points out,

> while not discrediting Ling's observation of the social mores still in place about when it is appropriate to take a call on a mobile phone, categorising such forms of communication as "secondary interactions" is no longer valid in an era in which the mediated can actually constitute the live event (Farman 2012: p.99).

To explain this, Farman uses Derrida's ideas to argue that in every situation and interaction, mediated, or co-present, we are filtering out most of the information that our senses are experiencing.

> …imagine that while you were having a conversation with someone, that every other conversation in the room and every sound in the room became as equally important. This level of sensory overload would not only make communication and interpersonal relationship impossible; it would dislocate the self from the place. Our sense of being-in-the-world is quite dependent on much of the world not being noticed. We function as embodied beings because we do not notice everything or sense everything (Farman, J. 2012: p.27).

Farman's argument is that our ideas of absence and presence are no longer useful. As technologies require 'us' to flow in and out of presence and absence (Farman, 2012).

Farman's point is that we focus in and out of situations all of the time, therefore to focus into a mobile phone call is to embody a particular space

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in a geographic locality, as we would embody the space in which we are having a face-to-face conversation. For Farman, technologies have become so intuitive, so part of the everyday experience that we experience them as a part of the body. When we answer a text or browse the internet, we embody our devices in a 'proprioceptive' experience in which we feel at one with the technology.

As Stald (2008) explains, the mobile becomes an

> …extension of the body and mind, even a kind of "additional self." …the mobile is always close at hand, ear, or eye: it represents a life-line to self-perception, a means of documenting of social life, expressing preference, creating networks and sharing experiences. To this extent, one could argue that the mobile user is becoming a kind of cyborg" (Stald, C 2008: p.158).

As discussed for interactionists like Collins (2005, 2011), mediated communication is of less value particularly because it is currently limited in its capacity to translate body language and eye cues or full multi-sensual presentation of self adequately. Interestingly Collins does suggest that it may be possible in the future to develop technologies focused on 'Interaction rituals' (IR) which tap into the human central nervous system and produce emotional energy and entrainment. He suggests that this is potentially dangerous. For him, IRs are the very peak of human experience, "electronic devices that send such signals would be tremendously appealing, especially if they could artificially raise such experiences to a

high level on demand" (Collins, R. 2005: p.64). He argues that this might

result in high forms of addiction and be a powerful medium for social

control. Current trends towards SNS particularly by young people seem to

suggest that mediated communication is a legitimate site of human

communication. Collins points out that;

> Many people, especially youth, spend many hours a day on
> mediated communication. Is this evidence that mediated
> interactions are successful IRs, or a substitute for them? I suggest
> a different hypothesis: since mediated IRs are weaker than bodily
> face-to-face IRs, people who have relatively few embodied IRs try
> to increase the frequency of mediated IRs to make up for them.
> Some people spend a great deal of time checking their email, even
> apart from what is necessary for work; some spend much time
> posting and reading posts on social network media. I suggest that
> this is like an addiction; specifically, the type of drug addiction
> which produces "tolerance," where the effect of the drug weakens
> with habituation, so that the addict needs to take larger and larger
> dosages to get the pleasurable effect. To state this more clearly:
> mediated communications are weaker than embodied IRs; to the
> extent that someone relies on mediated rather than embodied IRs,
> they are getting the equivalent of a weak drug high; so they
> increase their consumption to try to make up for the weak dosage.
> (Collins, 2011).

Although many of these sites do not enable us to interact to the extent to

which we might in co-present situations, they do offer many a community to

belong and interact within. Software such as Skype and Facetime now offer

us the opportunity of video phone calls via computer and mobile. For

Collins, the over-emphasis on mediated communication is something to be

wary of. For him mediated communication takes something human from us. It is also suggested that individuals can take on different personas and behaviours with ease, offend and attack people with no repercussions, they can enter and leave difficult/or uncomfortable situations and interactions as they wish. In this climate the

> "...demands of learning to get along with others are likely to become drowned out by self-interested pursuits. The possibility of a narrow world perspective seems certain for those individuals who choose to isolate themselves from people and ideas with whom they feel uncomfortable. If the easiest solution to avoid dissonance is to avoid situations that produce it, then the potential for an unrealistic social process is high" (Wells Brignall III and Van Valey, 2005: p.345).[2]

Wells Brignall III and Van Valeys' (2005) work focuses on 'youth' and how young people's socialisation experience differs from adults. Their work suggests that the generational divide highlighted by Prensky (2001) has many social implications. As young people are socialised with new norms and behaviours encouraged by the use of new technologies may be increasingly viewed as rude, spoiled and apathetic. Adults may be perceived as increasingly out of touch, irrelevant, arrogant or stuck in their

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[2] Although the literature suggests paradoxically that we are increasingly choosing to communicate through mediated forms it also suggests that we still crave human interaction, this seems to suggest something about voice how we want to present our self verbally. Is verbal language the issue here, in some situation the reflective act of writing offers a more authentic voice, where one can detach from the arena of immediate, emotional self-conscious response.

ways (Wells Brignall III and Van Valey 2005). Rituals learnt through their

socialization experience could be significantly different to those of young

people. It could also be argued that these differentials have always

manifested, and tensions between generations have emanated with the

introduction of new social and cultural phenomena. However, as Wells

Brignall III and Van Valey state "political and economic power are in the

hands of adults" and therefore learning skills of interaction which are similar

to the that of adults is still very important for young people (Wells Brignall III

and Van Valey, 2005: p.343).

Mobile phones have become a significant part of our consumer identities.

Ling asserts why mobile phones, as artifacts are powerful cultural symbols;

> The object itself is invested with meaning, and thus it is seen as a
> way for preadolescents to obtain the signs and symbols of the
> adolescent world. It is also seen as a way for the adolescent to get
> a foot into the adult world. That is, the mobile phone allows a type
> of pre-socialization. It is the adoption of the outward form of the
> next stage of their lives (Ling, R. 2004: p.104).

If this is the case, youth workers must be aware that the use of new

technologies in co-presence have the potential to affect the motivations of

individuals to interact socially. This has implications for traditional sites of

everyday rituals like youth work settings, for the relationships between

young people and other young people, young people and youth workers,

and the strength of co-present communities generally. My empirical

research will endeavour to see if this is the case and how it is manifesting in youth work situations.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Ord (2009) argues that youth workers should assume an adult to adult relationship with young people to give young people a more powerful position and so that they can learn and gain confidence from the experience. This does suggest that young people do need to learn to interact with adults in co-presence and learning certain social rituals and expectations within youth work. In an adult to adult relationship, young people will learn certain ways of being - cues and behaviours useful in adult culture. Brignal and Van Valey's (2005) argument suggest that young people are losing skills and opportunities to interact socially and can bypass these learning experiences by acting online or through devices.

Networked youth work

The impact of new technologies has not gone unnoticed within youth work practice. However, the topic is still significantly under-researched, with only a few publications being produced. These are actually practical guides which consider how practitioners could utilise technologies in practice. Davies and Cranston (2008) point out that;

> "Youth Work can play a key role in supporting young people to navigate the risks and exploit the opportunities of online social networking. Youth work can provide space for young people to

reflect upon their online activity and to develop their 'media literacy'" (Davies, T. Cranston, S. 2008: p.2).

For them the internet offers access and communication with young people who perhaps would not traditionally have attended youth provision, those that are 'hard to reach' because they are disengaged from education, because of geographic reasons, or because they are isolated socially. They also highlight the possibilities for technologies to enhance decision making and democratic processes on local levels.

Tim Davies was also instrumental in developing Youth Work Online (http://network.youthworkonline.org.uk/cgi-sys/defaultwebpage.cgi). This was a 'pioneering' website which endeavoured to create a network of practitioners and volunteers who had a shared interest in innovative youth work which utilised new technologies. The website provided support and resources and social network communication and chat facilities. Interestingly, the site only existed for a few short years before closing, highlighting the fluid and somewhat ambiguous nature of online communities.

Székely and Nagy (2011) present similar ideas to Davies and Cranston (2008) in their work. Recognising the new environment created by the network society, they point out that youth workers should be 'always' available, offering an interactive online presence in which passive and

active forms of communication are available. Through the presence of information through websites, and through delayed and immediate dialogue through SNS and messaging services. Székely and Nagy argue that youth workers should follow some basic rules to encourage credibility in their mediated communication. The youth workers should be identifiable, accessible, responsive and should communicate according to the rules of 'written verbality'. The objectives for online youth work for them are to educate on issues of overuse, online safety, and issues of law. They suggest that youth work can increase digital literacies, helping young people find resources, but also to address the digital divide in terms of age (Székely, and Nagy, 2011).

It is suggested that, although this work is useful, both fail to fully explore wider philosophical questions with regards to youth work and its philosophies, methods and values. Interestingly the key theorists from the academic field relating to youth work have, as yet, failed to assert their philosophical position regarding the new technological environment, and what this new world means for youth work practice. It can therefore only be assumed that they believe youth work should be a practice rooted in the traditions of co-present face-to-face interaction, in physical localities with the intention of forming and sustaining traditional forms of community and associations.

Discussion and conclusion

After consideration of the literature, it is evident that we are in the mists of a technological revolution, and the drivers for this are global economic efficiency. It is predicted that the result of this will be a fundamental change in human communicative culture. New technologies play a significant role in young people's lives. Statistically there is very little difference in the use of technologies in terms of gender, although male-dominant discourses are still evident in society.

New technologies have the potential to change many aspects of young people's socialising experiences, their disposition, their identities, motivations and ways of being. It is evident that this is changing the way people form and sustain relationships, how they communicate, and how they interact socially. The cross-over between real and virtual worlds is reforming ideas of presence, and people increasingly move seamlessly between mediated and unmediated communication, and activity. What is being suggested is that technologies reward individuals on a series of levels. Neurologically, increased usage rewards the brain with 'feel good' endorphins, socially they reward individuals with a sense of community and belonging, and a link to social capital through embedded, and weak ties, and symbolically devices suggest value and status.

The literature also indicates that the internet has opened up possibilities for revolutionary change in the way people learn. These are not only altering ways of learning, but also the ways in which people are motivated to learn. The changing environment has led some to suggest that individuals learn better by themselves and that teachers/ educators can hinder the learning process. This raises issues for formal and informal education providers and adds a new dimension to the debate of youth work's purpose, its ethics, and issues of power and control in practice.

The introduction of new technologies is reorganizing relations of power in society. It will have been noted that throughout Chapter 2 and 3, power has been discussed in 2 different situational contexts. All forms of power are interrelated but can be loosely viewed as macro and micro situational realms. In chapter 2, power was discussed in terms of 'youth' in society, exploring how young people are situated in realms of power. Initial discourses regarding 'youth' (and young people's) relationship with new technologies have invoked a diverse range of reactions, from negative moral panic arguments about online behaviours, overuse and addiction, to positive claims that young people maybe developing superior brains wired for 'twitch quick learning' (Pensky, 2001). The literature from Castells (2011) suggests that traditional forms of power are being flattened as a result of new forms of capitalism emanating through new technologies. They may well be beneficial in many ways giving young people access to knowledge,

resources, communities and an ability to sidestep authority. Davies and

Cranston, 2008, Taylor, 2014 also suggest that new technologies offer the

promise of a more equal playing field, a public sphere in which any voice

can be heard. However, this public sphere is situated in a new virtual realm

which new power hierarchies, persuasion, manipulation and new forms of

surveillance are becoming evident. Also, the technology enables young

people to bypass traditional hierarchies of power by falsely presenting

themselves as older or by withholding details about themselves, presenting

themselves as a different class, a different gender or ethnicity. While this

may offer new radical, even positive ways to negotiate identity politics it also

highlights the potential issues which might arise when youth workers are

working through technology. New technologies also offer an environment

for immensely powerful marketing and persuasion and are new sites of

surveillance and control.

Secondly, I have discussed power regarding the interpersonal power in the

relationships between youth work organisations, youth workers, and young

people. Examining the 'voluntary relationship' and what this concept means.

It has been established that the term voluntary relationship is contested. In

many ways it suggests a liberty, a freedom of choice. This choice however

is often informed by persuasive pressures and influence and is never void

of power. It has also been suggested, in Chapter 2, that youth work must

acknowledge that some coercive power can exist in this relationship (Ord,

2009). What is evident in the new environment is that there is a

fundamental change in power relations at a micro level, before we even

reach the negotiation of the relationship as suggested in Chapter 2. The

literature also suggests that our being, and interaction rituals are being

reprocessed into a new system of power. Co-presence is no longer the

dominant reality and so new online options are becoming the new

preference. Traditional hierarchies are being flattened, or reorganized, and

this has implications for all relationships including that of the one between

young people and youth workers.

It has been suggested that the internet encourages the loss of privacy,

weakens relationships, destabilises social interaction, and that over-use can

lead to addiction and isolation. Some believe that individualisation is

undermining traditional norms, values, ideas, and structures that once

shaped young people's identity. In the past, locality would have played a

central role in identity formation. For many young people, youth clubs and

youth workers would have played a part in this transitional period. It has

been suggested that in the new environment identities become more

complex, informed globally, and locally and manipulated within this project

by new global market forces which are ready to fill the gap left by traditional

referents.

What is being presented is a communication revolution, a fundamental

change in culture. Yet youth work culture is steeped in the traditions of

co-present face-to-face interaction, conversation and a concern with traditional forms of association and local community. A cultural change in youth work therefore requires us to fundamentally reexamine the values and philosophies of the practice. There seems to be an assumption in the theories of youth work, that practice (mainly), takes place in co-presence. Aspects such as social education and social learning are acquired by the experience of young people interacting face-to-face with others, and in groups. After consideration of Collin's (2005) theory of *Interaction ritual chains*, it is evident that positive social interactions (in which social education can take place) requires certain ingredients, such as a 'mutual focus' of attention, a 'shared mood' which build positive 'emotional energies'. These have the outcome of solidarity creating a supportive atmosphere in which individuals can learning co-present social skills and experiment in new roles as suggested by Button (1974), Smith, (1999), Ling, (2008), Collins, (2005). If young people experience negative IRs in youth work settings they will be less likely to return to these situations, they may lose confidence in their ability to interact socially and disengage and become isolated from co-present social situations. The increased usage of technologies suggests that individuals are spending a significant amount of time focused on screens which will inhibit their

focus and the time they have to interact face-to-face in any kind of immersed way.

It has also been established in (Chapter 2) that face-to-face dialogic conversation is one of the core methods of youth work and is valued as an essential element in the process of education and learning (Freire, 1993; Dewey, 1938; Habermas, 1991; Jeffs and Smith, 2008; Smith, 1999; Young, 2006). However, the literature in Chapter 2 suggests that increasingly mediated dialogue is often preferred to face-to-face dialogue, and that it fosters more 'authentic' communication as, in the case of messaging, it integrates the reflective process of writing. Research suggests that people are now using a variation of communication medias to express themselves, in a sense, people use different media for different situations. This potentially puts into question youth work's traditional methods of communication. The research will endeavour to find out whether this is the case and how youth work providers are addressing these challenges.

To review, the literature answers many questions regarding the new technological environment in regards to changes in culture, individual behaviours, and social interactions. My hypothesis that new technologies are impacting on the way young people and youth workers communicate and interact socially in youth work settings has been partly confirmed by the literature. The work of Ling (2008), Brignall and Van Valey 2005, Turkle, 2011 offer evidence to suggest that new technologies are impacting on

face-to-face interaction rituals IR. There is, however, a gap in specific

research which considers youth work settings and how the introduction of

new technologies impacts on the methods and values of youth work.

Literature from the field of youth work currently fails to explain how this

affects informal education providers, particularly for those whose central

concern is social interaction and face-to-face conversation. This gap must

be addressed as the literature suggests that young people are losing the

skills of social interaction which are fundamental to our social relationships?

Or, is it the case that the younger generation enjoy a privileged position in

which they are able to communicate and express themselves better, form

and display identity in liberating ways, build and maintain relationships in a

way which was unimaginable 20 years ago? It has been suggested that the

'net generation' are now able to transcend traditional structures of power

and influence and in turn can live a more authentic human life. If this is the

case, what does this mean for youth work practice? Although the literature

suggests initial discourses around generational divide are ambiguous, this

theme will be explored further as it is believed that there will be some

interesting differences regarding age and attitudes to technology. These

themes and gaps will be further explored in the data collection.

- The negative impact of technologies on social interaction rituals.

  (Examples of successful and failed IRs will be identified. What this

means for the relationship between young people and youth workers and the social education of young people in youth work settings).

- New technology and the impact on conversational dialogue and new communicative preferences, (horizontal power).

- Changing relationships (relationship maintenance through new media).

- Generational divide (relationships between youth worker and young people).

- New habits and addiction, technology as a part of the self.

Next stage

With the lack of philosophical consideration within the youth work field this study will be an exploration into youth work practice. The research will endeavour to find out how youth workers are currently facing new realities brought about by the new technological environment and how their experience compares to my own. The research will consider the significance of these trends, and what this means for the values, principles and methods which are central to youth work. The research will endeavour to explore these issues and create philosophical discussion regarding how technologies help or hinder youth work's core aims and suggest how the profession should move forward into a future with new technologies. As mentioned, Goffman's (1959) concept of 'dramaturgy' and Collins (2010)

model of *Interaction chain rituals* will be used to identify ingredients of successful and failed interactions. After consideration of the literature review several questions have been developed.

Questions for youth workers

- How are youth workers communicating with young people?

- How are practitioners using technologies within their practice to encourage dialogue?

- How are practitioners using technologies to maintain and develop relationships?

- Are practitioners considering advances in new technologies, and their impact on the relationship between theory and practice?

- Is the quality and focus of interactions and relationships being affected by these technologies in youth work settings?

- How do youth workers feel about the changes in the technological environment in relation to their practice and how does this relate to their demographic profile?

- Are practitioners using technologies to facilitate the educational aims of youth work, if so, in what way?

Questions for young people

- What do young people expect from youth provision, and youth workers?

- How are young people using these technologies to organise and meet, face-to-face, are they enabling them to be more social able?

- Can youth work be enhanced by the use of technologies?

Additional question for discussion

If informal educational youth work is built on the core elements of social interaction, the building of relationships and dialogical conversation, how are new technological environments affecting the way in which co-present young people and youth work practitioners are interacting socially? Does this affect the development of relationships, and the quality and continuity of the dialogue they share?

Chapter 4

Methodology

With the completion of the literature review, and the subsequent development of research questions, consideration was given to methods and how best to collect the data necessary. This chapter considers the methodological process, procedures and discussion regarding the research strategy and methods utilised during the design of the project. The evolution of the research methodology will also be discussed and rationalised. The chapter will be structured as follows:

- rationale for the research, ontology and epistemology;
- examination of bias;
- discussion of insider research;
- critical discourse analysis;
- research design;
- the rationale for mixed methods;
- discussion regarding the quantitative and qualitative phases;
- reflections on the pilot stages of the qualitative phase;
- reflexivity, and reflections on the insider research;
- discussion of power and ethical procedures;
- conclusion.

Rationale and motivation for research, ontological and epistemological position

The initial motivation for the research came from my own experience as a youth worker in practice. I began my career in youth work in early 2003. Based in a popular youth centre in the North East of England, my job involved working with groups of young people from a variety of backgrounds. We used a variety of resources to engage and retain these groups including sports, arts and crafts, music, and outdoor activities. At this time the computers in the project were not connected to the internet and were used for functional purposes including letter writing, CVs and poster making. Games consoles were available but were used sparingly. Within the sessions the staff, volunteers and young people would regularly carve out time and space for reflective discussion with regards to the activities we had been participating in, or on issues and topics and current affairs. Technologies were not the focus of activity within the projects.

It was 2 years later, during a University practice placement at a youth project in the North of England, where I noticed significant changes in the use of technologies by young people. The placement was designed for students to gain experience of youth work in a safe environment in which they are encouraged to continually reflect upon their practice experience, while also reading and discussing youth work's academic theory. During this placement I noticed significant gaps between youth work's theory and

practice and encountered major difficulties when trying to engage young

people in the reflective dialogue I had experienced in my previous work. I

believed this was mainly attributed to changes in technological innovation.

Around this time the youth project had acquired 10 new laptop computers,

with internet access. This was a valuable resource, particularly as the

majority of the young people we worked with did not have internet access at

home. The young people were able to use the computers at any time during

the youth work sessions and proceeded to do so. As a student with new

knowledge I was very keen to start working with this group and tried many

ways to engage in conversation and build relationships with the members.

However, it seemed impossible to compete with the engaging power of the

computers. Once focused on the screen the young people were deeply

immersed in their activities, they used MSN messaging services to

communicate with friends (often those not present), they also use sites such

as Myspace, and accessed website for online gaming. Only toilet and

cigarette breaks interfered with the attention they gave to the screen. I felt

that the youth workers were redundant in this environment, the body

language created by this act of using the laptops and the rejection of

interaction was common and uncomfortable for me as a student youth

worker. The staff team reflected upon these issues, and we tried limiting the

use of the computers to create space for interaction between youth workers

and the young people. However, increasingly the young people demanded

that they be able to access the computers. Relationships between young people and youth workers became strained, and some disengaged from the projects. The staff understood and valued the voluntary relationship but increasingly faced dilemmas regarding the control of community resources. The impact of the technologies presented a significant change in the social environment and in the behaviours of the young people involved in the project. It could be suggested that this was a normal reaction to a new technology and I was overreacting to a loss of control, but I did feel that the negative emotional energies created by the young people's immersion into the screen was significant. I felt that we should be trying to encourage certain social rituals as a part of young people's social education and for the general maintenance of the group.

As time has passed these trends have continued and intensified. Society's relationship with computers and the internet has changed. The majority of families have high-speed internet connections in their homes, and mobile technologies have come to dominate the way they communicate and access the internet. 3G and 4G mobile internet has further enhanced the individual's technological experience, allowing tether-less connectivity 'almost' anywhere (Ofcom, 2014). The diffusion of personal devices has been unprecedented, from 20% of the UK population owning a smartphone in 2010 to 77% in 2013 (Ofcom, 2013). The extent to which these devices are used and utilised has changed significantly since the research began,

as they now hold the capacity and abilities of powerful computers. Along with calls, and messaging, phones are now one of the main devices for accessing the internet, Social Network Sites (SNS), playing games, watching videos and the organisation of personal data. People now invest significant time into activity on their phones. Research suggests that on average a person checks their phone 220 times per day (Tecmark, 2014). We have witnessed significant changes in our relationships with the internet and its interactivity, from Web 1.0 read-only information services (defined as pre-2000 but not exclusively) to 2.0 participative interaction in open systems, the rise of e-commerce and social networks. We are now starting to experience what is defined as web 3.0, which is the intensification of an increasing customised, personalised experience through suggestive searching, personalised entertainment recommendations and shopping (Umesha and Shivalingaiah, 2008). With this in mind it is fair to assume that new technologies play a significant part in the daily lives, information seeking, and the communicative processes of young people and old today. It is also worth noting that technologies such as laptops, tablets, desktop computers, TV and games consoles are also still used heavily (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). Increasingly young people multi-task using several devices at one time. A consequence of this increased use is that young people are increasingly existing and socialising in worlds which straddle real, and virtual, online and offline environments. However, it is

also evident that young people are still motivated to come together as groups and partake in traditional forms of activity and community. It is suggested that technological innovation has changed the communicative behaviours, relationships, the identity, and ways of being of young people and old. This has significant implications for youth work environments, the interaction and communication between young people and youth workers. As an emerging field of study, the subject is not deeply considered within core youth work literature and what has been written in some ways fails to consider some fundamental questions regarding the traditional methods of youth work. Therefore, I believe it is important to contemplate the issues highlighted, by bringing together insight from different disciplines and by investigating the changing behaviours of young people, and the practice experience of youth workers in the field. The research will endeavour to identify the implications for the pedagogical practices of youth workers.

Examination of Bias

Sword (1999) argues that "… 'no research is free of the biases, assumptions, and personality of the researcher and we cannot separate self from those activities in which we are intimately involved" (ibid: p. 277). Cassell, Symon, (2004), Bryman, (2008), and Hennink, Hutter, Bailey (2011) point out that, when considering the rationale and motivation for their research, researchers must consider their own bias and value base. "Since it is not possible to be neutral, it is important to be open about our ideological positions" (Cassell, Symons.2004: p.181).

Qualitative researchers approach research with diverse views of the world and reality. With the understanding that 'multiple realities' exist and research studies are unique to individuals and their perceptions (Trochim, 2000).

When considering the topic of new technologies, it is therefore important to examine one's relationship with them. Turkle distinguishes between the "instrumental computer" and the "subjective computer." She observes how computers evoke a great deal of emotion and hold very different meanings for different people. (Turkle, S. 1984: p.13). It is interesting to consider my own bias in this context as our relationship to researching technology is a very complex one which is always laden with bias and therefore worthy of discussion. Technologies have increasingly become personal, and our

relationship with them more intimate. The rationale for the research gives an example of a negative professional experience regarding the impact of technologies. However, this is not true in many other aspects of my life. New technologies have in fact played a hugely positive part in my history, particularly my academic experience. I am dyslexic, and before programs like Microsoft Word (with spell check) were developed I found writing extremely difficult. I struggled terribly with spelling and grammar in school and in employment. This affected me in many ways. Poor literacy actually contributed to me losing my job as a graphic designer in 1992. I often made mistakes on drawing specifications, leading to embarrassment for me and the organisation. From school until I entered University in 2003, I avoided 'traditional' forms of writing and reading whenever possible. I believe this has had a profound effect on me, my self-confidence and self-esteem, and also really limited my opportunities and experience. For example, I would avoid application forms and jobs which entailed written work. It was not until I started my career in youth work that things changed. This was a career which at the time I thought was mostly practical. I was encouraged by a colleague to enroll for the Youth and Community BA at Sunderland University. She recognised that I was dyslexic, but also had a lot of faith in my abilities. She told me about the student support at the university and told me of many examples of people she knew with dyslexia who had succeeded in higher education. After starting the course, I receive student

support for my dyslexia, and I was introduced to 'Readwrite' software (https://www.texthelp.com/en-gb/products/read-and-write-family). From that point I have never looked back. The software literally changed my relationship with writing, and I found that with a bit of hard work I could produce work of a very high standard. I became obsessed with improving my standard, and in 2007 I completed my BA with 1st class honors. Two years later I began this PhD. Therefore, I value technological innovations greatly, particularly tools which help towards a more equal society. I also use technologies in other aspects of my life. I use recording software to record and produce music, I use graphic design software such as Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop in other work I am involved in. Perhaps we might view these enabling tools and technologies as somewhat different to new technologies such as social network sites and sharing sites such as YouTube. My view of YouTube is also extremely positive, and this platform has become a central site of learning and fun for me and for my children. I also use social network sites such as Facebook and value its many uses. Yet my professional view of technology suggests that new technologies are detrimental to the current methods of youth work. It often gets in the way of the 'traditional' social aspects of the profession. It is changing habits of communication and therefore our experience of interaction of 'traditional' dialogue. It is therefore understood that this research project is motivated by and driven by my own unique experience. Cassell and Symon (2004)

suggest the researcher is implicit in the construction of knowledge that is produced throughout the research process. Therefore, the "...stance that the researcher assumes in relation to the observed and through the way in which an account is transmitted in the form of a text" is influenced by a researcher's bias (Bryman, A. 2008: p.682). What Bryman is suggesting is that our subject position (or disposition) will shape the discourse of the research project and highlight the paradigm in which the research is situated.

The interdisciplinary nature of this research topic has resulted in an interesting yet complicated consideration of paradigms and worldview. The research is considered from a particular practice (youth work), the research is then situated within the values and principles of youth work theory and practice, this is further layered as we consider the researcher's relationship to that field. While always viewing the research from a youth work lens the technological context in which the study sits, requires the researcher to also consider the research in a constructionist world view. Considering the research in wider historical, political, and technological terms and the social forces which have shaped these phenomena and how these phenomena shape the individuals who make up societies. The research also concentrates closely on the pragmatic practice issues and interaction between individuals within professional practice. The complexity of this

matter is evident and, in many ways, the multifaceted nature of this

research could be beneficial. As

> looking through a variety of paradigms provides a richer view of
> the phenomenon, though integrating these perspectives remains
> problematic. Historically, technology was treated as a
> deterministic causal force with predictable impacts. More recently
> there is a recognition of the complexity of technology and its
> relationship to work which is both bi-directional and dependent on
> a number of contingent factors. One set of factors integral to the
> "impact" of technology is the dynamics of the change process and
> in fact the change process and "outcomes" are inextricably linked.
> We conclude that the social reality of technology implementation
> is highly complex. Very different technologies are brought into
> very different social settings for very different reasons, often with
> completely opposite effects and thus complex theories that
> recognize the emergent and socially constructed nature of
> technology are needed. (Liker, Haddad, Karlin. 1999: p.575).

Gormally and Coburn suggest when researching youth work, one should

take a 'constructo-interpretive' epistemological position (Gormally and

Coburn, 2013).

> In constructionism people act together to construct a social
> reality, while in constructivism, individuals seek to make sense of
> the social world they live in. The constructivist and constructionist
> perspectives are paralleled in youth work where there is a focus
> on the individual, as someone who is learning about themselves
> and their identities, but who is also part of a social group, in the
> social world, seeking to challenge stereotypical views and acting
> together to shape their version of reality (Ibid, 2013: p.874).

The ontological position for this research is constructionism, as I believe that the social world is constructed through the interactions of social beings. "In general, qualitative research is based on a relativistic, constructivist ontology that posits that there is no objective reality. Rather, there are multiple realities constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest" (Krauss, 2005: p.760). However, constructivism is also an individual seeking to make sense of the social world. Epistemologically the research is, (critical), interpretive as I acknowledge myself as active in the research process. "In this epistemology, the researcher's role is to interpret views from different perspectives in order to make it clear that no single perspective offers a complete picture of the phenomena being examined" (Gormally, S. Coburn, A. 2013: p.875).

According to Dobson (2002), "the researcher's theoretical lens is also suggested as playing an important role in the choice of methods because the underlying belief system of the researcher (ontological assumptions) largely defines the choice of method (methodology)" Dobson, 2002 in Krauss 2005: p 759). As stated the motivation for the research derives from my position as a youth worker I therefore come to the research informed by the value system of the profession including the critical elements inherent in the theory of youth work (As highlighted in Chapter 2).

Discussion of Insider research

The epistemological approach for this study is viewed as insider. Firstly, as it has been established, I am a practicing youth worker. I have experience of working in this field and ties and connections to organisations and individuals within the profession. I subscribe to the value systems linked to the profession, and I understand the practice in a way that 'will' influence my approach to the study (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000). I am also an insider in the sense that I am a subject within a culture experiencing a technological revolution. I have witnessed various changes in communication, interactions, fashions, and consumption of technological innovation in the same way as the majority have in the Western world. I understand the signs and symbols of this new culture. I, therefore, have a shared experience and am subject to the same ideological hegemony as most in this group.

There are several benefits and disadvantages to being an insider researcher and these issues will now be discussed. Padgett (2008) argues that the insider position awards 3 main benefits, namely, "easier entrée, a head start in knowing about the topic and understanding nuanced reactions of participants" (Padgett, 2008 in Berger, 2013: p. 4, 5). Drake (2010) argues that there are also pitfalls to this 'insider' position including the

blurred boundaries; imposing one's own values and beliefs, and projection of biases.

Because of this, Hockey (1993) reiterates the importance of reflection when considering our position as 'insider' and 'outsider'. He maintains that, insiders are able "to blend into situations, making them less likely to alter the research setting"... "However the obvious question might not be asked; conversely, the more we conceive of them as points on a continuum, the more we are likely to value them both, recognizing their potential strengths and weaknesses, in all manner of contexts" (Hockey, J. 1993, p.204).

Wolff (1950) states it is the outsider, the stranger who is best positioned to collect research because of the unbiased objective position.

> By contrast, the Insider doctrine asserts the exact opposite, namely, that the outsider: has a structurally imposed incapacity to comprehend alien groups, statuses, cultures and societies … [because he or she] … has neither been socialized in the group nor has engaged in the run of experience that makes up its life, and therefore cannot have the direct, intuitive sensitivity that alone makes empathic understanding possible (Merton, 1972, p.15).

Reflection on the insider research will be returned to on page (177) in the reflexivity and reflexive insider sections. This is necessary as a reflection on the initial aspects of the data collection.

Critical discourse analysis

The term discourse is an ambiguous term which has increasingly grown in popularity over recent years. Generally, it is understood as "a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)." (Jorgensen, M. Phillips, L, J. 2002: p.1). Within this research study I intend to analyse the discourse themes which emerge from the qualitative interview data. This will be achieved by using a specific discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis. Van Dijik (2001) argues that,

> Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit positions, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality (Van Dijk, Teun A. 2001: p.352).

The rationale for utilising this form of analysis is to critically analyse the public discourse regarding the issue of new technologies and their impact on the dialogue and relationships between young people and youth workers in youth work settings. Within the current discourse is the unquestioned assumption that new technologies are in the main, positive (Turkle, 2011). There is a certain deterministic discourse related to them. This is supported by the state's drive to build infrastructure which supports 'superfast broadband' and the technology industry which is saturating the markets with

products and advertising (Taylor, 2014; Wood, 2010). The effects of this drive are complex and under-researched, while technologies increasingly play a prevalent part in the lives of people in society. "While scholars have explored how industrial, technical and financial institutions mobilize resources to shape public opinion through the media, little critical analysis has focused on how technology companies shape our individual and collective decision-making" (Cukier, W., Ngwenyama, O., Bauer, R., & Middleton, C. (2009: p.2). Although this is not the main focus of the thesis it is believed that some of the responses from the respondents may uncover the power of technology companies to inform opinion and the more general discourse regarding the new technological environment. As Fairclough states, critical discourse analysis aims to

> …systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power" (Fairclough, 1995a: p. 132).

As stated earlier in the thesis, Lukes (1974) highlights how dominant power operates to set agendas and to persuade. Technology companies and their influence increasingly hold power in these areas. According to Castells (2011) the faces of these sites of power are increasingly hidden in networks. It has therefore become increasingly difficult to identify

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domination and power in the world, to identify who sets the agenda and who influences public opinion.

Critical discourse analysis has been employed as it "...involves exploring why some meanings become privileged or taken for granted and others become marginalized" (Bryman, A. 2008: p.509). Castells (2010 a, b, c, 2011) tells us that hugely powerful commercial and economic forces are the drivers in this technological revolution therefore a critical reading of how these powers operate and manifest is seen as essential in this process. New technology is mainly viewed in a positive light, they are sociably beneficial, communal, enabling, fashionable, and they keep us safe. Initial moral panic discourses have been overwhelmed by the weight of positive benefits which are undeniably evident in many of these technologies. As established in the literature there are also various discourse themes currently emerging in academia including; neuro-science arguments of Prensky (2001), Small & Vorgan, (2009), and Tapscott (1998) which suggest that new technologies are altering the human mind. The re-ignition of the medium theories of Marshall McLuhan (1962) McLuhan, Fiore, Agel, (1967) and Postman (1993), which highlight the social impact of technology. Themes which suggest technologies' potential for surveillance as in the work of Foucault, (1991), or technologies as the fundamental force in the advancement of modern capitalism described by (Castells, 2009 a, b, 2010). Technologies in the erosion of traditional interaction and

communication as explored in the work of (Ling, 2008, Collins, 2011) and in the commodification of community and communication as analysed by (Prodnik, 2014).

Critical discourse analysis was applied to identify these themes and identify others arising from the data. Therefore, the data which was collected and transcribed was organised into individual interview/ focus group and placed into 'case nodes' on Nvivo 10. They were then organised into themes, identifying any examples, keywords, themed discussion. This was initially sectioned into coded nodes (for example, technologies' impact on interaction) in Nvivo this was then further organised under the question headings in the analysis and then transferred to Microsoft word (Bazeley, 2011).

Research design mixed methods

The research methods employed for this empirical study involved both qualitative and quantitative data collection. Mixed methods were used to ensure quality and rigour in the research process through triangulation.

> Triangulated techniques are helpful for cross-checking and used to provide confirmation and completeness, which brings 'balance' between two or more different types of research. The purpose is to increase the credibility and validity of the results. Often this purpose in specific contexts is to obtain confirmation of findings through convergence of different perspectives (Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012: p. 157)

The quantitative and qualitative stages are presented in separate sections, (survey/ in-depth interviews/ focus groups) yet some of the data is analysed and convergence of the analysis is presented. Creswell (2009) refers to this presentation as a 'concurrent study'. In this process the final analysis and discussion makes no clear distinction between the methods of collection.

Although the research includes a quantitative phase, in the shape of a survey, this was mainly used to collect basic data to help, develop and defend further the rationale for the main qualitative phase of the research. The quantitative information was useful in identifying individuals who had specific interesting characteristics in terms of the variables presented in the survey and their experience of using technologies in practice. The survey, in a sense, was an invitation of interest to make connections with gatekeepers and intermediaries for the qualitative stage.

Survey

After reflection on the hypothesis it was considered that, as initially planned, some form of interview and/or observation would best elicit the data which was required. It was regarded as important in reference to quality and accuracy that a diverse sample of youth work practitioners and young people would be selected from a large geographic area. Cassell, Symon (2004) concur, stating that diversity is seen as a priority in a sample pool for a qualitative study as we "seek to show the range of ways that a

phenomenon is experienced within the chosen context (Cassell, C. Symon, G. 2004: p.16). Consideration was given to the ways in which a diverse sample might be best recruited. As mentioned, the youth work demographic is at best, poorly defined so a mapping exercise was considered important, however the size of this task soon became apparent. After making many enquiries into details on the youth work organisation/ youth worker demographic I only receive very vague information[3]. This was useful in some ways as I had identified gatekeepers and intermediaries, building relationships which were helpful later in the study.

It was agreed that, for the purpose of sample recruitment, a large-scale survey would be employed. "The purpose is to generalize from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristic, attitude, or behaviour of this population" (Babbie, 1990 in Creswell, 2009: p.13)

After considering practical and financial limitations of a national study it was agreed that the quantitative phase of the research would be confined to a survey of the North East of England. The survey would target youth workers (from Volunteers, to Managers/those involved in face-to-face youth work) from all youth organisations in the North East of England.

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[3]   Data from NYA, 2000. Not used as viewed as significantly out of date.

Survey design

The purpose of the survey was to be an instrument to find out baseline data regarding youth workers' general use of technology in practice, and to establish a youth work demographic and sample pool for the next stage of the study. The questionnaire requested practitioners to indicate whether they would be willing to participate in further research regarding the topic, and also whether they would be willing to grant access to young people who might take part. As mentioned, questions for young people had been developed from the literature review, so at this point it was envisaged that qualitative data collection would take place with young people at a later date. Therefore, the survey also requested access from the practitioners/ organisational gatekeepers to young people who were willing to take part in the research. Consideration would have to be given to the ethical implications of carrying out this study and the possible impact of the research on individuals and groups. Also, it was envisaged that further questions might develop from the interviews with practitioners which would be important in the triangulation of evidence, and in the development of a possible contrast in experience.

The rationale and purpose of the survey was stated within the introductory paragraph of the questionnaire; this was also sent as an email to the online population I was attempting to access.

I am a PhD student from the University of Sunderland, and also a youth worker practitioner based in the North East of England. This survey has been developed as a part of my PhD research to understand how youth workers are using communication technologies within practice. A communication technology refers to the devices, digital tools, or equipment which enables people to communicate with one another, for example mobile phones, and internet enabled computers. You will also be asked to consider the software applications which you may use on these devices, and also how, and why they are used. Software may include applications such as Microsoft word, social network sites (such as Facebook, MySpace), Messenger services, Text SMS (Short Messaging Service), and 'phone call facilities such as Skype. (please note there are a growing number of these technologies available and the list continues to expand, so please be specific, if the device or software you use is not listed, please specify in the space provided). If you would like the form in any other format (Large text/electronic copy/ Braille/ online survey) please do not hesitate to contact me. Marc Husband (Tel: -------------) dh2mhu@student.sunderland.ac.uk.

This large scale research will contribute to a wider understanding of youth work practice, in its current context. You and your organisation will be contributing to an important, and unique study which will have implications not only for everyday practice, but also for training and development. This study will also influence the content of professional education. The work will be disseminated through the usual route of academic journals and contributions to appropriate academic conferences. Further contributions will be made through articles for professional magazines and journals and offering papers to professional conferences.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this short survey, the form should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. All your personal details and responses will be kept confidential within reasonable limits. Only people directly involved with this project will have access to the surveys. Those who take part in the survey will be entered into a prize draw to win an Ipod shuffle.

The prize draw will take place 2 months after the collection of the completed surveys (August 2011).

(Survey questionnaire 2010, see appendix A).

Design considerations

The length and depth of the survey design was considered in reference to ensure the best response rate possible. First of all, the length of the survey was considered. Research by Galesic and Bosnjak (2009) indicates that the length of survey has a direct effect on the willingness of the participants to complete it. The length of survey is then a delicate compromise. If it is too short, it will fail to capture the data required. If it is too long people will refuse to participate.   I was also mindful that online surveying has made it increasingly easy for organisations to carry out research. Through involuntary third-party communications, Social Network Sites (SNS), and online customer service feedback, people are frequently asked to complete surveys. The fight for attention and participation then becomes extremely competitive. Therefore, it was considered important that an incentive was offered to motivate participants to complete and return the surveys (Lunt and Livingstone, 1992). A study in (2002) conducted by Edwards, Roberts, Clarke, DiGuiseppi, Pratap, Wentz, Kwan, considered what methods increased survey responses, and results suggested that "when a monetary incentive was offered the odds of response were doubled (odds ratio 95%). Unfortunately, I was unable to offer a monetary incentive.

However, I was able to gain a small amount of funding to purchase an incentive. I carried out a random prize draw for the respondents, with an Apple iPod shuffle as a prize. Interestingly Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2009) point out that although prize draws have become more and more popular with surveyors they have proved to have only a small effect on response rates compared to upfront monetary incentives (Dillman, Smyth and Christian 2009: p.242).

This research also highlights the important elements in successful survey design.

> Personalised questionnaires and letters increased response....as did the use of coloured ink .... The odds of response were more than doubled when the questionnaires were sent by recorded delivery ... and increased when stamped return envelopes were used ....and questionnaires were sent by first class post .... Contacting participants before sending questionnaires increased response.... as did follow up contact ..... and providing non-respondents with a second copy of the questionnaire.... also response was more likely when short questionnaires were used (Edwards, P. Roberts, I. Clarke, M. DiGuiseppi, C. Pratap, S. Wentz, R. Kwan, I. 2002: p.1).

Therefore, all of these aspects were considered in the design of the questionnaire, the extent to which some of the ideals were implemented were then confined by cost issues.

Each questionnaire was sent with a signed covering letter. Questionnaires were sent including a self-addressed envelope with a stamp. The postal recipients also received emails, via intermediaries.

Both online and postal surveys asked whether the participants would prefer different survey formats (i.e. Braille, electronic version etc). The questionnaires were kept short

Comment boxes

To allow for personalisation, participants were also given space to make comments, and add any other thought or narratives they wanted to convey via comment boxes.

Variables

Many of the variables presented in the beginning of the survey were developed to identify certain aspects of the participants and were mainly used for the purpose of identification and selection for the qualitative stage of the research. There were other motivations relating to some of the discourses which has been highlighted in the literature (Such as the equality and social justice elements of youth work: note, sexuality and religion were not used at this stage, as it was thought that these were more personal identity markers and these could be explored if brought up in the qualitative stages of the research). A brief rationale for each will be discussed below.

Age

This was considered an important variable in consideration of a possible
digital divide relating to age as highlighted by Prensky (2001), Small &
Vorgan (2008), and Tapscott (1998). It was hoped that this might identify
any differences in attitudes and behaviours towards technology between
different age groups. It was also considered important to have a wide range
of ages for selection in the qualitative stage of the study.

Disability

Disability was considered to be an interesting variable and a layered factor
in attitudes towards technologies, as technologies may be enabling and
have an effect on subjective position. As stated, my own experience of
enabling technologies also informs my interest in this particular variable. It
is suggested that a vast array of new technologies have been developed
which might improve the quality of life and communication of disabled
people. New forms of communication and communities are emerging; this
might inform an interesting aspect in terms of empowerment.

Ethnic group

There was some thought about differentials in technological use and
attitudes according to ethnicity and cultural background.

Gender

Although the statistical information reviewed in the literature suggests that there is very little difference in use and attitudes towards technologies I believe it is important to try to identify any differentials in this study. This variable may be important when considering the qualitative phase of the study. As in-depth probing may elicit subtle difference in use and behaviours.

Employment status/position

It was thought that consideration of employment status would be interesting in terms of how practitioners use technologies in practice. Particularly when considering the cross over between personal and professional use of technologies.

Sector of work

Sector of work is important as local authorities will have different policies and procedures compared to voluntary and private organisations, therefore the extent to which practitioners have the freedom to use technologies will vary. This will therefore be an interesting point as it may raise discussion on the way young people and youth workers might want to communicate but are restricted, and how this might affect the relationship between youth workers and young people and their attendance in youth projects.

Geographic location of place of work

It was considered important and potentially interesting to consider geographic position of work as technologies have had a profound effect on people's ability to sustain relationships over distance. Urban, semi-rural and rural categories were then chosen as sub-variables to distinguish between these differentials (Prieger, 2013. Dalvit, Kromberg, Miya, 2014).

Educational background

This was considered interesting in terms of fields of study, values, belief differences and professional ethics. Again this might also impact on attitudes towards technologies.

Types of youth work delivery

Delivery was important as I considered interaction to be one of the main features of the study, how interaction is planned, supported or disrupted by technologies is central to the study.

Regularity of use of technologies

This can indicate the limitations of practitioners in regards to their use of technologies in practice. This might include personal preference, organisational red tape, and lack of resources.

Recruitment for the qualitative stage

Each respondent was asked whether they would be willing to participate in
further discussion regarding the research. This strategic use of quantitative
methods would therefore enable me to recruit participants for the qualitative
phase of the study. Hennink, Hutter, Bailey, (2011) suggest that this
research-based recruitment model is beneficial in that that it allows "a more
refined purposive recruitment strategy" (Ibid, 2011: p.101) (See appendix 1
Survey questionnaire).

10 test questionnaires were shared with colleagues. Feedback was sought
and reflected upon. It was indicated that initially participants found the
questionnaire quite confusing in parts. Particularly when asking; which
devices practitioners were using, which software applications they preferred
and how practitioners were using technologies in practice. So discussions
took place with the participants and clarity was further given to those
questions and their layout. The surveys were retested with a smaller group
and finalised after agreement with my supervision team.

The postal survey targeted approximately 350 individual youth work
organisations from the Northeast region. While also partly addressing some
of the questions raised within the literature review relating to practitioners
use of, and attitudes toward technologies within their youth work practice.
Both postal and online surveys were conducted from May 9th, 2011 through

to July 1st, 2011. This cross-sectional survey targeted the individual practitioners from all youth work providers in the Northeast, including statutory, voluntary and private youth organisations. 72 postal, 68 online surveys were completed by participants from 87 individual youth work organisations.

The online survey was diffused through intermediaries from local authorities' youth services and voluntary organisation support services. 300 emails with links to the survey were delivered to a variety of statutory and voluntary youth work providers from around the region. In the case of both postal and online survey, the recipients were encouraged (through a covering letter/email) to disseminate the survey throughout their own organisations and contact lists. The survey link was also promoted through social network sites such as Facebook, and youth work organisations' own website such as Sunderland Voluntary Sector Youth Forum, and the Regional Youth Work Unit. It was considered that many of the postal and online surveys would have reached the same organisation and there was some thought that participants might choose a particular questionnaire format as a matter of preference. The majority of the emails were posted by gatekeepers who, for matters of confidentiality refused to give details of their contact lists and members. Therefore, there was little way of knowing how many online surveys reached individuals, and organisations.

It is worth noting that, even though it was encouraged within the covering letter there was not one single request from any targeted participant for a survey in any other format than the one that they had received.

The purpose of the online and postal survey of the North East was used to target Youth workers from across the region (See Chapter 5 survey findings). To review, the survey was designed:

- to elicit demographic information from youth workers considering variables including age, gender, ethnicity, educational, and employment experience and the geographic location in which they work;

- to elicit important information in reference to youth workers' behaviours relating to information and communication technologies;

- to identify a diverse sample to consider for the next stage of the research. After discussion with the supervisory team it was agreed that this would be difficult without consideration of an established demographic. Therefore, participants were asked if they would be willing to be contacted with reference to the topics included in this survey;

- the survey responses enabled potential participants to be asked whether they and the young people they worked with were willing to participate in the study.

Sample and diffusion

Creswell (2009) indicates that as an ideal it is important to determine the size of the population frame in which the survey will be disseminated. However, as mentioned, documentation on the size of the workforce in terms of the number of youth work organisations and numbers of youth work practitioners is very vague. The regional youth work unit last produced figures for local authority staff in 2006-07. However, in light of the recent financial cuts to local youth services, and the fact that their data only considered statutory services, and not voluntary organisations this was not considered as reliable information.

This is further complicated due to the current 'nature' of the youth work profession which seems to be constantly in flux. There are also long-standing issues with regards to what is defined as youth work (see discussion within Chapter 2: Youth work, history and theory section). To confront these issues, it was decided that all organisations who advertised themselves as youth work providers would be targeted. Organisations and individuals who recognised their work to involve 'youth work' could decide for themselves whether they felt that they facilitated 'youth work' and complete/ or not complete the survey accordingly.

Using my own experience and networks I was able to gain access to a significant number of youth providers and youth workers within; South

Tyneside, Gateshead, Sunderland, Durham, and Newcastle through colleagues and known gatekeepers. However, I did not have contacts within; North Tyneside, Northumberland, Cleveland and Redcar, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool. I therefore had to adopt what Buchanan et al (1988). Cassell and Symon (2012) refer to as an opportunist approach when gaining access and choosing research participants in these areas. Firstly, I contacted youth services within local authorities, and voluntary sector support services. The local authorities were helpful and most gave full lists of their own providers, the majority of the voluntary services were unable to share their contact lists and information on organisations in their areas due to confidentiality issues. Most stated that they could only pass on the survey via their own e-mail lists and within their newsletters. Therefore, I had very little idea how many of the surveys reached youth providers in the areas or how many youth providers existed. To increase the chances of reaching as many providers as possible I completed internet searches to find voluntary organisations in these areas.

Mixed modes survey

A mixed-mode survey was employed as it was considered that, although it would be more cost-effective running a single-mode survey, e.g. an online questionnaire, this would inadvertently contaminate the study as it would exclude participants who do not use, or do not have access to the internet

(Hewson, Yule, Laurent, Vogel, 2003). This was considered essential in the design and dissemination of the survey because of the research topic. The strategy for the survey distribution and the qualitative participant recruitment included the utilisation of "gatekeepers' formal and informal networks, snowballing, advertising and.... research-based recruitment" (Hennink, M. Hutter, I. Bailey, A. 2011: p.91). Bryman suggests that snowball sampling can be seen as a convenience sample, as it is unstructured in its dissemination, however it is sometimes the only way in which certain groups and individuals are reachable (Bryman, A. 2008: p.184). The online survey link was also sent to contacts via social network sites and relevant online youth work groups. As Hennink, Hutter, Bailey, (2011) suggest "it is useful to have several different starting points for snowball recruitment" to broaden the range of participants accessed (Ibid, 2011: p.101).

Survey end and evolution of the research (Chapter 5 survey findings report)

As stated, the survey ended July 1st, 2011. The data was organised and analysed between August and December, 2011 using SPSS statistical software, as this is considered to be the most widely used software for organising quantitative data in social science (Bryman, A. 2008). Therefore, skills attained by using the program would be possibly useful in the employment arena. The information was then presented using Microsoft

Excel (See Chapter 5). This was mainly used because I found Excel far more user friendly, and clearer for presenting visual data.

140 practitioners from 87 different organisations completed the survey. The research questions were then further developed for the qualitative stage during December 2011 and January, 2012. From the 140 respondents, 79 practitioners indicated they were willing to be contacted regarding further questions. From the 79, 20 individuals were chosen. These individuals were selected for a number of factors regarding their profile and responses, the final sample included practitioners:

- who expressed extreme positivity towards the use of technologies within practice;

- who expressed extreme negativity towards the use of technologies within practice;

- who use technologies but never when communicating with young people;

- who have selected variables which are interesting or extreme i.e. high usage of technologies, and in the older or younger age categories or practitioners who work in a variety of different geographic areas;

- who have considered, in depth, and commented about the use of technologies in practice its effect on interaction/relationships;

- who consider technologies as a starting point for engagement.

As mentioned, each respondent's profile was considered with reference to the variables highlighted in the survey (age, gender, ethnicity, disability, experience, educational background, geographic location of organisation).

Qualitative phase

After consideration of the survey findings it was evident that deeper investigation would be necessary to fully answer the questions developed from the literature review. It was evident that the survey had highlighted some important information regarding the use of technologies within practice, and some general insight into workers' attitudes towards these technologies and their uses. However, this quantitative data failed to give the depth of information required to answer the complexity of the questions posed. Therefore, it was clear that a dialogue was necessary between the researcher and the participants so that the questions could be fully understood within context. "The problem is not only about the way the questions are asked (for example in abstract or specific terms), but also about the structure or framework for the dialogue" (May, T. 2003: p.21).

The supervision team and I discussed the next phase of the study considering the various possible methods to employ. Earlier in the research design I had considered the possibility of using semi-structured interviews, observations of practice and also time diary (Nie, and Hillylingus, 2002). After consideration of the feasibility it was agreed that the use of time

diaries would be very difficult to employ in youth work settings. Those involved would have to be extremely committed and motivated to complete the task. Also the process of completing the diary in real-time during sessions would be problematic, as sessions are often very short. This would also impact significantly on the 'natural' environment and behaviours of the young people and therefore contaminate the research. Therefore, the idea of using time diaries was rejected.

Thought was given to the kind of interview to employ for the qualitative stage. Structured interviews were ruled out due to the complexity of the topic. The context of the research needed to be fully described and understood so flexibility was required within the method. Structured interviews require that one can never get involved in long explanations of questions or deviate from the sequence of the set questions (Fontana & Frey, 2008).

Guion, Diehl, and McDonald, 2011 point out that in-depth interviews are a powerful method for gaining a deep understanding of the interviewees' experience.

> "...because they use an open-ended, discovery-oriented method, which allows the interviewer to deeply explore the respondent's feelings and perspectives on a subject. This results in rich background information that can shape further questions relevant to the topic" (Ibid, 2011: p.1).

Characteristics for in-depth interviews:

- open-ended Questions;

- semi-structured format;

- seek understanding and interpretation;

- recording responses.

Hennink, Hunter and Bailey (2011) state that in-depth interviews can feel like a conversation with a purpose. They suggest that using this method involves interviewers establishing rapport, asking open questions in an empathetic way and encouraging deep responses through probing.

After discussion with the supervisory team it was decided that 3 pilot in-depth interviews using a semi-structured format would be undertaken during the period of January and February, 2012. The pilots offered the opportunity to test and adjust the questions, and parts of the interview process. Creswell points out that we should:

"Expect the research questions to evolve and change during the study in a manner consistent with the assumptions of an emerging design. Often in qualitative studies, the questions are under continual review and reformation (as in grounded theory study). This approach may be problematic for individuals accustomed to quantitative designs, in which the research questions remain fixed throughout the study" (Creswell, J, W. 2009: p.131).

The questions developed from the literature were reviewed and reworded so that they were clearer and more understandable.

All of the participants were given the opportunity to opt-out of the use of the Dictaphone. But all agreed to its use. The interviewees were assured that the recordings would be in my possession and would be erased after the research was complete. This was repeated in the young people's focus groups.

Pilot interview write up

- Interview 1 (31st Jan 2012) Identified as W.A.

- Interview 2 (8th Feb 2012) Identified as W.B.

- Interview 3 (28th Feb 2012) Identified as W.C.

Pilot Interview 1 (WA) (date 31st Jan 2012)

(Interview length approximately 40 minutes)

Profile WA

WA is a female in the 20-30yrs age range, who is employed as a part-time youth worker in the North East area. WA indicated that she is white British, and she has no disability. She is employed as a qualified worker (NVQ level 2) and works for 2 organisations in the Sunderland area. She is employed

by a city council, and by a youth organisation in the voluntary sector. WA sees the geographic area she works in as semi-rural. She has 6 years' youth work experience including volunteering and paid work. She has stated that she uses technologies on a daily basis. Her work is centre-based, face-to-face, which includes work via technologies, WA is also involved in outreach work. WA uses mobile phones, laptop computers, and desktop computers within her work and utilizes social network sites, world wide web and mobile phone applications. These are used for all purposes. WA stated that these technologies are important in communicating, organising and engaging with young people.

Interview 1

WA is someone who I have had a professional relationship with and therefore we are 'comfortable' in each other's company. This was useful in some respects. It took away the usual anxieties of meeting someone for the first time. However, I know WA in a practice capacity and to present 'myself' in an academic 'sense' was strange. I recorded the interview via 2 Dictaphones to reduce the chance of recording mistakes and malfunctions. WA had some understanding of my research study prior to the interview. Leading up to the interview I felt everything was a little too relaxed and informal. However, it was interesting that WA's behaviour changed when I started recording. She formalised herself and started to act differently, assuming a professional persona for the interview. This formality focused

the interview process; however, we lost the relaxed conversational mood that we had started with. I also was affected by the presence of the Dictaphones, I noted after the interview that I 'felt a sudden jerk of nerves' when the recording started and with this the whole interaction between WA and myself 'tightened up'. The questioning was sometimes difficult and the flow was sporadic. The interviewee began acting in a very formal manner, in 'insider' terms it was like she had stepped into my world instead of me into hers. With this I think we lost the benefits of the insider relationship. On reflection, I think I should have explained about the structure of the interview as a construction of knowledge rather than me trying to elicit particular facts from the interviewee. The Dictaphone may also have been an issue as she may have been focused on how she would be perceived when the recording was listened back to, however I had assured her that it would only be me and the transcriber who would have access to the recording. Some useful information was taken from the interview. However, I felt that the questions did not flow well. I was concerned about the amount I needed to interject. At times this was difficult, and sometimes I found myself giving examples, and I felt myself leading the interview in a way that was unstructured and more of a loose conversation. I was also aware that there were long pauses. Also, there were periods when body language was used. Reflections were noted after the session but body language and gestures were used so frequently that much of it went unrecorded. There

were also periods when WA referred to examples and individuals who I was aware of, this was difficult as things were inferred but not fully explained for the recording.

Pilot interview 2 (WB) (date 8th Feb 2012)

(Interview length approximately 1hour 10minutes).

Profile WB

WB is a female in the 30-40yrs age range, and works in the North East of England. She is employed as a full time senior detached youth worker. WB indicated that she is white british and has no disability. WB has been involved in youth work for 13 years and has a BA Honours in Community and Youth work studies. She considered the geographic area she works in to be semi-rural. WB stated that the work she is involved in takes place via detached, outreach, and work via technologies. She pointed out that she uses technologies daily and mainly uses e-mail, Facebook, messenger and mobile phone calls and text. She stated that she used devices such as a mobile phone, laptop and desktop computers and other internet-enabled devices. She mainly uses the technologies for organising, contacting and administration reasons. WB pointed out that these technologies are very important for communicating with young people, essential when organising, and important when engaging. WB stated within the survey that she used technologies "mainly for arranging activities and planning, as young people

often lose mobile phones and some don't have landlines often" (WB). WB pointed out that there are positives and negatives when using technologies. "these days there are less young people on the streets, yet if you log-on to Facebook you realise many of them are logged on, we don't use messenger but I think some will be on there and some texting" (WB).

Reflection after pilot interview 2

After the first interview some minor changes were made to the order of the interview questions. This was done to try and improve the flow of the interview. After reflecting on the interview with WB I decided to move some of the later questions which stimulated more flowing conversation to the start of the interview. I also decided to ask the participant if I could start recording much earlier in the process to give both parties time to relax and get used to the recorder being in the room. I reflected upon the issue of 'leading' within the questions, however, I felt that giving examples and interjecting at some points was essential for teasing rich information from the interviewee. I had also sent an e-mail to the participants with some information regarding the interview before the planned date so they could prepare some thoughts and examples. This e-mail was very brief and informal as I wanted the participants to read it and focus, as it was thought that if I had sent a lengthy formal e-mail it might be overlooked due to the excessive amount of emails professionals receive.

Interview 2

The relationship between WB and the researcher is educational as we have studied together in the past. Interestingly WB was anxious from the beginning and constantly apologized before we started the interview for not having a great deal of knowledge on the subject of technologies and the fact that she might not be able to answer the questions. WB clearly had some insecurity about her own knowledge and preconceptions of the knowledge of the researcher. On reflection I thought this might be to do with masculinity and technology (Horowitz, 2002; Lohan, and Faulkner, 2004). This was a surprise to me, as I was also feeling self-conscious about using academic language. Also. I still felt a little unprepared, and I was particularly worried about explaining the research study in an understandable concise manner, anxieties which were raised after the first interview. I started the interview by clarifying the definition of technologies, reiterating what I had stated in the email. WB pointed out that she had read the email and she was clear about the definition and this was further confirmed by the fact she had prepared notes for the interview.

Initially, the interview flowed much better and the interviewee discussed the topic at length giving some rich interesting answers. The interviewee talked so freely about the topic that after the first question she had answered many of the questions which had not been asked yet. Reflecting upon this I thought it was useful to just "go with the flow" of the interview, making sure

that the topic areas were covered but not restricting the interviewee to the structure of the questionnaire. During the interview we had to move to various rooms and offices in the building. Although this was not ideal, I did not feel that it disturbed the flow of the interview too much. There was a good atmosphere during the interview and the interviewee seemed to enjoy exploring the issues highlighted in the questions. The interviewee apologised again at the end of the interview, stating 'I'm not sure if that was helpful for you' (WB). After the interview I sent an email to thank her for her input and that the information she had shared was really important and useful. A process I repeated with the rest of the participants.

Pilot interview 3 (WC) (date 28th Feb 2012)
(Interview length approximately 1hour 20minutes)

Profile WC

WC is a male in the 50-60 yrs. age range. He is a Full-Time Youth and Community worker. He has over 20 years' experience in youth work. He is a qualified at BA Hons level. WC highlighted that he is dyslexic. He is involved in face-to-face and one-to-one work with young people, and also manages a community Centre. WC uses mobile phone calls in his work with young people but only uses e-mail and EYS systems in the managerial side of his work. WC uses mobile phones, laptop and desktop computers and uses phones and texts to communicate and arrange and organize his work with young people. WC stated that some technologies are important in

organising, but are not important in communicating and engaging young

people and see technologies such as mobile phones as generally negative.

Reflections after pilot interview 2

WC was also sent some information regarding the research area and asked

to reflect upon some specific examples for the interview. I also reflected

upon the positive parts of the interview with WB and decided to go with the

flow of the interview and not stopping the interviewee if they started to cover

other questions. I also planned to start the Dictaphone recording early as I

did in the second interview as I felt this worked well in relaxing both parties.

Interview 3

The third participant I have met a few times during my career. We share an

interest in music and we took some time before the interview to talk about

that, and also the current context of youth work. This was useful and it

really relaxed the atmosphere. Again, the interview flowed very well and

the interviewee talked at length with little encouragement. As with the

second pilot the participant covered several questions with one answer,

leading me to conclude that it was better to make sure all of the topics were

covered and not formalise the interview by sticking to the precise questions.

Reflecting on the power knowledge issues in the second interview with WB I

asked WC whether he had any anxieties or preconceptions of the interview

or the researcher WC stated that he had no anxieties or preconceptions before the interview.

Reflexivity

> Reflexivity is commonly viewed as the process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome (Bradbury-Jones, 2007; Guillemin and Gillam, 2004; Pillow, 2003; Stronach et al., 2007). It means turning off the researcher lens back onto oneself to recognize and take responsibility for one's own situatedness within the research and the effect that it may have on the setting and people being studied, questions being asked, data being collected and its interpretation (Berger, 2013: p.3).

Pillow (2003) suggests that reflexivity is essential in the process to ensure that the research is ethical, that the process is 'non-exploitative' and takes into consideration the negative effects of power in the process.

> Reflexivity helps maintain the ethics of the relationship between researcher and research by 'decolonizing' the discourse of the 'other' and securing that while interpretation of findings is always done through the eyes and cultural standards of the researcher, the effects of the latter on the research process is monitored (Ibid, 2003: p.3).

Berg (2007) states that reflexiveness supports researchers to work against 'unconscious editing' and suggests that it encourages a more in-depth engagement with the data. With this said some, such as Berg, suggest that reflexivity "…assumes that researchers are explicitly aware of their own values, self-identity or ideologies" (Berg, 2007: p.178 in Hennink, Hutter, Bailey 2011: p.20). It is therefore acknowledged that while the research design was consciously considered in a balanced way, the research will ultimately be flavoured with my influence and shaped by my values and ideologies to some extent. The reflexive process has been considered from the start of the research study, and I have tried to be systematic in recording reflections on the relationship between self and research throughout the process.

The rationale for choosing a particular method is therefore not instrumental or a choice void of bias but linked heavily to a value system. I noted after the first pilot interview that, although I had set out to compose a semi-structured interview, I still felt confined to structure. I wanted to probe further and struggled not to interject on many occasions. I wanted to give 'energy' to the interaction and stimulate depth. This is deeply linked to the critical aspects of the paradigm within which I work and have been educated.

> Being reflexive is to place the self, bias and values as critical to
> the research process. Acknowledging the prevalence of these
> aspects and addressing them, adds depth to superficial

reflection on methodological practice. This may include how research was conducted, why certain actions were taken and the impact of these actions. It can also incorporate reflections on the overall research process. Therefore, being reflexive is to be critical and conscious of tacit as well as overt assumptions, bias and prejudices which may be held. In this sense, the researcher becomes integrated into the research (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002: p.1).

Reflexive insider

My position as an insider varied throughout the interview process. The first pilot interview took place within my own place of work with a colleague. Firstly, I found it difficult to transform into the role of a researcher, introducing the topic was uncomfortable for me, my youth worker persona and the values I hold and display within practice, which include the systematic consideration of power in conversation and interaction. I felt a sense of power as a researcher and it made me feel awkward. How one present themselves is "...very important because once the interviewer's presentational self is "cast", it leaves a profound impression on the respondents and has a great influence of the success of the study (or lack of)" (Fontana & Frey 2008: p.131). I felt even though the interview was semi-structured that this subtle change in persona had affected the relationship between the interviewee, and interviewer. The interview felt strained and I was not sure that the interviewee had a full understanding of the questions I was asking. Also, the interviewee used examples and

scenarios that I was aware of and often situations were even referred to without words.

Reflecting on the first pilot interview I started to feel I knew too much about the interviewee's experience in this sense I was feeling the negative aspects of being an insider.

The pilot process encouraged me to reflect on my role as an 'insider' researcher, and how my relationship to the participants, the subject area (as a youth worker), my power and knowledge affect the interview process. For Mercer, this is a double-edged sword, for which there are strengths and weaknesses. The insider researcher constantly moves "along a number of axes , depending upon time, location, participants and topic" (Mercer 2007: p1). The benefits of being an insider researcher are evident when considering the issues with being an outsider

> .... the outsider has a structurally imposed incapacity to comprehend alien groups, statuses, cultures and societies … [because he or she] … has neither been socialized in the group nor has engaged in the run of experience that makes up its life, and therefore cannot have the direct, intuitive sensitivity that alone makes empathetic understanding possible (Merton, 1972, p. 15).

However, with this familiarity the insider runs the risk of overlooking the obvious, avoiding sensitive questions and general lack of objectivity. As with the first pilot interview with WA, situations referred to were inferred and

shared experiences were not explained fully. Platt points out that these

issues need to be considered as it might lead to the data becoming thinner

as a result (Mercer, 2007).

Although there is a certain common-sense value to the status of being an

insider there are some who have suggested problems in the positive

discourse around insider research. Hodkinson (2004) highlights the

ambiguity of insider status and points out there are elements of identity

which are useful and benefit the research process, but in most cases there

are a multitude of diverse elements which create barriers. The term

insider, then, suggests absolute which in fact is often ambiguous. Song

and Parker (1995, in Hodkinson, 2005) argue

> Dichotomised rubrics such as 'black/white' or 'insider/outsider'
> are inadequate to capture the complex and multi-faceted
> experiences of some researchers such as ourselves, who find
> themselves neither total 'insiders' nor 'outsiders' in relation to
> the individuals they interview (ibid.: p. 243).

Considering this, I became aware of the complexity of the relationship

between myself and the participants in the study and my positionality as a

youth worker, an academic researcher, a student, a male and an adult.

Hodkinson suggests that we can be pulled into the trap of trying too hard to

present as being an insider as a youth worker this might be the assumption

that working with young people is always the same and deny the diversity of

different young people and situations. We might assume particular values, but the complexity of value consensus of views and values which is youth work are, on the contrary, often very different.

In the young people's focus groups, I felt far more at ease with the situation. I quickly realised that the more I kept to the structure (or unstructured) of group work discussion the more comfortable my facilitation role seemed. I felt like a youth worker stimulating questions. On reflection, I believe that my initial definition of insider for the whole qualitative phase was too simplistic. In the practitioner's interviews I felt I was not an insider at all, I was in fact an outsider. Although I am a youth worker I was presenting myself as a researcher and a professional. It was my role positionality that made me feel uncomfortable. I was presenting myself as someone who 'did not' know the experience of the interviewee. This experience confirms the point that the insider term is is too simplistic and requires thought.

Conclusion of pilot interviews

Although consideration had been given to the design and structure of the questions it was very hard to predict how the questions would flow. During the first pilot interview it was evident that there were issues; on reflection, this was mainly due to my inexperience and wanting to follow the

questionnaire in a structured manner. In the next 2 interviews I started to gain a balance of flow and accuracy in asking and answering the questions.

As mentioned in interview 1 the introduction seemed difficult and it was hard to explain the context and read whether the interviewee fully understood the definition of technologies and youth work I was presenting. During the pilot interviews this varied. It was deduced that this was due to the differentials in practice, and educational experience, and also age. Within the first interview this was further complicated by the fact that I was interviewing somebody I worked with, the interviewee had some knowledge of my study prior to the session. However, it was in a way I assumed that she had a clear understanding of the research. Defining the complex hypothesis is difficult and I feel it is only fully clear if it is understood in the context of the literature review. In a sense this is quite subjective and the definition given by the researcher is in many ways open to interpretation. Obviously this is imperative in creating variation in responses. Clearly this is a skill that will have to be developed and reflected upon as a part of the research process so the researcher might better explain research to a variety of audiences.

Organisation of data

As stated, after the completion of the interviews transcriptions were completed and Nvivo 10 software was used to organize the research data; transcriptions, articles, field notes, audio were all compiled and coded. After

analysis, the information was transferred to a word document for further organisation.

Analysis

As mentioned, discourse analysis using thematic coding was used to organise the data from the interviews. Specific themes were identified in the text, this was grouped and discussion was developed by comparing and contrasting the data from each case.

A research diary was used throughout this period and informed the research process over the duration of this stage. Notes, memos, interviewee profiles and reflections will be considered in the analysis and transcription of the process.

Main interviews and analysis

A further 10 interviews were carried out between January and June, 2012. The interview data has been transcribed using an online transcription service (https://www.uktranscription.com/). The data was then analysed utilising Nvivo 10 software.

Rationale for young people's data collection method

A number of questions had been developed for young people from the literature review. Much of the research discussed suggested that there have

been profound changes in the way young people communicate and consume information. This in turn has had an impact on the way young people construct their identity and it is suggested that this environment has created a more individualised, global culture (Jeffs and Smith, 2004, Livingstone, 2005). Research suggests that technologies are also affecting our co-present interactions, and although these changes may seem subtle they have implications for our ability to bond and connect as human beings (Ling, 2008, Collins 2011). Specific research with young people regarding their experience of youth work and technologies is very limited. Therefore, questions have been developed to be answered with consideration of these 'profound' changes.

Questions for young people after consideration of the literature

- What do young people expect from youth provision and youth workers (In the current context)?

- How are young people using these technologies to organise and meet, face-to-face, are they enabling them to be more sociable?

- Can youth work be enhanced by the use of technologies?

- How do technologies impact on co-present interactions?

Due to issues of access, the collection of data from young people was delayed until after the data collection of practitioners/ gatekeepers had been

completed. As already stated, a survey was employed to find out basic data from practitioners and organisations, and to establish a sample pool for recruitment of participants of practitioners and young people. The survey questionnaire requested practitioners to indicate whether they would be willing to participate in further research regarding the research topic and also whether they would be willing to grant access to young people who might be willing to take part in the study. At that particular point in time it was envisaged that qualitative data collection would take place with young people later in the research process, and the recruitment of practitioners was prioritised. This would give time to develop further questions by considering the findings from the practitioners' interviews, and also give time to consider the ethical implications of the impact of the research on young individuals and groups. Young people's views were considered important as they would possibly reveal data useful to compare and contrast between young people and practitioners giving an interesting insight into their experience and attitudes towards technologies.

After the surveys were completed, interviews with practitioners took place between January and August, 2012, transcriptions were completed and the data was analysed. The importance of completing qualitative research with young people became further amplified as their practitioners seem to present many assumptions within their answers concerning young people's use and experience of technology. Some of the practitioners suggested:

- that young people are losing/or not acquiring social skills because of their relationship with technology;

- that young people want to be contacted via technologies by youth workers;

- that young people see technologies as an appendage (as a part of themselves);

- that communication is not meaningful through technology.

Further discussion was also considered important to understand:

- why young people attend youth provision;

- to find out if young people desire co-present social interaction;

- how young people feel about organisation/ limitations because of the inability to communicate via technologies beyond the face-to-face;

- are social network communications having an effect on deaf clubs in particular?

- young people's usage and reliance on technologies in relation to their geographic location/ location of their youth provision;

- young people's experience of using their personal technologies in informal, and formal settings, their feelings on this issue;

- young people self-learning through technologies.

Young people data collection methods

I have highlighted some of the practicalities which were thought might

restrict and differentiate the experience of data collection with young people

compared to the practitioners. Although it might be argued that there may be some merit in replicating the research with practitioners, with the young people, however, trying to recruit a diverse representative sample for one-to-one interviews was problematic due to the use of gatekeepers and also, as Barbour (2012) points out, one-to-one interviews can be viewed by some as "...intrusive and threatening" (Barbour, R. 2012: p.96). However, it was believed that consideration must be given to the reality that young people experience youth provision in groups as users. Their motivations are therefore very different from those of the practitioners. As the research mainly considers practice that facilitates youth work to groups it was thought that it would be useful to interview young people in groups. (Note: a very small number of the organisations indicated they do work with individuals one-to-one). The rationale for the methods is further amplified below.

As with the practitioners' interviews, the young people's interview research questions required in-depth probing to generate a mutual level of understanding, and the desired information. Focus groups were considered the most appropriate method as young people experience youth provision as groups and therefore it was felt that it would be interesting to hear about their collective experience. "Focus groups provide insight into public discourse (Kitzinger, 1994) and the views expressed in focus groups may, of course, be different from the 'private' views that would be expressed in one-to-one interviews (Smithson's, 2000 ideas in, Barbour, R.2012: p.47).

Callaghan (2005) argues that focus groups "... can enable us to access the knowledge which embodies the "habitus" of the wider community" (Callaghan, 2005) cited in Barbour (2012): p.39). Therefore, it can be assumed that focus groups would give a fair representation of young people's views in a more general sense.

Barbour (2012) suggests that there are no set rules in determining whether to use focus groups or one-to-one interviews. The advantages and disadvantages of each must be considered dependent on the research and situation. It might be assumed that individuals might prefer to take part in a one-to-one interview as they can express their individual thoughts, feelings and experiences in a safe environment. However, "...there may be safety in numbers and coming to a focus group discussion may allay concerns of some individuals that they may not have 'anything of interest' to contribute to the research" (Barbour, R. 2012: p.42). Focus groups would give me the opportunity to hear both individual and group views and discussions. Bryman suggests that in "... the context of a focus group, individuals will often argue with each other and challenge each other's views", he suggests that in this process the researcher should end up with a more realistic account of their views (Bryman, A. 2008: p.475). At the time, consideration was also given to the mixed methods approach and the possibility of carrying out one-to-one interviews and focus groups with young people. It was thought that this would open up pathways to interesting debate and

contrast between the group and individual take on the topic (Barbour, R. 2012: p.42). It was also believed that this might be a good way of triangulating evidence. However, it was difficult to predict what the possibilities were in regard to the potential access to young people. After consideration of time limitations and the responsibility to put boundaries on the data collection it was considered that focus groups would be sufficient for the purpose.

Power and procedures in the research process

As mentioned, gatekeepers recruited from the practitioner's interviews were used to gain access to young people for this stage of the study. MacDougall and Fudge (2001) argue that gatekeepers are often essential when accessing hard to reach groups. Young people below the age of 16 years cannot be contacted directly by the researcher as ethical approval needs to be acquired through Sunderland University's Ethics committee, and therefore their willingness to participate depends significantly on the practitioner's/gatekeeper's willingness to inform, and motivate the young people to take part (See Appendix B Ethical approval)[4]. Therefore, researcher input into the selection of participants from the sample is limited, in relation to the interview selection process. The way in which young

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[4] Ethical approval was given through the University's application procedures. My supervisor Prof, Peter Rushton had to complete this under the procedures at the time.

people are prepared for the focus group by practitioners' organisation might create a particular bias in their response, however although these issues need to be considered, they ultimately have to be accepted. Youth workers also had the power to be present within the focus groups. I did not stipulate that I wanted to speak to the young people without the youth workers being present, leaving it to the youth workers and the young people to decide as a group. In 3 of the cases the youth workers asked if they should leave the room to let the group speak without their presence impacting on the interview and in these cases the young people thought it best that they did. In the one focus groups in which the workers did stay', while acknowledging the fact that their presence would have an impact on the data collection and the privacy and freedom to speak about their youth projects, I actually felt their presence added to the session and in fact made the young people feel comfortable and more confident to speak. The presence seemed to be related to their interest in the subject and less about controlling the young people. On reflection, it may have been interesting to interview the groups and the practitioners together in a larger focus group.

Significant consideration was given to the way I would present myself to the young people. My initial contact was through interaction with the young people's youth workers and therefore they would have informed them that I was a male, a student, researcher and a youth worker. I considered how my power and presence as an authority might affect the situation, the

interaction between individuals and the flow of the discussion. In terms of the consideration of certain aspects of power in the interview process I thought it important to wear casual clothes to be informal and not be too structured in terms of time. As an act of gratitude, I brought a box of chocolates to each of the focus groups offering them to the participants at the beginning of the session. This acted as an icebreaker and I believe this was very important in creating a comfortable positive atmosphere for the focus groups. I also thought the use of appropriate terminology and language would play a major factor in the success of the data collection (Punch, 2002). Barbour (2012) highlights the importance of checking the room in preparation of focus groups, making sure resources are available and seating is suitable. This was not possible in 3 of the 4 cases as I was restricted by the youth project's time limitations. Luckily, the seating in all of the projects was conducive for group discussion, and was set out in a circular fashion which gave each participant the best opportunity to speak (Liamputtong, 2011).

It was noted that in the process the researcher may hold power, but the process itself can be empowering for particular groups and individuals. In all of the cases the young people seemed to enjoy discussing the subject and have their stories heard.

Ethical reflections

After considerations of the methods to be employed, thought must also be given to the ethical implications when conducting research with young people. Working within, and studying a practice such as youth work it is important to consider and reflect upon the values of the practice and work within them. Therefore, the researcher must ensure that the voluntary relationship between the researcher and the young person is upheld and respected, and that young people enter into the interview process by their own choice, and be aware that they can leave the relationship as they wish in line with values highlighted in Chapter 2 by (Davies, 2005). This requires that young people are fully informed of the research topic, the part they will play in the research, what the information will be used for, and also they are informed with regards to issues of possible disclosure (Batsleer, 2010). The statement below was presented to young people by gatekeepers to recruit participants for focus groups.

Initial introduction for the research (for young people)

> I am a PhD student from the University of Sunderland, and also a youth worker based in the North East of England. I am currently looking for willing participants between the ages of 13-19 to take part in focus group interviews for my PhD study. I am trying to understand how young people are communicating with other individuals, organisations such as youth clubs, and youth workers. I am particular interested in how young people use technologies to communicate. By technology, I mean the devices, digital tools,

or equipment which enables people to communicate with one another, for example mobile phones, and internet-enabled computers, and also the software applications that are used.

This large scale research will contribute to a wider understanding of how young people are communicating with friends, individuals; groups, how young people feel about this, and also how youth work organisations correspond with young people. By taking part you and your youth club will be contributing to an important and unique study which will have implications not only for everyday youth work practice, but also for training and development. This study will also influence the content of professional education. The work will be disseminated through the academic journals, and contributions to appropriate academic conferences.

All interview data and transcriptions will be anonymised, and will be treated with the greatest of care also all personal details will be kept confidential. Only people directly involved with this project will have access to the transcriptions. If you are willing to take part in the group interviews, please let a member of your youth club staff/volunteer know.

Using pre-existing groups

It was envisaged that the young people to be recruited would regularly

come together as groups and, they generally would be seen as pre-existing

groups. Barbour (2012) points out that this raises ethical implications in

terms of confidentiality between members of groups. The researchers

should therefore be mindful that these groups exist beyond the interview,

and that it is possible that sensitive information is likely to be discussed

outside of the focus group.

Consequently, ensuring that the topic and questions are not too intrusive or provocative is important. It was also essential to ensure the group was briefed and fully clear about disclosure, and confidentiality. It was also seen as important to leave time to debrief the group to reaffirm the agreement of confidentiality and reflect as a group on the process.

Size of group

Bryman (2008) points out that focus groups should involve a group of at least 4 participants, Morgan (1998) suggest between six and ten, Barbour however argues there is "no magic number". She suggests that it is important that when carrying out a number of focus groups it might be useful to be consistent in the group sizes "as it puts us on firmer ground in relation to making claims about the patterning of the data, since it would suggest that the differences observed are not just a feature of a one-off group, but are likely to be related to the different characteristics of the participants reflected in selection." (Barbour, R. 2012: p.59).

Size of the study

Many factors have been considered in the selection of focus groups as the chosen method for the qualitative stage of the research with young people. Due to the limitations in terms of time and resources, a small sample of 4 groups, of between five and seven participants was selected from the

predefined population. Bryman argues that focus groups are often very difficult to transcribe, and analyze, and huge amounts of data can be produced in a very short period of time (Bryman, A. 2008: p.488). With the limitations regarding access to the young people, intermediaries were asked to select diverse groups of young people between the ages of 13-19. Groups were selected with reference to the criteria below.

As mentioned, access to young people is a problematic issue, and this has implications for the selection of a sample as choice has been constrained. Therefore, the young people were selected from the organisations who took part in the survey. A selection was then made using the same criteria used when choosing the practitioners.

Young people were selected from:

- organisations with practitioners who have expressed extreme positivity towards the use of technologies within practice;

- organisations with practitioners who have expressed extreme negativity towards the use of technologies within practice;

- organisations with practitioners who use technologies but never when communicating with young people;

- organisations with practitioners who have selected variables which are interesting or extreme i.e. High usage of technologies, or practitioners who work in a variety of different geographic areas;

- organisations with practitioners who have considered, in depth, and commented about the use of technologies in practice its effect on interaction/relationships;

- organisations with practitioners who consider technologies a starting point for engagement.

Symbolic interaction between participants

Wilkinson (1998) tells us that interaction is almost totally ignored with in focus group research and that the findings from focus group research are often presented in the same way in which a one-to-one interview would be presented (Wilkinson, 1998). Kitzinger (1994) states that the point of focus groups is to capture, and try to understand the interactions among participants. It was also interesting to consider the group interactions in relation to the topic of technologies as Collins (2005) suggests that topics/artefacts such as these can create an emotional energy within individuals in groups. Collins points out that these emotions are measurable by reading facial expression body rhythms and postures. So notes were collected regarding these expressions during the interviews however, due to the time restriction the extent to which this information was analysed is limited. It was also particularly interesting to consider how technologies impacted on interaction in group settings; therefore, the group was encouraged to leave their personal technologies on during the interview just

to see how they reacted, and if they were contacted how this affected the group process.

Questions for young people

- Do you attend other youth projects/ if so, what are the differences?

- How do you currently communicate with your youth project?

- How would you prefer to communicate with youth workers/ projects?

- How do you feel about the way youth projects use technologies?

- How would you like youth providers to use technologies?

- How are young people using these technologies to organize and meet, face-to-face, are they enabling them to be more social able?

- How young people view technologies in relation to their communication with others? (Is technology a necessary part of communication/ a relationship)

- How do young people view the boundaries of usage of personal technologies and project resources within youth provision?

- Do young people feel that technologies impact on co-present interaction?

- Examples of what youth providers do well and not so well in reference to communication technologies?

- Why do you think young people attend youth provision?

- (Friendship, support, social activity, resources)

- What do you think young people expect from youth provision and youth workers?

Plan for young people's focus groups

An application for ethical consent was submitted to the Ethics Committee 31st Jan, 2013. Agreement from the Ethics committee was granted early Feb, 2013. In this case ethical approval was applied for through director of studies Prof. Pete Rushton. Professor Rushton was named as the Principle Investigator for the project and I was named as the research assistant for purpose of the application. An online receipt for approval was given in Feb, 2013; however, the system relating to this procedure was hacked and later taken down. Therefore, there is only an email as evidence of ethical approval (see appendix B)

Plan for the data collection

- Pilot focus group to be completed by 10th March, 2013.

- Review with supervisory team early March, 2013.

Young people's focus group/ interviews

- Focus groups 1 and 2 completed by 31st March, 2013.

- Focus groups 3 and 4 completed by 30th April, 2013.

- Transcription completed 31st May, 2013.

- Analysis of data completed 30th August. 2013.

Note: Several of the practitioners indicated that they had young people who were willing to be involved in the research, however; this consent was given over 12 months prior to the intended focus groups with young people. I was restricted in terms of giving definite dates for focus group as I needed to go through the Ethics Committee process which took longer than expected. So the organisations were contacted and agreement re-sort a week before the actual interviews.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the various aspects of the research methodology for this project. My ontological position has been established as constructivism, and the epistemology is viewed in general terms as critical insider. The overall methodology for the data analysis is a critical discourse analysis. The methods for the data collection have been established with rigorous consideration of the field to be studied and reference to the research literature. It has been accepted that bias is inherent in topic choice and development of the research question. Bias also informs the way I approached the research. I believe that the social or conversational nature of the practice of youth work makes me more likely to flavour conversational qualitative methods as my professional disposition draws me towards social interactions rather than the structure of quantitative methods. Reflexive

ethical procedures have been discussed and will inform the way I will

proceed during the process.

Chapter 5

Survey findings

The previous chapter set out the rationale for the research design and process. This chapter will present the findings from the survey of the North East which was carried out between May and July, 2011.

This section presents the statistical data findings from the survey. The initial variable findings presented, such as age, gender, disability, ethnicity, employment sector, geographic location are established demonstrating the make-up of the population and the youth work demographic. This information is then used in the cross-tabulation of data later in the chapter.

The table 1 below indicates the frequency of surveys completed by organisations from the North-Eastern boroughs. Note: there were no respondents from the Redcar and Cleveland area.

TABLE 1: SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY AREA
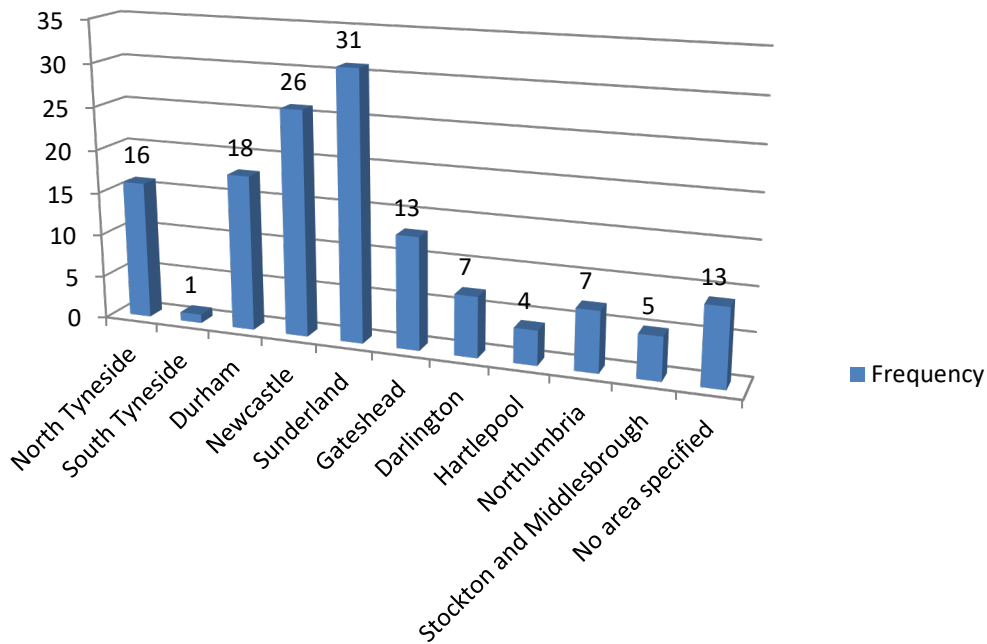
Age

As demonstrated in table 2, 125 out of 140 practitioners answered the question "What is your age?". The minimum age was 19 and the maximum 62. The average age of the sample was 35.9 years. When age categories are introduced we see that only 3 (2.1%) of the sample are within the 15-20 years of age range and 1 (.7%) in the 60-70 years with the majority of practitioners in the 20-30 years of age category. (As mentioned in the methodology chapter, age was seen as an interesting variable because of the generational divide in terms of the use of technology described in the literature.

Evidence of this may uncover differing attitudes to technologies in the qualitative phase

of the research).

TABLE 2: PRACTITIONERS AGE RANGE
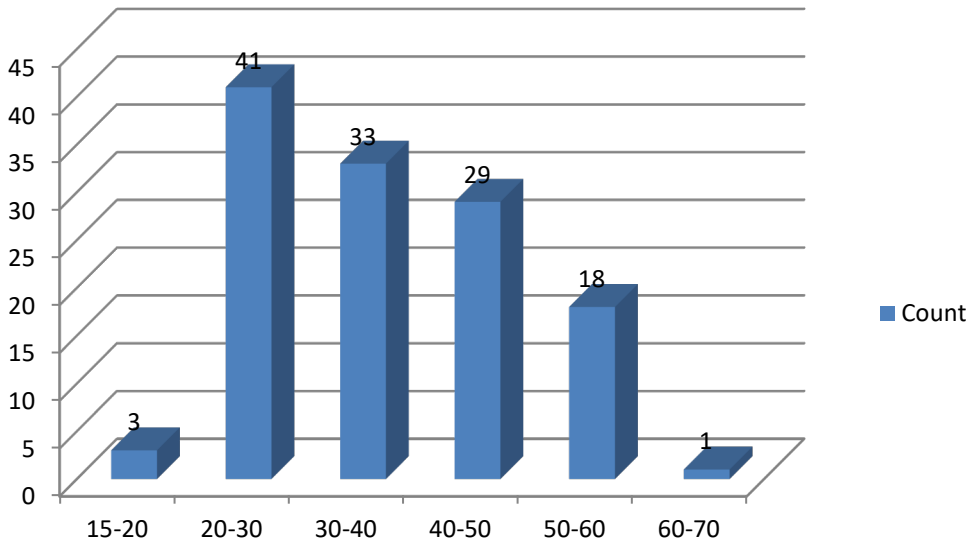
Gender

Of the 140 surveys, 45 (32 %) were completed by males and 95 (68%) by females.

Disability

Of those asked if they considered themselves to be disabled, 127 (90.7%) answered No

and 13 (9.3%) answered yes out of which 4 (2.9%) considered themselves to have a

specific learning difficulty. Two (1.4%) indicated themselves as having a disability

relating to mobility. Two (1.4%) indicated that they had a mental health difficulty. One

(.7%) indicated that they were blind/partially sighted. Three (2.1%) indicated they had a

progressive disability/chronic illness. Two (1.4%) said other (Lupus – auto immune

deficiency – it is considered by my employers to be covered under DDA but does not affect my work).

Ethnicity

White British makes up the majority of the survey count with 123 (87%). Caribbean 3 (2.1%), white Irish 2 (1.4%) and white African 1 (.7%).

TABLE 3: EMPLOYMENT
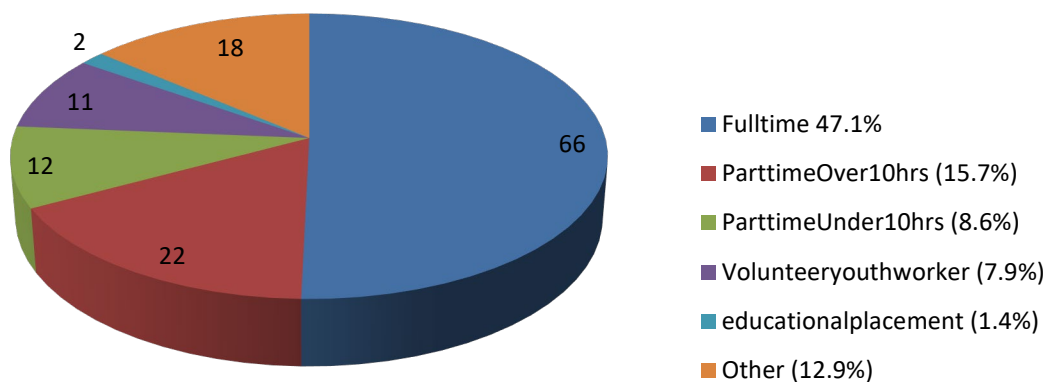
Table 3 indicates that, of the 140 respondents 66 indicated they were in full time youth work positions, 40 of whom were female. Twenty-two (15.7%) were working part time (over 10hrs per week). Twelve (8.6%) worked part time (under 10 hrs per week). Eleven (7.9%) of those who responded were volunteers. Two (1.4%) were on educational

placements and 18 (12.9%) ticked 'Other'. From those who selected 'other' gave specific roles[5].

The majority, 53 (37.9%), of the sample had 11 to 20 years' experience in youth work. Twenty-five had 21 years or more. Twenty-four (17.1%) had been involved in youth work for 6 to 11 yrs. 22 (15.7%) had 0 to 5 yrs experience. 16 (11.4%) failed to answer the question.

Sector

Seventy-two (51.4%) of practitioners were employed by a local authority. Sixty-two (44.3%) were employed within the voluntary sector. Six (4.3%) were employed in the private sector.

The majority of the participants, 54 (38.6%), were employed by organisation which employ 21 or more people. 31 (22.1%) work for organisation who employed 11 to 20 people. Twenty-three (16%) organisations have 6 to 10, and 19, worked for small organisations with 1 to 5 staff.

Geographic location of work

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[5] Manager, manager of a disability service that serves young people, Development Manager role, Full time Drug and alcohol worker, not employed as a youth worker, Creative director of arts centre, Project coordinator, Vocational, Pt trainee youth worker, 20 hr. post evening work but employed by school to delivery, Volunteer officer, Church leader with oversight of youth activities.   Area community coordinator, Full time liaison officer manager of an action group, Community and youth work studies placement (yr. 1), Youth worker but currently not employed as one, trainer, full time youth work manager with practice sessions week, Full time workforce development consultant

The data suggested that the majority of participants 86 (61.4%) worked in urban areas.

Thirty-five (25%) in semi-rural areas, and 17 (12.1%) worked in rural areas. Two

indicated (none of the above). Some did not consider their work as confined to urban,

semi-rural and rural, stating that they worked on regional, or national levels; other

suggested that they worked in all, urban, semi-rural and rural areas.

TABLE 4: GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF WORK
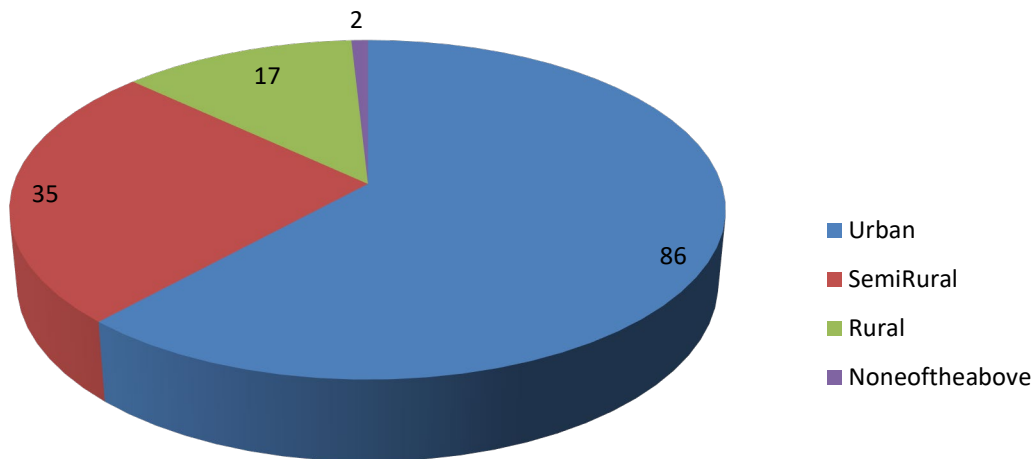
Education

In terms of educational qualifications, the most popular with 43 (30.7%) was the BA in

Community and Youth Work. Twenty-nine (20.7%) have an NVQ in youth work. Ten

(7.1%) have completed a masters/ MPhil or PhD. Twenty-six (18.6%) have completed a

diploma in community and youth work. From the category 'None of the above' 23

(16.4%) other qualifications were highlighted; including plus Connexions PA Diploma,

National Youth Organisation qualification, Salvation Army training, Diploma formal/ informal education, PTTLES level 4 A1 assessors award.

Delivery

Participants were asked about their youth work practice, and the forms of delivery they were involved in. (Note: the participants could use multiple responses for this question). Face-to-face work was the most popular answer with 113 (75.3%). Interestingly one-to-one work was the second most popular answer with 65 (43.3%). One-to-one work is not a delivery method which is discussed often within the youth work literature I have presented, thus suggesting a more individualised practice reality to the collectivised theory of group work, and community. Sixty-two (41.3%) were involved in face-to-face via outreach work. Forty-nine (32.7%) were involved in face-to-face via detached work. Surprisingly 38 (25.3%) of the practitioners indicated that they were involved in face-to-face work via technologies, quite a significant amount when bearing in mind the technology is in its infancy. Furthermore, many of the practitioners mentioned restrictions such as council policy and red tape in the survey comment boxes (See Appendix C), which limited the use of many forms of social media. Eighteen (12%) were using text based technologies within their practice.

Face-to- face delivery and employment sector

Interestingly, 23 (15.3%) of the 38 (25.3%) practitioners using technologies to facilitate face-to-face work were employed by a local authority. Eighteen (12%) were employed

by voluntary organisations, with 3 (2.1%) using the technologies within both of these sectors.

Frequency of usage

In Table 5 we see that Forty-four (31.4%) of the practitioners used technologies within their work with young people on a daily basis. Forty-four (31.4%) used technologies on a weekly basis. Sixteen (11.4%) used technologies on a monthly basis. Twenty-four (17.1%) stated that they never used technology in their work with young people (Note; however, all 140 stated that they used some form of technologies with their work).

TABLE 5: PRACTITIONERS FREQUENCY OF USE OF TECHNOLOGIES WITHIN THEIR WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
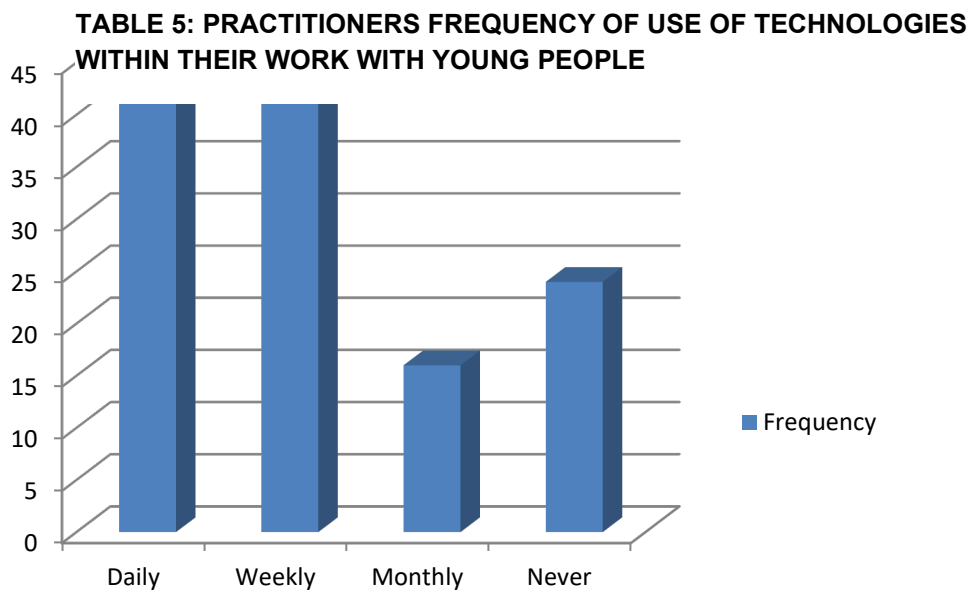
Devices

All 140 practitioners indicated that they used some form of technological device in their work with young people, using a total of 336 devices between them. Table 6 shows a breakdown of the devices used and a count of how many of the organisations used each device. From the devices suggested in the questionnaire, mobile phones were the most popular with 101 (29%) using the device within their work with young people. Static desk top computers were the second most popular with 99 (29.3%) reporting that they used them, then laptops with 81(24%). 'Other internet enabled' devices made up 14.2% of the total, and practitioners highlighted games consoles such as Wii, Xbox, and internet TV. PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) was the least popular specific device with only 4 (1.2%). Three (.9%) people suggested 'Other relevant devices' including landline, cameras, video cameras, smart board, iPod and Sat Navs.

TABLE 6: DEVICES
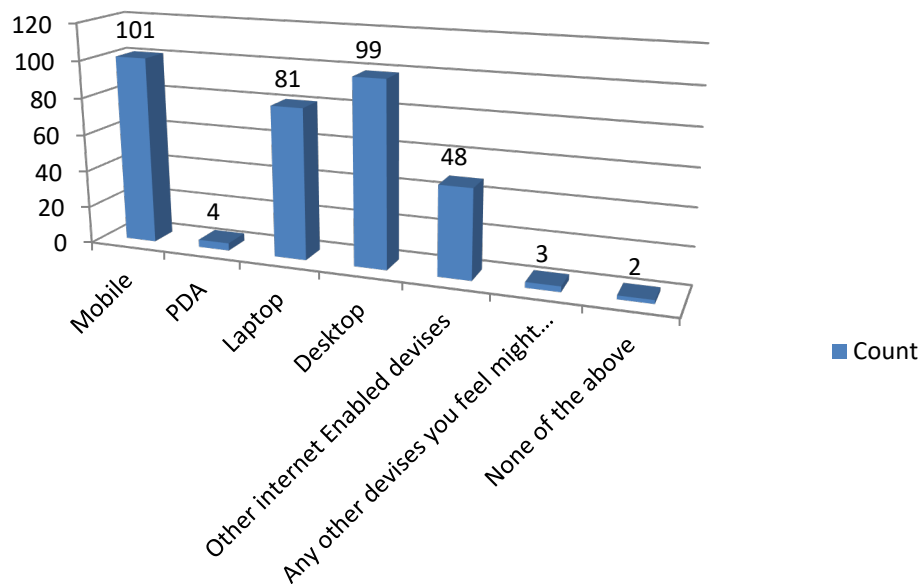
Software/ applications

Interestingly, phone calls were the most popular means of communicating when working with young people with 108 of the responds stating that they used calls. E-mails stand as the second most popular with 91 of the respondents stating they utilised this technology. Text (SMS) 78, world wide wWeb with 58, social network sites 51 and organisers (organisational applications such as digital diaries) 49. A breakdown of the other applications used is demonstrated in table 7.

TABLE 7: SOFTWARE/ APPLICATIONS

211
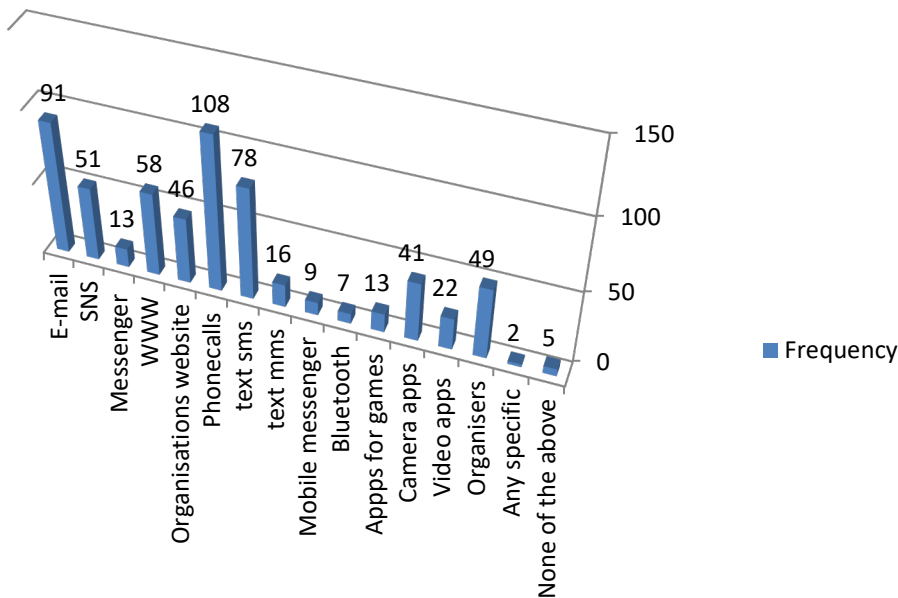
Use and Purpose

Table 8 indicates that when considering purpose and use of technologies, there is a fairly even spread. 'Contacting young people' seemed to be the most important use for technologies with 71.4% of the respondents indicating that they used technology for contact the young people. Ninety-six (68.6%) used technologies for 'Communicating with colleagues with reference to their work with young people'. Only one person indicated 'None of the above'. Practitioners then, on average, use technologies for 4.23 different tasks within their work with young people.

TABLE 8: USE AND PURPOSE
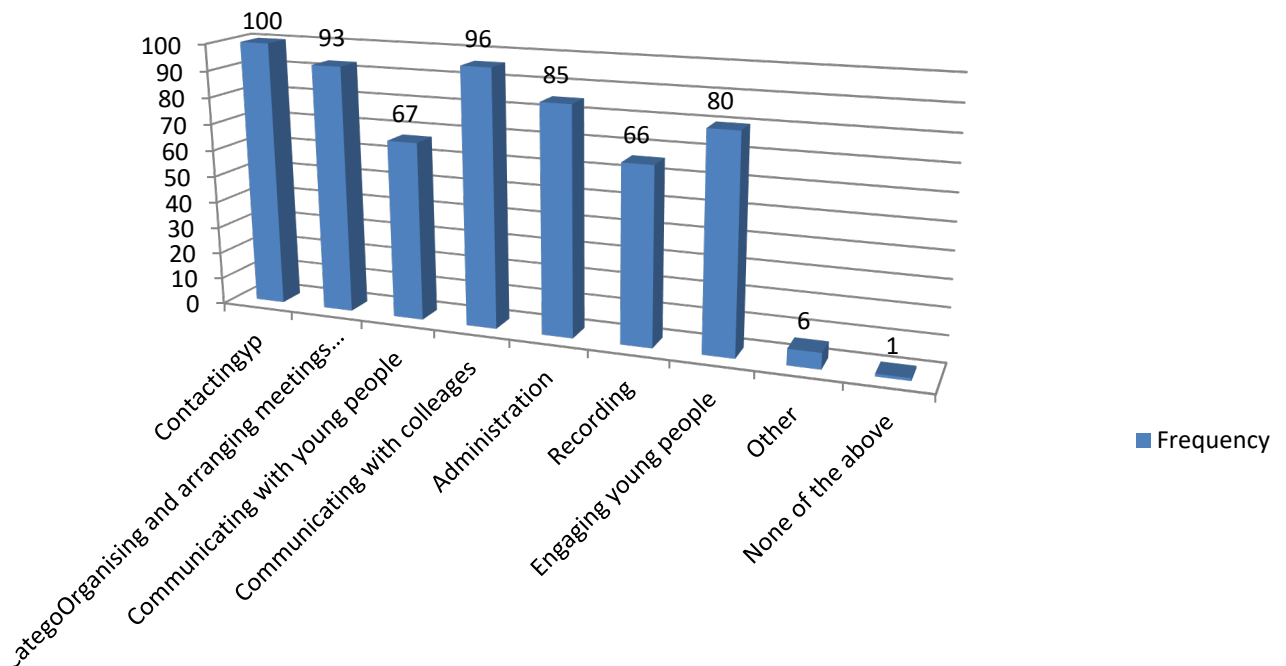
Table 9 shows the practitioners' perceptions of the importance of technologies, and their uses within their work with young people.

TABLE 9: IMPORTANCE AND PURPOSE
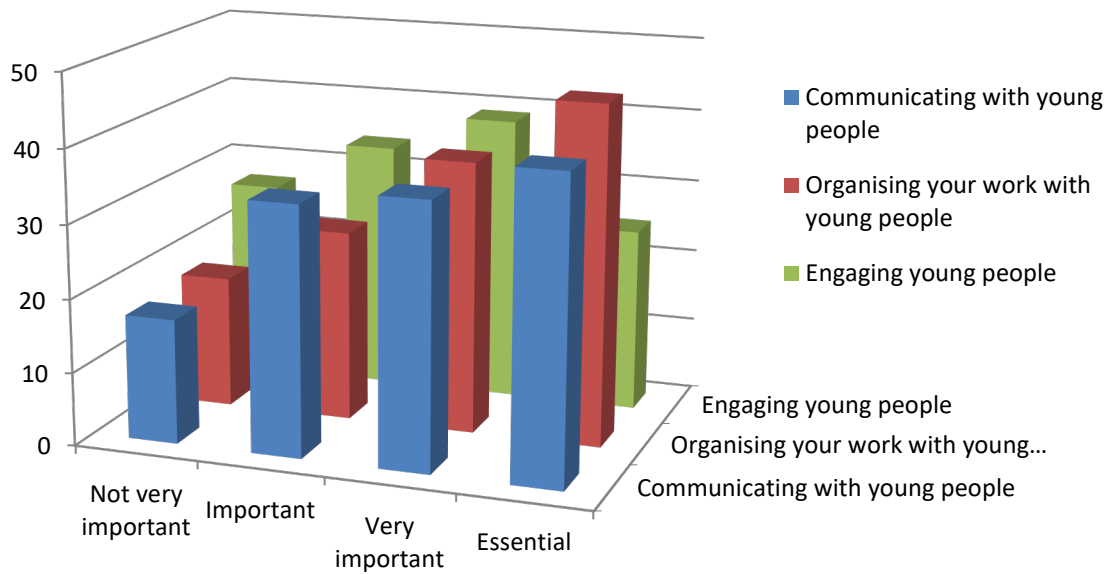
Communicating with young people

With consideration of the findings the vast majority 88% have indicated that these technologies are Important if not essential when communicating with young people. With only 17 from the 140 indicating otherwise (See table 9).

Organising your work with young people

Similarly, when organising work with young people 87% indicated that technologies were 'Important', 'Very important' or 'Essential' (See table 9).

Engaging young people

Interestingly, there is a slightly more even spread when considering using technologies for engaging young people. With 27 indicating that they are 'Not very important' (See table 9).

Practice implications

Table 10 shows that the majority of practitioners who answered this question , 66 (47.1%) indicated that technologies have a positive effect on their work with young people. 56 (40%) indicated that there were positives, and negatives to this and only 1 (.7%) practitioner suggested that there were negatives attached to using technologies.

TABLE 10: PERCEPTION OF TECHNOLOGY/ EFFECT ON PRACTICE
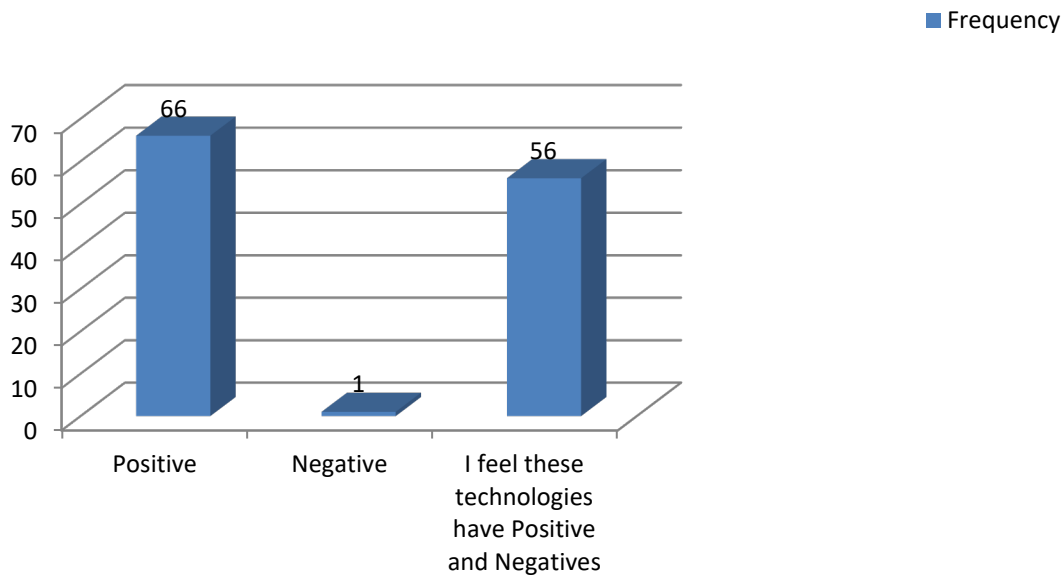
Gender and software applications

Table 11 shows that when considering comparative use of devices there is no significant difference between female and male usage other than more men used E-mail more than woman and that woman use more camera applications.

TABLE 11: GENDER AND SOFTWARE APPLICATION
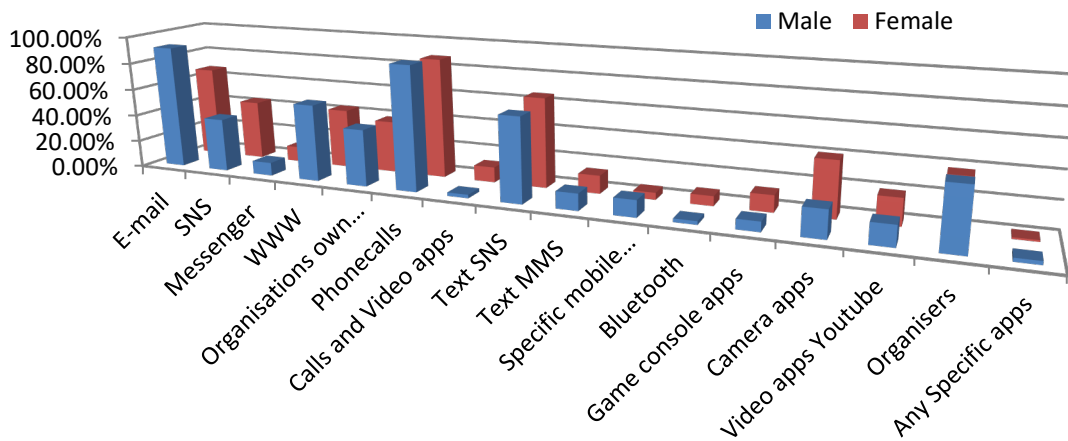
TABLE 12: GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND DEVICEE
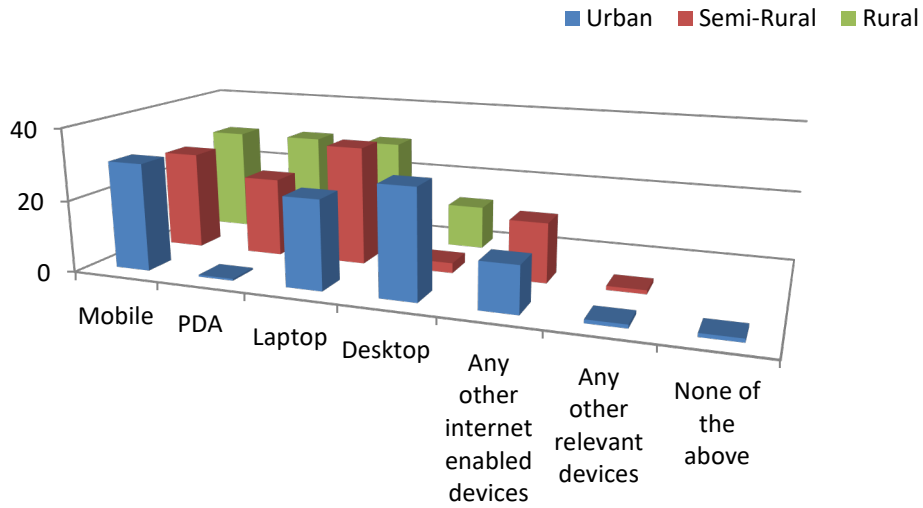
TABLE 13: GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND PURPOSE
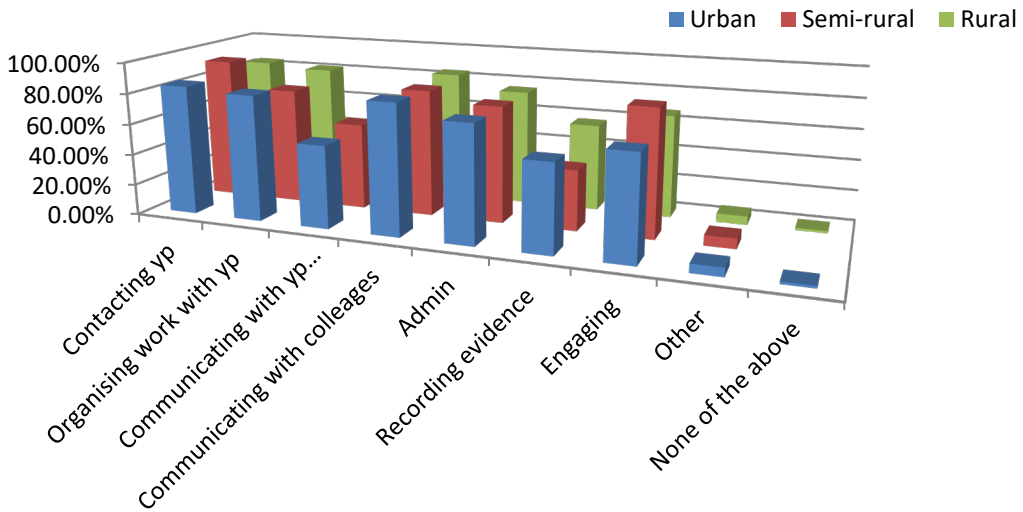
Geographic location and devices, use and purpose and software

Interestingly, Desktop (static) computers are less popular within the semi-rural and rural categories, perhaps indicating more mobile work taking place (See table 12). Also Table 14 shows that 62% of those from rural areas indicated that they used social network sites within their work comparing to 44% in semi-rural areas and 32% of those working in urban areas. This suggests SNS may be a useful tool for communication in more remote areas.

TABLE 14: GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND PURPOSE
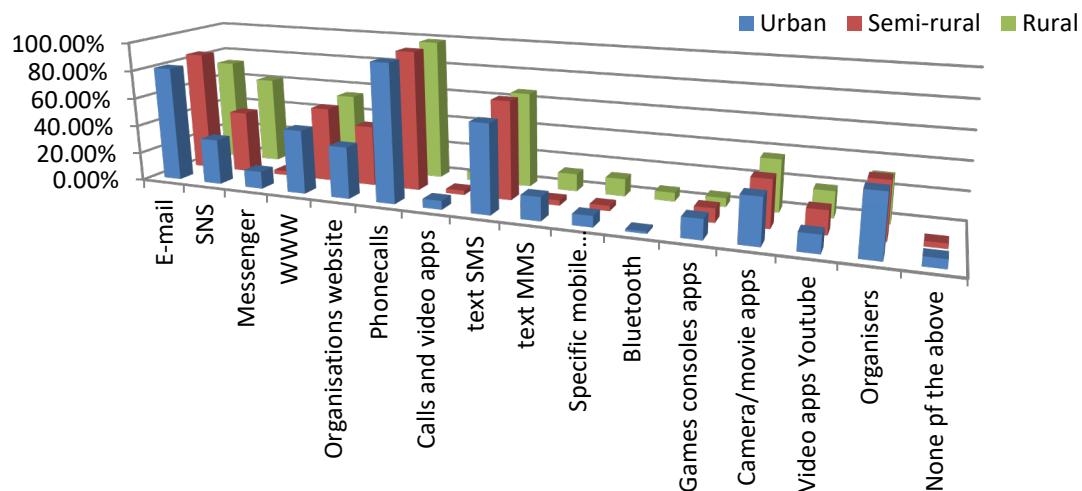
Age and Usage

From the practitioners in the 15-20 age category (Note: the youngest practitioner was 19 years of age) (See table 15, 16, 17, 18).

1. (33.3%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Daily' basis.

2. (66.7%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Weekly' basis.

- None of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Monthly' basis.

- None of the practitioners indicated that they 'Never' used technologies in their work with young people.

From the practitioners in the 20-30 age category (See table 15, 16, 17, 18)

- 15 (36.6%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Daily' basis.

- 13 (31.7%) practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Weekly' basis.

- 6 (14.6%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Monthly' basis.

- 7 (17.1%) indicated that they 'Never' used technologies in their work with young people.

From the practitioners in the 30-40 age category (See table 15, 16, 17, 18)

- 11 (33.3%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Daily' basis.

- 15 (45.5%) practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Weekly' basis.

- 2 (6.1%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Monthly' basis.

- 4 (12.1%) indicated that they 'Never' used technologies in their work with young people.

From the practitioners in the 40-50 age category (See table 15, 16, 17, 18)

- 11 (37%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Daily' basis.

- 5 (17.2%) practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Weekly' basis.

- 5 (17.2%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Monthly' basis.

- 8 (27.6% indicated that they 'Never' used technologies in their work with young people.

From the practitioners in the 50-60 age category (See table 15, 16, 17, 18)

- 5 (29.4%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Daily' basis.

- 4 (22.2% practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Weekly' basis.

- 3 (16.7%) of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Monthly' basis.

- 5 (27.8%) indicated that they 'Never' used technologies in their work with young people.

From the practitioners in the 60-70 age category (See table 15, 16, 17, 18)

- 1 (100%) of the practitioners in this age category) used technologies on a 'Daily' basis.

- None of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Weekly' basis.

- None of the practitioners in this age category used technologies on a 'Monthly' basis.

- None of the practitioners indicated that they 'Never' used technologies in their work with young people.

TABLE 15: AGE AND USAGE/ DAILY
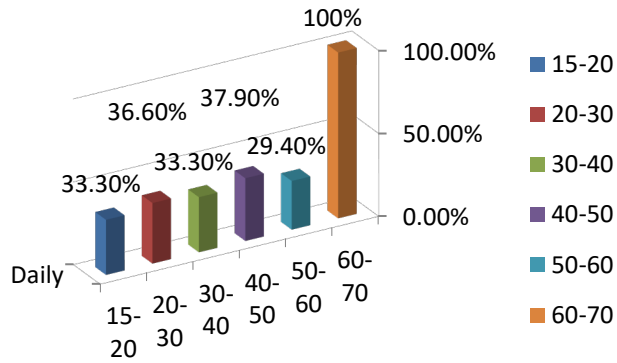
TABLE 16: AGE AND USAGE/ WEEKLY
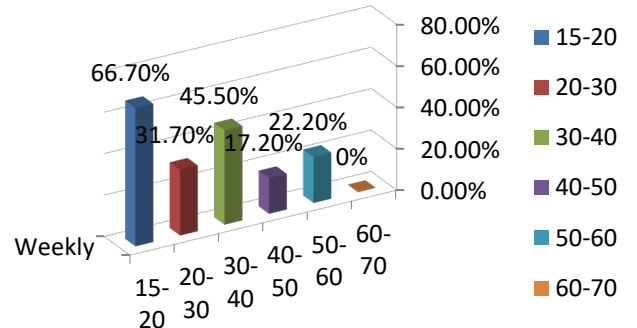
TABLE 17: AGE AND USAGE/ MONTHLY
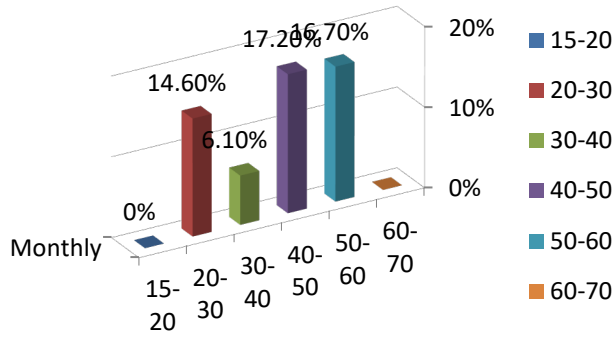
TABLE 18: AGE AND USAGE/ NEVER
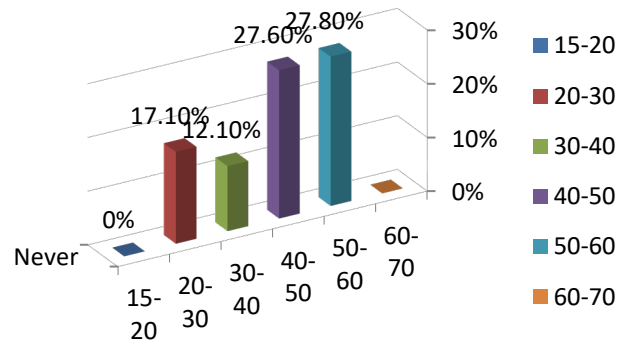
(Note) 100% of 60-70% (Note: only one person (100%) is represented in the 60-70 categories).

Qualitative comments

From the comments there are several themes emerging. In line with the statistical information. The general discourse within the comments sections is positive towards technologies. However, many see a potential paradox and are reflective about youth work's purpose and the role technology plays within that. For many, technologies are:

> excellent devices for making contact, a distraction when trying to work (Student youth worker on educational placement);

> use of technology in youth work is welcomed but should only be one tool used to engage young people (Practitioner).

Many stated that technologies enable communication between parties to be immediate and efficient, and are particularly useful when contacting people about activities, trips and events. Practitioners feel it important to be able to move with the times and be relevant to the young people they are working with: "young people today use technology as an essential part of life so the more access we have to that the better our work and ability to engage with them will be" (Part time youth worker).

Several of the respondents vented their frustration regarding their employer's hesitation with the regards to the use of technologies and the general policy red tape in their organisations.

> I feel that digital technology and communication is not used enough within youth work, there are many barriers to this including cost, concerns around safeguarding, lack of equipment and resources etc. In my experience, certainly

within the local authority, there are many restrictions to the usage, although I believe it is the way forward to engage positively with young people (Full time youth worker).

Many of the practitioners highlighted that they had, or were in the process of setting up, their own organisational website, Facebook pages, and virtual youth work sites.

Some practitioners aired their concerns regarding particular issues around professional boundaries and safe guarding.

Technologies, such as telephone and email, are important for contacting young people, however, using social networking to contact young people can have an extremely negative effect. Not least because it is an infringement on young people's privacy but also as professionals we should not be using 'friends' sites to contact young people, it blurs already hazy boundaries (Part time Youth worker).

Another worker highlights similar ethical issues.

It is easier to communicate with young people as most have a mobile and access to the internet. However, this in itself can be a problem as some young people try to befriend you on social network sites, which is unethical but the young person might not see it that way (Fulltime Youth worker).

This worker suggests, like Collins (2010), that there are certain ingredients essential for social solidarity, and youth work.

I have to say that nothing beats the social interaction and face to face communication people engage in whether it being to circulate information or reaching those technologies cannot reach; emotional interaction and engagement is paramount to the work we do and how it reflects societies changes throughout the years (Fulltime youth worker).

The full transcription of the comment box responses can be found in Appendix C.

Conclusion

It has been established within the qualitative comments that technologies can help and hinder in youth work environments. Many are concerned with their organisations' slow integration of new communicative behaviours through technologies. This is viewed as a major issue as they believe young people are less likely to be found on the streets and are increasingly moving to online spaces. Others see the negative aspects of these changes, ethical issues, and privacy being the main issues for practitioners. This is a particular issue in terms of professional boundaries as young people have attempted to 'befriend' youth workers on social network sites. Several practitioners suggest that communication and interaction through technologies should not replace face-to-face as technologies lack the ability to translate emotion as suggested by Collins (2011) in the literature section. Some practitioners however, do like the immediacy of texting and messaging particularly for reminding young people to turn up to sessions and remember consent forms.

After consideration of the statistical information it is evident that the majority of the practitioners are using technologies within their work with young people. Technological devices and software applications are embedded within their practice and are generally seen as very important, if not essential when contacting and organising work with young people. Interestingly, older forms of technologies seem to be the most popular with phone calls and mobiles the most frequently used medium of communication.

The survey highlights that practitioners are actively using technologies throughout the age categories. However, those practitioners in the older categories are far more likely

to use technologies 'Less' (or 'Never') than in the other age categories. When considering gender there seems to be very little difference in usage and preference in the use of technologies. Interestingly, when considering the geographic area in which practitioners worked, and the software applications they used when communicating with young people, social network sites (SNS) were more popular in rural areas compared with urban. Suggesting that (SNS) could be an important means of communication between young people and youth work organisations in these areas. From those who stated they 'Never' use technologies within practice, seven highlighted that they were restricted by their employer.

The findings reveal some interesting conclusions. This is particularly true of the comment boxes, which begin to reveal some of the issues arising in practice. These issues will be considered in-depth with in the qualitative phase of the study. I intend to explore how young people and youth work organisations communicate and how this is changing with the introduction of new technologies. The focus of the qualitative phase will be to further examine how technologies help or hinder the methods, aims and values of youth work described in Chapter 2, and how practitioners are facing the issues arising.

Next steps

The following chapter will present the findings from the practitioner's interviews.

Chapter 6

Youth work practitioners interview findings

The practitioners' interviews were carried out between January 2012 and June 2012. Twenty participants were initially selected from the 79 who indicated they would be willing to participate in the qualitative phase of the research study. From this group, 3 pilot, and 13 legitimate interviews were completed. From the 4 remaining practitioners who had agreed to take part in the qualitative phase 3 had left their youth worker posts and one was on sick leave.

The data findings presented within this chapter were extracted from the practitioners' transcriptions using Nvivo 10. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was employed to analyse the text. Initial discourse themes which were identified in the literature chapter were further explored. These include:

- the negative impact of technologies on social interaction rituals. (Examples of successful and failed IRs will be identified. What this means for the relationship between young people and youth workers and the social education of young people in youth work settings);
- new technology and the impact on conversational dialogue and new communicative preferences, (horizontal power);
- changing relationships (relationship maintenance through new media);
- generational divide (relationships between youth worker and young people);
- new habits and addiction, technology as a part of the self.

Other discourse themes were identified from the findings from the survey results. Including:

- limitations of practitioners by their organisations to utilise new technologies;

- personal and professional issues (new ethical concerns);

- deterministic or positive discourses towards technology.

Whilst having these predefined themes in mind I was also open to identify any other unexpected common themes within the text.

Aims of the chapter

This chapter will firstly introduce the youth work practitioners who have participated in the research, giving some basic details regarding their background. This will be followed by a presentation of the research findings from the interviews. This is organised by grouping data around the specific questions asked in the interview process. Thematic analysis is discussed at the end of each question.

Identification coding

The youth workers will be identified by the short abbreviation as below.

Worker 1 (W1) (Male) is a full time youth worker for a local authority. He has several years of face-to-face experience. He also holds a BA in Community and Youth Work Studies. He in the younger age category and currently works in semi-rural areas, mainly delivering centre based activities. W1 describes himself as white British and has no disabilities.

Worker 2 (W2) (female) is a full time manager/youth worker for a local authority. She has over 20 years of face-to-face experience, several years of management experience. She also holds a BA in Community and Youth Work Studies. W2 is in the 40-50 age range and mainly works in urban areas. Her work takes place via face-to-face, detached, outreach and through technologies. W2 believe that technologies are very important to youth work practice but have positive and negative effects.

Worker 3 (W3) (Male) is a full time worker for a large voluntary organisation. He has over 10 years experience in youth work in various forms. W3 is in the 30-40 age range and works in Semi-rural areas. His work takes place through face-to-face, outreach, and via technologies. W3 states that he white British. He also points out that he has no disabilities. He has a BA in Community and Youth Work Studies. W3 states that he is positive towards the use of technologies in practice.

Worker 4 (W4) (Female) is a full time coordinator youth worker for a faith based youth organisation. W4 has a between 0-5 years experience in youth work, and is the younger age category. W4 holds a psychology degree. She states she has no disabilities, and sees herself as white British. She works in urban areas, and is involved in face-to-face and one-to-one work. She uses technologies in practice and believes them to be very important within the work she does.

Worker 5 (W5) (Male) is a full time youth coordinator for a faith based voluntary organisation. W5 has between 11-20 years of experience and is in the 30-40 years age category. He states he is white British and has no disabilities. W5 has no qualifications

relating to youth work. His work takes place in urban areas. W5 believes there are both positives and negatives when using technologies in practice.

Worker 6 (W6) (Male) is a fulltime youth worker/manager for a local authority. W6 has over 20 years experience of working with young people in a variety of different forms. W6 is in the 50-60 years age category. W6 has a BA in Community and Youth Work Studies. W6 believe technologies have a negative effect on practice, but can see their importance in some situations.

Worker 7 (W7) (Female) is a fulltime youth worker for a small voluntary organisation. W7 is in the 30-40-year age category and has between 11-20 years of experience in youth work. W7 has a BA in Community and Youth Work Studies. She states that she is white British and she has a disability. W6 believes technologies have both a positive and negative effect on practice.

Worker 8 (W8) (Female) is a part time volunteer youth worker for a small voluntary organisation. W8 is in the 20-30 years age category and has between 0-5 years' experience. Her practice take place in rural areas, via face-to-face, and via technologies. W8 states she is white British and has no disability. W8 believes technologies are essential for practice and that they have a positive effect.

Worker 9 (W9) (Female) is a fulltime worker for a local authority. W9 is in the 40-50 years age category and has between 11-20 years of youth work experience. She holds a BA in Community and Youth Work Studies. W9 states she is white Irish and has no disability. Her practice takes place in urban settings and she works face-to-face, outreach, detached, and via technologies.

Worker 10 (W10) (Female) is a fulltime youth worker for a small voluntary organisation. W10 is in the 30-40 years age category and has between 11-20 years' experience of youth work. She holds a BA in Community and Youth Work Studies. W10 states she is white British and has no disabilities. W10 works face-to-face, outreach, one-to-one and via technologies with young people in urban settings. She feels technologies can have both positive and negative effects yet are important for youth work practice.

Worker 11 (W11) (Male) is a fulltime youth worker for a small voluntary organisation. W11 is in the 30-40 years age category and has between 11-20 years of experience. He holds a BA in Community and Youth Work Studies. W11 states that he is white British and has a hearing impairment. W11 currently works in urban settling, via face-to-face, outreach, detached and one-to-one. He believes that technologies have both positive and negative effects on practice. W11 also pointed out that they are very important for contacting and organising work with young people but not important for engaging.

Worker 12 (W12) (Female) is a fulltime youth worker for a local authority. W12 is in the 20-30-year age category and has 06-10 years of youth work experience. W12 has a MA in Community and Youth Work Studies. She works in a semi-rural setting and works via face-to-face, outreach, detached, one-to-one and via technologies. W12 states she is white British and she has no disabilities. She believes technologies have a positive effect on practice.

Worker 13 (W13) (Female) is a part time worker for a small voluntary organisation and for a local authority. W13 is in the 20-30 years age category and has 06-10 years of youth work experience, W13 has a NVQ level 2 in youth work. She states she is white

British and has no disability. W13 works in urban setting via face-to-face and detached. W12 believes that technologies have a positive effect on practice.

How are youth workers communicating with young people?

All of the interviewees pointed out that they used mobile phone calls, and text (SMS) within their work (W1, W2, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W8, W9, W10, W11, W12, W13). There were variations in the ways in which these mediums were used and utilised, but this seemed to be the quickest, most practical, and convenient technology currently available for the communication of information. One-to-many texting was a popular technique for organising, informing, and reminding young people about events and activities. There was little evidence that calls and text were used for deep discussion, however, they were used to encourage co-present face-to-face interactions in which deeper discussion could take place. They were also used as a safety mechanism, enabling practitioners to be contactable with young people in vulnerable situations.

Several of the practitioners pointed out that not only was mobile text the best way of communicating but it allowed the practitioner to send information to a large group easily and effectively. As W3 states

> how I do it, if I text young people, which I admit I do, but I'll text them on my work phone. If say the session's quickly changed, rather than ring 20 kids up, I'll just do one group text, and they get it all (W3).

Interestingly, W3 pointed out that texting best suited her preference as she would rather not talk to people on the phone. W4 stated that she regularly communicated with

volunteers, and parents, by text, but not young people. This was because her

organisation did not have a work's mobile, and she had to use her own. It was evident

that mobile text is the preferred form of communication for both workers, and young

people, volunteers and parents. However, W4 was limited in her ability to communicate

as she only had access to her own personal phone. She was prepared to use her own

calls, and text to contact parents and volunteers because of the convenience; however,

this limited her in the fact that she could not contact young people on a personal phone.

> I use it for the volunteers. That's my best way of communicating with volunteers, because they're all at _____ University. Or some are at _____ and the local colleges, so kind of sending a group text really, really works. But I don't have a work's mobile, so I don't mind, because the volunteers are, well you can trust them, but I wouldn't be very happy - like which I have to do and I don't particularly like – when I have to text the parents, or ring them off my mobile if we're on a trip. I don't particularly think that's too professional, but.... sending a group text to volunteers is so helpful, yes. But obviously I wouldn't text the children, because I don't have a work's phone. But I can see the benefits of it if it was a youth project and you could just say, like, "Don't forget we're going on a trip on Saturday (W4).

W5 co-ordinates youth work within faith based services around the region. He does not

work directly with young people on a regular basis anymore but is aware that the youth

leaders within their youth groups mainly use text messages to communicate with young

people and families. He also mentioned that some of his groups use Facebook, and

Twitter to communicate basic information. (W5) is aware that

> Standard communication would be sent out on a whole lot of text messages (W5).

(W7) is a detached youth worker and uses text and other technologies to contact, inform and discuss issues regarding her project. She pointed out that she uses text as an addition to face-to-face interaction and discussion. W7 gave examples of how this was an important conduit between herself and young people, and sometimes their parents. Being contactable was very important to W7, and technology in this sense seemed to enable her to create a safe space beyond traditional boundaries. This was also important within the interview with W8. W8 suggested that cyberspace was open and accessible, and highlighted that in these spaces communication was not bound by her working hours. W8 believed that it was important that young people should be able to contact her whenever they needed too. W8 also suggests that communication through technologies is often preferred to face-to-face.

> A lot of the young people I work with have my work mobile phone number and know they can text if there's an issue. I often receive Facebook messages and emails from my young people asking for advice etc. It's useful to have a way in which they can contact me immediately, rather than having to wait until the next youth session. Not only that I find a few of my young people struggle to initially communicate with me and my workers, it's helpful that they have this less evasive way of communicating (W8).

Social network sites

Social network sites were also utilised by the practitioners. This medium was mainly used to convey basic information. But some used Facebook chat facilities to communicate with young people. With the convergence of applications and social network sites such as Facebook on to smartphones it is difficult to map the ways in which devices are utilised. Trends toward mobile technologies are growing at an

incredible rate (Ofcom, 2014). The way in which practitioners use their devices is almost impossible to map and it is not the main focus of this discussion. Therefore, call, and text and social network sites will be discussed separately for the moment.

W3 works with young carers and their families. Social network sites have become extremely important for the people he works with and have enabled the creation of community for families and individuals who are often isolated. W3 highlighted that not only are these sites very useful in his communication with family and young carers but they create a social space in which people can thrive beyond the project. He talks about the empowering potential of SNS.

> So we did quite a lot of work with some of the mums of the young carers we work with, mums with mental health issues. And they've gone onto, I think through making friends with us on Facebook, and then noticing they're friends with each other on Facebook. I think they've gone on to give quite a lot of support to each other…And I think when you've got women who are agoraphobic, that's a huge difference; that's a really positive thing. And not only agoraphobic but having very tough times with their own teenage children. Because it's hard enough dealing with a teenager, dealing with a teenager when you've got a mental health issue, and there's all sorts of guilt and resentment and love that goes all bundled in a family where that's happening. And it's intensified because it's just in these walls permanently, support via Facebook I think has been quite important for them (W3).

During the interview with W2 she pointed out that her organisation carried out research into social media with young people from her projects, and it was identified that young people wanted to be contacted through, and communicate through, Facebook. When their research findings were presented to the council, the idea was rejected. The council were concerned about the monitoring of such processes and they suggested that the project have a restricted information only (no use of chat facilities) Facebook page.

Interestingly the young people, pointed out that that is 'not what Facebook's about' and rejected the councils compromise.

> The Facebook site the council attempted to try was where young people could just access information. They couldn't ask questions. It wasn't a two-way street…So they said, "Well, that's not what Facebook's about." They said, "We could just go and get that off a poster or something." They couldn't have a conversation with someone. It was just more the council putting information on. And the council wouldn't get back in touch with any young people through it. So they said they wouldn't use it (W2).

This example is interesting in terms of power. Young people did not have the power to communicate through their chosen method, the traditional site of hierarchy (the council) resisted new forms of communication. As Castells (2011) argues, traditional sites of power will resist new more horizontal forms of communication (Castells, 2011). In this sense this new form of communication might be viewed as a threat to this site of authority.

Alternatively, these may be real concerns that new technologies might start to affect youth workers' working practices as the nature of these technologies encourage 24/7 communication (Castells, 2009a). W9 stated that she had to set rules for the young people to protect the boundaries of her professional work, pointing out "you aren't going to get us at ten o'clock at night" (W9). This comment, however, does suggest that young people were trying to communicate with her outside of working hours. W9 suggests that it is important to be able to communicate through a variety of mediums. She believes that communication technologies such as mobile phones are an appendage which are so much a part of young people that they do not see themselves as separate from the

technology. For this reason, W9's project has been very creative and open to new forms of communication. Her work often involves working with young vulnerable women who will often only communicate through text or social network sites at the start of their relationship. W9 points out that technology is then essential in the process of supporting, building and sustaining relationships with young people. However, she also highlights the problematic issues which can happen in virtual worlds, and the new ethical issues practitioners may face.

> So if they said "Right, I'm going to commit suicide tonight," how would you respond to that? So fortunately we haven't seen that yet and it's a risk I'm aware of. It is worrying, particularly when we're dealing with kids whose parents might have mental health issues. Kids might be developing mental health issues themselves. Quite a few that have self-harmed, so what do you do when someone hasn't sent you that message but they've put it on a public thing anyone can see that says "I'm going to hurt myself tonight, or something like that...So fortunately the challenge hasn't happened. And in that situation I think the first thing we'd be doing was contacting them privately, I suppose, by Facebook, or even giving them a call and saying "We can see this; it pops up on the newsfeed; are you alright? Do you want to chat to anyone? The other solution that people have suggested, not in the organisation but in other projects, is just don't follow anybody on your newsfeed. Cut yourself right off from that, don't subscribe – cut off all your subscriptions so you just don't see anything. But I think we'd probably lose quite a bit of knowing more and more about the young people that we work with if we did that as well, because they have chosen to be our friends, and they do choose to put these things up there, and they're well aware that you can see it (W3).

Other ethical issues were evident in the way in which practitioners used new social technologies. One practitioner stated that they used SNS to access 'intelligence' regarding young people's movements and behaviours.

> "Who's going here? Who's going there?" So you know straightaway okay that's what's going on. So it's given us the heads up a few times when we've

been doing detached work. You'll see "meeting at so, bring your drink, meeting here, meeting there. "(W10).

This example describes how new technologies such as SNS offer the environment for new forms of surveillance as suggested in the literature (Foucault, 1991; Westlake, 2008).

Discussion

Mobile calls and text, and Facebook seem to be the most popular medium of communication between practitioners, young people, and colleagues. New technologies are clearly a new and powerful way of communicating with large groups quickly and efficiently. Even the most technophobic practitioner (W6) 'confessed' that he used text regularly. However, the practitioners and organisations linked to councils were actively discouraged from communicating through texting and Facebook. It is very evident that most of the practitioners were constrained in their communication and often were unable to communicate via the technologies which young people preferred to use use a due to their organisation's technology and internet policy, confirming the findings from the survey (Chapter 5) (W2). This concurs with Podd (2010, 2015) that young people lack power in decision making and participation, to the point that they cannot suggest their preferred means of communication and perhaps that traditional sites of power are fearful of changes in communication between individuals and institutions (Castells, 2011). W9 and W10's examples give some indication of the possibilities of working through SNS and how important being present in these new spaces could be for youth work providers, but also highlights the ethical issues, resources, and new ways of

working which would have to be considered and developed to support such a task. As suggested earlier in the thesis an adaption to this new environment presents the potential for a complete cultural change in communication, and therefore fundamental changes for youth work theory and practice (This will be explored further in the discussion and conclusion chapter).

It is interesting to consider the nature of communication technologies and their relationship to youth work practice, it seems very evident from the comments that mobile calls, texts and social network sites are culturally embedded in social life. The nature of youth work practice does not work well within this, as practitioners are constrained by time limitations with some workers only working a few hours a week. Technologies encourage communication around the clock (Castells, 2009a, b, 2010). The expectation of immediate response and convenient communication is increasingly becoming a cultural norm according to Turkle (2011). She suggests we are increasingly tethered to work via technology. This tethering blurs the lines between our personal, and professional lives as people are always online and reachable. Also by going deeper into the outer-practice lives of young people we are invited to see other sides of them (their backstage) (Goffman, 1959). SNS help make visible constructed performances that straddle the frontstage and the backstage, the public and the private. Social network sites in particular invite us to know someone better, or see the faces which they do not present in co-presence. The question should be not should we refrain from building relationships through these forms but, is youth work currently resourced for the task of doing so? The limitations in voluntary and statutory youth service are very evident with almost all local authority youth services in decline (NYA, 2016; Richardson,

2016). Therefore, it might be argued the boundaries of our relationships we have with young people must be clear, and realistic. Also, the idea of gathering information on young people's actions outside of youth work sessions bring up new issues of surveillance as suggested in the literature (Westlake, 2008, Foucault, 1991). New technologies have made it very easy for both youth workers and young people to access information on each other. This puts into question issues of confidentiality and disclosure, as in the experience of W10 she had evidence that young people were drinking under age. This information had not been passed on willingly by the young people but retrieved strategically.

Also what is written on SNS may be an extension of the truth or general 'banter', yet youth workers may increasingly feel pressures to intervene or pass on information if they perceive young people to be 'at risk'. This may also 'spoil' young people's online identities as suggested by Trottier (2014) and this may have implications for other areas of their lives.

How are practitioners using technologies within their practice to encourage dialogue?

It is evident that when practitioners were asked about how new technologies encouraged dialogue there were many varying factors involved. Conversation through technologies ranged from the most basic communication of information, through to in-depth online counselling. In many of these cases the organisation's policy created restrictive environments, and safe guarding protocols limited the potential for dialogue through devices. However,as mentioned, it was evident that technologies were almost

universally used to organise social activity in the co-present. Calls and text were used to 'check in' with people, however there were no real examples of how text and calls were used for sustained conversation. A small number of the interviewees used social network sites for dialogue; one in particular highlighted in-depth counselling work with young people in very challenging situations. This was an invaluable tool for the worker, as the young person would not communicate face-to-face in the co-present.

Others highlighted how new technologies created some problematic situations in which some young people were communicating through their personal technologies while in the presence of others. In these examples this seemed to disturb the environment and made it difficult for the group to engage fully in a dialogue with the workers.

> I mean the young people come in and everybody's like head down and everybody's looking at their screens. We have situations in, for example, our project night, all the time if somebody's talking and half the group are texting on their mobile phones and obviously that is not the type of values that we're trying to instill; I mean apart from anything else it's a bit rude (W10).

In this example, the youth worker wanted to encourage a 'mutual focus' within the group but the young people's 'exclusive' use of technology (focusing on their own individual activity) (Ictech,2014) had resulted in a negative, or failed ritual for the group (Collins, 2011). If individuals feel they are not being listened to, and their audience does not even look at them, they may lose self-confidence in their ability to speak to a group. This example highlights the issues practitioners may face in terms of trying to facilitate positive social education and learning.

Interestingly, very few of the practitioners indicated that they did not use technologies because they felt face-to-face interaction was somehow better. It was only when technologies were used during co-present interaction that the use of technology became an issue, with most of the practitioners giving examples of how the use of mobile in particular, had been a barrier or distraction from conversation. However, there were also positive examples of how technologies had enabled dialogue to take place.

> We have had situations where young people haven't been able to attend the young people's management meetings and they have used skype to conference call. Mainly so that the group had a full quorum (W13).

These examples highlight the paradox of new technologies. In some cases, we see how the use of technology in co-presence has an extremely negative effect on 'mutual focus' (Collins, 2010). But in this case we see how technologies enable young people to take part in a meeting (and decision making processes) via technology as suggested by Davies and Cranston, 2008).

Internet resources, a catalyst for conversation

As mentioned the extent to which conversations were stimulated by the use of text and calls was limited. However, several of the practitioners pointed out that they had used websites such as YouTube to create environments for conversation. Sometimes this was used prescriptively, with a practitioner using a documentary on issues such as smoking, for example, as a starting point for conversation. Others pointed out that conversations would happen spontaneously from practitioners commenting upon the

videos young people were watching in what Ictech (2014) calls the 'collaborative' use of technology. W1 gives an example:

> It brings up all sorts of bizarre issues actually. It's good to know what young people use the internet for as well… you'd probably learn a lot about young people from what they're watching and from the sort of issues that we have with the computers…because if they are watching certain things, like you could have the most bizarre conversations. I had a discussion with a young person who was adamant that bare-knuckle boxing was legal. I said "What are you watching on there isn't a legal fight, is it? Basically somebody's being assaulted or somebody is doing that, it's like street fighting, they're not supposed to do it – it shouldn't be on YouTube and you shouldn't be watching it because it's illegal (W1).

W10 gives an example of how her organisation has used Facebook to ask questions which might stimulate conversation on issues that affect young people, this is done in the form of an online poll so the reaction is limited in cyberspace but the conversation could continue in the co-present.

> I don't know if would be classed as encouraging conversation, but I suppose that's one way that we have used Facebook to try and encourage a bit of participation in what we're doing…. The other thing we've done is we've used like little polls to get young people's opinions on things so around like LGBT awareness week we put some stuff out like should gay footballers be out and proud about their sexuality? Like yes, no, depends and we encouraged young people to say what they thought and get some debate going and things like that (W10).

W2 suggested that many conversations had manifested from young people's use of the internet, and that it was often a major informant of young people's opinion. W2 stated that young people's views could often be traced back to particular websites, suggesting

new forms of persuasion through technology. W2 suggests that young people are often more knowledgeable on certain subjects than the youth workers, because of their access to knowledge through the internet. What are the implications for youth workers in this light? (This will be further explored in the discussion chapter).

Discussion

It is evident that youth workers are limited in their abilities to fully engage in dialogue with young people through technologies. However, there does seem to be a wide range of situations in which this could be beneficial, particularly as communication via these means seems to be becoming preferable to certain groups.

It seems that sites and applications such as YouTube are essential in stimulating conversation in youth work settings. YouTube, and the internet generally offer an extremely powerful resource for engagement, and problem posing for practitioners (Freire, 1993). However, the stimulation of conversation became difficult when young people used technologies 'exclusively' particularly on mobile devices (Ictech, 2014).

The example where W13's group used Skype within a conference call highlights some of the beneficial features of the technology to keep participants involved in democratic dialogue and processes as suggested by Davies and Cranston (2008). However, there is another side to this as the convenience that the technologies offer could encourage members not to meet face-to-face and increasingly rely on mediated communication, this could have a corrosive and displacing effect on the group (Nie, & Hillygus, 2002, Ling, 2008).

How are practitioners using technologies to maintain and develop relationships?

Within the previous answers, practitioners have given examples of how technologies have been used to build and consolidate relationships. It is also evident that practitioners were aware of the possibilities the technologies hold, but are also aware of their practice limitations. Being contactable 24/7 would open the possibility for strong relationships to be formed, but would also put expectations on workers to communicate with young people outside of working hours and days. They may also receive confidential information which needs to be passed on and this would also impact on youth workers' personal lives. It is fair to say that even contact through a one-to-many text is helpful in maintaining relationships. Receiving a message could make young people feel that they belong to a community and are associated with a group. It has been suggested that young people now communicate through several mediums within the relationship depending on preference and convenience. It is also evident that communication is frequent and happens around the clock. In light of the literature,it might be suggested that young people are retreating from traditional social situations and investing significant time in their mediated activity (Nie, Hillyligus, 2002). Contrary to this, W2 suggests that although technologies are a huge part of young people's lives they still want to be together with the staff and other young people in co-presence.

> They just want to still hang around and sit and chat to each other. So I think definitely, even though they've got contact with each other through Facebook and texting, they do crave this whole "Let's come together as a little group" ... they're all turning up at half five on a Wednesday. And it doesn't start until six. But you can bet they're always there half an hour before. Because they're just desperate to all be together, I think, and just find out what they're all doing and that kind of thing (W2).

This description of the group suggests that there is something essential in co-present group interaction which motivates individuals to return to sites of social ritual as suggested by Goffman (1959), Collins (2005) and Ling (2008). This suggests the young people have had very positive ritual experiences in the past. Interestingly this group has an explicit 'focus' (This is a youth forum which focuses on local issues). It might be deduced that they want to be together to enjoy each other's company in co-presence. This could be associated with the fact that they had a particular general 'mutual focus' in which positive EE are built and entrained, they were kept on task and were not distracted by technologies (Collins, 2005).

Online relationships

When considering relationships via technology W5 is reflective about the issues that can occur. He highlights the difference between online and offline relationships as vastly different, and the issues that can arise from bad judgement.

> And because – in my own mind I am quite clear about this – I think it's because they can't see the interaction that's happening face to face. So they don't see the effect of their words on the other person, they just rant on the keyboard and then hit enter or post, and it's there and it's gone. And not only can everybody else see that they've had a rant or that they've said something inappropriate, they are not aware unless somebody brings it to their attention of the potential damage or the actual real damage that they've caused (W5).

Interestingly W5 is an older practitioner who no longer works with young people but does supervise youth workers. His experiences are therefore interpretations of other

people's experiences. Generally, his comments were negative towards young people's use of technologies suggesting a generational difference in attitude regarding age and a general moral panic discourse in the interview (Cohen, 1980). Having predefined ideas of young people's online behaviours therefore may inform negative images of young people for workers. This could have negative implications for the relationship between younger and older generations.

However W7, who is in the 30-40 year old category but concurs with W5, a raises concerns about the potential for 'meaningful' relationships in cyberspace.

> If you're just talking about keeping in touch with somebody, then it helps you keep in touch with them. But it doesn't help that young person build up relationships, I don't believe, in any sort of meaningful way. Because I think often with the internet, relationships with people can be very false, built on lies, built on very shaky ground. I don't think it enhances the formulation of real, solid relationships, and it certainly doesn't teach a young person how to interact with others (W7).

This suggests that strong relationships can only really be initiated face-to-face in co-presence, and that relationships made in cyberspace are weak and ambiguous. This is perhaps at odds with the earlier claims of W3 who gave examples of strong online communities forming through Facebook. Whether these groups sustain and extend in to 'real' relationships are not clear, but they seem to be particularly important to individuals who are socially isolated.

Interestingly W1 suggests that the allure of technological resources can have a positive effect on relationships. Creating situations from which young people and youth workers

can negotiate and build strong relationships. For this worker this negotiation is essential

in sustaining relationships with young people who might be viewed as hard to reach.

> …in every session that they're coming in to use the consoles if they can talk to me about an issue that's in the news or something about how they're doing in school or what they want to do when they leave school, then that's positive, I think. I think that's youth work; that's how we can use it now…and we end up building good relationships, and I think because you have those relationships when you say "Come and do this with us for 15 minutes and then you can go back to doing what you want to do," I think that's sometimes how I work around it (W1).

Several of the interviewees referred to the new environment and how relationship

boundaries have become harder to define and sustain because young people expect

relationships to exist on more levels than they did traditionally. Being able to contact

someone via Facebook seems to be an important feature in a relationship with a young

person. Practitioners pointed out that they were always receiving friend requests via

Facebook.

> I see staff as well, and you've had ones say if for example maybe they've worked on a project for so long, and even if it's a work phone, whatever, they kind of text people, or they Facebook people. And there are issues around staff having friends as young people on Facebook sites, and all that kind of thing, which is their own site and whatever. But there's a little bit about the grey area of personal/professional being overstepped, where you become too close to that young person. And it has been where you end up sharing what you are going to do that afternoon or that weekend. And it's just that grey area, where it can be used wrongly, I suppose…If you're using it just – which I do – it might just be meetings, or just telling people things are cancelled, just not getting into this kind of chit-chat stuff with young people…But it's a difficult one, because as youth workers you're kind of seen as, if you want to say, a good friend as well. You have to have some form of an attachment with young people, which is a good attachment, but it's not overstepping the mark that way as well (W2).

This balance seems to be a new ethical dilemma as young people increasingly expect to be able to communicate via a variety of means. W8 points out that being contactable is an important feature of relationships and therefore to build 'meaningful' relationships workers need to be available at any time and by a variety of media. Even when youth services are not functioning.

> I'm always available for my young people via social networking and mobile device to ensure that our relationships are maintained throughout periods where the youth service isn't available. It also allows staff to keep in contact during these times without having to have formal meetings (W8).

W8 also argues that technologies enable young people to bypass barriers to engagement, and are empowering for marginalised or isolated groups.

> Tech. gives us a way to build relationships with young people we necessarily wouldn't come face-to-face with as these young people would usually have to walk through our doors. By using technology, we can engage with young people who wouldn't step foot in our setting in the first place due to lack of knowing it's available, distance etc. (W8).

W9 states that young people expect to be able to communicate with practitioners via a variety of means, and points out the importance of being available via these technologies. To not be available in these new spaces excludes groups who will only communicate through these means.

> They expect to be able to get hold of us through a mobile phone and they expect us to be on Facebook. And they expect us to be able to communicate with their preferred method of communication. So we have mobile phones

which are the Project mobile phones. Lots of young women, again, will text but won't answer their phone so we'll ring it, they won't answer… We send them a text and got an answer straight back. That happens all the time (W9).

W13 points out the difficulties she has faced when working with young people whose lives are immersed in technologies.

> It is really hard to know what to do sometimes. We have this one lad who is constantly on Facebook via his phone or through our computers and he literally narrates his life, well his status anyway, and when people have commented on his status he announces it to everyone" "I'm like, we don't want to know! " (W13).

W9 points out that technologies have created a number of risks and opportunities in practice and in many ways strengthen the relationships between young people and the practitioners. She has learned through experience, and has developed rules and boundaries to safeguard herself and the young people involved in her projects. But it is also evident that her work has strayed outside the confines of set working hours, and that it is the nature of the technology which has enabled this change (Castell, 2009,a,b).

In the interview with W7, she talked about her experience and the importance of keeping in touch with young people via mobile.

> I think that I definitely use texting as a way just to check in with young people, especially if I know there's a lot going on with their lives and perhaps they haven't got time. Like, some of our mums have got two kids and they're going through domestic violence and they've got appointments with social workers and counsellors…You know most of the days of the week and it's just that text to say, 'Are you free to meet up for a cuppa this week? How's things going? Do you need me to give you a call' (W7).

This 'checking in' through messages seems to play an important role, and could be seen as essential maintenance of modern relationships. Interestingly W7 pointed out that messaging could corrode relationships as it might increasingly make it too convenient to just text instead of meeting face-to-face. The interviewer and W7 discussed this issue.

> You know what you were saying about you checking in with people; are you saying that that can become convenient and… That kind of overtakes actually going to see somebody, do you know what I mean? (Interviewer)

> (W7)" Yes. I suppose so, yes, yes. I suppose you're right. I think on occasion it probably does. It probably means that on detached youth work, we're far less likely just to pop in round their house, which is something that we used to do a lot, knock on people's doors when we're out and about on the estate and say, "Oh, we haven't seen you for a while. What's up? We just thought we'd pop by. How's things going?" Which is something in the early days we used to do quite a lot of, but now I don't tend to do as much because I suppose I can just text and say, "What's up?" (W7).

This ability to bypass what might be viewed as 'real' interaction because of convenience and communicative preference is a significant change in the youth workers' professional relationships with young people. This will be discussed further in the discussion chapter.

W1 highlights some of the issues that can arise through the use and abuse of technologies. He gave an example of how social network sites could have profound implications for youth work providers and the relationship between youth workers and young people.

We were closing the session one night and found a picture of two of our young girls on the projects computers screen saver... At first I thought "Oh my God, there's two of our young girls in their underwear. That's really, really – why are they...?" …somebody had saved these pictures to our screensavers... I was quite disappointed. Never found out who did it. And obviously when we did a little bit of digging these were just pictures they had of themselves on Facebook. And someone else had obviously just copied and pasted them and saved them as wallpaper on our computers. Which I think if we didn't see it and somebody else had used them the next day, what would they have thought about us? So I haven't seen the girls since, the two girls who it was. They will know I contacted the school about it (W1).

In a similar case W9 talked about an issue in which her organisation's Facebook account was hacked, and the hacker posted negative statements to a young person, which had severe consequences, and destroyed the relationship between a young person, the youth worker and the organisation.

we were like horrified because she was absolutely such a lovely young woman – loads and loads of issues going on in her life. So we thought "What the bloody…" And we still don't know until this day. So we've tried ringing her, we've tried going round her house. Because we wanted to sort things out… We're absolutely devastated that you would think we would do you any harm. Please ring us. And if anyone was going to speak to _____ will you like let us know and tell her to get in contact with us or come and see us (W9).

Discussion

Generally, this discourse regarding relationships and new technologies is extremely mixed and complex with positive and very negative implications in practice. The paradoxical social effects of new technologies are very evident in the findings. It seems that practitioners are saying that relationships cannot develop via communication technologies alone. In this sense, they are a useful tool for 'checking in' with young

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people, arranging and organising to meet, engaging young people in co-present relationships. It is evident that the convenient use of technologies for 'checking in' often makes it easy not to meet face-to-face, and therefore could have a corrosive effect on a relationship. Several practitioners highlight the problematic nature of online relationships as lacking depth and meaning and can be potentially harmful. However, many others also pointed out that young people expect relationships to exist beyond the co-present and that being contactable is a part of any 'meaningful' relationship in the current context. Also some suggest technologies are potentially excellent tools for engaging young people who would not usually have the confidence to access youth provision, or those restricted by distance. Does this require us to consider new forms of relationships and forms of communities, communities that function online and offline in new embodied space as suggested in the work of Farman (2012)? Are the professional relationships which develop within the boundaries of the traditional youth work settings, not enough for young people? Is this limiting the effectiveness of youth work?

How do youth workers feel about the changes in the technological environment in relation to their practice and how does this relate to their demographic profile?

Considering the issue of whether practitioners had given thought to the changes in the technological environment, there was clear evidence that practitioners' views varied relative to age and experience. It was also apparent that it was difficult to distinguish between personal and professional technological experience as they overlap greatly in this respect.

When discussing the changes in young peoples' interactive behaviours within informal settings W1 highlighted the difference between his interpretations of the changes compared to his older colleague. W1 pointed out that his older colleague was often frustrated by young people's 'rudeness' and lack of inclination to interact.

W1 is a young youth worker who recognised the difference between his colleague's experience compared to his own.

> Yes, he's in his forties, and he's been working with young people for a long time in loads of different settings. And for a long, long time he was a detached youth worker as well, so obviously a lot of his work was talking to young people….And he loves it – obviously he'll do whatever young people want to do, but sometimes when you are walking round a youth club setting and just having conversations about different things, asking young people how they are, when young people don't – not pretty much stop what they're doing, but when they would prefer just not to have the conversation with the human being that's talking to them, rather just carry on with whatever they're doing, that bothers him a little bit more than it bothers me…But I have grown up with technology; I have been a young person who's used games consoles and who's had the internet and used the internet in school. So I was probably in a similar sort of position, whereas when he was younger I would imagine adults talking to you before you were texting on your phone or whatever (W1).

As mentioned in the previous section (W5) there were definite signs that attitudes towards technologies were loosely link to age. With several of the practitioners over 25 years of age highlighting a lack of understanding of the new environment. These older practitioners seemed very concerned about the co-present social effects of the new technologies while those under 25 were less concerned (W1, W13). Even in the case of W9 who was a pioneer of using technology in practice, who highlighted the benefits of work through SNS, still indicated that technologies had a detrimental effect on co-

present social interaction, and took an extremely hardline in regards to their use in youth work settings. W6 explained that his attitude to technology has a detrimental effect on his relationship to young people. He pointed out that he only uses computers when necessary and in many ways he lacks digital literacy. However, this is a choice made in conjunction with his experience, and his value of face-to-face social interaction.

> I think that today if you can't use the computer, it's like being illiterate. And that's the way it is, you know, the equivalent of not being able to read and write. I'm a dinosaur compared to most people now. I think it was better when people just interacted (W6).

He gives an example of his interactions and relationship with his daughter.

> My daughter texts me from upstairs, 'will you put the kettle on' (W6)

W6 presents rather nostalgic views of the past and his experience of interaction as a young person.

> When I was growing up we used to go out to the country, out the way from people, setting fires, sit round and chat. Throwing a few potatoes that we'd got from the farmer's field into the fire. We were covered in soot and everything, but we were interacting you know and it was quite social (W6).

As a younger worker W13 maybe belongs to a generation which is "Not as offended as what other generations are" (W13).

Interestingly two of the interviewees talked about the way in which new technologies were affecting the deaf clubs they had been involved with. W4 suggested that social Network sites might be having an effect on co-present sociability.

> …all the deaf clubs are shutting, or they're all like 70 year olds and 80 year olds that go, because new deaf – if that makes sense – can text each other. Because, say 30 years ago, if deaf people wanted to meet each other, they'd know on a Friday afternoon the deaf club would be open. But now deaf can text each other, they don't have to talk on the phone; so deaf clubs are shutting all over (W4).

> Really? (Interviewer)

> Yes. So I don't know if that… But that, like really… They're massively shutting. And the funding's cutting because they're not going, because rather than being told you have to meet your deaf friends on a Tuesday at two, I don't know, they can say, "Oh, well, shall we do this?" We can text, which is quite interesting, that technology's supported deaf in that way, hasn't it? (W4)

W11 is a deaf person, and a youth worker and points out that the deaf community experience paradoxical social benefits from technologies. While offering people the benefits of social interaction and community. The technology displaces and encourages people to stay at home.

> It's cheaper than having to travel to meet someone. What is it, £10-£15 a month paying for broadband? That means I don't have to pay to get on the bus, I don't have to go to the pictures. I don't have to go to the pub or the cafe or whatever to buy any food or drink. That's their perspective and I disagree with that …it's about social skills and being involved in the community, gaining confidence and being independent, being able to use public transport. Using your organisational skills. Staying at home, that's not exactly a skill but my belief is going out is useful. Do it in your leisure time. You need to do

something every week, you can't just stay at home in front of a computer screen all of the time. That's really important" (W11).

It is interesting that the general discourse regarding technology in this section is negative (Which on reflection may also be informed by my biased construction of the questions and my experience as an older practitioner). W6 is nostalgic about simpler times and clearly values face-to-face co-presence. There is a moral panic related to age in this case (Cohen, 1980). Again, in W11's case, he is concerned with the closing of deaf clubs, yet this example suggests that these young people now have a choice to interact with new communities of people which they did not before and communicate through means which are more to their preference (Madell and Muncer, 2007). For these young people online communities may feel more organic. If true, this implies a positive change for these young people. But the evidence suggests that it is encouraging them to move away from co-present interaction (Nie, Hillyligus, 2002, Valkenburg, Peter, 2007). It is evident, then, that something is lost and gained in this process.

Is the quality and focus of interactions and relationships being affected by these technologies in youth work settings?

The majority of the practitioners pointed out that technologies affected their co-present interactions in negative ways. It was difficult to measure whether it actually affected relationships but it did seem to suggest a tension between youth workers and young people. One of the practitioners pointed out that she removed phones from the young people when they came into her project (W9) as she thought it was essential that

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people listen to each other, and support each other in group work settings. This 'mutual focus' was seen as essential in creating environments in which young people could gain confidence through positive interactions. It is notable that this project targeted vulnerable and hard to reach young people and encouraged relatively formal, group work environments. In a sense, it cannot really be judged in the same terms as generic youth work settings. Interestingly, several of the practitioners who complained about the inappropriate, unsociable use of mobile phones gave examples of how this disrupted formal settings such as their youth work sessions in schools. This raises the question whether this is more to do with what 'practitioners' expect from formal rituals (Collins, 2011).

W1 expresses how he views the effect of new technologies on social interaction.

> I think it has a massive effect…Talking to the back of somebody's head or the side of somebody's face, and you'd get the odd glance; that happens...Sometimes you feel like you're disturbing them" (W1).

W1 points out how staff at his project struggle with the behaviours of young people.

> … they just will not take their eyes off the telly or stop what they're doing even to answer... Even when you're doing something for them like giving them a cup of tea or something that you've made and saying "Here you are," they won't even look at you and give you eye contact. They won't take their eyes off the computer and have a conversation with you (W1).

W1 highlights the problematic nature of the technology and the voluntary relationship. Interestingly he feels disrespected in formal situations but not in informal settings.

I'd still say in certain circumstances it could be quite ignorant if you are having a conversation. What I usually find, sometimes I've been teaching in school around something like a course. And young people, because they know me from the youth club and because I'm not a teacher in the school, they'll think it's alright just to play their music, on their phone or something. I was really struggling with that; I thought that was a bit disrespectful that they would rather listen to their music than listen to what I had to say (W1).

And in informal situations these behaviours do not even bother him.

… a lot of the time you're talking to young people in the centre and sometimes they actually are texting or doing something with technology, Blackberry Messenger can just zip a message off even quicker than a text to a friend, and it doesn't actually even – I probably don't even bat an eyelid now when a young person does that because it's just what happens (W1).

Interestingly, W1 discusses the other distracting features which take practitioners away from co-present interactions. He highlights that generic youth work settings are often chaotic environments in which 'only' fleeting conversations and interactions take place, and that this is not necessarily to do with technologies.

Because there's 101 different incidences and issues and things you have to deal with before work can happen. My point is that it is probably not about technology, it's just about the youth club setting...(W1).

W1 points out how some young people have become aware of the 'rude' and unsociable use of technologies within youth work sessions, and have developed their own ground rules to control it.

I'm not saying they have to. It's a choice. They don't have to. But the young people come up with their own guidelines, saying, "Keep your phones off (W1).

Sometimes these rules are negotiated by the workers and the young people

So we've just said for the first hour and it's all the work side, that we need to plan for the session, and then phones after that. And to be honest it's great because it just stops the distraction (W1).

It is interesting that the worker refers to this as the 'work side of things', if what is meant is the group work or youth work this might imply that this is experienced as work, as difficult, and therefore might be what Collins (2005) refers to as a 'forced ritual', which as Collins suggests lack EE and therefore energies are not 'entrained' and young people will not be motivated to return to the situation.

W2 pointed out that young people at her project are spending a significant amount of time in cyberspace and are increasingly becoming displaced from 'real' life. In this example W2 refers to the young people's use of XBOX live and the game "Call of Duty".

They have this thing where they'll go, "Let's see if we can do a 12-hour shift without stopping." And you're like, when do you ever go to school, or college, or whatever you are doing? And some will stay off college to finish whatever they're doing (W2).

This new environment clearly is powerfully immersive and has the characteristics and ingredients of successful interaction rituals IR. There is a strong 'mutual focus' (the game) and strong EE which continues over long periods of time. As mentioned this will impact on other aspects of their 'real' lives and their co-present social

experiences and learning as suggested in the displacement hypothesis (Nie, Hillyligus, 2002)

W5 suggests the use of technologies has ramifications for social life on micro and macro levels. He gave several examples of how technologies were disrupting co-present social interactions in his project, but also was aware of more serious consequences for the function of society as a whole.

> And I don't know whether that's a thing of: I've got a piece of kit here that means that I can phone who I want, send communications to whoever I want, whenever I want, therefore I'm independent of rules and structures. Even though I will take the benefits from the rules and structures when they suit me and say "No, thank you very much," when they don't…I don't know whether it's a change in generational function or what it is… But I think it could have serious implications in terms of how the society functions because if people lose the ability or the desire to actually meet together person to person, and spark off each other in terms of somebody saying something over there that they then pick up and run with it, and just that general basic level of conversation, you do wonder what the impacts will be on the society at large (W5).

Again, a generational divide is alluded to as (W5) discusses the tensions between generations and feels anxious about how these new behaviours will be perceived by the older members of his organisation.

> And sometimes it's not so much us as the leaders' point of view, it would be either other volunteers, or if it was an all-age session, an all-age activity or a service where we've got everybody from the 0-year-olds up to the 90-year-olds… who would be like "that is just the height of bad manners!" So you can use that as a positive learning so that actually you're not saying "Please don't do that because we want you to listen," but actually you need to just be aware of other people, and what you do has consequences outside of yourself (W5).

W5's example also suggests that technologies are impacting on the social education of young people and they are not learning the skills of interaction and therefore they do not know how to interact with older generations (Brignall and VanValey, 2005).

W4 also gives an example of how she was concerned about how the habits and behaviours of young people would influence younger children.

> We had an event and there was a mix of ages– because the family events are invited to everybody – and there was some more youth, like 14/15, and they kind of had their phones out all the time, and when we were trying to do things they really weren't listening. And then you don't want to say, "Oh, can I have your phone," because it's not a school session, but it's kind of like, "Well, can you set a good example, because the younger children are copying what you're doing?" Okay" (W4).

As with W5's example, W4 perceived the use of technologies as disrespectful and rude in these situations. There was a tension about how others would experience the use of technologies. Whether it was a concern with the opinions of the older generation, the social effects on younger children or the lack of social skills of the young people themselves, these practitioners seemed generally concerned with the wider social effects of the behaviours brought about by the use of technologies. Concerns also highlighted in much of the literature of Collins (2011), Ling (2008), Turkle (2011).

Several of the practitioners highlighted how their own use of technologies was impacting on their interactions in their personal lives.

> My mum goes mad with me, because she doesn't even text at all. She has a phone, but just to ring me and dad if it's an emergency and especially it annoys her – well, and it does annoy me actually – you know when mums have got

babies in the pram and they're just like texting? And you think, "Just engage with your child (W4).

W13 gives a similar example

I think it can be an issue, I think a lot of this generation, it's the normal thing, it's the norm now, like people, for instance if I go to my nannas and I'm on my phone I get shouted at, because she wasn't used to it, she wasn't brought up around that. Whereas if I'm with a friend and I'm on the phone it's just a normal thing (W13).

Youth workers discussed how they felt about the behaviours of young people. W10 gives an example of how youth work practitioners can be made to feel redundant, as young people communicate in cyberspace whilst still in the co-present setting.

It sometimes annoys us that you can have a room full of young people who are talking to each other on Facebook. They don't turn around and face each other and have a conversation…Yes it's often quite hard to engage with them when they're focused on Facebook (W10).

These examples seem to suggest that new social hegemonies in which the phone interaction (or other use of technology) becomes the priority over co-present interaction is becoming embedded in culture generally (Humphreys, 2005). Again this has implications for young people's social experience and indicates individualised activity rather than a collaborative activity with 'mutual focus' (Collins, 2008).

W7 explains the difference between interaction through technology, and co-present interaction.

I think you get a totally different image, don't you, from texting and getting a reply to actually popping around the house and seeing the condition of the house, the condition of the young person, what's going on inside the family home, how they present themselves, you know; do they look tired, do they look like they're keeping well. So I think you can get a totally different set of information now, can't you. So I definitely think – I suppose it has overtaken maybe some of the contact, the face-to-face contact (W7).

Considering a digital divide in terms of age W9 highlighted the profound change in usage of technologies and how these changes might impact on future generations.

But it's interesting like the, the iPhone and that all the apps they've got for babies as well, do you know what I mean? So you've got baby apps on it you know like… and babies using apps knowing how to swipe you know and seeing the different pictures and things. You have to look through the apps. So are we training them now from birth to…(W9).

These applications which are targeted at children are perhaps an indication of how technologies are conditioning the consumers of the future, and are also an indicator of the changing socialising experience of children and young people. Interestingly W1 states that we just have to accept this new reality, but, practitioners should not be afraid to challenge negative behaviours. The use of technologies in this sense can be problematised and the issue can be the source of dialogue toward young people's social education.

I think you have to accept things to a certain level and you have to try and work things to your advantage... and also not being scared of saying "Do you know what, that's actually quite rude to be texting". Not being scared to challenge it and letting them know that "Actually for two hours this is what we're going to be doing. After that you can go on your mobile phones" and things like that

but you know if someone's talking when you're talking...And we do challenge a lot of things and we do try and have boundaries (W1).

W9 also gives an example of how this issue sparked an important discussion on the impact of the use of technologies in group work situations.

> And this particular year we had a young woman who was, who just can't cope. And she's talking to me but she's like this. So in the end I said to her "Okay the basket's out and your phones are all in there." And then just an open and honest discussion about why they're going in there. And they were going in there because how can you support another person when you're sitting on your phone? Yes, you think you're listening but you're not" (W9).

W2 concurs

> But then when you're in sessions– you can't get through sessions without them texting, or whatever they're doing, Facebooking or whatever. It's constant…And even just to say to them, "Look, we're going to just put our phones down. We're going to leave them off for an hour." It's good" (W2).

This challenge to new social hegemony seems an important element in young people's social education for youth workers (Button, 1974; Smith, 1999, Jeffs and Smith 2010).

W12 highlights some new issues and dilemmas when challenging these behaviours and the power of this new hegemony.

> No, I mean we challenge it and the young people challenge each other but it's that classic thing that they tell somebody off for interrupting them and then they're interrupting somebody else like two seconds later. But I think just having people that will challenge it and point it out and make an issue is important (W12).

W12 gives an example of a formal educational setting.

>It's just a constant battle teachers have with stopping them from using their mobile phones and debating about whether they should take their phones off them. Should they not...Is it wrong to take the phones off them? Do they get them back at the end of the lesson? Do they get them back at the end of the day? (W12)

W11 discusses his work in detached situations.

>Now whether they carry on talking to you or they get their mobile phone out and start texting and this, that and the other, that's their decision. If they no longer want to talk to us then that's fine we'll walk away, or somebody else will jump into the conversation (W11).

In W11's case the mobile is used as a social 'prop' to signify that the person is marked absent from co-present social interaction, this might be a genuine use of the device, i.e. to answer an actual important phone call or text, or this might be used to indicate that the young person is not interested in talking to the youth worker as suggested in the theories of Goffman (1959) and Turkle (2011). Either way this is difficult for youth workers to negotiate in detached situations, what is perhaps more important is that youth workers do not use mobile devices in these situations as they may well be perceived as a 'prop' to indicate that they do not wish to interact with young people.

W6 gives an example from his one-to-one work.

>I run the perpetrators' program and this lad is texting under the table, and you can't possibly be listening to somebody when your texting at the same time. I find that really annoying (W6).

In this case W6 gets the impression that the 'prop' (the mobile) is being used to indicate that the young person does not want to be there. For W6 the act of texting under the table and (presumably) not engaging in eye contact is very difficult for him to negotiate. The situation resulted in a negative or failed IR (Ling, 2008, Collins, 2011). W6 failed to engage the young person in co-presence. This may well have affected W6 relationship with the young person, his confidence in his abilities to engage young people and therefore his general abilities in youth work. This might also confirm his views of a generational divide. While on the other hand these might well be the new norms of interaction for the young person.

W9 talks about her experience with mobile phones in practice.

> It's massive. that is... I find mobile phones more disruptive and more damaging than anything else" (W9).

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, W9 had to resort to extreme measures to ensure that people are not distracted in her session. W9 believes this is essential in creating mutually supportive social spaces.

> I confiscate their phones off them when they come in. What we've been finding just recently and it's been over the last year or so, never had to take a phone off a young woman ever. But what happens is they cannot leave it alone, they have to have it in their hands and they have to, and they have to respond to whatever's going on instantly (W9).

For W9 it is the power of the social hegemony of answering calls and texts which is the driver for the constant use and she believes that the young people at her project really

want to be there and come of their own choice. W9 pointed out this can be a very difficult issue to negotiate as young people in particular see their phones as part of themselves. A new prosthesis as suggested by Hardt and Negri (1998) Žižek (2009). She stated that she regularly received comments like:

> My right arm you can have that but you can't have me phone – do you know what I mean? (W9).

Interestingly W9 gave an example of how someone else's communication preferences can affect our own behaviors.

> There was a young woman I worked with years and years ago and I had a kind of a conversation with her. And she would always text. And we were having a discussion, she said "I text everyone but I won't speak to them on the phone." And I said "Why?" She said "Because it's easier to do it by text." And do you know what I found myself doing the same thing where I'd text rather than having to talk (W9).

W2 gives another extreme example of what she was required to do to create space for focused interaction with young people.

> …what we do is we've got some cottages that I take the kids to up at Kielder, which the council own. But you can't get mobile access. Well, I know where you can get it, but I'm not going to tell the kids that. But you can't get access in the forest where it is…And it's just like, my God, you'd think their arms had been cut off. Because it's like, "What do I do? What do I do?" And they've got so used to this…Which I think even I have. It's like if my phone's not on me – like I haven't got it on me now, but I do feel like, "Oh, my God. I haven't got a phone on me" …So even as worker you're constantly thinking you need to have a phone on you, so you're contactable all the time (W2).

Individualism

Several of the practitioners recognised individualism as a factor in young people's

communicative behaviours.

> Well, it's all changed and I've always said I truly believe no man is an island. And nobody can exist in isolation to other people. It's detrimental to try and do that. And the sense of community, community in society's quite eroded; we don't have a common purpose, we don't have a lot of shared experiences anymore, so all of the ways in which we used to come together in the wars and around common industries and stuff, we don't do anymore. So everybody's looking after their own interests instead of looking after the interests of the community and of the many…So I just think that on many levels, people are feeling increasingly depressed and deprived of social interaction and if the care and compassion of other people. And misunderstandings between people are growing and tolerance is less than it's ever been. People are so not tolerant and not patient, they're not empathetic. They're very harsh in their judgement of other people. They don't have a lot of the value bases, like maybe based around community or religion or what have you. That whole thing about how people in glasshouses shouldn't throw stones. I know you can spout all that nonsense, but I think people just don't have that kind of value base" (W7).

The interview discussion provokes W7 to reflect on her organisation ethos and youth

work values.

> Yes. I mean, that's a thing that I think is quite striking, that when I started thinking about this and reading about it, you kind of think that – I don't know; I always think in individual terms when I'm thinking about our club or whatever that we've got going on. I think of the individuals within that group. And they kind of forget about that social education side of things and that association with a group of people and how important that is and those little interactions within that. I think that's one of the things where skills are really… And something that's really important I think (W7).

It is interesting to consider this as youth policy has increasingly encouraged more individualised outcomes over recent years (Every Child Matters, 2003; Youth Matters, 2005; and Positives for Youth 2011). This is perhaps evidence that policy is informing practice more than the academic theory which focuses on group work, social education, and collective outcomes.

Throughout the interviews technologies were generally seen as an extension of this individualism. W8 however argues the opposite stating that;

> …technology is everywhere and we rely on it, in my experience technology has done nothing but strengthen the interactions and relationships I have with my staff and young people" (W8).

Clearly W8 has the ability to communicate by any means she needs which is not true for many of the other practitioners. This example highlights the potential positive relationships which can develop and sustain through multiple sources of technology.

Interestingly W3 discussed the way technologies, can create opportunities for social interaction for socially isolated young people.

> I did take a lad to a gaming centre in Newcastle the other week and we were playing stream games…But the same lad, very socially isolated, very shy lad, but when talking to him about the things that make him happiest, as far as he's concerned he's got lots of friends but that's Xbox LIVE. He's got loads of friends on Xbox LIVE. And that makes him really happy; that's one of his biggest joys in live is his Xbox LIVE and the friends he's in contact there" (W3).

> And then I took him along to this Gamerzone just off Chinatown in Newcastle. And they've got a load of network PCs, it's all set up with stream so you just play loads of different games. And he absolutely loved it; he just sat there playing various shoot 'em up stuff"…And the next time we went he brought

the money along to buy a membership for the place and he was like "I'm going to get my mates to come down, we'll all come down here and play together." Actually that's gone from someone who was just going to sit at home on his Xbox to now "I want my mates to come over to Newcastle with me and we're going to come up here and sit together and play these games together." Actually that's a step forward; that's out of the house, that's like the lads going out together rather than sat in separate houses" (W3).

So the medium ultimately might be the same, it might be they're sat in front of a computer blasting away but actually they're sat in front of a computer in the same room now, and they're going out on a day out to Newcastle as well. So there's a positive outcome there, possibly, in terms of communication (W3).

Although this example suggests a sociability, what is being described is individuals 'alone together' interacting through a screen (Turkle, 2011).

Discussion

It is evident from the findings that technologies significantly impact on the co-present interactions between young people and practitioners, it is very clear that if not considered this could be a major issue for practice. This is creating a culture of distraction as suggested by Turkle (2011). The way in which the interviewees reacted to the situation seems in some part to be related to their age and experience, which in turn related to particular values. Some of the younger workers recognised these issues but accepted this as the way things are. The behaviour went unchallenged in generic settings as there was no clear thought in terms of how this act affects our interactions, conversations and relationships and what could be done to counter it. In some cases, when practitioners did challenge the behaviour, this was a useful starting point for discussion, dialogue and social education.

The unsociable use of technologies was difficult for youth workers to understand and negotiate, on some occasions the workers believed that the phone was used as a 'prop' to indicate that the young person did not want to interact with the youth worker. While other behaviours suggested that the technology is just so engaging that they cannot help it and there are new social hegemonies of answering calls, messages with immediacy.

The evidence also raises new questions about how workers negotiate the use of personal devices within voluntary relationships, when as W9 pointed out, young people see their mobile devices (and their capacities) as a part of themselves. Practitioners working in formal situations gave examples of how they coerced young people into not using devices, however these issues of control and formality give rise to the question of whether this is youth work ,in accordance with the manifesto of Davies (2005), in the sense that these practices may not be "…starting where young people are starting – particularly with their expectation that they will be able to relax, meet friends and have fun?" (Davies, 2005). There were conditions to the participation in the project which were clearly at odds with the will of the young people, the rules were forced, and not negotiated. Also, Davies asks; "Is the practice respectful of and actively responsive to young people's wider community and cultural identities" (Ibid). As technology becomes more intertwined with young people's identity, and 'body' and their ability to access virtual communities, youth work providers might need to consider how they approach these issues in more respectful ways.

Also within these findings we can begin to see the paradoxical nature of communication technologies. There are many examples of how they can give a voice to voiceless

individuals, a medium for communication which best suits the young person. They can also be a useful conversation catalyst and source of knowledge. However, it is also evident that the increased use of these technologies impacts on co-present conversations, and the overreliance and their overuse can be detrimental to young people's 'traditional' social skill development. What is being described is a fundamental change in communicative and interactive culture confirming Castells (2009, a, b, 2010) and Farman's (2012) claims. Questions of whether youth work should assimilate to this new culture, or fight for traditional forms of interaction will be further explored in the discussion and conclusion chapter.

Do practitioners believe that technologies help or hinder the educational aims of youth work?

In the construction of the questions it was not foreseen that the answers would overlap so much. It was appears that, for many of the practitioners, there was a clear divide between technologies and youth work. Technologies were seen as an 'aid' for creating situations for face-to-face youth work. Most of the practitioners did not see technology as integral to youth work practice. W7 believes that youth work has its own integral value.

> I think that it is priceless and I don't think that technology really has an influence on that. It's not about technology; it's about human interaction. Technology's just an aid to get to the quality of the stuff, to get young people to have those quality interactions, which are far better for them I think (W7).

W1 talks about the way in which they have to negotiate environments for face-to-face interaction, and focused conversation.

You just have to strike some sort of balance. And I think because they respect us as youth workers for offering them the space and for being nice to them a lot of the time... And we end up building good relationships, and I think because you have those relationships when you say "Come and do this with us for 15 minutes and then you can go back to doing what you want to do," I think that's sometimes how I work around it (W1).

That's why the methods of getting different points across to young people has to be whacky in all sorts of different ways because I wouldn't get them to sit around a table and do an hour's long session constant, because there's too many distractions (W1).

This culture of distraction which W1 is alluding to suggests that the space and time for 'mutual focus' and 'youth work' is being reduced and that they are required to negotiate short spaces of time to work as a group (Collins, 2011; Turkle, 2010).

Social education

Several of the practitioners mentioned how they felt that new technologies had a detrimental effect on young people's acquisition of social skills (W2, W6, W7, W9). "These days' young people don't have any social skills what so ever" (W6). Some believed that this was down to young people's overuse of technologies. It was suggested that young people had been displaced from face-to-face interaction through gaming and an obsession with the internet and therefore were not accessing opportunities to practice traditional co-present face-to-face social skills. Others believed the increased use of personal technologies were encouraging distracted behaviours in youth work settings, and this was viewed as rude by the practitioners (W1, W5, W9), while some, such as W2 ,used this as an issue to problematise and discuss the social effects of technology. It seems evident that young people are attending to an increased

amount of communicative interaction (traffic) which requires them to be social in new ways. These new ways of being social are difficult for practitioners to understand and navigate. These behaviours are also not conducive to the kind of behaviours youth workers were trying to instil in young people which are more traditional forms of group work and respectful democratic face-to-face interaction rituals in a supportive atmosphere (Button, 1974, Smith, 1999).

W6 openly discussed his distaste for new technology but did recognise the importance of mobile phones in the current context of youth work (to ensure young people turned up to sessions). Interestingly W6 believes that, communication through technologies has only become necessary because of individualism, and he believes that young people do not have the social skills, or adhere to the responsibilities once expected. W6 also stated that the effect of mobile phone use in the co-present is detrimental to face-to-face interaction. Knowing verbal cues and signs, such as eye contact are important aspects of interaction for workers such as W1, W6, W7, W10.

W10 sees technology as a tool for initial engagement, which in turn creates an environment which is difficult to control. W10 discusses the way which technologies impact on the social education elements of youth work.

> But the fact that we're trying to create that sort of situation where people are learning from each other and people are getting something because they're engaging face-to-face with each other, and trying to give them something that you cannot get from constantly texting. And it does impact on what we're trying to do because they just find it so hard to put that phone down or to stop, or to not check their Facebook and we can be talking about something really important, they're like "Can I just check my Facebook? I need to check my Facebook" and it's like that addiction to constantly checking and messaging. It's a real distraction I think sometimes to what we're trying to do (W10).

W9 is also very aware that for some young people communication through technology is becoming a preference and she thinks this is affecting their abilities to communicate face-to-face (Madell and Muncer, 2007).

> And we're starting to see now with young women just who, who don't know how to communicate. Because they do it through phone (W9).

W7 gives some examples of groups who are described as having no social skills. She also mentions how this is relative to the traditional youth work values which inform her practice.

> I think we're probably a lot more about old-fashioned youth work values. Because actually, it's very interesting because we're just starting this project up and we met with a group yesterday; yes, nine groups, they'll be about 13, 14; and we're chatting with a Learning Mentor and she says that they're getting an awful lot of young people coming up into high school that have got absolutely no skills with people. They've got no people skills. They don't know how to interact with each other, they don't know how to build and maintain friendships, they don't know social expectations, they don't know social cues. And these young people are totally void of human interaction and it's because they're obsessed with gaming, obsessed with the internet and they live a persona online because that's more fun than actually living their life because they've got no opportunities for interaction with other young people (W7).

> …these are actually kind of - rather than being the kids who cause more trouble - these are perhaps the more kind of 'oddballs', kind of more insular, more shy, more sheltered. Some of them have learning difficulties. Two of them I can see perhaps have mild Asperger's. But these young people just have total lack of skills in that area. And we were saying yesterday, we were thinking in the staff team, "What's that all about?" And we're like, "Yes…" They were mentioning their gaming, they were mentioning their computers and that's what they do in their spare time. And they're just totally void of the skills (W7).

It is difficult to understand whether it is being suggested that the internet creates these kinds of behaviours in young people, or whether it is just more attractive to introverted individuals. It is perhaps not the focus of this particular study but is interesting that W7 suggests the learning mentor within the school said "that they're seeing more and more of this coming through" (W7).

This is also confirmed by W2, who stated that she is working with an increasing number of young people who struggle to hold any kind of conversation. W2 believes that there are groups of young people who are not learning 'traditional' communication skills because of their preference towards communication via technologies. W2 also points out that she is working with groups who have been referred to her by schools because they lack social skills. She gives an example of how she had tried to stimulate conversation with her groups;

> We had three photographs: Nelson Mandela, and two others. And we said, "Right, let's just have a chat about these photographs." And they were going, "Right..." And they couldn't...And I know it wasn't because they didn't know who they were, because they knew who they were. They just couldn't form sentences. Do you know what I mean? (W2).

W9 discussed how young people's lack of adherence to respectful social practices impacted on other young people in her project.

> …we had an incident yesterday which got challenged. It was during the lunchtime and they'd had their phones. And social skills are just zero. And they, the two of them were BBing each other and excluding the other two. So they were both laughing at the same time and stuff and then excluding the other two, so it was challenged straightaway., and what was even more

right… these are sort of really bullied young women – do you know what I mean? So that and I think that's why they, they dealt with the challenge because they know what it's like. And didn't realise that they were actually intimidating and making the other two fearful of what was going on (W9).

This exclusionary behaviour, that Ictech, (2014) refers to as semi-exclusive use of devices, again was at odds with the inclusive respectful ethos of W9's project and the values of socially educative youth work generally (Button, 1974, Smith, 1999). While it could be argued that these behaviours could also take place without technologies, it is clear that it is more difficult to challenge behaviours which are taking place through technology as it is a private space which is on personal devices. In this case, the way these secretive (exclusive) behaviours were perceived in co-presence was very negative and alienated the young person (an example of a failed interaction ritual as Collins (2010) would put it). This may affect the young person's motivation to return to the project, and highlight their social insecurities making them less likely to act with confidence in social situations in the future.

Discussion

Overall it is evident that new technologies can help and hinder the social aspects of youth work. In early sections it is evident that technologies have been used to help young people access co-present social experiences (W3). But there are also many examples of young people who are lacking social skills and the motivation to act socially in the ways in which youth workers expect (from previous experience, before the introduction and mass use of technology, or possibly through their youth work

education). It is, however, worth keeping in mind that these young people are clearly gaining skills by communicating through new technologies, gaining new media literacies as suggested by Davies and Cranston (2008). Although this is evident they still suggest that young people still want to be together in co-presence but their actions are more individualised in social situations (W5, W6). It can be concluded then that technologies are making it increasingly difficult for youth workers to encourage educative supportive social situations in which young people can acquire and try out roles and learn social skills. How much of this can be attributed to technology alone is difficult to say as individualism is also suggested as a factor in this change. As mentioned in the literature chapter, new technologies could be seen as an extension of individualism, an artifact born of the requirements of this ideology (Castells, 2000; Livingston, 2005). It is also worth noting that discourse within the findings is mostly negative, however this may be attributed to the questions that have been asked and a particular bias in the research. More positive examples of social education may be more evident in the young people's focus group findings.

Are practitioners using technologies to facilitate the educational aims of youth work, if so, in what way?

W13 gives an example of how she has used technologies to create conversation in practice. YouTube in particular has become the prime site of 'mutual focus' in which the group builds EE through discussing what is on the video (Collins, 2011, Ictech, 2014). This could be attributed to the fact that young people see YouTube as a central site of their culture, the fact that it is accessed through the internet is also important.

…if there is anything really interesting on YouTube or on the internet or the news or something like… that like, we'll maybe watch it and discuss it, as a group, erm talking about the issues or whatever else that's raised around it. It was like the racism about the football the other week. When the young people were watching the TV the news came on and it was saying about racism so we had a big talk about racism. So we had a talk about racism, just because of it being on the news" (W13).

W9 gives an example of how she has used YouTube in her practice,

And that always has a huge impact because the girls like the true stories you know like the… So that always has a massive impact yes. So we use them for things like that but as I say the way we've got it set up at the moment, it isn't very good so we are looking at putting a TV up there so we can have bit better use of it. Because there's some fantastic stuff out there (W9).

W7 also gives an example of how she uses the internet as a powerful visual stimulus:

…and around the drugs as well, we used internet with the drugs work as well, and we looked at before and after pictures of drug users and the effect that it can have on them physically. Because I think that visual stimulus is obviously very engaging for young people, except I think sometimes obviously, you've got to try and keep it interesting and engaging for them, and I think having some sort of visual stimulus... And also having something that – depending on how the conversation goes, because conversations often take on a life of their own – you can just tap in something in the computer and come up with a reference point or come up with extra information. You know, you've got to be careful because it's not always 100% accurate. But that can enhance the conversation and also keep the young person's interest as well (W7).

W5 highlights the benefits of YouTube as a conversation starter:

… even as recently as last week when I was doing a training presentation, and to be able to have access to a whole bunch of YouTube clips or videos online

is just really handy. Because quite often it's enough just to either lighten the mood or take it to a different level because there's somebody on-screen delivering something that's actually really quite difficult to hear (W5).

But because they've said it, you can then take their difficult stuff and say "Well, okay, this is what this guy said; what do you think?" as a kick-starter for conversation and debate (W5).

But again, YouTube, it's that whole being careful of what you use, but certainly there's some really good stuff that you can use (W5).

And obviously when you've got people, in terms of educational stuff, you know when you've got high end excerpts of lectures that are put on there. Or on the other scale, Mr. Bean walking into a chemistry classroom and blowing himself up, which just, as I say, lightens the mood, or takes it down a different challenging route where possible (W5).

Workers give several examples of issues which have arisen from the use of

technologies which could be seen as opening new areas of ethical decisions and

dilemmas within youth work practice and theory.

So there's always new bits of technology, new issues all the time. There was another one last week or the week before – a website called Thankyourwank.com which we discovered. It's linked to your Facebook picture, your actual profile picture. And if you haven't got your picture set to private – if your picture's public then your face will be on this site called Thankyourwank.com. You can go on and vote for who you would wank over (W10).

It's absolutely disgusting honestly. So when we discovered it I talked through it with the staff who immediately said right I'm going to go and check it out. They went on Facebook and they were on there. But some of them had pictures of their children as their profile picture (W10).

W10 discusses the problems that can occur through the misuse of technologies. Her

example raises some important issues with regards to the use of personal technologies.

There's only one incident that pops in to my head and that is of another young person who decided it was nice to show everybody here a pornographic video on his phone…So the way we managed that is to say firstly "Can you put your phone away? It's not appropriate, you're in a youth club setting and there are children." And then he didn't put it away and he showed somebody else. So we said "You're going to have to give us your mobile phone, you can have it back at the end of the session. Or you can go home now." And he gave us his mobile phone and that was last we heard of that…But we did have that opportunity to talk to them about why you can't have inappropriate things on your phone, especially if it's one of your friends. It's classed as child pornography…But it's still about raising that issue and making them aware" (W10).

Interestingly W9 pointed out that she had encountered many issues while using technology for youth work purposes.

Oh we've had thousands, absolutely thousands. I've been online while a girl's ... or Messenger while a girl's physically been cutting herself and showing me pictures, which was the most horrifying thing I think I've ever experienced online. And actually had to speak to Mental Health Services with regards to what do I do here with this young woman? (W9)

Discussion

With consideration of the findings it is evident that new technologies offer new risks and opportunities regarding youth work's educational purpose. It is very clear that the social behaviours created by the use of new technologies raise new questions for the profession's aims and values. Technologies clearly have created a new environment of sociability which encompass real and virtual worlds and a new culture of distraction. The

internet offers a universe of educational information, which is presented in engaging and interactive ways, and this seems to have become essential in the stimulation of educative conversation in practice. However, new ethical issues are evident as young people have access to the infinite resource of the internet.

Conclusion

It is quite evident that new technologies have had a significant impact on communicative culture and that this is changing youth work environments. These technologies have also significantly extended the expectations of youth workers and blurred the personal and professional boundaries by offering young people and youth workers the ability to contact each other outside of working times (Castells, 2009a). This also offers new possibilities for surveillance of young people which suggest some serious implications for the ethical practices of youth work organisations (Westlake, 2008).

Generally, there is evidence to suggest that this has significant implications for the fundamental methods of youth work, its values and purpose. Young people's social behaviours were characterised by distraction and this was viewed by most of the practitioners as negative. What is being described is a new social arena in which they embody a new space which is a mix of both real and virtual worlds, as suggested by Farman (2013). Within this world they had less and less time and focus to give to real co-present interactions, they were therefore not performing their 'front stage' roles in the co-present. This was attributed to new social hegemonies of answering calls and texts with immediacy and young people having to perform in real and virtual worlds at the same time (Turkle, 2011). This could be viewed as a new sociability (Farman, 2012).

What is being described is that youth workers are trying to instill a more 'traditional' way of interacting and 'being' in groups, a practice which was developed before the mass introduction of new technologies, (Button, 1974, Smith, 1999, Jeffs, and Smith, 2010). This is a significant issue which needs to be addressed by the profession and will be discussed further in the discussion chapter. Also there was evidence of a generational divide in the attitudes towards new technology, and a general 'moral panic' discourse regarding young people's new behaviours (Cohen, 1980)

It was also evident that mobile devices in particular are seen as an extension of the body for young people and they were perceived as being addicted to their personal technology by practitioners. More generally what seems evident is a shift from the general discourse of technology as a tool, to technology as a new prosthesis (Hardt and Negri, 1998; Žižek, 2009).

Social technologies clearly offer new opportunities in terms of work with isolated, vulnerable, and disengaged, young people. W9's and W3's examples in particular demonstrate how engagement through SNS can lead to positive social engagement and new forms of community. But there is also evidence to suggest that these technologies encourage a displacement from social opportunities.

The internet and YouTube in particular offer new engaging sites of learning and promoted positive group discussions and 'mutual focus' in youth work sessions. Youth workers used this prescriptively and spontaneously and gave examples of interesting conversations regarding a variety of issues. Some such as W5 and W6 suggested that new technologies were damaging social life, and had the potential to damage the

function of society as argued by Ling (2008), Collins (2011), Turkle (2011), and Žižek (2009). Others believed that theory and practice "need to adapt with the times and take interest in what our young people are taking interest in" (W10). It is also suggested that there are a number of issues which impact on the youth work environment of which new technologies are only one.

The data suggests that there were differentials in terms of settings, as it was much more difficult to control the environment in generic youth sessions, than in the more formal sessions, as in the specific work with young women, and in the youth forum. These projects had a focus and this seemed important in creating environments for group dialogue, a 'mutual focus' which encouraged, or entrained EE (Collins, 2011). Although there were still issues in these projects there was an explicit understanding of the goal of the youth work. While in the generic session these goals were less clear.

Individualisation was also highlighted as a factor in young people's new behaviours. The evidence seems to suggest that individuals have a reduced time for group pursuit as they focus on their own activities. On reflection, it may have been useful to identify how the practitioners' own use of technology impacts on youth work practice to see if this is significant in the interaction between youth workers and young people. This will be considered in the analysis of the young people's focus groups.

Next steps

The next chapter will consider the findings from the young people's focus groups and examines their experience of the impact of new technologies. This presentation of

finding will confirm and contrast some of the claims made in this chapter and also

answer further questions established from the literature.

Chapter 7

Young people's focus groups analysis of findings

As presented in the Methodology chapter the rationale for the young people's focus groups was partly to address several questions developed from the literature, and to compare and contrast some of the claims made about young people by practitioners in the previous chapter.

This chapter will consider the findings from the young people's focus groups. The data findings presented within this chapter were extracted from the young peoples' data transcriptions using Nvivo 10. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was employed to analyse the text. The findings are presented under particular discourse themes which have been identified in the analysis of the result.

Coding

After reviewing the data collected it was evident that there were no significant differentials in the group responses regarding the variables and criteria used to select the groups, suggesting common cultural, or universal experience of new technologies. This in turn suggests a saturation of technology and technological consumption in the lives of young people generally. There were however differences in the structure of the groups and their purpose. Therefore, the groups were identified within the analysis section simply as Group 1, Group 2, Group 3, and Group 4.

- Group 1 attend a generic youth club.
- Group 2 attend a specific youth forum.

- Group 3 attend a project which concentrated on specific issues affecting young people.

- Group 4 attend a generic youth club.

The groups consisted of a total of 21 young people: 4 from group 1; 6 from group 2; 7 from group 3 and 5 from group 4. Not all of the individuals who were present contributed to the focus group discussion.

Individuals from the groups are identified, for example, as G1(1), refers to a young person from Group 1, and so on. Their age and gender will also follow G1(1/F/18) decoded as young person 1 from Group 1 who is female and aged 18. Any youth workers who interject are referred to as W and the corresponding group number (e.g. worker from group 1 W1 as in the previous chapter).

The information that follows is a summary of the data collected from the focus groups.

Communication between young people and youth projects

All of the young people stated that they communicated with their projects via some form of technology. Group text messaging seemed to be the most effective form of communication for most; the majority of the projects had a Facebook page and/or a specific website and this was also seen as an effective way of finding out information regarding the projects' opening hours, activities and events (Segêty and Nagy, 2011). It was evident that young people were communicating on a variety of platforms depending mainly on personal and group preference and cost implications.   It was also clear from

the young people's comments that these forms of communication were not used for any sustained dialogue between the young people and their youth workers/ projects.

When discussing this communication with Group 2, the young people highlighted that they were a part of a youth forum, and it was their job to organise themselves, so they organised their own meetings and events, they also created their own promotion. This project utilised technologies such as social network sites, but their comments emphasized that these platforms were not very effective for promoting their projects, and rather it was just an expectation that they would be available or promote through these means. Although the page was run and monitored by young people, it only had 10 members. This perhaps highlights the ambiguous nature of communication via these platforms and how 'friends' or 'members' can be unreceptive as they are free of the traditional social pressures and responsibilities to associate or respond in cyberspace. In this sense the action of 'liking' or being a member of an online group or page is far removed from being a member or an active participant in a group or project (Granovetter, 1973; Baym 2010). The act of liking, says, I acknowledge or sympathise with a cause and I want to be seen as concerned but I may not act beyond sharing or liking the group page or statement (Žižek, 2009). The reasons for this lack of action or interest could also be put down to the fact that young people are bombarded with huge amounts of information, requests and activity which they have to process and prioritise. This is what Neil Postman once referred to as an 'information glut', information in this sense is viewed as garbage (Postman, 1992).

The young people in Group 1 pointed out that they sometimes received information regarding the project's activities and opening hours via Facebook, texts and phone

calls. However, there seemed to be inconsistencies in the flow of information from the

project, as some of the young people were not aware of the Facebook page, and some

received texts and others did not. When asked how you currently communicate with

your project the young people replied:

> via Facebook (G1(3/F/17).
>
> we don't (G1(4/M/16).
>
> yes, we do (G1(3/F/17).
>
> oh yeah G1(4/M/16)
>
> the account ------- staff (G1(3/F/17).
>
> "No ------------ the group!" G1(2/F/16).
>
> Oh no, sometimes they phone you (G1(4/M/16).
>
> do they? (G1(1/F.17).

Interestingly, the young people from Group 4 highlighted that they did not have a great

deal of communication with the project via technologies, mentioning an occasional

group text. Further, it seemed that communication via new technologies was not as

necessary or important as they could call into the project at any time to talk to someone

face-to-face as there was always somebody in the building.

It was clear that the majority of the young people had strong, what might be seen as

'traditional' relationships, with their youth workers and youth projects. Those who

seemed to have the strongest 'embedded' ties with their projects gave examples of

relationships built over long periods of time, and their staff, and opening hours were

consistent (Granovetter, 1973). Group 4 pointed out that they felt comfortable 'dropping

in' to see the staff at any time and they always felt welcome. This was further maintained by basic information via group texts.

> .... it's open during the day though so if we've got any questions we can just pop in. The manager "... is always in here ...G4(2/F/16).

While G4 was an example of a well-resourced, adequately staffed project supported by the local authority, G1's project is a voluntary project which has very limited resources; they had no fulltime staff and most of the employees worked less than 10 hours per week. This could explain the reason for the inconsistency in communication they highlighted. While G2, G3, and G4 are local authority supported projects, G4 has received significant funding over recent years to focus on particular issues in the locality. Time and financial investment is therefore a significant factor in the extent to how effective projects are in communicating with young people, however it seems that, as with G4, in ideal situations young people preferred to communicate and interact in traditional ways.

The importance of 'traditional' face-to-face relationships was also highlighted by G2. G2 (1/M/18) discusses the group's relationship with their youth workers at their project.

> So we would really see her as a friend not a worker, like if she did bring in a project I would like take her seriously then, but I've like know her for years, and years, and years and years so I'm used to her sort of thing we've got a great relationship with the group and with the workers like one big happy family (G2(1/M/18).

The relationship the worker had with this particular group was clearly developed through working with the group face-to-face, however, it was suggested that in more recent times they had spent less time with the worker and communicated through phone calls and text, this was mainly due to their age, situation and changing roles.

This description of a 'happy family' was reiterated by group 4: "everyone gets along, and we get on really well with all, it's like sort of one big family. It's just a nice environment to be in" G4(2/M/16). It is interesting to consider this concept of an extended 'happy family' in preference to a description of community or group, there seemed to be closeness, a family they had a commitment to.

All of the groups seemed reasonably happy with the way in which they communicated with their projects. None of the young people suggested that they would like to have more contact or deeper dialogue via the technologies. It was clear that the technologies used were purely to convey information about the opening hours, closures, activities, events and opportunities which would ultimately take place in co-presence.

Interestingly, Group 1 suggested that their project could improve by having a specific website; but they did not encourage any further communication between the project and young people, stating that it would be potentially "privacy invading" G1(1/F/17).

It is notable within these groups that there was no suggestion of any kind of active online community: generally, their use of social media was only to support them to maintain their existing real life co-present friendships and relationships. A member from Group 2 expresses how technologies help to sustain their group's co-present activities.

With a group that comes together like us, we come from … all corners of the borough, it is a necessity to have a phone and keep in touch. What we're doing, where we're doing it, how we're doing it. Like today not many people would know we're going on the minibus if they didn't have a phone. But because everybody does have a phone everybody will like be texting, so they be like, arh we're going to _____ and that, so I think it is an absolute essential keeping in touch with people (G2(1/M/18).

Preferences platforms and devices

Although laptops and computers were mentioned mobile phones seemed to be by far the most popular way of communicating for young people. The majority of those interviewed stated that they mainly used texts and Facebook chat to communicate. The discourse within the interviews seemed to always return to mobile / Smartphones even when the interview was introduced as a discussion about technologies in general. Some of the group members discussed other devices briefly, including Xbox, PlayStation, mobile gaming devices, and tablets. In terms of software and applications, Facebook dominated the conversation. Blackberry Messenger (BBM) was also popular, however, many of the young people expressed their concerns regarding the lack of security involved in its use and how this could be dangerous for new users and young people due to its lack of regulation. Many of the members still used the application but in a very controlled way between small groups of friends. Group 3 explained that they used to use (BBM) in an open way but have changed their habits due to problems that they had experienced.

There was lots of conflict on BB (W3).
Oh yes (G3(1/F/16).

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To be honest there's more fights on Blackberry than there is on Facebook like (G3-2/F/16).

Interestingly, the youth worker interjected into the discussion and gave an explanation of why Blackberry messenger is so problematic.

I think what young people click to very quickly is that BB is less traceable, people can't observe their activities and what they're doing. While Facebook, a lot of people pull back off that and they are on BB messenger and communicate less through Facebook. Whenever we have had disputes in the project it's been on BB, because they know we're on their Facebook so they know we can see what is going on. And we've also had young women who have been threatened sexually on online through BB, images sent online, you know abusive people, they don't know stalking them, harassing them, and then they won't give up the phone (meaning the victims) to the police and at one point I ended up contacting the police and they had to end up coming in as it was a safeguarding issue, but the young person wouldn't give up their phone it was like removing their arms. I was trying to work with the police, they said if they could just go down there and show them they would be happy with that, but the fact that they would take their phone away and it would be gone for months and months on end that's why they wouldn't divulge what was going on BB. But then they questioned everybody, and everyone was getting these kind of images from this same person this person was really freaky. But getting those same images and not doing anything about it. So I was saying you know that's abuse. It's happening and no one is dealing with it (W3).

It is interesting to consider this issue in terms of surveillance, BBM offered a very different environment to Facebook, as individuals can hide their identity with ease on BBM. [6] Negative behaviours do not necessarily have negative consequences. Unlike the panopticon environment of Facebook in which individuals regulate their own

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[6] This issue was evident in the organisation of the London riots (Halliday, 2011).

behaviours in the constant gaze of others fearful of the 'risk' of 'spoilt identity' (Foucault, 1991; Trottier, 2014; Westlake, 2008), the discourse here suggests that this 'unshackled' BBM environment is negative, dangerous and risky.

Distraction

It was evident that the majority of the young people interviewed spent a significant amount of time using technologies. Most stated that they used mobile technologies "all of the time, 24/7", "all day every day". Some of them also admitted to checking their phones during the night. Mobile use also took place during school lessons. In terms of usage, many of the young people explained that they had incurred large bills for exceeding their contract allowances, and also gave examples of their friends' over-usage. Also during the interviews phones beeped and buzzed regularly, most of the participants acknowledged texts and notifications but none answered calls. Many of the young people held their phones during the interview, and one regularly left the discussion to check his phone as it was on charge in the corner of the room.

Within the interviews, phone bills of between £40 and £1000 were mentioned. The young people interviewed used between 1500 and 5000 SMS text per month, not taking into account other forms of messaging such as Facebook chat and messaging services, Blackberry messenger or E-mail. It was also clear from the interviews that there was evidence of addiction in the behaviour of the majority of the young people; the interviewees suggested that they would not be without their phones, or they constantly needed to check for notifications or messages. "I never log out my Facebook. My Facebook is constantly logged in so if someone messages me I get a notification

straight away saying someone's in boxed or someone's posted on my wall. Always on never logged out" G2(2/M/17). Another stated:

> I only get 500mb of internet and I used it within 3 hours. Gutted for the rest of the month I wasn't able to go on my phone. Like I never even ventured out of the house just because I have Wi-Fi in the house so I was like it was like going back to the ice age, it was like being stranded on an island, I was devastated (G2(1/M/18).

This reference to a lack of connectivity being like "going back to the ice age", seems to suggest the cyberspace is a 'real' place that you can be isolated from. To be 'out of the loop' or the environment is an anxiety which seems to be common between many of the young people.

It was evident in all of the interviews that the young people considered their phones as an appendage, as a part of themselves (Hardt and Negri, 2000). Some describe physical withdrawal symptoms when kept from their phones. It was clear that the device model and brand had some value to the young people but it seemed to be the ability to receive and send messages that was at the heart of their addiction (Weinstein, Feder, Rosenberg, Dannon, 2014). This also confirms Collin's assertion that sending and receiving messages is like receiving and administrating a drug (Collins, 2011). In this example, the young person describes her feelings when her phone is nearly out of charge.

> I start to get the shakes. It's like when your phone's on red, you're like right I won't touch it, what's the time, I won't touch it now, it's on red, is it still on red? Aye, it's still on red, oh my god is someone going to ring us, oh my god it's gonna go off. And then as soon as you put the charger in its feeding the phone

and you're like 'YEAH'. Buzzing you feel like superman flying through the door (G3(1/F/16).

Those who mentioned games and games consoles referred to extremely heavy use, and all of the young people who were mentioned using games consoles were male. This was also true in the practitioners' interviews. A female who mentioned games referred to mini games on their mobile phones such as 'Candycrush' and 'Templerun'. One of the young male stated:

> I used to spend about 12 hours a day on the PlayStation ... I used to do that in the holidays, at college, as soon as you come out you be looking for the COD (Call of Duty) midnight release. I was on it 3 days straight, didn't really go to sleep, minimal, minimal food a couple of drinks of coffee. Like in between games you have like a minute so you run and get what you need and straight back into it (G2(1/M/18).

One young person pointed out how she is on her smartphone constantly, and how traditional formal structures such as school are failing to control and constrain mobile and Smartphone usage.

> I'm on Facebook all the time like constantly really (G2(5/F/17).
>
> So how does that impact on school, college, whatever (Interviewer).
>
> Well they can't really do anything about it. They just give up to be honest (G2(5/F/17).

A member from Group 4 backs up this claim:

> I just use mine constantly, all the time on the phone even in lessons (G4(2/F/17).
>
> Do they never try to confiscate them (Interviewer)?

I refuse to hand it over, if they actually do take my phone I take my battery out and my sim card oh and I take my memory card out as well. Well I don't want teachers going through my phone (G4(2/F/17).

Interestingly Group 3's youth project did not allow young people to use their phones during the sessions and the group were required to place their phones in a basket at the start of the day and were only allowed to check them on a break. Talking about her involvement in the project G3(3/F/16) stated that:

This is the longest length of time when I'm here that I don't go on my phone. Because I'm not allowed (G3(3/F/16).

We might not answer before dinner time and afterwards but we are on constantly. Like in a typical morning, I'll come in here and I'm like texting (a friend) or I'm texting (another friend), erm or we'll be Facebooking each other ... (G3(1/F/16).

Ethical dilemmas

The youth projects' control of the use of technologies brings into question the role of the voluntary relationship as they are forced to give up their phones. The rule was developed as a part of the setting of group ground rules, but it is quite clear that given the choice the young people would have their phones during the session. It may raise the question if the project would exclude those who would not give up their phones. Worker 9 from G2 pointed out that some young people had left her project because of this reason. As phones become more and more important to young people and a part of global culture will these rules be viewed as more exclusionary and extreme? Particularly

if formal institutions such as schools, colleges and universities do not require students to give up their phones.

It was interesting that the interviewees acknowledged their overuse, and un-sociable use of their phones, but seemed unwilling or unable to change their habits unless forced to do so. Furthermore, in the practitioners' interviews some workers mentioned how they had organised trips and activities in places where the mobile signal was very poor just so they could focus on a task. (G3(5/F/16) talks about the distracting nature of technology in all parts of her life.

> I even put it on when the programmes on (TV) like I turn on my phone and I miss half the thing. I just get distracted. I end up with a sore head because I'm on it that much (G3(5/F/16).

Interestingly all of the young people pointed out that they had all exceeded their phone contract limits at some point. This, by definition, highlighted that the usage was significant. However, texts and calls are only an element of a variation of communication tools on Smartphones. A study which considers communication, and usage might be an interesting area for further research.

Relationships

The young people were asked if they thought that it would be possible to have a relationship without technologies. The young people's responses varied to this question as some gave examples of how they sustained relationships with members of their families without much communication beyond traditional forms. However, it seemed that in strong relationships beyond the family, technologies were extremely important to the

young people. There were many examples of how they maintained their relationships particularly through their phones. The young people were asked: "Do you think technologies are a central part of relationships" (Interviewer)?

> Yeah (G1(4/M/16).
>
> so do you mean if we didn't have Facebook the relationship with our friends would be completely different.... (Interviewer)?
>
> urh probably (G1(2/F/17).

G2(1/M/18) who is a self-confessed heavy technology user suggests that relationships can be sustained without communication via technologies.

> Well yes and no, like, because some of my mates don't have, like, phones, like, and if I see them and I say fancy meeting tomorrow I'll meet you at such and such place, such and such time or I'll knock on ya. Something like that so not like everybody has a phone. It's, like, my little brother, I had to get him home from school, he doesn't have a phone, but I had to, like, arrange it before he went to school so I said look I'll meet you at the bus stop at half 3 so phones aren't really essential but me if people want to get in touch with me or I've got to get in touch with other people it's a necessity G2(1/M/18).

Whether these ties are as strong as ties maintained through technology is questionable. G2(3/M/17) points out that he feels that he needs to check to see if people are busy by texting them before making the next level of communication, a phone call, or meeting face-to-face.

> I think it's kind of easier to talk to people if you don't see them that often. But I seem to think that sometimes if you don't know if they're busy, so you can, like, message them so then if you message them, it's essential, like, if you're not seeing them but also an annoyance sometimes (G2(3/M/17).

It is interesting to consider that the technologies might enable young people to negotiate relationships in ways that best suit them, as in Turkles (2011) ideas of the 'Goldylocks' effect. Technology enables them to have relationships with people in which they are 'not too near', 'not too far' but 'just right'. In this sense communication through technology becomes a convenient option when people do not want to carry out 'real' co-present social performances (Goffman, 1959).

Similarly, within the practitioners' interviews Worker 7 pointed out that she had stopped visiting some young people while on a detached youth work session as she had started to text them to 'check-in' instead. She later admitted that this had become a convenience. There was a sense that she did not want to disturb the young person. Texting was an excellent way of completing a task without any action, an interpassive act as suggested by Žižek (2009).

I asked Group 3 whether it was possible to have a relationship without communication via technologies. The general consensus was that it was "Absolutely impossible…Like, you couldn't organise to meet somewhere, because at the time they wouldn't be there probably, you couldn't contact them or ring them" (G3(3/M/17).

There seemed to be an anxiety for young people about not having their phones, or having the possibility of communication. This suggests why young people might see phones as an appendage, as it is so much a part of their lives and habits. For some it almost seemed like this form of communication was like another human action.

Many of the young people discussed their relationships, and it was clear that their strong friendships were built and maintained through regular communication via technologies as well as co-present interaction. G3(1/F/16) and G3(2/F/16) gave a description of their relationship and the maintenance which is required. "Me and (G3(1/F/M) text each other from morning till night, everyday" (G3(2/F/16).

The group gave examples of how they filled the time, 'traditionally' assigned to relaxation and privacy with mediated conversation. "I could be lying in the bath like, and I'll just text her. I'll phone her in the bath, "what you doing in the bath"? ""I text everybody when I'm in the bath it's the only thing that occupies us" (G3(1/F/16).

> I always take my phone like when I go in the bath now when I never used to, and I get to the point when I've been in the bath an hour because I've been on my phone (G3(5/F/16).
>
> I ring my mam when I'm on the toilet (G3(2/F/16).

It was evident that there were gender differences in the young people's answers. Those who stated they could not have a relationship without communication via technologies were all female. With the size of the study it is difficult to say whether this is significant. There does seem to be a distinction between what is seen as a strong relationship, or a strong friendship and a friend. This is interesting when considering the relationship between the young people and the youth worker as it has been suggested that young people do not want the maintenance aspects of a relationship with youth workers via technologies.

Distraction /symbolic interaction

The groups were asked, "do young people feel that technologies impact on co-present interaction"?

The majority of the young people indicated that they did and they felt strongly about others using technologies in their presence, however many of them also stated that they often found themselves doing the same thing. "See sometimes people talk to me when I'm on my phone and I know I'm dead ignorant and like what you doing? And I'm like ah yeah and I keep looking like that and I'm, like, why and I just can't stop" (G3(5/F/16).

G3(5/F/16) gave an example of how her boyfriend's gaming caused social embarrassment.

> He's got one of those Sony Erikson play phones where you can flip it up and play a bit of PSP and I think he's addicted to it. I feel so embarrassed you know when your mam comes up, he's so rude my mam will ask him a question and he'll just go uhhu, I'm like have some respect, If I did that with my mam there would be a massive kick off, I hate it me, I threatened to take it back to the shop (G3(5/F/16).

G1(4/M/16) and G1(2/F/16) talk about how their interactions are affected.

> Arh, gets on my nerves, it's like talking to the wall (G1(4/M/16).
>
> No it's not that. I'm just miles away (G1(2/F/16).

This example suggests that the young person is 'miles away' in the embodied space which Farman (2012) suggests. In the new 'proprioceptive' experience of being in co-

presence and in new communicative space. This concept will be explored further in the discussion chapter.

Members of group 4 pointed out how they found other people's use of technology in the co-presence irritating. Again, it was clear that although it was irritating to them they were unwilling to challenge what seems to have become a norm.

Proper grinds on me (G2(2/F/16).

Aye it does but I do it to other people sometimes (G2(3/M/17).

I talk to them and text at the same time. But when you're talking to someone while you're texting you type it, I mean you type what you're thinking about (G2(2/M/17).

I do it loads, all the time (G4(4/F/15).

So it's like multitasking isn't it (Interviewer)?

Yeah (G4(2/F/16).

it's like trying to do this (G4(3/M/14).

(G4(2/F/16) Pats her head and rubs her tummy, then shows a similar trick with her fingers.

it's proper rock hard it's like when you're texting (G4(3/F/16).

In these examples the young people describe the difficulties of performing in co-presence and in communicative spaces. Acting on 'front stage' in 'real' life and on another 'stage' through texting. Also, the young people have empathy with each other's activity as they recognise how difficult the task of acting on two stages is (probably from their own experience). In this similar example, the young person explains that she can

now text without looking at the keypad, enabling her to make eye contact in the co-present: "yeah, but I'm like texting like this right, but when I'm texting I look at them because I know where the buttons are, and all that" (G4(3).

Layered communication

Considering the extent of technological usage, it was clear that young people were continually multitasking, interacting in the co-present and through technology simultaneously. Turkle (2011) suggests that with this increase in usage we are continuously 'layering' tasks. What Turkle points out is that we cannot multi task and do all of these tasks well, and this will have implications for social skills and habits. Therefore, in social situations if individuals do not perform their social ritual acts in a focused way they may be perceived as not being sociable, and rude. (Goffman 1959). This young person talks about his interaction with his friends.

> I don't know if it's just me or my group of friends who do this because we're pretty strange. But on the bus coming back from college, there's normally about 6 of us right, sitting on the bus and we all have our head phones on listening to music, and we're texting each other although we are in a metre proximity to each other, but we still text each other. Just saves talking and you can just text away and listen to your music at the same time G2(2/M/17).

Interaction in the home seemed to have changed quite dramatically with the introduction of technologies as many of the young people gave examples of how they had started to communicate with their family members via their phones as a matter of convenience. "Yeah but if I'm upstairs and my mam's downstairs I'll be like mam, bring me a drink, or is tea ready? Or what time is it" G2(1/M/18).

A member of group 3 discusses a similar example.

> I do that to my boyfriend when I'm in the bath next door, 'will you bring this in, will you get me that?' last night I was sitting in the bath I knew I had to brush my hair before I washed it, he was on his game I text him, will you bring me my hairbrush in it was right next to him. He says 'you're a right lazy cow' (G3(5/F/16).

> When I'm in the bath I have my headphones in, I'm like mam if ya want us just phone us (G3(1/F/16).

Online and offline persona

Several of the interviewees talked about differences in people's character when communicating through technologies. Referred to as 'keyboard warriors the young people pointed out that they knew many people who acted differently through technologies to how they did in real life, in this space those who were shy exude confidence.

> …because people hide behind keyboards and screens and that, and they'll be a lot more talkative, like 'keyboard warriors' like they'll talk a lot more over like text, like if they were like somewhere completely different like if they were home and I was at home like they would talk a lot more opposed to face-to-face interaction (G2(1/M/18).

One of the young people pointed out that she was very different online, compared to 'real-life'.

> I talk to people on Facebook and then like, if I see them in the street I'll just have my head down and I'll be like shy (G3(5).

It is interesting that the young person feels more confident in virtual worlds, this perhaps confirms Castells' (2011) theories that power is more horizontal in these spaces. Maybe the young person feels she can articulate what she wants to say better through written word as argued by Maddell and Muncer (2007).

Online community

None of the group gave any explicit examples of how they communicated in groups online with reference to their youth projects. The youth forum group suggested that they valued face-to-face group interaction, however, it is interesting to think of how power relations in the group might be altered through the use of technologies. Within this group there was a dominant male who was verbally articulate and dominant in the focus group discussion. He pointed out that it was his experiences of being a part of the youth forum that had built his confidence. Interestingly, this young person had highlighted how one of the quieter members of the group was very outspoken online but said virtually nothing in co-present group situations. This is an example of how the use of technologies could potentially level group dynamics, possibly improving the quality of the democratic process in youth settings and the voices of young people if used well. Also, it might be important for more dominant members to ensure quieter members have a platform to speak.

Generational divide

Within the interviews it was clear that the young people recognised a generational divide. In a sense, older groups were seen as out of the loop. We can see the

implications here for youth workers, as young people are spending an increasing amount of time in cyberspace and new communicative space and youth workers are excluded from this environment. A space where bullying and abuse can occur and youth workers will be unaware and unable to intervene or challenge. As young people increasingly choose to interact in these new spaces often away from adults' scrutiny, are we seeing a communication breakdown between the young and old? The evidence does seem to confirm what Wells Brignall III and Van Valey (2005) suggest that young people are declining opportunities to interact and socialise with older generations and therefore are by-passing skills which may serve them well in life, as they will need to negotiate with adults.

G4 discussed the fact that one of the workers used their phone constantly within their youth sessions. Interestingly, this was almost seen as a positive. The fact that the worker understood the technology and the fact that they had the correct brand was seen as a fashion symbol of credibility.

> I think that's what's good about (worker) because she's like still young, she's in with the technology, she still a kid but she's like 26" (G1(4/M/16). "it doesn't make you a better youth worker, it's just a sign that you know what's going on, what's the crack.... it's not important it just shows you, well it is a bit important that they know what we are going on about. But sometimes it can be a distraction like something can be going on and they can be like just sitting texting. And it's like pay some attention to your job (G1(4/M/16).

One of the young people from the youth forum explained his role and the importance of being able to communicate with the older generation.

Well this group really is to like make a difference for people like who have no idea how to get in touch with their counsellor . I think most kids would rather talk to like a younger person rather than a ehh a sixty-year-old councillor who aren't really in touch with the youth side of things. So I think that most people would rather speak to someone their own age, who have an idea of what they are going through G2(1/M/18).

This example typifies the positive social educative work which can take place through youth work. This group have clearly learnt many social skills through their involvement in their project and have benefitted from having opportunities to interact with counsellors and professionals. This intergenerational interaction could be seen as very important for young people (Wells Brignall III and Van Valey, 2005) as power is in the hands of adults. It is also interesting that this group requested that they be able to communicate with the council through Facebook but the council refused their request. Therefore, being able to acquire face-to-face social skills through youth work was essential in these young people having power and having a seat at the table with councillors.

Youth work and provision

All of the young people seemed to see the value of youth provision as a place to meet and socialise face-to-face, and engage in 'traditional' forms of relationship and associations. There was a strong sense that the young people felt very comfortable in their projects "... like when you come in here everyone gets along, and we get on really well with all, it's like … one big family. It's just a nice environment to be in" G2(2/M/17). The majority of the interviewees attended youth provision to 'see' their friends, to get off

the streets and to have some fun. Some talked of how they wanted to 'make a

difference' through involvement in the political arena;

> I know when I come here, I'm the chairperson, so I expect to make a
> difference to people, not only for young people but for people who are like, I
> don't know for people who have got disabilities or got mental health problems
> or things like that. Just so that, I don't know really, I think everyone has a
> different view or opinion on it. But that's what I want to do though is like make
> a change G2(1/M/18).

Others thought youth projects were important places for young people to improve social

skills and build confidence and self-esteem. Interestingly very few of the young people

referred to technological resources at the projects; they did not feel that it was very

important that the clubs/ projects had internet access or relevant technologies.

G2(1/M/18) gives an example of how his project has benefitted him in terms of
confidence and social skills.

> When I first joined 4 years ago I used to be, like, the shy one of the group sit
> in the corner didn't talk didn't look at anyone .. if I got spoken to then I'd
> speak but not, like, I wouldn't like raise my voice to speak. But now I probably
> the most, like, I talk a lot more, like I'm, more confident. I wouldn't dare stand
> up and talk in front of a couple of hundred people and give a presentation,
> but now it's just a doddle, not a problem. I just do it. And I've seen that with
> G2(2/M/17) as well, like… he was like me, quiet, used to sit in the corner
> G2(1/M/18).

Conflict issues

It was very evident from the young people's comments that online and offline conflict

was a major issue in young people's lives. The groups gave examples of how fights and

attacks had been recorded on phones and then put on Facebook for everyone to see.

They also discussed how they had witnessed videos of child abuse online. The same

group also raised their concerns regarding online bullying, and highlighted the fact that

people cannot escape bullying online as it is always there. It is interesting to consider

the fact that youth workers are constrained from interacting with young people through

technologies such as social network sites by red tape and policy and it seems that

young people would also discourage any further invasion into their private lives.

However, communication technologies seem to be the platform where much of young

people's issues seem to be playing out. For youth workers, young people's online life is

a back stage which is not visible (Goffman, 1959). Members of group 3 explains the

realities of online conflict and new voyeuristic trends

> I remember when people were recording my brothers fight on Facebook I
> was going onto everybody's Facebook page a saying get it off, in-boxing
> them to tell them to take it off (G3(2/F/16).

> They all find it funny now though don't they? (G3(5/F/16).

The young people explained that people want shocking clips to show on Facebook

as they are under the impression that if they get enough likes then Facebook will

advertise through them and they will get paid. There is little to suggest that this is

true, but the 'viral' trend is in tune with sites such as YouTube, where those who

upload funny or shocking videos are rewarded with kudos through comments and

likes and potentially through advertising. In a sense, young people are acting like

journalists always on the lookout for new, funny, or shocking clips. G3(4/F/16)

explains the effects of this trend referring to the attack on her brother.

If you have been recorded and you're the one who's been beat up, you just want to forget about it all afterwards but you can't because it's all over Facebook G3(4/F/16)

Because everyone knows it's on Facebook, I'm mean the police knew about it, he told the police, now he's got to look at it for the rest of his life. Like the girlfriend he's with now she's seen it as well. So I don't, like, trust anyone, like new friends (G3(2/F/16).

Group 3 highlighted their concerns about online abuse and bullying and that this was driving people to despair. There was a sense that the young people found this space inescapable and previous actions, evident in photos and comments could potentially haunt them 'forever' which could lead to 'social stigma' (Goffman, 2009). It seems cyberspace offers the freedom of an unsupervised life in a virtual space, which seems to be replacing unsupervised freedom in the real world. However, in cyberspace it is almost impossible to forget your mistakes as they are recorded and evidenced. G3(5/F/16) suggests that this can have severe consequences.

There's just so many people killing themselves these days. Teenagers and children killing themselves, because they just get bullied so much, like cyber bullying it's just disgusting really (G3(5/F/16).

Conclusion

After considering the evidence from the young people's interviews it seems clear that there has been a significant change in the way young people communicate and consume technology, even over the duration of this study. Usage is increasing year on

year, along with technological innovation, this has further implications for the social interaction in the co-present as the layering of tasks intensifies.

Within this research there has been a focus on communication and interaction, however, what has maybe been overlooked is the importance of being together. Young people seem to express a need to just be together through their involvement with their projects, to belong to a group or community, whether they are with friends who are not fully interacting because they are partly engaged with technology, does not seem to matter. In this way technology was not making them unsociable in the sense that they are becoming more physically displaced (for these young people), but perhaps as Turkle asserts, they are 'alone together' increasingly drifting between the layers of their mediated and unmediated tasks (Turkle 2011). It is quite clear, for the moment anyway, that most of the young people were capable of engaging in a focused discussion for the most part. But the trends of increasing usage and the acceleration in technological innovation, and the way in which they pervade and intertwine our social networks raises the question, are we seeing a slow erosion of focused face-to-face interaction or a new kind of community that does not need continual face-to-face interaction?

This clearly has had a significant impact on the way that young people build and maintain relationships. What seems to be being described by the young people is that relationships are multifaceted, and strong relationships are sustained through several forms of communication, texts, phone calls, SNS messages, and social network sites. This communication gives fuel to relationships and enables them to continue beyond traditional boundaries. Collins (2005) might argue that this mediated game of sending and receiving messages is the thrill or high of addiction, but whatever the symptom

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there seems to be evidence that this is the energy that helps keep strong relationships alive in modern times.

With these new expectations of mediated relationship maintenance young people do now seem to be layering tasks. It might be suggested that their technological use impacts on their leisure time, and focused time to the extent that they are simultaneously living in two worlds, or new embodied space as suggested by Farman (2012). The extent to which this fully affects co-present relationships is still unclear (yet worthy of further study). It is fair to say that unsociable behaviour in co-present situations is not only an issue that affects young people but has become a norm within our society as a whole (Turkle, 2011). The extent to which this can be researched and analysed is difficult to ascertain at this point. However, the issue which Van Valley (2005) raised within the literature review is that young people must learn skills of negotiation if they want to 'get on' in the adult world.

When considering all of this information and relating it to youth work's core values and principles, it was difficult to see how technology could improve youth work practice. The young people seemed to appreciate clear and consistent information regarding activities, events and opening times but did not encourage any communication beyond this basic information. Evidence does suggest that mediated communication was a preference for some, and could offer the possibility of improvement in equal voice and democratic process as suggested by Davies and Cranston (2008).

The young people, however, spoke very highly of their youth projects and talked of gaining confidence, and self-esteem, and making a difference through their

involvement. Youth projects were a place for socialising, meeting friends and having fun. It was interesting how this part of their lives seemed far more traditional, and disconnected from their life online.

There was an interesting contrast in the young people's projects as two of the groups were generic youth clubs; one was a youth forum and one a focused project. The focused project worked on life skills, the project insisted that the young people not only turned their phones off but hand them over. The rationale for this was that much of the work that they did involve quite deep discussion on personal issues and that those involved had to agree to listen to each other at the start of the sessions. This rule had been developed over time as the workers had found that it was impossible to work in a focused way when young people were constantly using their phones. As many of the young people stated, they see their phones as an appendage and therefore giving up their mobile must surely have been a deterrent to some young people as the phones were confiscated for quite long periods of time.

When we consider conversation as the cornerstone of the facilitation of education within youth work, the environment we create so this can happen is paramount (Smith, 1999). Therefore, it begs the question of how we can create environments in which civil conversations can take place without affecting the liberty of the young people involved and whether technology can improve the voice and interaction for those who prefer to communicate through these mediums.

As mentioned, the young people's answers did suggest that communication between them and their youth projects was limited and should remain so. The fact that young

people attend youth projects and interact with youth workers, however, suggests that they value both greatly.

It is quite clear that youth work is facing a whole new set of ethical dilemmas and questions. The way in which technologies are being developed suggest a trend towards more personalised devices which will potentially have an increasing impact on our lives. Wearable technology such as the Google glass will deepen the ethical waters ahead. As technologies become more intuitive and intergraded into every aspect of our daily lives, what will youth work's role be? These issues will be discussed further in the discussion and conclusion chapters.

Chapter 8

Discussion

In this chapter I will analyse and discuss the data collected from the survey of the North East, the young peoples', and practitioners' interviews, considering the overarching themes initially discussed and developed within the literature review. I will consider the implications for 'youth' and society in the context of the technological revolution, and more specifically within the network society conceptualised by Castells (Castells, 2009, 2010, 2011). The discussion will include the cultural changes experienced by the participants and the implications for sociability, the construction of identity, and their experience of reality, and move on to discuss micro-social effects which are seen as a result of particular changes in co-present communication, community and learning. I will then focus on the specific implications for youth work theory and practice within the conclusion.

This will be organised by considering three key themes which have emerged from the research findings:

- New hybrid relationships, and communication
- New social environments
- Consumer culture, and the 'seeping' commodification of community and communication

I will begin this section by explaining how the data from my own research confirms the statistical and theoretical claims in the literature in terms of consumption and diffusion of technologies. I will then bring to light the cultural effects which have become evident.

Castells (2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011) asserts that technologies will increasingly pervade and influence all parts of our lives. Statistical research confirms expediential growth in the consumption of internet-enabled technologies year on year (Ofcom 2006, 2013, and 2014). At this point in time, mobile devices such as tablets and Smartphones are the most popular devices in terms of usage, and are the most common means of accessing the internet, although laptops, desktop and games consoles continue to be extremely popular. When considering my own quantitative data, it was evident that there were no significant differentials when considering the cross-tabulation of diffusion and variables such as gender, ethnicity, disability, educational background, or geographic factors, i.e. those who lived and worked in rural, semi-rural, and urban areas (pp. 213-214). This confirmed the literature reflecting a shared unifying (Western) global consumer experience. The survey data revealed that although not fully realised, technologies pervaded all parts of the youth work environment and were perceived as 'very important' if not 'essential' in practice (pp. 211-212). Devices such as smartphones, mobile phones, desktop PCs, laptops, smartboards, TV, digital cameras, and video cameras were mentioned. Software applications including PowerPoint, Word and Publisher were utilised. Creative software such as iMovie, Adobe Premiere, Final Cut, and Comic Life were all mentioned and utilised within practice. The most popular applications were YouTube, Facebook, SNS messenger services, SMS texts, phone calls via mobile, Blackberry messenger and websites. These technologies were used

for a variety of different purposes, highlighting the proliferation of new, and older

technologies into the practice in general terms.

When considering the qualitative data, the extent to which devices and applications

were being used by young people was striking, with almost all of the young people

describing constant use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Many of the young people

pointed out that they communicated with each other, (through some form of technology)

"from morning till night, everyday" (G3 (2/F/16). Mobile phones were the most popular

device mentioned and all of the young people involved in the focus groups owned a

phone. There were several examples of how the expectation of 24-hour communication

meant that they received and read messages through the night. The cost of the

constant communication was telling, with almost all of the young people giving

examples of how they, or their friends had significantly exceeded their credit limits on

their contracts.

Trends and increasing usage

The increasing expansion in usage will now be discussed considering the aspects of the

technologies, which encourage this increase.

> …they cannot leave it alone, they have it in their hands, and they have to
> respond to whatever's going on instantly (W9).

The claims made in the literature, that the use of technologies was leading to forms of

addiction are difficult to confirm. Particularly if we consider these claims within the

current 'determinist' discourse (Buckingham, 2008) (i.e. it is difficult to identify the

overuse of technologies as a problem when the tide of information is telling us that technologies are nothing but beneficial). Also every demographic is using technologies more so we cannot attribute these claims to any particular age group (Ofcom 2014).

It is difficult to confirm, and it is not the purpose of this research to diagnose IAD, however, the term addiction was used many times during the interviews, but mainly by practitioners referring to young people. Several of the young people indicated strong compulsion toward their phones. We can perhaps understand the addictive nature of these new technologies by recognising the social, symbolic, psychological, value of devices such as smartphones by considering the literature of Collins (2011); Castells (2010); (2011); Ling (2008); Tapscot (1998); Turkle (2011); Levitan (2014), and Farman (2012). What is evident is that there are incredibly powerful, potentially addictive forces at play which are constantly rewarding us on many levels, but we are perhaps yet to see the resulting symptoms of this very recent phenomenon to any great extent in Britain, other than they increasingly encourage an upsurge in usage[7]. Several of the practitioners did recognise signs of addiction within the young people's behaviour, and many of the young people's comments seem to confirm this. "…they're like, Can I just check my Facebook? I need to check my Facebook…. and it's like that addiction to constantly checking and messaging." (W10: p.281). The need to constantly check messages confirms Collins' claims that messaging acts as the trade of weak Interaction rituals (IRs). He explains

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[7]Tran, M. (2010) Girl starved to death while parents raised virtual child in online game

"…mediated IRs are weaker than bodily face-to-face IRs, people who have relatively few embodied IRs try to increase the frequency of mediated IRs to make up for them… I suggest that this is like an addiction; specifically, the type of drug addiction which produces "tolerance," where the effect of the drug weakens with habituation, so that the addict needs to take larger and larger dosages to get the pleasurable effect" (Collins, R. 2011: p.1).

Addiction and gaming

Addictive traits seemed particularly true for those involved in gaming. As W2 cited "…they have this thing where they'll go…Let's see if we can do a 12-hour shift without stopping?.. And you're like…When do you ever go to school, or college, or whatever you are doing?... And some will stay off college to finish whatever they're doing" (W2: p.262). One of the young people pointed out that he was obsessed with "Call of Duty" and recalls. "I was on it 3 days straight, didn't really go to sleep, minimal, minimal food a couple of drinks of coffee" (G2(1): p.304). The issue of gaming is clearly a different issue to the main focus of this research however these examples do highlight the addictive nature of a variety of technologies and do in fact confirm a physical displacement theory as highlighted in the literature review, affecting sociability in the co-present (Nie, & Hillygus, 2002). However, today this theory is thickened by the fact that these games are often social as they allow audible and avatar-based communication via XBOX and PlayStation services linked directly through internet networks. These services therefore also confirm a social stimulation theory (Valkenburg, Peter, J. 2007) as they offer social spaces for people to meet and interact from all around the world. This environment also offers the particular game as a space for 'mutual focus' in which often people work together to achieve tasks. 'Mutual focus' is for Collins (2005) an

'essential' feature of sustained emotional energies EE leading to successful IR's. In this light we can perhaps understand gaming as a site for solidarity. But the solidarity is gamified and mediated and therefore weaker in Collins terms. Gamification is fast becoming seen as not only a site for business and selling but also the new point of motivation and engagement in education (Kapp, 2012; Huang, Soman, 2013; Nadezhda, Lina, 2015; Muntean, 2011).

One of the practitioners highlighted the 'positive' side of online gaming and discussed his work with a young male who was 'socially' isolated from co-present interactions: "He's got loads of friends on Xbox LIVE. And that makes him really happy; that's one of his biggest joys in life is his Xbox LIVE and the friends he's in contact with there" (W3): p.275). Gaming also offers the opportunities for young people to adopt different personas and identities in an environment where they are free to express different aspects of themselves (Vasalou, Joinson, 2009; Kafai, Fields, Cook, 2010).

This might be attractive in the sense that it empowers those who are shy, quiet, disempowered, impaired, or disabled in the 'real' world. Dominant discourses around gaming and other forms of media boast the technologies' ability for interactivity and empowerment, however others are beginning to suggest that these media encourage 'interpassivity'." Interpassivity can be defined as a mode of relating that involves the consensual transferal of activity or emotion onto another being or object - who consequently 'acts' in one's place" (Wilson, L. 2003). Žižek (2009) tells us that 'interpassivity' is a compulsion driven by the 'Big other' or superegos injunction to 'enjoy' (through gaming for example) or be 'social' (through SNS). However, Žižek reminds us that there are benefits to this in some respects, that this makes us feel we are politically

active, or part of a community. Ultimately, these are weak surface level activities which suggest but do not really fulfil action. Their use is driven by capitalistic innovations and therefore it is the interests of capitalism that are at the root of the communication through the medium.

Value of devices, technologies as an appendage

It was interesting to hear that many of the young people mentioned how they viewed their mobile phones as an appendage or a part of themselves; "My right arm you can have that but you can't have me phone" (G2): p.272). These examples highlight the value of mobile phones to young people. This value seems to be perpetuated by three particular factors, Firstly, the symbolic value of the phone in society which young people may use as a fashion statement as it was perceived by young people in the case of (G1:4/M/16) (discussing the worker owning an iPhone), a status symbol within their peer group or as Ling suggests, consciously or unconsciously used "…to obtain the signs and symbols of the adult world…" The phones, in this sense, are "… the adoption of the outward form of the next stage of their lives" (Ling, 2004: p.104). Secondly, the capacity of the device. Most smartphones have the capabilities of most computers, offering the possibilities of gaming, internet browsing, organizing, making notes, reading, watching movies, recording, listening to music. Lastly, the communicative power offers the user calls, SMS texts and applications such as e-mail, and SNS and other messaging and video call services such as Skype and FaceTime (which encapsulates the addictive elements mentioned earlier in this section).

Hardt and Negri (1998) and Žižek (2009) refer to these technologies as the new prostheses as their functions and capacities integrate into the individual's body. The brain's limitation is extended by the use of the search engine, our communication is extended through text, SNS and messenger application and these technologies are so intuitive they are experienced in natural ways (McLuhan, 1962). In this sense, the use of the device (or technology) gets so engrained into the individual's social communication and general behaviours that it feels alien to be without it. Interestingly, this idea of a device as an appendage is set to extend with the innovation of new wearable devices such as watches which synchronise with your smartphone, and map every aspect of your movement including your sleeping habits, and devices like Google Glasses. Virtual reality headsets such as Oculus Rift and Samsung's Galaxy S6 Virtual Reality headset further embed smart mobile capacities into the everyday life experience. Although we have not quite reached the point in which wearable technologies are commonplace, many are already highlighting the point that "There are huge privacy and ethical implications around wearable technology," (Goodwin, 2014). They offer many new capabilities which could infringe on individual privacy and safety, for example, recording in social spaces without consent of others, and the possibility of using face recognition to find out details about complete strangers, furthering concerns about the possibility of total surveillance (Foucault, 1991). These new devices will also require the readjustment of social performances which might increase or reduce the impact of technologies on co-present interactions (Ling, 2008).

We can perhaps also understand the value of the device and their possibilities as they hold the personal information, history, photographs, movies, contacts belonging to the individual. They can be seen then to hold the contents of their lives as well as their portal to other spaces, worlds and identities. The artefact in this sense must be respected, and it was evident that young people demanded respect for their devices. In McLuhan's (1962) terms we can perhaps see these particular elements as extensions of human faculty. There is also the symbolic value of mobile phones as an extension of the body's aesthetic or skin, their capacity as an extension of human memory, and communicative power as an extension of the voice and other communicative symbols. These devices are therefore extremely powerful, making individuals into what Žižek refers to as prosthetic gods. This can be viewed as the extreme of individualism as humans become self-reliant as they have direct access to all 'perceived' knowledge and resources via new technologies (Žižek, 2009).

Commodification of communication and new consumer identities

With consideration of the literature it is evident on a global macro level that technological innovation has been driven by concerns of economy and business efficiency (Castells, 2010). Global free markets have encouraged a world in which there are, as Postman (1993); Jameson (1994) might suggest, no other alternatives to constant innovation and development of new technologies. In fact, "…it seems easier to imagine 'the end of the world' than a far more modest change in the mode of production" i.e. capitalism intertwined in global networked technologies (Jameson in Žižek, S. 1994: p.1). The way this has shaped and influenced our minds is impossible to

say, but what might be asserted is that we understand the world where the idea of constant technological innovation for the benefit of humanity is the dominant global hegemony which we experience today. Our lives, our social and cultural realities are therefore shaped not only by technology but by intertwining of technology, management, and business. Postman (1985, 1993) foresaw these issues long before the full diffusion of the internet. He was concerned that market forces driving technological innovation would destroy social institutions, such as schools, undoing centuries of development of civil life and social practices. For Postman (1985, 1993) educative practices are extremely important not only in the development and direction of knowledge but in the socialisation of children and young people into 'democratic' civil society. Considering the evidence, it seems very clear that these changes are occurring. It might be suggested that values have altered in the way in which Postman imagined to the extent that mediated communication and experience is at least, considering my own research, as valued as much as unmediated communication (G2; G3). What is being described is the proliferation of technologies into every part of life. Prodnick (2014) points out that this is a part of a 'seeping' commodification of every aspect of our lives. In this sense, community and conversation has been taken by business and sold back to us as a commodity through our consumption of 'social' technologies.

> The key characteristic of a seeping commodification is the fact that, in the current historical epoch, commodity form is able to trickle down to all the niches and activities of society and human lives. A seeping commodification is able to more or less successfully mimic the activities that are distinctive of communication, which has (in the recent decades) been completely absorbed into the capitalist accumulation circuit. Because of these characteristics, commodification is nowadays able literally to seep into the spheres that

seemed completely impenetrable (even unimaginable) to the market exchange in the past. (Prodnik, 2014: p.161).

Within the research there was evidence that this created an environment in which mediated communication was exploited. It was very evident that all of the participants were consumers ('or quasi' through their parents) of new technologies. The majority of the young people gave examples of how they exceeded the limitations of their mobile contracts and often went beyond their personal allowance and had, in turn, faced additional charges (p. 304). It seems now that technology ownership and particularly, mobile phone contracts are an unquestioned norm for young and old, and an expectation which will perhaps span from childhood to (potentially) the grave (Gillett, Ajasafe, Lovell, Schmid, Holmes, 2005). People in this sense are (potentially) lifelong consumers and therefore their lives and identity are deeply intertwined with consumer culture. This intertwining of personal growth and consumption is not just contractual but linked closely to identity. One of the practitioners recognised this and identified that there have been iPhone apps developed for babies so they can be conditioned from birth (W9: p. 267). The ownership of mobile phones such as the iPhone could be seen as a link to young people's self-esteem within their peer group, and wider culture, but also global self-esteem through Apples' global dominance as a brand. In the research, a worker was rewarded with respect for having the 'correct' mobile phone; "It's just a sign that you know what's going on, what's the crack" (G1(4/M/16) p.319). Artefacts such as the iPhone were viewed as powerful symbols of status but also of group

membership. [8] Shared symbols in this sense help in unifying a group, building trust, and be a source of interest and conversation.

When considering the differentials in terms of age, adults born before the full diffusion of the internet have been, perhaps, led into a world of this new mediated consumption, where young people have been born into a culture of communication in which consumption is essential. They are socialised to expect to be tied to mobile phone contracts and are therefore potentially at the prey of markets and mediated business. For example, account-based selling through conduits such as iTunes, Google play, Xbox live, PlayStation network, are other ways in which businesses attach themselves to individuals for the long haul. Subscriptions and memberships to sites such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, put young people in the firing line of powerful advertising and neuromarketing which follow them and their preferences from site to site in 'behaviour tracking', waiting for moments of weakness. Quick links to shopping sites such as Amazon or Ebay make buying almost an automatic possibility, as they are always there waiting for those 'system 1' 'fast thinking' emotive impulses (Eyal, 2014; Dooley 2011; Song, 2013). The 'Buy with one click button' offers us speed, which is gold in the fight for attention in the mediated world.

Co-present interaction and face-to-face communication are 'mostly' free in monetary terms but do not offer the liberating freedom of the networks, the capacity of the new prosthesis, the ease of 'interpassivity' or the 'ecstasy of consumption' which mediated

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[8]   At this point in history the iPhone was predominantly associated with youth, fashion and popular culture (Juhlin, O., & Zhang, Y. (2011).

communication offers. Although the research suggested that this was still valued it also suggested an increasing preference to mediated communication. Is technology doing what Postman (1993) argued it would, making face-to-face less and less visible, and therefore less and less relevant? (Castells, 2010). Young people are then not only conditioned for consumerism but also to accept increasing surveillance.

The consumption of our own Surveillance

Although there was evidence that practitioners and young people had discussed safety and privacy issues regarding the internet (W9; G3), there were no wider considerations of how the internet in particular is creating a world in which there is an increasing blurring of lines between the public and private. As it has been argued that, along with being conditioned for consumerism, it seems young people are simultaneously being conditioned to accept (and enjoy) their own surveillance. New technologies can be seen as a further extension of the 'panopticon' system described by Foucault (1991) in which every part of the subject is visible all of the time (Westlake, 2008; Oliver, 2011). Interestingly, the field work research took place at the same time as WikiLeaks had released information regarding Google and Facebooks' spying, and just months prior to the Edward Snowdon revelations regarding NSA, and GCHQ's domestic spying programmes (Citizen four, 2014). The evidence suggests we have accepted and normalized surveillance in the very act of consuming technologies as surveillance is built into the architecture of the new system. One worker told of how her project had used Facebook to track the movements and activities of certain groups to gain

'intelligence' on the group's interests and needs. In this example, Facebook let the

practitioners know:

> Who's going here? Who's going there?" So you know straightaway okay
> that's what's going on. So it's given us the heads up a few times when we've
> been doing detached work. You'll see "meeting at so, bring your drink,
> meeting here, meeting there. "(W10).

This idea of gathering 'intel' on young people's movements by using Facebook

was also highlighted on a recent documentary "Under Age and Over the

Limit" (Northern Echo, 2014), which highlighted the possibilities of how

technologies can be used to track and spy on young people and raising a new

ethical dimension to the practice of youth work which will be discussed further in

the conclusion chapter.

New hybrid relationships and communication

> ...people are attracted to the path of least resistance" (Neuman, 1991: p.103, in
> Castells, M. 2008: p.359).

It was evident that the increasing adoption and use of new technologies have clearly

had a huge impact on the way that young people build, maintain and understand

relationships. What is being described by the young people is that relationships are

multifaceted. Strong relationships are sustained through several forms of

communication, for example, texts, phone calls, SNS messenger services, and that this

communication consolidates and gives energy to co-present interactions and

relationships. Several of the young people and also some of the practitioners talked

about their preference to text, or chat online as opposed to face-to-face or via phone calls confirming claims from Madell and Muncer (2007) who argue that communication via technologies such as email and SMS text gives people greater control over their interactions allowing time to reflect and think about their actions and responses. Practitioners explained how deaf groups were dispersing due to their preference towards mediated communication (W11). As mentioned this needs further investigation but if this is true it does suggest a significant change in social behaviours and the traditional formation of community groups. This was further exemplified by the young person who explained how he and his friends communicated via texts while sitting on the bus at the same time as being co-present (G2(1/M/17) p.225). Others describe how they could express themselves better through new technologies. These examples seemed to involve the young people who described themselves as shy and quiet in 'real-life', those described by others as 'keyboard warriors', those who are far more likely to speak out or challenge in cyberspace than in co-presence, again suggesting that the flattening of power through mediated communication offered a more attractive space for more 'authentic' communication and expression (p.316) (Castells, 2011).

All of these examples do highlight issues of preferences towards mediated communication which suggests that there are certain aspects of co-present interpersonal interactions which they would prefer to avoid. Perhaps unmediated social situations offer the anxiety of the potential for conflict, humiliation, or violence. (Although it is noted that this symbolic violence is possible online, cyberspace enables individuals to avoid the physical presence of others. It also enables people to hide aspects of themselves as described by Wells Brignall III and Van Valey (2005). This may be

informed by past experience of interpersonal power issues or stories which culture has taught them, as they face the 'reality' which has been developed by an historic construction of power relations of hierarchy built by social institutions; or to view these examples in Collins' (2005) terms, the young people have experienced negative, or failed interaction rituals IR, in which no positive emotional energies EE were sustained, or entrained, and therefore there is no motivation to return to those rituals. However, it must be noted that these examples were only from the practitioners' accounts. The young people who took part in the research obviously did not avoid co-present social situations. Further research might consider these 'displaced' or 'invisible' young people to whom the practitioners referred.

In a sense, these technologies offer the possibility of avoidance of 'power realities' and of the threat of failed IR, physical violence, and traditional co-present conflict to be further removed from one's reality. It is very likely that these behaviours will inadvertently lead to young people increasingly avoiding 'real-life' social situations. There were some extreme examples of this mentioned by the practitioners. Some groups of young people who were described as totally socially inept (W7: p282). Will an increase in these behaviours create an anxiety of real-life co-present interactions where there is always the risk of interpersonal power differentials, and the potential of 'real' conflict? Or could it be the case that new technologies enable young people to negotiate relationships in new ideal ways, which Turkle refers to as the Goldilocks effect, wherein individuals keep friends and family neither too close, nor too far away, but just the right balance of both physical and emotional distance (Turkle, 2011). She argues that we love technologies so much because we can control what we share, presenting our best

'faces' all of the time and hide what we do not want others to see. Turkle argues that traditional conversation is so imperfect in comparison to communication through new technologies, because it is open to emotion and mistakes and lacks the reflection of written word. Yet for Turkle it is conversation that makes us human and this is the paradox of the new world.

Questioning the digital divide discourse

There is a tendency to suggest that there are differences between young people and old in the context of a digital divide (but remember this research does not consider the outer practice life of the practitioners), that young people are digital natives and practitioners are digital immigrants as Tapscot (1998) suggests. What is actually being suggested by the literature is that the majority of society is engaging with new technologies, and that the extent of usage of technologies is increasing year on year. [9] There were some examples of how attitudes towards technologies were different when regarding age, however there were also examples of how older practitioners were championing work through a variety of new media (W8, W9).

Although it was not directly stated that there was a generational divide there was the feeling that adults were out of the loop, and that this was reinforced by the constraints of the practitioners' ability to communicate through technologies due to red tape and

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[9] It is worth noting that as this research is coming to an end Smart phones have become the number one device for accessing the internet. There are 82.7 million mobile subscriptions alone in the uk, young people may dominate the market in terms of usage of messaging services via mobile phone, but it is perhaps naive to believe there is a significant difference in the use of technologies generally particularly between groups between 12 and 50.

policy. The majority of the practitioners were active users and consumers of technology, only one stated that he was not. He admitted that," it's like being illiterate" (W6: p. 256). Therefore, for the majority there was no significant generational divide with regards to their experience of technology, there was only a divide in terms of standards of social 'manners', or 'etiquette', or the understanding of new social hegemonies or because boundaries were put in place by organisation through policy. In situations where practitioners were utilising technologies there was a sense that they made them more relevant, and accessible, and strengthened the relationships with young people (W1, W8, W9: p. 250).

Perhaps one of the defining features which differentiates young people's experience and that of the practitioner is that young people have grown up immersed in the logic of mediated networks as described by Castells (2011). Therefore, they understand and have experienced power differently. Obviously they have similar experiences in unmediated 'real' life in which they have to negotiate interpersonal power relationships with family, other children and young people. They experience power in hierarchical structures through education and relationships with the state through institutions. But they perhaps have always known a world in which power is horizontal in a way the older practitioners have not. They are then socialized differently and understand power differently. They have different expectations and are perhaps more sensitive to power (Taylor, 2014; Castells, 2011). Also, as already mentioned, they have the ability to negotiate their relationships with others in new ways (as in the Goldilocks Effect, Turkle, 2011). Communication through technology also enables young people to 'hide' their body (Brignall and VanValley, 2005). As Foucault states, the body is inscribed with

meaning, and for young people this is often a negative inscription of deviance and deficit (Foucault, 2010). Therefore, it might be seen as liberating to not be defined by the body's appearance in the 'real' world, avatars and other forms of online presentations of self may feel more comfortable (Thomas, 2007).

Relationships in timeless time

The space and flows inherent in internet-based networks

> ...dissolves time by disordering the sequence of events and making them simultaneous, thus installing society in eternal ephemerality. The multiple space of places, scattered, fragmented, and disconnected, display diverse temporalities, from the most primitive domination of natural rhythms to the strictest tyranny of clock time…While the emerging logic of new social structure aim at the relentless suppression of time" (Castells, M. 2009 a: p.497)

Castells (2009) tells us that new global networks based around the internet offer new communication possibilities in timeless time. Turkle (2011) suggests that the sheer volume of information and communication possibilities creates a collapsing of time which is leading individuals to layer tasks and increasingly encourage multitasking behaviours. The research confirmed these claims. With many of the young people giving examples of how they were always communicating via technologies. This impacted on the unmediated parts of their lives in many ways. Some pointed out that they layered mediated tasks on top of other aspects of their lives confirming the claims from The Kaiser Family Foundation (2010) research. Young people stated that they communicated via technologies whether they were in the bath, or on the toilet, or when

they were using other technologies, gaming, using the internet or watching TV. There was a sense that they had to receive and respond with immediacy. A delay or break in communication was met with anxiety. There were several examples of this anxiety when young people were running out of credit (and therefore willing to go over their contract limits), when they were running out of data, when out of signal range and when running out of battery power(G4(2/F/17).

For many of the young people, the use of technology was concentrated into time-spaces where other activities such as reading, watching TV, or playing games might once have fitted, or filling the time where boredom might occur. However, some have questioned whether boredom and solitude are important parts of human development (Turkle 2011). There was some suggestion that the use of technologies was impacting on traditional resting and relaxation time as young people sent and received texts and messages via SNS late at night, and sometimes through the night. There was also evidence to suggest that gaming impacted on the social life, the sleeping, and eating habits of young people in negative ways (G2(1/M/18): p. 306). There were some examples of how technologies were impacting on young people's education as they described the conflict as they negotiated the use of their phones in school hours (p231). Others admitted skipping college to continue gaming at home (p. 263).

With this evidence it is clear that networked technologies are shifting old ideas of time boundaries as they allow a new sociability and new ability to layer tasks around the clock as Castells has suggested. Creating the potential of boundless time in which old structures of time are increasingly becoming irrelevant, as communication pervades the boundaries of co-presence and we all become potentially reachable all of the time. This

in turn has created a culture of new expectation in which social communication, sending

and receiving takes place around the clock. With this in mind we can recognise the

concerns of Postman (1993) and Turkle (2011). Although these authors might suggest a

'roll back' of use, this seems unlikely as the technological momentum is very much

taking us towards increasing use not less (Ofcom, 2014). What is clear is that there is a

new fluidity to relationships and communication in which both blend through mediated

and unmediated experience and boundless time which is increasingly unstructured.

New expectations

As McLuhan (1962), Postman (1993), Castells (2009 a, b, 2010), foresaw with the

diffusion of internet-based networked technologies, changes are taking place to our

social realities. New social expectations would arise as a side effect of the compression

of time and space and local-global communication. Considering the findings it is difficult

to argue against these claims. There were many examples of how new expectations

were arising particularly in terms of 24/7 communication and the increasing expectation

of immediate response. Some of the practitioners were very aware that young people

expected youth providers to be more accommodating to young people's preferred

choice of communication, and that this communication was multi-faceted.

> They expect to be able to get a hold of us through a mobile phone and they
> expect us to be on Facebook. And they expect us to be able to communicate
> with their preferred method of communication (W9).

This example highlights an extreme change in communication preference. Some

accepted this new expectation as a modern reality which they would have to surrender

too, and for others, they were limited by policy but it was clear that all this 'expected' communication did not fit within the confines of the predetermined time/space of working hours. There were several examples of how practitioners worked outside of the boundaries of their professional life. One worker gave an example of how she recognised this expectation and was therefore "..always available…via social networking and mobile devices to ensure that our relationships are maintained throughout periods where the youth service isn't available" (W8: p. 250). The new expectation of communication pervades most people's lives in unrestricted ways to the extent where practitioners are essentially working for free or volunteering, at unsociable hours, and take part in immaterial labour (Hardt and Negri, 2000). One worker pointed out how she had tried to restrict this by stating "you aren't going to get us at ten o'clock at night" (W9: p.235) suggesting a cutoff point, but this implies that she will answer any time before ten. It also raises the question whether youth work practitioners are communicating outside of the specific days of their working week. Hardt and Negri (2000) present this issue as 'biopolitical', as immaterial labour dissolves the separation between work and life. As a result, relationships and communities are fundamentally changed merging and linking work, and private life connections and priorities. Communication technologies enable situations in which work life and private life increasingly merge, and definitions of personal and professional relationships become ambiguous.

New timeless time described by Castells (2010) is totally unrestricted, working globally and therefore does not respect working hours, or days. The boundaries of home and work life, and what is personal and professional are, in a sense, increasingly becoming

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blurred Hardt and Negri (2000). Many of the survey respondents pointed out the problematic nature of social networks and how young people had tried to befriend them via their personal Facebook. Marshall McLuhan (1962) suggested that technologies would someday prompt the re-tribalisation of human society into a 'global village' through the connection of the internet, and that is perhaps what we are starting to see. What McLuhan did not perhaps envisage is the complexity of this idea as time collapses and the possibilities of infinite information and communication becoming available; the institutional and professional ethical problems which this tribalisation would have to negotiate.

One of the projects described how a youth forum made up of local young people had sought to set up a Facebook page for young people from the area to communicate local issues, and ideas in a democratic dialogic forum. However, the local authority refused to let them do this offering a compromise of a 'passive' Facebook information page, without any means of communicating through messenger or inbox service. The young people refused the compromise stating that "Well, that's not what Facebook's about." In other examples practitioners highlighted the point that any form of communication outside of face-to-face was not allowed so they had to communicate with young people through their parents. As in this case, "Safeguarding policy does not permit adult/youth interaction" (Survey respondent). In some cases the extent of the resistance of local authorities to this form of communication was quite striking, even banning texting as "…it is considered too personal " (Survey participant). Some practitioners highlighted, the point that by refusing these means of communication some projects were restricting opportunities for inclusion for young people who were socially isolated. As Castells,

(2011) argues traditional sites of power will resist new, more horizontal forms of communication. (Castells, 2011).

Problems also arose when young people were trying to befriend practitioners on their personal Facebook accounts. Restriction and exclusivity go against the openness of the internet and might be then seen as 'snubs' to the young people we are trying to build relationships with. Others felt that

> ...using social networking to contact young people can have an extremely negative effect. Not least because it is an infringement on young people's privacy but also as professionals we should not be using 'friends' sites to contact Y.P., it blurs already hazy boundaries (Survey respondent).

These arguments are layered by the 'real' safeguarding concerns which the use of new communication technologies magnify. However, it might be argued that by not communicating via technologies we are turning a blind eye to the world in which my research suggests young people are spending the majority of their time.

Convenience

> Technologies are quick and convenient, however, I don't feel that they allow the same relationship building as a face-to-face conversation would (Survey participant).

Some practitioners had come to realise that communication through SNS, phone and internet had made communication almost too convenient (W7: p. 252). One worker pointed out how she had built a relationship with a young person over time through

attendance of her youth club and through detached work. She described how the relationship had changed over time into a virtual relationship to the point where instead of going out to visit the young person and talk face to face, see and understand his living conditions, they had gradually reduced the relationship down to a regular short text message. This may have been a natural gradual end to a relationship, but what is interesting is that the practitioner admitted that it had become convenient and it is perhaps this convenience that does lead to a corrosion of co-present social life as Carr (2010) suggests. This reduction in communication could be seen as an extension of the efficiency that the technologies offer. In a short text there is the appearance and evidence that communication is taking place but what is being left behind is the content of the relationship. Using Žižeks' (2009) ideas of 'interpassivity we can suggest that there is something inherent in 'social' technologies which create an assumption that community is being played out through the use of the technology. In this sense, the artifact, the mobile phone in this case, does the work for us, or we perceive it as so. The act of 'liking' on SNS offers 'interpassivity' as we can support political causes or show our discontent with the click of a button, we can associate with groups and use profound quotations without any understanding or other action on our part. 'Friendships' and 'community' are available without any work involved. It is perhaps with this critical understanding that we can have a clearer view of 'social technologies' and give us an anchor so we might decipher what is useful and effective, and what is surface or superfluous.

Carr (2010) suggests that the new technological environment encourages fast thinking, and short attention. As we increase and layer tasks, slow thought and sustained focus

becomes less useful as we have more and more information to negotiate and prioritise. This was evident in the fact that communication between the practitioners and young people mainly consisted of short messages (p. 229). Practitioners engaged young people with the offer of short pieces of 'work', quick chats, interactive polls to gauge opinion and interests, instead of sustained dialogue. The competition for attention seemed to be the new battleground, and we might conclude what this inevitably encourages is short attention and convenience. Interestingly, the only example of sustained dialogue in groups was through face-to-face in an environment where there were quite formal rules, boundaries and an explicit 'mutual focus' (See W9 and G3).

Convenience and displacement

> …often these days there are less young people on the streets, yet if you log-on to Facebook you realise many of them are logged on (Survey participant).

A number of the practitioners mentioned the effect that new technologies have had on the deaf community (p. 258). They believed that technologies have had a very positive effect for them regarding their communication and social relationships. They stated that communication and interaction through technologies had become convenient, and many deaf young people preferred mediated communication and, thus, this had a paradoxical social effect as many deaf young people were choosing not to attend clubs (in the co-present) and fewer deaf young people were interacting face-to-face. In this sense, new technologies have created an environment.

> That means I don't have to pay to get on the bus, I don't have to go to the pictures. I don't have to go to the pub or the café or whatever to buy food of drink" (W11: p.258).

Again this is an interesting claim which perhaps needs to be confirmed and explored by further research, but it is interesting to consider the potential effects as convenience and expense as further layers of our motivations influencing how we act socially in the co-presence.

Privacy, identity and representation

There were some examples of young people who did not want to communicate with youth work practitioners through new technologies, viewing this as potentially privacy invading (p.299). They understood that such contact offered practitioners the ability to see the other sides of young people's lives and selves which are visible on social network sites such as Facebook. In a sense, the young people were protective of their representation. Perhaps the young people presented a very different 'front stage' self in their face-to-face relationships with the practitioners and presented a very different 'back stage' online self, or these could be seen as several different 'front stage' selves (Goffman, 1959), so they preferred to keep that particular self hidden in fear of the social repercussions, embarrassment and the risk of 'stigma' and 'spoiled identities' as described by Trottier (2014). In fact, there were several examples of how social network sites had been damaging to the young people's online identities or representation of themselves. This was mainly down to hacking but there were also examples of how physical fights involving young people had been uploaded to Facebook and were visible to everyone in that young person's friend's community (p.322). This could result in identity stigma where young people might be viewed as bullies, victims, or generally

violent, which could have implications for all parts of their lives. In the case of the hacking, negative comments were made on behalf of the youth projects (p. 254). This had a catastrophic effect on the relationship between the young person and the project. In this example it was a project working with the most vulnerable of young people. In this sense, the project itself was viewed as online identity, the action of the hacker had spoiled that identity for the young person who was targeted. In another case, a private picture of young women in bikinis was put as wallpaper on the youth projects' computers, seemingly as a joke by another young person (p. 253). This example highlights the vulnerability of privacy with technology, and in this case seems to have caused lots of embarrassment for the young people involved, and in one case ended the relationship between the young people and the youth project.

In this light it is worth noting that young people seem to have the opportunity to play out many different representations through face-to-face, and mediated communication. Although this has been theorized (Humphreys 2005; Ling 2008; Westlake, 2008, Hogan, 2010, Trottier, 2014) as the presentation of 'front stage' and 'back stage' performance, we can perhaps understand this better by considering that young people have the possibilities to operate on several 'front stages' in which they can present and hide parts of themselves to different audiences continually depending on their motivations and preference. The extent to which this is utilised is obviously variable from person to person, but what is evident is that it leads to a new complex environment for identity formation and representation.

Some practitioners suggested that young people are "obsessed with the internet, and they live an online persona" (W7: p.282). This 'obsession with one's online persona has

led some to suggest that technologies such as SNS encourage a 'social aggressive narcissism' (See Mehdizadeh, 2010, and Pearse, 2012) in which people exhibit self-obsession, vanity, and behaviours of superiority. People increasingly 'add' hundreds if not thousands of 'friends' as a part of these self-aggrandising behaviours. Some suggest that these kinds of behaviours are encouraged by social technologies and also through education culture in western society:

> The way that children are being educated is focusing more and more on the importance of self-esteem – on how you are seen in the eyes of others. This method of teaching has been imported from the US and is 'all about me' (Pearse, 2012: p.1).

This self-absorption would go some way to account for the increasing usage and distracting nature of technologies such as Facebook. It is not only that technologies are distracting but they increasingly encourage this individualistic, narcissistic, 'it's all about me' attitudes and behaviours. However, it is worth noting that studies highlight that this trend is an issue for all age groups. Community sites such as Facebook could be seen as a key location of learning, and reward. This has made many raise questions about the kind of learning which goes on through these media and concerns about the boundaries of socialisation in cyberspace (Livingstone, 2005).

Baudrillard (2002) tells us that these virtual experiences are simulations of 'real' life. There is an avatar (or page identity) in place of me, there is a community which simulates 'real' community, there is interaction which simulates 'real' interaction dressed up in a way which 'appears' to be 'even better than the real thing', but are ultimately empty. For Marturano and Belluci (2009), Facebook is a "new disguised form of

advanced capitalism aimed at eroding space to more challenging modes of Internet collectivism" (ibid), as they encourage the 'impassivity' described earlier in the chapter.

New social environment

Although there is strong evidence that technologies created environments in which mediated communication was preferable many of the young people seemed to want what might be seen as traditional aspects of youth provision, somewhere to meet friends, to have fun, and in one example, to make a difference in their community. What seemed to be being described generally throughout the study was a youth work environment of 'buzzing' social activity as young people interacted through a variety of different media technologies as well as face-to-face co-present situations. This was, in turn, limiting the attention of everyone involved, and also the mutual focus of groups on particular tasks, shortening the space for deep or critical discussion on group and individual level. Practitioners pointed out strategies and negotiation to get attention, negotiating time-space for 'work'. The time frame for this work always seemed to be very short, and it is worth noting that there was an impression that this was almost always driven by the youth provider's priorities and not the interests of the young people. "So we've just said for the first hour, and it's all the work side, that we need to plan for the session, and then phones after that"(W1: p. 262) "give me 15 minutes of your time and you can go back to what you were doing" (W1), others gave examples of how they strategically planned a trip to a place with no mobile signal to encourage engagement and new activities which clearly highlights a particular problem of attention and focus.

Although there is a focus here on the problematic distracting nature of technologies it is evident that youth provision is used and valued, it is perhaps useful to consider Farman's (2012) argument that we are always focusing in and out of different realities whether there are a multitude of different technologies involved or not. Secondly, Farman and others such as (Barthes, 1978, Baudrillard, 1972, and Castells, 2011) would argue that in this sense, communication is as important through technology as it is experienced as 'real', because "…there is no separation between 'reality' and symbolic representation…all humankind has existed in and acted through a symbolic environment" (Barthes, 1978; Baudrillard (1972) in Castells 2008: p.403). However, Collins (2005) argues that there is something essentially human in co-present ritual interaction which technologies, as yet, cannot produce which is EE.

Symbolic interaction

…they won't even look at you and give you eye contact. They won't take their eyes off the computer and have a conversation with you" (W1: p.260). There were many examples of how young people were ignoring traditional social cues and habits of interaction. The young people also confirmed that their social behaviours were often rude but 'they could not help it' (p. 261).

What seems to be happening is that young people's behaviours are layered with new social hegemonies of answering calls and texts with immediacy. This is highlighted by Hopper (1992) and also driven by encouraged narcissistic identity trends (Pearse, 2012), and the new cultural expectations highlighted by Castells (2009 a, b, 2010). The social requirement to answer phones when they are ringing, the expectation of

immediate response to texting and messages are perhaps as important and valued as any co-present activity (Farman, 2012). In Collins (2005) terms, this impacts on the co-present rituals which are essential to group solidarity. Technologies in this sense distract and negatively affect 'mutual focus'. Emotional energies EE fail to build between the individuals in the groups and the interaction rituals IR fail. Failed interactions can lead to negative outcomes for groups as they lack the motivation to return to situations because of the lack of group 'effervesce' and EE. There were many examples of how technologies were impacting negatively on IR in practice (W1, W5, W6, W9, W11). There were examples of how young people tried to tackle this communication battle by texting while holding a conversation in the co-presence and keeping eye contact (p. 314). Performing on 'two front stages' (Goffman, 1959). We can perhaps understand this new environment of layered mediated and co-present task by employing Goffman's (1959) theories of 'crosstalk'. The use of technology continually influences and highlights other people's social vulnerabilities in the co-present as their interactions are interrupted (by an incoming call or text, or Facebook message) and others are left 'single' requiring individuals to mark themselves 'with' someone whether via technology or by talking to someone in the co-present. They may also use the devices as a social 'prop' to indicate that they do not want to talk to the youth worker (ibid). Similarly, Turkle points out we have become pausible as "our face-to-face conversations are routinely interrupted by incoming calls and text messages" (Turkle, S. 2011: p.161) and as we move the phone to our ear, or turn to read messages we are "marked absent" from the co-present conversation and interactions. What is being described is an environment where there is little space for focus. Individuals try to perform on two front stages but

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this ultimately weakens the EE in the interactions they are taking part in, this results in weak or failed IR.

There is a sense of a fragmentation in co-presence, an atomizing effect driven by individualised mediated communication and self-obsession. Although it is worth reminding ourselves that this does not seem to have stopped young people wanting to be together in social spaces such as youth clubs. What seems to be clear is that we have accepted changes and new social behaviours, and norms in a very short space of time. While Farman (2012) would argue when we answer calls or attend to messages we may be currently seen as marked absent from the co-present, yet we embody the time and space with the person we are talking to, in the flow of communication between the people that we are calling, or messaging. Changes in communication habits and the loss of 'manners' had not gone unnoticed, and most of the participants gave examples of how technologies have had an impact on face-to-face interaction in negative ways. While giving examples of how they were irritated by these behaviours they also pointed out that they were guilty of it also. "…It sometimes annoys us that you can have a room full of young people who are talking to each other on Facebook. They don't turn round and face each other and have a conversation" (W10: p. 266); and the statement "I know I'm dead ignorant" ... but "I just can't stop" (G3(5/F/16: p.312). This seemed to be a common theme throughout the young people's interviews. The way in which the interviewees reacted to the situation seems, in some part, to be related to their age and experience, which is in turn related to particular norms and values. Young people, and younger youth workers empathised more with each other with regards to their behaviours, seemingly recognising the dilemma of having to prioritise between

texting and interacting in co-presence. Others recognised the issue but accepted this as 'the way things are' (p.206), it goes unchallenged as there is no clear thought in terms of how this act affects our interactions, conversations and relationships, and in turn how the consequences for our future social norms are affected. Collins (2005, 2011) might argue that this mediated game of sending and receiving messages via technologies is just a poor substitute for co-present face-to-face interaction and the emotional energies these 'real' interactions entrain, but whatever the reason there seems to be evidence that this is the oxygen that helps keep strong relationships alive in modern times. We might then, view mediated communication as essential maintenance to group and interpersonal relationships.

Alone together

Turkle (2011) suggests that through the use of technologies we are increasingly encouraging environments and behaviours in which we are 'alone together'. We are in the presence of others but are distracted from co-present interaction through the use of technologies and the increasing layering of tasks. Although there was strong evidence of this, it is interesting to note that, for the most part, young people were using technologies to organise and sustain relationships which they would inevitably meet in the co-present. Although there was a certain bias inherent in the research (interviewing young people who attended youth clubs) there was a strong sense that young people craved co-present social interaction with one another. As one worker stated "… they're desperate to be together" (W2: p.246). If we understand this in Collins' (2005) terms we might understand youth clubs and provision as sites of positive interaction rituals IR in

which emotional energies EE are entrained. This explains the reasons that young people continue to want to be together socially however when together they felt the responsibility to tend to their mediated tasks in the co-present and they layered activities of co-presence and communication through technology. This created situations in which young people had to make interaction choices and select priorities. There was a sense that, while they might want to be together with other young people, they often prioritise mediated communication over interaction with most workers, prioritising short interactions with close friends. New technologies in this sense let us act out our lives in individualised ways but we are always in reach in the way that Turkle (2011) (as mentioned) refers to as the 'Goldilocks Effect', we keep people 'not too close, not too far, just right'. Our mediated sociability is too convenient, it allows us to use our 'friends' when we want them and to pause them when we do not. It is interesting to consider young people's motivation to be together in co-presence. We are, of course socialised from an early age through family, community, playgroups, nurseries and schools and therefore for the most part have a disposition as sociable beings through the experience of our upbringing, through primary and secondary 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1984). Collins (2011) suggests that it is only in co-present interaction rituals that we experience the EE 'emotional energies' which stimulate interaction entrainment so that we might return to interactions again. Without this energy we potentially lose the motivation to interact and thus sustain friendships, and communities. For Collins, this is what makes us human and he also points out that mediated communication cannot transfer (EEs). Although Collins' argument is strong, we live in a world of increasing mediated communication. Whether we view this as a less or secondary means of communication, what is evident

is that technologies at this point in history are central to the organisation of social life in

the co-present.

Individualism, ritual functionalist concerns

> So everybody's looking after their own interests instead of looking after the
> interests of the community and of the many…. think that on many levels,
> people are feeling increasingly depressed and deprived of social interaction
> and care and compassion of other people (W7: p.273)

Some practitioners were concerned with young people's sociability and the potential

effect on society as a whole, and that young people were not only losing the skills to

communicate with each other, but this was particularly true when dealing with adults

confirming Wells Brignall III and Van Valeys (2005) belief that "Knowing these rituals

and being able to play a proper front stage role is crucial in order for individuals to get

along with others" (Wells Brignall III and Van Valey, 2005: p.338). However, the

interviews with the young people seemed to disprove this as most of the participants

were articulate, friendly, and respected 'traditional' cues and rules of the interview ritual.

Some did receive texts and check their phones while the interview was taking place but

generally prioritised the interview. There is, however, a case to state that those who

choose to take part in interviews value the opportunity in some way and therefore there

is a certain bias inherent in the process. Also, these young people may have learnt skills

of interaction through the continued relationship with their youth provision. And there

were many examples described by the practitioners of changes in behaviours, as one

practitioner stated; "… we're starting to see now with young women who don't know

how to communicate Because they do it through their phones" (W9: p. 281). If this is the case, it has significant implications and youth workers would then have to 'work from where young people are at' and adapt practice to fit this preference, as a starting point at least. Others were concerned about child/parental attachment and how mothers were not giving due attention to the children because they were focused on their phones (p. 265). Some talked of how schools were experiencing high numbers of young people with poor social skills due to their overuse of technologies, and interestingly were asking youth work providers to work with them to improve their skills. Whether this lack of sociability was solely down to new technologies is questionable and perhaps it is not useful to speculate that this was the case without understanding the group better. It might be equally valid to suggest that without technologies these young people could be even more socially isolated, or that these examples could be seen as confirmation of Wells Brignall III and Van Valeys (2005) claims that young people are increasingly losing skills of interactions with adults.

Next steps

The next chapter will conclude the thesis.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

This chapter will summarise the research study and will demonstrate how the research has addressed the hypothesis established in Chapter 1 and 2. My proposed hypothesis was that new technologies are impacting on the way young people and youth workers communicate and interact socially in youth work settings and that this had implications for the philosophy, methods and values of youth work. This was confirmed by the literature in a general sense, and confirmed in the data findings by a detailed account of youth work practice. The research conclusion confirms the complexity of the new social environment, the need for further research, and makes recommendations for practice. While the literature and many of my findings relay a negative discourse regarding the impact of new technologies I have endeavored to make the research as balanced as possible. Ultimately, the research was born out of a negative experience in my practice and therefore there may be bias inherent in the process as explained in the methodology chapter. There are, however, many examples of positive practices and innovative uses of new technologies which could be viewed as deeply engaging and empowering for young people and youth workers. Far from being viewed as a moral panic informed study, it is hoped that this unique research will offer a critical foundation for a more informed youth work theory, practice and research for the future.

The fight for attention

In light of the evidence, it is clear that new technologies have become a significant part of young people's lives, their identities, and are central to their communicative behaviours. It has been established that new technologies are impacting on the interactions and relationships between youth workers and young people in youth work settings (W4: p.260; W7: p.286; W9: p274; W10: p.241; W13: p.241; W11: p.259). New technologies, such as smartphones, offer a multitude of immersive communicative options, games, and activities. Their use is reducing the time, space and opportunity for youth workers to interject, and engage with young people. It is concluded that this has substantial implications for youth work as this creates an environment of distraction and increasingly reduces the space and time for sustained dialogue between young people and youth work practitioners (W1: p.241).

Control, and environment: new ethical issues in youth work

The problem of distraction was a particular issue in open (or generic) youth work sessions and it was only in more formal situations, where the use of technologies was controlled where there was evidence of sustained dialogue between young people and the practitioners (W9 p349). Social network site (SNS) usage seemed to encourage a very individual or 'exclusionary' experience which was extremely distracting in many cases. New technologies often encouraged a fragmented social environment, and individualised experiences in situations where group learning and mutual focus is valued and promoted. The exclusive and semi-exclusive use of smartphones also created problems as youth workers had difficulty controlling the content of what was

being watched and shared in the projects, for example when a young person was watching and sharing pornography (W10: p.288; Ictech, 2014). Control also became necessary as personal devices offer a new option in choice and interest which may not be in tune with the ethos and values of the youth project. The implications for this could be significant in terms of the reputation of the organisation and this could also have legal ramifications if minors are accessing inappropriate content within the youth provider's building. It was evident that the establishment of specific ground rules was a useful way of getting young people to understand the potential effects of their use of technologies. But this was not without its issues as the use of new technologies was so alluring that these rules were ignored, or, in some cases the young people disengaged from the projects because they refused to have their use of personal technology controlled (W12. P. 268). As technologies become increasingly personal, and young people's mediated behaviours more autonomous it may become increasingly difficult to police and regulate young people's media usage and control the learning environment. The youth work field needs to establish which elements of technology are useful in practice and which are problematic. If this is to happen, a robust argument must be established to highlight why we should value face-to-face over mediated communication. Guidance and training need to be developed to consider how youth work moves forward into the future with new personal technology. It has been argued throughout the thesis that Collins (2005) Interaction Ritual Chains is an extremely useful theory to employ in evidencing the importance of face-to-face interaction in practice. In the interim, youth providers could develop specific policy around the use of personal

technologies in their buildings. They could also present signage which highlights rules regarding content which is inappropriate in the youth work sessions.

Young people in hybrid space

Young people are still motivated to attend youth provision in groups but also want to attend to their own individual mediated communication and activity when in the presence of others. These new proprioceptive behaviours put in to question the very concept of presence as young people embody new hybrid spaces with one foot in co-presence and one foot in cyberspace (Farman, 2012). They embody their experience of being in the presence of others while communicating through or utilising their devices. New intuitive technologies enable a seamless experience which is deeply immersive. This experience was common in the research and this has implications for our social experience G3(5), G1 (2), (G2 (2), (G4 (3). Whether this is described as multi-tasking, task layering or general distraction, the effects of technologies guide new behaviours in ways which cannot be ignored. It seems that for young people communication through technology is as valid and valued as face-to-face conversation. While younger workers empathised with the new behaviour, this new way of being was experienced, particularly by the (older) practitioners as rude (W1 pp. 256) (W5 p.264). The lack of adherence to 'traditional' social rituals, rules and cues made very difficult terrain for practitioners to navigate (W10 p.241). It seems evident that older workers struggled with the perceived lack of manners and this behaviour was experienced as a rejection (W6 p.270), while young workers could empathise more with these new behaviours (W1. p.262). The lack of eye contact was one of the main issues mentioned by practitioners (W6. P.261, W1

p.261). Youth work attempts to instil certain values and social behaviours in positive

rituals which are reciprocated between individuals and groups. Positive social

interactions are viewed within youth work's practice and academic literature as virtuous

and are essential in the concept of a good society (Davies in Murphy and Shaw, 1999;

Jeffs, and Smith, 2002; 2008; Young, 2006). Collins (2005) highlights that these positive

social rituals are the social glue of human solidarity and without them human cultures

will become fragmented and increasingly individualised. He argues that this will have

negative effects on the function of society. Youth workers need to develop new ways of

addressing this issue and develop practice which promotes face-to-face social

interaction but is also sensitive to this new youth culture. This requires practitioners to

return to the central philosophical questions highlighted in the literature chapter and

engage in a dialogue with young people asking; what conditions foster 'human

flourishing'? and the 'good life' generally, what makes a for good society? (Brown, Ross,

2009).

It is also suggested that youth work might need to utilise new technologies in creative

ways to engage with young people during youth work sessions as a starting point before

addressing these philosophical questions. Being available to communicate in hybrid

'real' and virtual spaces simultaneously might be a necessity as we move into the

future, as young people increasingly expect choices in modes of their communication

(W9 p.250) (Madell, and Muncer (2006). Communication via technology is clearly

preferable, particularly to less outgoing young people, and maybe useful for some when

dealing with adults and professionals. Applications which offer the option of private

messaging services while in youth work settings might be a useful way of engaging and

building relationships with young people. In light of youth works guiding values and principles established in chapter 2, it is encouraged that any work which takes place through the technologies (as described) should be carried out with the goal of encouraging young people into 'traditional' face-to-face interactions and co-present group work.

Relationships, expectations and divides

New technologies have significantly changed the ways in which relationships are developed and are sustained. Young people now expect relationships to exist and sustain through face-to-face and through constant mediated messaging which, in many of the cases, takes place around the clock (W9. P.234) (G3: p.310). These are the norms of their relationships and their communicative behaviours. Also technologies enable individuals to negotiate relationships in new ways and keep people at an ideal emotional distance as in the 'Goldilocks Effect' suggested by Turkle (2011). Therefore, the extent to which young people engage in strong relationships with youth workers may be further weakened. The evidence suggests that youth work is limited in its ability to meet the needs of the new expectations of young people's communication (Survey comment boxes p. 217-218). SNS offer new ways of communicating and knowing young people, but youth workers are restricted from interacting fully through these means because of safeguarding policies and working hours (Appendix C). This limitation may be the defining features of the professional relationship between youth worker and young people but also might confirm a generational digital divide. In this sense, relationships between youth workers and young people are limited as they do

not have the space and time to build trust as they would with people in other parts of their lives. This may become an increasing issue as the open nature of the internet encourages a more public display of self. As professionals, youth workers do not expose the 'backstage' part of their lives through social network sites. However, the nature of these applications encourage an open social environment. Young people may increasingly see the lack of visibility of youth workers in these spaces as a violation of relationship norms and it was evident in many cases that youth workers had missed opportunities to strengthen relationships because of their professional limitations (Survey findings, comment box, Appendix C) (W2: p.233). Communication between young people and the youth providers were generally described as impersonal, with basic information sharing, group texts, and non-interactive Facebook pages. In the example where a practitioner did engage with young people via technologies, it was suggested that this strengthened the relationship between worker and the young people (W8 p249). However, this required the worker to communicate in their free time and raises new ethical issues for the profession as this blurs the boundaries between professional relationships and friendship.

Displaced groups

It is also concluded that new technologies offer paradoxical social effects. They offer young people new social environments which stimulate sociability online but also displace young people from co-present social settings. It is particularly evident that this is attractive to already marginalised groups and individuals (W3: p.274; W11: p.257; W9: p.280).

For young deaf groups (W4: p.257) and young women (G3) socially 'enabling technologies' seemed to offer an inviting, liberating environment for them to express their voice. It also offers reflective space where power is experienced more horizontally (Castells, 2011) and where young people can articulate what they want to say away from social pressures of face-to-face interaction (See Madell, and Muncer (2006). Although this may be viewed as empowering in some respects, technologies encouraged these groups to move away from social co-presence and onto online environments. This move away from co-present social interaction could be seen as a radical shift in the behaviours of vulnerable young people and those who might be seen as being disabled by society. This led some ,such as W2, W7, W9, to suggest that these individuals were missing out on the acquisition of social skills. There were cases where outside agencies such as schools had referred young people, who were seen as socially isolated, to youth work providers (W7: p.281; W9. P.281). In this sense, youth work and group work opportunities were seen as an important practice for offering young people social education and social skill development where young people's occupation with the internet and gaming was seen as particularly problematic and was displacing young people from social opportunities.

Further research needs to consider the motivational factors which are supporting these trends for already marginalised groups and individuals. This research might establish how all educational and supportive services can utilise the positive aspects of these technologies and change and adapt so that they can better serve and engage these young people. Specific work with young women which uses young people's preference toward technology as a starting point might be a useful way forward. W9's work

highlights some examples of good practice and demonstrates how initial engagement through technologies could move young people into co-present social situations, in which they gain a 'traditional' social education in tune with the values of youth work.

Youth work online

It is evident from the findings that online youth work via social network sites outside of youth work sessions is challenging, and raises new ethical issues for the profession (W9 p.253-254. There are many ways in which the use of SNS is useful for youth workers, particularly the convenience for the communication of information, reminders, to relay information about closing and opening times, activities and events. However, the youth worker role is problematic in cyberspace as critique and challenge are difficult in online worlds, people can disengage, block or switch off without the social consequences of 'reality' (Wells Brignall III and Van Valey 2005). Also, by engaging in these worlds, youth workers are led into environments where young people's private lives play out. SNS offers new possibilities for us to see the other sides of young people's lives, their 'backstage/ or 'other front stages''. This may offer opportunities to understand people better, their interests, passions and issues (Goffman, 1959). However, in the light of the guiding values and principles of youth work established in chapter 2, it is suggested that young people's outer practice lives must be viewed as private. If young people want to share their issues it should be on their terms in face-to-face co-presence, as power and choice should be in the hands of young people (Davies, 2005). As Ord (2009) argues, youth workers should establish an adult to adult relationship with young people, and therefore we should respect their privacy and rights

as we would an adult. It was evident that youth workers felt increasing pressure to engage with and communicate through these means and work outside of traditional working hours and days. As young people sent friend requests via social network sites, when they did engage with SNS this work began to impact on their own time (W9. P.235; Survey respondent: Appendix C). Although many have experimented with ideas of online youth work (Davies, T. Cranston, P. 2008, Bonnici 2011, Segêty and Nagy, 2011) and offered strong guidance, currently it seems that most youth services are ill-equipped and resourced to facilitate such work safely (NYA, 2014). It is therefore recommended that any work which attempts to utilize technologies such as SNS is well resourced, and proceeds with significant attention to the safeguarding of young people and youth work practitioners, so that young people's and practitioners' safety, rights and privacy are protected and youth workers' workloads and contractual limits are respected.

Surveillance

As established in the discussion chapter, new technologies, and particularly SNS, offer new sites of surveillance and encourage a culture of performative self-policing (Westlake, 2008) (W10: p.235-236). 'Intelligence gathering' and any other forms of surveillance should not be encouraged within practice and this should be viewed as an encroachment of young people's human rights. Young people may be unaware of the extent to which adults, professionals and authorities are able to follow their movements and monitor their behaviours. Youth work must endeavour to educate young people on these issues. As mentioned in the literature and in the discussion chapter, surveillance

is built into the architecture of the internet, and young people are being conditioned to accept, and even enjoy the consumption of their own surveillance. The internet is therefore a new site of power (Castells, 2011) in which young people (and old) have very little power in shaping the environment they inhabit and new, extremely subtle and powerful forms of persuasion and control police the new virtual social world (Westlake, 2008, Hardt and Negri, 2000). Youth workers can create environments in which these issues are discussed and problematised. Davies and Cranston (2008) have suggested that youth work can play an important role in the media literacies of young people. Critical media literacies could be developed for practice which consider issues of surveillance, privacy, the presentation of the self in cyberspace, and issues of 'spoilt identity' and 'stigma' in online spaces. Radical youth workers might encourage activism which speaks truth to power on issues of surveillance (Belton, 2010).

Addiction

It was clear from the evidence that the technology industry has encouraged an environment of increasing consumption of digital devices, such as smartphones and tablets, and applications (particularly messaging services) such as Whatsapp (Ofcom, 2014). All of the young people involved in the research spent a significant amount of money on their mobile phone contracts. It seems young people are conditioned as consumers (or quasi consumers via their parents/guardians) from an early age through broadband and mobile phone contracts. Mobile phones have become important symbols in the culture of young people. Consumption of technologies and digital products are now an important factor in young people's lives, their identity formation,

and self-esteem. Personal technologies such as SNS profiles are extensions of the self and are therefore extremely important in the lives of young people (G1: p.318). For the duration of this research study there has been exponential growth in the use of technologies with young people spending a significant part of their lives engaged with multiple devices (Kaiser family foundation, 2009; Ofcom, 2006, 2014). Although several practitioners referred to young people's use and abuse of technologies as addictions, the limits to what is seen as excessive use is very difficult to define as what was considered heavy use in 2009 is considered general use today (W9: p.268; W10: p.281; G2: p.304; G3: p.306). Consumer identity and addiction (or the use and abuse of technologies) could inform philosophical based discussion within practice. As mentioned, the idea of technology as an extension of the body (or the new prosthesis) might also inform engaging critical debate on the relationship between individuals and their technology, and the impact of new technologies on social settings in youth work practice.

YouTube as a conversational resource

It is concluded that the internet is an extremely useful resource and stimulus for conversation in youth work settings when used in a collaborative manner. YouTube in particular has become an essential tool for youth workers in practice (W9 p.286; W5 p.287). This was used in planned work and also in spontaneous situations to stimulate conversations about a variety of issues. It was evident that applications such as YouTube opened up a wider world to young people and was useful for challenging ideas and prejudices which may have been formed locally, regionally, and nationally.

There were some examples of how practitioners had used technologies to stimulate conversations on issues of equality and social justice, racism and LGBT issues (W10: p243; W13: p.286). YouTube videos often encouraged mutual focus in which groups worked and discussed issues together.

General conclusion

It is concluded that new technologies offer new risks and opportunities for youth work practice. Although the research has suggested some significant changes in the communicative behaviours of young people, ranging from internet addiction, to subtle changes in ways of being. The research also confirms that young people are still motivated to attend youth provision and still partake in what might be viewed as traditional community activities. It was suggested that young people valued youth provision as a social space where they can have fun, make and consolidate friendships. Some even want to make a difference to their communities.

Although youth work's guiding philosophies, values and principles are clear, the profession currently fails to fully acknowledge the significant changes in young people's (and practitioners') identity and new communicative behaviours brought about by the new technological environment (See chapter 2). Research from Collins (2005) and Goffman (1959) highlights that successful interaction rituals are essential for positive social outcomes. Mutual focus is an essential ingredient in this model, this creates EE which fosters group effervescence and results in positive ritual outcomes and solidarity (Collins, 2005). My research confirms that in many cases these rituals are being disturbed as young people become distracted by technologies. If youth work is to be

effective it is essential that the environment for successful IRs are created. By problematising the new environment and through philosophical discussion youth workers might move forward in addressing these new issues.

This research study has highlighted several important findings.

- It has established the distracting nature of personal technologies and the potential ethical issues they engender.

- The changes in young people's ways of being and their individualised behaviours while using technologies and how this has put into question the whole concept of presence in youth work settings and in general terms.

- How technologies are reducing young people's opportunities and abilities to sustain conversations in co-presence.

- The research also highlights the educative power of the internet and how this has become an important resource for practitioners.

- New technologies have built in their architecture the potential for surveillance and encourage new forms of control and self-policing and there is scope for youth work to educate young people about these issues.

- The extent to which these technologies are being used and utilised by young people, and the addictive nature of these artefacts. Technology as a part of the self (the new prosthesis).

- Goffman's concept of 'dramaturgy' (1959) and particularly Collins' (2005) *Interaction ritual chains* has been identified as extremely useful tools for understanding youth work environments and it suggested that the youth work field adopt these theories to plan, identify and analyse good practice, particularly as new technologies become common in practice situations.

It is hoped that this study will be a starting point for future research, thought and theory regarding new technologies and youth work theory and practice.

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Appendix A

Survey questionnaire

I am a PhD student from the University of Sunderland, and also a youth worker practitioner based in the North East of England. This survey has been developed as a part of my PhD research to understand how youth workers are using communication technologies within practice. A communication technology refers to the devices, digital tools, or equipment which enables people to communicate with one another, for example mobile phones, and internet enabled computers. You will also be asked to consider the software applications which you may use on these devices, and also how, and why they are used. Software may include applications such as Microsoft word, social network sites (such as Facebook, MySpace), Messenger services, Text SNS (Short Messaging Service), and Phone call facilities such as Skype. (please note there are a growing number of these technologies available and the list continues to expand, so please be specific, if the device or software you use is not listed, please specify in the space provided). If you like the form in any other format (Large text/electronic copy/ Braille/ online survey) please do not hesitate to contact me. Marc Husband (Tel: ------) dh2mhu@student.sunderland.ac.uk.

This large scale research will contribute to a wider understanding of youth work practice, in its current context. You and your organisation will be contributing to an important, and unique study which will have implications not only for everyday practice, but also for training and development. This study will also influence the content of professional education. The work will be disseminated through the usual route of academic journals and contributions to appropriate academic conferences. Further contributions will be made through article for professional magazines and journals and offering papers to professional conferences.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this short survey, the form should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. All your personal details and responses will be kept confidential within reasonable limits. Only people directly involved with this project will have access to the surveys. Those who take part in the survey will be entered into a prize draw to win an Ipod shuffle. The prize draw will take place 2 months after the collection of the completed surveys (August 2011).

Forename _____ **Surname** _____

Main employers' address _____

Contact telephone ---

E-mail address ---

Question1. **What is your age?** ⬜⬜

Question 2. (Please tick the box which applies)

A Disabled person is defined in the Disability Discrimination Act as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term impact on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. Having read this do you consider yourself to be covered by the definition?

Yes ⬜ (see question 3)

No ⬜

Question 3. If you answered yes to Question 2, and would like to, please indicate (using the boxes below) the nature of your disability (tick as many as are applicable)

Specific Learning Difficulty (Such as Dyslexia)	⬜
Mobility (physical disability)	⬜
Mental health difficulty	⬜
Blind/partially sighted	⬜
Progressive disability/chronic illness (e.g. MS, Cancer)	⬜
Deaf/hearing loss Learning disability	⬜
Other (Please specify)_____	⬜

Question 4. To which of these groups do you feel you belong? (Please tick the box which applies)

What is your ethnic group? **White** White British White Irish White Scottish White Welsh Gypsy or Irish Traveller Any other white background (Please specify) …………………………	**Mixed Heritage** White/Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background (please specify) …………………………….	**Asian or Asian British** Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Chinese Any other Asian background(Please specify) ……………………………..
Black or Black British Caribbean African Any other Black / African/ Caribbean background (Please specify) …………………………	**Other Ethnic group** Arab Any other ethnic group (Please specify) …………………………… ….	

University of Sunderland

Question 5. Are you female or male? (Please tick the box which applies)

Male ☐ **Female** ☐

Question 6. In your role as a youth worker. Are you currently?

(Please tick the boxes which apply)

A Full time youth worker ☐

Part time youth worker (over 10hrs) ☐

Part time youth worker (under 10hrs) ☐

Volunteer youth worker ☐

On an educational placement as a youth worker ☐

Other ☐

Please specify _____

Question 7. Youth work experience (include volunteer/ unpaid experience)

(Please tick the box which applies)

0 to 5yrs ☐

6 to 10yrs ☐

11 to 20yrs ☐

21yrs+ ☐

Question 8. In which sector do you work/volunteer? (Please tick the boxes which apply)

Local authority ☐

Private ☐

Voluntary ☐

None of the above ☐

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Question 9. How many people does your organisation employ (including part-time and full time workers) (Please tick the boxes which apply) ☐

1 to 5 ☐

6 to 10 ☐

11 to 20 ☐

21 or more ☐

Question 10. Do you consider the geographic area in which you work to be: (Please tick the boxes which apply)

Urban ☐

Semi-Rural ☐

Rural ☐

None of the above ☐

Other (Please specify) _____

Question 11. Qualifications relevant to youth work (Please tick the boxes which apply)

NVQ (Please specify which level) ☐

Diploma in Community and youth work ☐

BA in Community and youth work ☐

Masters/ M/Phil/ PhD level ☐

None of the above ☐

Other (Please specify) ------------------- ☐

Question 12. **Does your work with young people take place: (Please tick the boxes which apply)**

Face-to-face Centre (based youth provision within clubs etc) ☐

Face-to-face detached ☐

Face-to-face outreach ☐

One-to-one ☐

Face-to-face via communication technologies ☐ (through
applications such as Skype/ Hexegon)

Via communication technologies (Social network site etc) ☐

Other (Please specify) ------------------------------------ ☐

Question 13. **How often do you use technologies to communicate with young people? (Please tick the box which applies)**

Daily   ☐

Weekly   ☐

Monthly   ☐

Never   ☐

Expand on your answer if you feel it necessary ---------------------------------------

Below is a list of devices which you may, or may not use within your youth work practice. Please tick the boxes that apply then move on to question 15 and indicate the software/applications which you use within

your youth work practice. In question 16 please indicate for what purpose you use the devices/software applications.

Question 14. Please indicate which devices you use when working with young people? (Please tick boxes which apply)

Mobile phone ☐

Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) ☐ (such
as IPOD touch Please Specify
which device or devices you use). _____

Laptop computers ☐

Desk top computers ☐

Other internet enabled devices such as Games ☐
consoles, internet TV etc. (Please specify) _____

Any other devices you feel maybe relevant (Please specify) _____ ☐

None of the above ☐

Question 15. Which software application do you use within your work with young people?

(Please tick the boxes which apply)

Email ☐

Social Network sites (SNS) ☐

Messenger (Windows messenger, MSN) ☐

World Wide Web ☐

Your organisations own Website ☐

Phone calls ☐

Calls and Video calls/confrence ☐
(Applications such as Hexagon,Skype)

Text (Short Messaging Service SMS) ☐

Text (Multimedia Messaging service MMS) ☐

Specific free mobile messenger (such as Blackberry Messenger) ☐

Bluetooth ☐

Applications supported by games consoles (Such as XBOX Live) ☐

Camera/movie applications ☐

Video applications (Such as Youtube/ Iplayer) ☐

Organisers (Dairy, Notes, word processing) ☐

Any other specific Applications (Please specify) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ☐

None of the above ☐

Question 16. Reason for using the device and software

(Please tick the boxes which apply)

Contacting young people (Informing them about opening times, promoting clubs, activities, ☐events
etc).

Organising and arranging meetings with young people. ☐

Communicating with young people (Having conversations, discussions etc) ☐

Communicating with colleagues with reference to work with young people ☐

Administration (Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation ~~uth Service EYS)~~ ☐

Recording (Photos, Movies, Notes) ☐

Engaging young people (used as a tool for youth work, to create discussion) ☐

Other (Please specify) _ ☐

None of the above ☐

Question 17. How important are these technologies when? (Please tick boxes which apply)

	Not very important	Important	Very important	Essential
Communicating with young people	☐	☐	☐	☐

(Any communication which involves conversations with young people, this may include any dialogue via, e-mail, text, phone, Skype etc)

| Organising your work with young people | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

(This may include any planning, monitoring evaluation, collection of information, organising events, trips etc)

| Engaging young people | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

(Using technology as a focus of conversation, as an attractive resource)

Question 18. **Do you feel the youth work you are involved with is affected by these technologies?**

(Please tick the appropriate box)

I feel these technologies have a positive effect on my practice ☐

I feel these technologies have a negative effect on my practice ☐

I feel that there are both positive and negative outcomes from using these technologies ☐

Expand on your answer if you feel it necessary ---------------------------------------

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Question 19. Please use this box if you would like to make any further comments.

Please tick the box if you would be willing to be contacted to answer some further questions relating to this topic.

☐

Is your organisation willing to grant access to young people with reference to this research? ☐

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Appendix B

Ethical approval

(Note: the official document was lost as the University lost information from their servers in a cyber-attack. This is an email with the raw detail from the ethics committee)

Hi Marc, I have had a look through the applications, would it be this:

ID. 176

FACULTY: FES

TITLE: The introduction of the internet: the implications for informal educational youth work theory. A study of youth work providers in the northeast of England.

NAME: Peter Rushton

COLLABORATORS: Marc Husband

UG? no

START DATE:31/03/2013

END DATE:30/09/2013

MEETING DATE

COMMITTEE DECISION: Approved with Conditions

Thanks,

Michelle

Michelle Marshall

Research Support Administrator

University of Sunderland

2nd Floor, Edinburgh Building

City Campus

Sunderland

Tyne & Wear

SR1 3SD

Appendix C

Survey comment box responses

- awaiting permission from LA for sns

- because we have deaf and blind partially sighted kids, we use a range of assistive technology including voice activated software.

- Communication via parents. Safeguarding policy does not permit adult-youth interaction.

- Could be 2/3 times a week just depends what is taking place.

- email, text, smartboard, online programs (Drive IQ) Facebook

- Emails, mobile and land line

- Facebook, mobiles

- I have had to text young people in the past to ensure they have completed medical consent

forms. At present I am involved in a group that has their own Facebook site.

• I regularly update out website and Facebook page with events and opportunities for young people.

• I run our youth website

• It is a modern form of technology that young people use often, there is also cost implications many young people access Facebook for free, whereas texting and ringing may cost them to communicate

• letters and newsletters are composed using Word and Publisher, variety of creative projects using digital cameras, video cameras, Imovie, Adobe Premier, Final Cut, Comic Life, desktops PCs and laptops, young people and parents contacted via mobile 'phone calls, texts and messages via Facebook.

• mainly e-mail and facebook

• Mobil Text message and calls

• mobile phone- usually text to remind of meetings etc

• not allowed due to council policies. I think it would be a useful tool if we could.

• not in this role. In previous posts I have used a number of sns.

• Occasionally text

• Only as of recently, Durham County Council did not encourage their youth workers to use social networks or technology to contact young people, even to the extent of simply texting, as it is considered too personal. however, after being involved with ____ youth service, I've managed to convince my bosses to allow us to use social networking, like _____, on a pilot basis.

• other than an out of date website

- telephone calls occasionally when going on trips

- text and Facebook

- Text, Email, Facebook

- The young people i currently work with are those either homeless or threatened with homelessness. I see these young people as they use our project and as yet we have not seen or had any young people demonstrate a need or desire to use technology to better our work them.

- This would be rarely

- use email

- usually as required due to trips/ activities etc, would suggest monthly as an approx. Average

- We keep in touch mainly via Facebook. We also use Yammer within the organisation to communicate with staff and for the Regional Active Participation network.

- whenever needed

- work mobile

- Work mobile to text around for meetings

- young people mostly use current technology such as smart phones it is how they connect with peers/family and outside agencies

- **Appendix practice implications comment box**

- A wide audience can be informed very easily. Young people are very technologically knowledgeable.

- As a means of contacting / awareness raising

- Contact in an instant, with near on instant responses. It is integrated part of our youth work practice, where clear guidelines for communicating in this method are embedding in practice. We also running social media safety awareness with all groups of young people who communicate with us using this method, through group sessions and messages sent via Facebook message statuses

- Depends on situation Getting information. cyber bullying discusses

- Due to council restrictions. I am limited in what I can do.

- Essential to use but they must not replace face to face contact.

- Excellent devices for making contact a distraction when trying to work.

- Facebook creates issues between young people and young people bring phones into session when inappropriate

- good for pre event communication. A problem of mobile devices in youth sessions. Many get damaged.

- Helps in contacting young people and colleagues

- I can only see the positives using the technologies.

- I don't feel that these technologies really have an effect on my work with young people.

- I feel that for me, and the young people, technology has a positive outcome, and for youth work generally it COULD have a positive outcome, if people just embrace it, and by people i mean older youth workers.

- It is easier to communicate with young people as most have a mobile and access to the internet. however, this in itself can be a problem as some young people try to befriend you on social network sites, which is unethical but the young person might not see it that way.

- More positive than negative

- na

- often these days there are less young people on the streets, yet if you log-on to Facebook you realise many of them are logged on, we don't use messenger but i think some will be on there and some texting.

- over use of pc internet

- safety for young people and workers must be considered but they can be a very valuable tool.

- Social network sites come with their own problems re professional boundaries.

- Some yp respond well to technology, others ignore emails and would rather speak face-to-face

- Technologies are quick and convenient however, don't feel that they allow the same relationship building as a face-to-face conversation would.

- technology is fine however raises the questions of safeguarding and professional boundaries.

- There are a number of social networking sites that young people use but current council policy is not to use these to engage young people in youth work practice.

- there should be a recognition that these are core and central to inclusion

- Young people sometimes rely too heavily on these resources for example if they dont recieve a text msg they assume the session is not on and dont turn up even when they no it runs every single week.

Any other comments box

- At present we are setting up a Facebook account and also a system to send multi messaging for yp to be aware of what is going on. The negative part is the council red tape when looking at safeguarding young people.

- I feel that digital technology and communication is not used enough within youth work, there are many barriers to this including cost, concerns around safeguarding, lack of equipment and resources etc. In my experience, certainly within the local authority, there are many restrictions to the usage, although I believe it is the way forward to engage positively with young people.

- I find sns can be problematic, bullying issues etc. I would consider this to be an unsafe method of communication with young people, staff vulnerable.

- I have to say that nothing beats the social interaction and face to face communication people engage in weather it being to circulate information or reaching those technologies cannot reach; emotional interaction and engagement is paramount to the work we do and how it reflects societies changes throughout the years.

- It is becoming very difficult to contact certain young people with this communication.

- Safe guarding of adults very important

- speech to text is used to enable a wide range of people to participate... yet the majority of events and activities whilst tokenistic ally inviting us. fail to provide to our needs.

- Technologies, such as telephone and email, are important for contacting young people, however, using social networking to contact young people can an extremely negative effect. Not least because it is an infringement on young people's privacy but also as professionals we should not be using 'friends' sires to contact yp, it blurs already hazy boundaries.

- Technology is important however you need to have very clear and safe boundaries to work

with.

• Technology underpins virtually everything that we do. records are stored digitally, letters are written via computers, service users and other agencies are contacted via email, telephone. texting or social networking and we use software and hardware in a high proportion of the creative work we carry out.

• Texting can be the most effective communication as response is either instant or none at all.

• The technology helps me to respond to young people quickly and improves the organisation of things eg. Young people can be reminded to bring forms back etc. It also enables youth workers to get opinions from young people very quickly so increases the chance of young people being involved in decision making.

• Use of technology in youth work is welcomed but should only be one tool used to engage young people.

• We are in the throes of developing more 'virtual' youth work.

• We dont use technology to contact young people we use word of mouth to organise events.

• We have just developed our organisations website and sns to reach a wider audience and are skill learning how to use them effectively.

• young people today use technology as an essential part of life so the more access we have to that the better our work and ability to engage with them will be.

Appendix D

Transcription information

UK Transcriptions

Security & Confidentiality

Website Security

This site is 128 bit SSL secured, and all file transfers are encrypted. All files are permanently destroyed after 8 days. Transcripts are securely stored online for 60 days. Only authorised key staff have access to the server. This website is also subject to a quarterly securty audit by an external security firm.

Office Location

The UK Transcription office is located in central Brighton, just a couple of minutes from Brighton Railway Station. We do not share a mailbox. The office is housed in a self-contained, fully registered, comprehensively insured commercial property, secured with panic buttons and an industrial grade alarm system.

Transcript Delivery

Transcripts are delivered as an unencrypted email attachment as standard, without password protection. However, various security controls can be applied to files on request, such as password protection and direct downloads. We have found clients generally prefer receiving transcripts via email. However, if you would like to download transcripts from your password secured file area, this can quickly and easily be arranged.

Non-Disclosure

All staff and typists are subject to a legally binding NDA. Email info@uktranscription.com a draft copy of our standard confidentiality agreement. We are of course happy to sign an agreement of your own devising.

Our Transcribers

UK Transcription employs a combination of in-house and remote typists, with particularly sensitive material being restricted to in-house staff only. All typists are UK citizens. A significant proportion of our remote typists are local to Brighton, and have trained at our

offices.

Please call 01273 256578 for further information.