

My living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment: a Living Theory research approach

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of
Liverpool Hope University for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

Christine Jones
June 2019

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, except where explicit acknowledgement is made, that the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own and has not been previously submitted for an award at this university or any other institution.

C. Jones 14th June 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank a number of people who have shared this journey with me.

My mother and father who have always encouraged me to study, gave me so many opportunities and always believed in me.

The four members of the SEN team who so willingly gave their time and supported me throughout my research. The SEN team who have been a pleasure to work with and inspirational in their dedication in working with children, young people and families.

Members of Conversation Café who have supported me, giving me their time and critical reflections as a group and individually. My fellow PhD researchers at Liverpool Hope University with whom I have shared weekends reflecting on and critically engaging with each other's work.

Jack Whitehead who has been inspirational and a constant support. Marie Huxtable for her support throughout.

Nigel Harrison for being such a supportive manager and for the endless discussions we have had on our values. Sandra Harris for her involvement in my research and her administrative support.

My supervisory team, Jan Jobling, Joan Walton, Claire Penketh and previously, Bart McGettrick for their support and feedback.

My wonderful family who have shared this experience with me. My sister, Madeline, my two sons Adam and Michael, my mother, who has 'stormed heaven' and my husband, Brendan, who has been a constant support through the highs and lows. Thank you in supporting me and accepting my 'absent self'.

My living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment: a Living Theory research approach

ABSTRACT

Christine Jones

My original contribution to knowledge is the new standard of judgement of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. This standard emerged through the creation of my living-theory as my explanation of my educational influence in contributing to the emergence of empowerment in the workforce, which is driven by my ontological, life-enhancing values. I have reflected on and clarified these values, going back to my early years to the present, and asking whether I am living my values in my practice. These values form my explanatory principles and my living standards of judgement on which I judge my practice.

In this thesis, I have also generated my living-theory methodology, drawing insights from action research, autoethnographic research, self-study research and narrative research. In generating my living-theory methodology, I demonstrate and clarify my meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment in the course of emergence in my practice.

I use a multimedia account to clarify and communicate my journey and meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. I draw on my experience of working as a statutory special educational needs manager in a small English local authority, working with my manager and a team of people which I manage. I claim that my notion of empowerment emerges through my research which has an influence on me, my team, and children and young people with special educational needs and their families within the local authority. I conclude my thesis with a reflection on my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| AUTHOR'S DECLARATION | 2 |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | 3 |
| ABSTRACT | 4 |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS..... | 5 |
| LIST OF IMAGES..... | 8 |
| LIST OF VIDEO-CLIPS..... | 9 |
| LIST OF FIGURES | 10 |
| LIST OF TABLES | 11 |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS..... | 12 |
| INTRODUCTION | 13 |
| Introduction | 13 |
| Why I am undertaking this research | 14 |
| Research question and aims | 15 |
| Clarifying my values | 17 |
| My original contribution to knowledge | 19 |
| Contribution to the ecology of knowledges..... | 32 |
| Structure of my thesis | 32 |
| Summary | 35 |
| CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF MY RESEARCH..... | 37 |
| 1.1 Introduction..... | 37 |
| 1.2 The term 'special educational needs' | 37 |
| 1.3 The development of my professional career | 38 |
| 1.4 The political, economic, social and educational landscape | 46 |
| 1.5 The global context | 58 |
| 1.6 Summary | 60 |
| CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY | 61 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 61 |
| 2.2 Values and living standards of judgement..... | 62 |
| 2.3 Ontology, epistemology and methodology..... | 66 |
| 2.4 Methodological inventiveness..... | 70 |
| 2.4.1 Insights from different research approaches | 72 |
| 2.4.1.1 Action research | 74 |
| 2.4.1.2 Autoethnographic research | 81 |
| 2.4.1.3 Narrative research | 82 |
| 2.4.1.4 Self-study research | 85 |
| 2.5 Validity | 89 |
| 2.6 Data collection..... | 90 |
| 2.7 Ethical considerations..... | 96 |
| 2.8 Summary | 102 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| CHAPTER 3 FIRST ACTION REFLECTION CYCLE: AN EXPLORATION OF EMPOWERMENT – A REFLECTION OF THE INFLUENCE OF EMPOWERMENT IN MY WORKPLACE..... | 103 |
| 3.1 Introduction..... | 103 |
| 3.2 What is my concern and why am I concerned?..... | 104 |
| 3.3 What kind of data have I gathered to show the situation as it unfolds?..... | 108 |
| 3.3.1 My role as a statutory SEN manager..... | 121 |
| 3.3.2 My vision as a manager of the SEN team..... | 123 |
| 3.3.3 The SEN team..... | 134 |
| 3.3.4 What evidence has been produced from the meetings with the four team members? | 139 |
| 3.3.4.1 Team member A. | 140 |
| 3.3.4.2 Team member B..... | 142 |
| 3.3.4.3 Team member C..... | 145 |
| 3.3.4.4 Team member D. | 146 |
| 3.4 How do I explain my educational influence in my own learning and in the learning of others? | 149 |
| 3.5 Summary | 152 |
| CHAPTER 4 SECOND ACTION REFLECTION CYCLE: A REFLECTION OF MY CONCERNS AS A STATUTORY SEN MANAGER AT A TIME OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE | 154 |
| 4.1 Introduction..... | 154 |
| 4.2 Setting the scene of the SEND reforms | 155 |
| 4.2.1 My reflections leading up to the SEND reforms..... | 157 |
| 4.3 What is my concern and why am I concerned?..... | 158 |
| 4.4 What kind of data have I gathered as the situation unfolds? | 162 |
| 4.4.1 The work streams | 162 |
| 4.4.1.1 Engagement and Communication | 164 |
| 4.4.1.2 Integrated Assessment and Planning | 166 |
| 4.4.1.3 Workforce Development | 177 |
| 4.4.2 The initial expansion of the SEN team..... | 180 |
| 4.4.3 The academic year 2014-2015 | 183 |
| 4.4.4 The SEN process review..... | 188 |
| 4.5 How do I explain my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations? | 189 |
| 4.6 Summary | 193 |
| CHAPTER 5 AN EXPLANATION OF MY EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCE IN MY OWN LEARNING, IN THE LEARNING OF OTHERS AND THE LEARNING OF SOCIAL FORMATIONS IN CREATING MY LIVING-THEORY OF LIVING INCLUSIVE AND INCLUSIONAL EMPOWERMENT | 194 |
| 5.1 Introduction..... | 194 |
| 5.2 What are educational influences in learning?..... | 195 |
| 5.3 My educational influence in my own learning..... | 196 |
| 5.3.1 The emergence of the notion of empowerment..... | 196 |
| 5.3.2 My discomfort in asking, 'How do I empower people?' | 196 |
| 5.3.3 My claim to be contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment | 197 |
| 5.3.4 My learning through using video-recordings and digital visual data as I clarify and communicate my embodied expressions of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment | 200 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 5.4 My educational influence in the learning of others | 207 |
| 5.4.1 Team member A..... | 208 |
| 5.4.2 Team member B..... | 211 |
| 5.4.3 Team member C..... | 215 |
| 5.4.4 Team member D..... | 217 |
| 5.5 My educational influence in the learning of social formations | 222 |
| 5.5.1 The SEN team..... | 222 |
| 5.5.2 The local authority in which I work | 224 |
| 5.5.3 Other local authorities with whom I work | 226 |
| 5.6 Summary | 227 |
| CHAPTER 6 FINAL REFLECTIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD..... | 229 |
| 6.1 Introduction..... | 229 |
| 6.2 Aims of my study and have I achieved them?..... | 229 |
| 6.3 My reflections on my personal development | 232 |
| 6.4 My reflections on my professional development | 233 |
| 6.5 My reflections on my development as a researcher | 234 |
| 6.6 The journey continues... .. | 236 |
| 6.7 The validity of my claim of the emergence of an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment..... | 238 |
| 6.8 Conclusion | 239 |
| REFERENCES | 240 |
| APPENDIX A – MIND MAP OF TRANSCRIPTION OF MEETING WITH TEAM MEMBER D – AUGUST 2017 | 259 |

LIST OF IMAGES

| | | |
|-----------------|---|------------|
| Image 1 | Members of Conversation Café | 28 |
| Image 2 | Chris and Nigel | 109 |
| Image 3 | Nigel, Sandra and Chris | 115 |
| Image 4 | Randy Pausch | 117 |
| Image 5 | Team member A and Chris | 140 |
| Image 6 | Team member B and Chris | 143 |
| Image 7 | Team member C | 146 |
| Image 8 | Team member D and Chris | 147 |
| Image 9 | Chris at Confirmation Event | 203 |
| Image 10 | Members of Conversation Café at validation group meeting | 206 |
| Image 11 | Team member A | 210 |
| Image 12 | Team member B | 213 |
| Image 13 | Team member C | 216 |
| Image 14 | Team member D | 219 |

LIST OF VIDEO-CLIPS

| | | |
|----------------------|--|------------|
| Video-clip 1 | Members of Conversation Café discussing ‘inclusive’ and ‘inclusional’ empowerment | 28 |
| Video-clip 2 | Chris and Nigel discussing empowerment | 109 |
| Video-clip 3 | Nigel, Sandra and Chris discussing the impact of Sandra’s attendance at a meeting | 115 |
| Video-clip 4 | Randy Pausch at his last lecture | 117 |
| Video-clip 5 | Team member A and Chris discussing empowerment | 140 |
| Video-clip 6 | Team member B and Chris discussing empowerment | 143 |
| Video-clip 7 | Team member C and Chris discussing empowerment | 146 |
| Video-clip 8 | Team member D and Chris discussing empowerment | 147 |
| Video-clip 9 | Chris discussing empowerment at Confirmation Event | 203 |
| Video-clip 10 | A validation group meeting discussing Chris’ work | 206 |
| Video-clip 11 | Team member A and Chris discussing empowerment | 210 |
| Video-clip 12 | Team member B and Chris discussing empowerment | 213 |
| Video-clip 13 | Team member C and Chris discussing empowerment | 216 |
| Video-clip 14 | Team member D and Chris discussing empowerment | 219 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------|
| Figure 1 | Wilson's link between ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology | 68 |
| Figure 2 | Bamber's centrality of authenticity | 69 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|----------------|--|------------|
| Table 1 | Reduction in government grant funding in Bath and North East Somerset 2013-2016 | 56 |
| Table 2 | Numbers of Statements of SEN and EHC plans 2006-2017 | 57 |
| Table 3 | States of empowerment and disempowerment | 133 |

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|--|
| ADHD | Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder |
| ARNA | Action Research Network of the Americas |
| BERA | British Educational Research Association |
| CPD | Continuing Professional Development |
| CRAM | Case Review Action Meetings |
| CSR | Comprehensive Spending Review |
| CSIE | Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education |
| DCSF | Department for Children, Schools and Families |
| DES | Department of Education and Science |
| DfE | Department for Education |
| DfES | Department for Education and Skills |
| EHC | Education Health and Care |
| ESRC | Economic and Social Research Council |
| FTE | Full Time Equivalent |
| FE | Further Education |
| IQM | Inclusion Quality Mark |
| LDAs | Learning Difficulty Assessments |
| M.A. | Master of Arts |
| MATs | Multi Academy Trusts |
| MBA | Master of Business Administration |
| NDTi | National Development Team for Inclusion |
| NEET | Not in Education, Employment or Training |
| NVQ | National Vocational Qualification |
| Ofsted | Office for Standards in Education |
| PA | Personal Assistant |
| PhD | Doctor of Philosophy |
| PDR | Professional Development Review |
| SEN | Special Educational Needs |
| SENCO | Special Educational Needs Coordinator |
| SEND | Special Educational Needs and Disability |
| SENDIST | Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal |
| SMSAs | School Meals Supervisory Assistants |
| SPM | Social Photo Matrix |
| TAs | Teaching Assistants |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| USA | United States of America |

INTRODUCTION

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost

Introduction

In this thesis, I describe and explain the evolvement of my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. I begin my Introduction with a poem by Robert Frost, 'The Road Not Taken'. I am drawn to the lines:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less traveled by

In conducting my research, I have evolved my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment by using a Living Theory research approach (Huxtable and Whitehead, 2017). In using a Living Theory research approach and generating my own living-theory methodology, I ask the questions, 'How do I improve my practice?' 'What are my values?', and 'Am I living my values in my practice?' If I am not living my values in my practice, I may see myself as a 'living contradiction'

(Whitehead, 1989, pp.43-44). The researcher is central to the enquiry. In using a Living Theory research approach, the researcher generates their own theory and knowledge with the 'I' being central to their enquiry, hence my question, 'How can I, as a statutory special educational needs (SEN) manager, improve my practice in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which has an influence on me, my team and ultimately, children and young people with SEN and their families?'

In my Introduction, I begin by explaining why I am undertaking this research. I state my research question and aims, clarify my values, and discuss my original contribution to knowledge including my contribution to an ecology of knowledges. Finally, I introduce each chapter of my thesis.

Why I am undertaking this research

I am undertaking this research to enquire into my practice to improve my practice and to contribute to the knowledge-base of my profession. I am a statutory SEN manager working in a small local authority and managing a team of eighteen people. I am also a practitioner-researcher. I state this with purpose as I could not have learnt what I have done and my thinking evolved as it has done without the combination of the two. Researching into my practice has given me insights which have led to a deeper understanding of who I am, what is important to me and how this, intertwined with my practice has improved my practice and has had an influence on others. My reflections have helped me to understand my educational influence in my own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations (Whitehead, 2008a). By social formations, I mean 'a group of people who come together with a common focus' (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.121). I explain this notion further in Chapter 5.

My doctoral enquiry builds on research undertaken for my Master's dissertation (Jones, 2009). At the time, I was researching into how I could improve my practice as an Inclusion Officer. This was a significant step for me, because, in conducting my research, I was introduced to Living Theory research and the notion of Living Theory methodology whereby practitioners enquire into how they can improve their

practice and question whether they live their values in their practice. In my present enquiry, I have generated my own living-theory methodology and continue to question what my values are and whether I am living them in my practice as a statutory SEN manager. In researching my practice as an Inclusion Officer, I determined that inclusion and my inclusional way of being were significant in the emergence of my practice. On completion of my M.A., in continuing my research as a statutory SEN manager and with further reflection of my values, the significance of empowerment has emerged. I have come to realise the strength of the notion of empowerment throughout my life, how much it means to me, and how it has impacted on my life. It is a force that I see in my personal and professional life; the idea of being empowered, creating conditions whereby others may feel empowered and indeed self-empowerment. The idea of empowerment, for me, is very much entwined with how I view relationships; how I relate to others and how others relate to me.

Research question and aims

My research question is:

How can I, as a statutory SEN manager, improve my practice in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which has an influence on me, my team and ultimately, children and young people with SEN and their families?

The aims of my study are:

- To research into my practice to improve my practice by generating my living-theory methodology.
- To offer an original contribution to educational knowledge by reflecting on my values and developing a new standard of judgement of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.
- To determine the influence of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment on me, my team and ultimately, the children and young people with SEN and their families within the authority.

The word ‘empowerment’ is a term that has different meanings to different people depending on their life experiences. At this point, I would just like to clarify what **I** mean by empowerment. I do not see empowerment as giving power to the other or being given power by the other; there is no exchanging of power. Why? It is because, I believe, the power is already within the individual, whether it be their motivation, their passion, their knowledge, skills or talents. To me, empowering the other is about recognising and respecting the qualities, passions and attributes of the other and then **enabling** the release of these energies; conversely, for me to be empowered by the other is for the other to show an awareness of my passions, knowledge and skills and to **enable** the release of that energy. Self-empowerment, in my view, is very much to do with the energy within the individual and a demonstration of the release of that energy. Empowerment, for **me**, is associated with respect, regard and trust in the other and self. It involves creating spaces for the other to grow and it involves risk-taking. In Chapter 3, I explore further the literature on empowerment.

I believe that I have a contribution to make to the notion of empowerment in the workplace as I research my practice to improve my practice. Through generating my living-theory methodology, whereby I reflect on my values and evaluate whether I am living my values in my practice, I believe that my research and practice on empowerment contributes to the literature on empowerment. I am researching into how my manager creates conditions whereby I feel empowered, and the influence this has on me, my team and ultimately the children and young people with SEN and their families within the authority. I am looking at how I create conditions whereby the SEN team feel empowered and the influence this has on my practice, their practice and ultimately the influence on children and young people with SEN and their families within the authority. I believe my research in empowerment offers a different perspective as through my reading to date, little interest has been taken about the influence of being empowered from the view of the person who is being empowered in the workplace and the influence that has on the practice of the individual (Greasley *et al.*, 2005).

Clarifying my values

The significance to this research of values, and specifically my own values, has already been identified. It is therefore relevant to clarify here the nature of those values, which underpin and inspire the thesis, before moving on to show how these are integral to my original contribution to knowledge, namely, my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

In beginning my doctoral enquiry, as a statutory SEN manager and an educational researcher, I needed to clarify and to understand further what my values were. My reflections clarified and determined much of what I had learnt in the exploration of my values for my Master's dissertation, that is, my inclusive values (Booth, 2005, 2011) of fairness, a good work ethic, determination, justice, love, hope, peace, trust, equality of opportunity, respect and regard of the other, my concept of inclusion and my inclusional way of being were important to me. However, what was to emerge, which I had not expected, was the significance of empowerment in my life and how much it means to me.

My reflections took me back to when I was a child through to working with the local authority as an Inclusion Officer and Senior Inclusion Officer. I shall now take you through the clarification of my values as they emerged in my reflections. There are five phases: 'Influence of home, primary school and church'; 'Influence of secondary school'; 'Influence of early teaching career'; 'Leadership and management - the early years' and, finally, 'Being an Inclusion Officer and a Senior Inclusion Officer in a small local authority'.

My reflections regarding, 'Influence of home, primary school and church', clarified some of my inclusive values embedded within me from an early age; these are the values of fairness, a good work ethic, determination, justice, peace, faith, love, hope and trust. I believe that the interconnection between my school, church and home, and the values and principles they expounded have had a very strong influence on me. I lived in a world of love, caring, sharing and giving where I was enabled to grow as a confident adult. It was an innocent, protected world in which love, trust, faith, hope, peace and justice were openly discussed and openly demonstrated. I

believe that the values I hold today have been very much influenced by my early and formative years.

When I reflected on, 'Influence of secondary school', the inclusive values of fairness, equality of opportunity, respect and regard of the other and my concept of inclusion were emphasised. Also, it was a time, when I became aware of the value I place on relationships and the interconnectedness between one and the other and my inclusional way of being. However, it was at that stage that empowerment began to emerge when I became aware of those pupils in the 'bottom set' who, to me, seemed 'anonymous' in that they did not seem to be included in school life activities, such as school plays. Also, there were pupils who did not seem to have a voice in matters that concerned them. I determined, that in my future career as a teacher, I would treat pupils and people with respect and on an equal basis, and give pupils and people a voice; for them to be instrumental in their own development and future and for them to feel empowered and included.

As I reflected on, 'Influence of early teaching career', my commitment to the driving forward of my inclusive values of fairness, justice, equality of opportunity, respect and valuing the other, became evident. The notion of empowerment continued to emerge as I determined that the pupils I taught did not remain in the 'bottom set', and that opportunities and responsibilities would be given to them whereby they may feel empowered. I ensured that children in the 'bottom set' would be included in school plays and concerts, and as a result, would feel empowered.

Reflecting on, 'Leadership and management - the early years', highlighted the time I was a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and managing a team of teaching assistants (TAs). Equality of opportunity and my concept of inclusion were further demonstrated, with my continued drive for others to feel empowered being increasingly emphasised. I wanted TAs to feel empowered and included. I wanted them to have a voice in matters that concerned them. To this end, I set up TA meetings and Performance Reviews and encouraged them to be creative, to use their initiative and to use their talents. This, for me, is what empowerment is about. It is about enabling people to use the energy within them whether it is their knowledge, skills or talents, as explained, and further clarified in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

On 'Being an Inclusion Officer and a Senior Inclusion Officer in a small local authority', my drive for inclusion and empowerment continued. As an Inclusion Officer and a Senior Inclusion Officer, in my work in leading on the development of the award of the Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) in the authority, I came to realise that for a school to be truly inclusive, it needed to be inclusive not only of pupils but of adults also. I believed very strongly in everyone having a voice; everyone having the opportunity to be involved, and everyone feeling empowered to make a contribution.

My reflections from being a child to working in a local authority, and reflecting on what I have already learnt through my initial exploration of my values for my Master's dissertation, helps me to understand what is important to me and how I have functioned in my various professional roles. These reflections have enabled me to further understand my motivations and drive throughout my personal and professional life. It has emphasised the significance of my inclusive values, my concept of inclusion and the inclusional way I like to work with others. In particular, I have come to the realisation of empowerment in my life.

Reflecting on and clarifying my values provide the foundation on which my research has developed as I seek to improve my practice as a statutory SEN manager, and was a formative factor in the identification of my research question. These values continue to emerge throughout my enquiry and this is explored further in my methodology. They have become explanatory principles and standards of judgement on which I judge my practice; they provide the foundation and evolution of my original contribution to knowledge which is my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

My original contribution to knowledge

My original contribution to knowledge, as stated, is my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. When I first started my PhD, I understood that one of the criterion in gaining a PhD award was 'to make an original contribution to knowledge'. However, I was unsure what this meant. At first, I felt quite daunted by this statement as so much has been already been written and published on various topics so I needed to understand exactly what was meant by this

term. I was particularly concerned with the word, 'original', thus, in making an 'original' contribution, what does 'original' mean in this context? I particularly liked the explanation expressed by Pat Thomson. Thomson (2015), professor at the University of Nottingham, Convenor for Research in Arts, Creativity and Literacy and a frequent PhD thesis examiner, addresses the question as to what the notion of 'original' may mean and discusses the ideas of 'singularity', meaning that I've done something fresh and unique, combined with the notion of 'originary', meaning I've done something new here, and combined with the notion of 'authenticity', meaning this is all my own work, I haven't copied it from anywhere else.

She feels that these terms are not helpful in determining assessment criteria for academic study. Singularity or something unique, she explains, is not always the case in research, as some researchers may be working separately but on the same problem and may come up with similar results. She highlights the example of Nick Hopwood, who, on the completion of his research for his PhD discovered a thesis that had been published and addressed almost the same question as his own, however, the context, sample and approach were different. Both Pat Thomson and Nick Hopwood conclude that even if the PhD question was the same and results identical, it would not be a problem if the research had been carried out independently.

In addressing the notion of originary, she feels that this would not necessarily apply as very few researchers work on a manuscript that has been undiscovered or perhaps work on a new part of the universe. Thomson agrees that a PhD researchers' originality lies in the thinking-for-myself process, coming up with their own interpretations and categorisations which arise from their question, sample, methods and analytic or theoretical approach.

Authenticity, she feels, poses a possibility in that the work is the researcher's own and not plagiarised. However, she points out that research draws on others' research and is a complimentary addition or reframing.

Thomson likes and refers to the idea of originality as expressed by David Lodge, a graduate and Honorary Fellow of University College, London and now writes novels full-time, who suggests that originality, where novels are concerned, may be

described as defamiliarisation, that is, giving the reader a different and interesting insight into something. She concludes:

As David Lodge argues, originality is taking the reader, and I'm suggesting the thesis reader/examiner too, somewhere which is simultaneously familiar and not. Original thinking and writing defamiliarises and in doing so, recovers a newness about the topic no matter how well trodden it is. An original contribution to knowledge offers the reader a chance to re-view and re-think the event/ text/ phenomena in question. That's the kind of original contribution I'm interested in.

(Thomson, 2015, no pagination)

On the point of originality, Liverpool Hope University (2016) clarifies its stance:

A PhD candidate would meet the criterion of originality by, for instance, discovering new knowledge, or connecting previously unrelated facts, or developing a new theory, or revising established views. In considering whether a thesis has met such requirements, Examiners should base their judgement on what may reasonably be expected of an able and diligent research student after completing the appropriate period of research required for the degree.

(Liverpool Hope University, 2016, p.23)

I hope that examiners, in applying the criterion of originality, will determine that my living-theory of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment is making an original contribution to knowledge. I hope that examiners recognise my original expressions of meaning when I refer to living inclusive and inclusional empowerment and that I have created a sense of defamiliarisation in that I have taken them 'somewhere which is simultaneously familiar and not'.

My claim to my original contribution of knowledge of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment has undergone much analysis. For some time, I considered what my original contribution to knowledge was. I knew it was to do with living empowerment but I was torn between three notions. Was I contributing to:

- living inclusive empowerment?

or:

- living inclusional empowerment?
- or:
- living inclusive and inclusional empowerment?

The crux of the matter seemed to be in the difference between ‘inclusive’ and ‘inclusional’. In beginning this exploration, I decided to look at the meanings of each of the words, ‘empowerment’, ‘living’, ‘inclusive’ and ‘inclusional’ and what they mean to me.

Empowerment. Firstly, I would like to clarify, as already expressed, my understanding of empowerment. When I first began my doctoral enquiry, I identified a definition which resonated with me:

True empowerment is not giving people power, people already have plenty of power, in the wealth of their knowledge and motivation, to do their jobs magnificently. We define empowerment as letting this people power out...
(Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph, 2001, p.13)

I, too, believe that empowerment is not about giving people power; rather it is about enabling people to demonstrate the power that is already within them whether that be their motivation, their talents, their passions (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; McClelland, 1975). Much of the literature on empowerment refers to such terms and phrases as ‘subordinates’ (Conger and Kanungo, 1988), ‘authority or power given to someone to do something’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017), ‘... passing power from higher organisational levels to lower ones’ (Carson and King, 2005, p.1050). I do not take this stance when I speak of empowerment and I do not use such terms and phrases. I do not take the view in my personal or professional life that anyone is subordinate or superior. The Oxford English Dictionary (2017) describes subordinate as ‘lower in rank or position’; ‘of less or secondary importance’. Superior is described as ‘higher in rank, status or quality’; ‘greater in size or power’. Such definitions and the language used in the terms above are hierarchical suggesting that one is of lesser or higher value than the other. I do not perceive any person to be ‘higher’ or ‘lower’ than another in any respect; rather each person is to be valued for what they are and for whoever they are; each person has their gifts, talents, motivations and knowledge; whatever position an individual holds in a workplace,

each has their responsibilities and each contributes to the workforce accordingly. My view on this reflects my ontological stance and my values in having a respect and regard for the other in that all have something to offer and to give.

Living. What do I mean by this? So much of what I have read on empowerment is about researchers who have done research on others and have arrived at conclusions based on the experiences of others. Much of my research is to do with my practice as a statutory SEN manager as I ask the question, ‘How do I improve my practice?’ I am focussing on empowerment in the workplace. When I refer to ‘living’ empowerment, I am referring to empowerment that is ‘living’ in the workplace. The Oxford English Dictionary (2017) defines ‘living’ as ‘alive’. So, the question could be asked, ‘Is empowerment ‘alive’ in the workplace?’ For me, the term ‘living’ empowerment has further connotations. Through my research and reflecting on my earlier years to the present, I have come to see that the notion of empowerment has been important to me throughout my personal and professional life. When I refer to ‘living’ empowerment, when speaking of self, I am referring to living my value of empowerment. Thus, when I refer to ‘living’ empowerment, I am referring to two perspectives: firstly, to empowerment being ‘alive’ in the workplace and secondly, for me, the living of my value of empowerment in the workplace.

I felt clear that I was contributing to living empowerment but I needed to determine my understanding of whether this ‘living’ empowerment was inclusive, inclusional or both. I continued with my exploration of the meanings of the words ‘inclusive’ and ‘inclusional’.

Inclusive. Inclusive is an adjective. The Oxford English Dictionary (2017) defines inclusive as ‘including’ or ‘not excluding’. It is a word which evolved during the late 16th century from medieval Latin, ‘inclusivus’, and from Latin ‘inclus’, past participle of ‘includere’. Related words are inclusively and inclusiveness (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2017). Inclusive derives from the noun, inclusion. Inclusion is defined as ‘the action or state of including or being included within a group or structure’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017).

I like the idea of inclusion as proposed by Booth (2011):

I see inclusion as connected to the development of democratic participation and global citizenship. Engaging with inclusive development that makes this link can help to move beyond democracy as political rhetoric, to making it part of the values with which we wish to shape our lives together.

(Booth, 2011, pp.303-304)

Fundamentally, for me, inclusion is about valuing others and ensuring equality of opportunity. In researching inclusion in my Master's dissertation (2009), I also came to understand inclusion as that to do with human rights which are founded on such values and principles as freedom, justice and the dignity of every person (Rustemier, 2002). Thus, to be inclusive is to be including of all whatever their race, creed, colour, age or disability and to remove discrimination and all barriers to involvement and participation. As stated, when I was an Inclusion Officer and Senior Inclusion Officer in the authority, I led on the award of the Bath and North East Somerset IQM whereby I would assess schools as to whether they were inclusive. In my extensive work on this award, I came to the realisation that for a school to be truly inclusive, it was not only inclusive of pupils but of all adults and stakeholders, that is, teachers, TAs, school meals supervisory assistants (SMSAs), caretakers, governors and parents. In other words, I determined that in an inclusive school there was a culture of inclusion which was inclusive of all, where all had a voice, all had the opportunity to participate and all felt a sense of belonging. This idea of inclusion and being inclusive aligns very much with that of Booth (2011):

I see it (inclusion) as a never-ending process of increasing participation for everyone; children, young people and adults. It involves challenging and reducing all forms of exclusion. Increasing participation for all implies not only that everyone is entitled to participate in their local educational settings, but that education systems and settings are developed to be responsive to diversity in ways that *value equally* all children, young people and their families and the adults who work with them.

(Booth, 2011, p.304)

Booth sees inclusion as 'putting particular values into action' (p.308) and has drawn up his list of inclusive values based on discussions with teachers, students and others around the world: equality, rights, participation, community, respect for diversity,

sustainability, non-violence, trust, compassion, honesty, courage, joy, love, hope/optimism and beauty. In reflecting on my values, the following emerge: fairness, justice, equality of opportunity, respect and regard of the other, love, trust, hope, peace, a strong work ethic and determination. These are my values which are the bedrock of my being and which drive me to do what I do in my personal and professional life.

Inclusional. I use the term throughout my Master's dissertation when referring to my ontological way of being in my relationship with others. 'Inclusional' is to do with the quality of relationships between one and the other; it is inter-relational and inter-actional. It is the space between one and the other where there is a flow of interaction; it is a moving space and it is organic. In my inclusional relationship with others, there is a flow of energy which does not close down the other, but rather invites them into that space. An inclusional relationship is a relationship which I strive for in opening up a space between one and the other; it is like a playing field where issues can be openly discussed and thrashed out. The outcomes may not be as one would have wished, but the important thing is that a space has been opened up which invites this flow of interaction, this energy and this engagement between one and the other. I also see 'inclusional' as a derivative of 'inclusionality'. Rayner (2006) evolved the concept of inclusionality which he describes as a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that are connective, reflective and co-creative. Thus, for me, an inclusional way of being, refers to the relationship between one and the other which invites a flow of interaction which is connective and co-creative with the other.

It is a term that is used throughout Living Theory research. Marian Naidoo's title of her PhD thesis (2005) is entitled, "The Emergence of a Living Theory of Inclusional and Responsive Practice", in which she looks at how she can improve her practice in the healthcare service. In explaining her values, she states:

Working in an inclusional way means that I try to embrace boundaries as places of creativity, connection and dynamism rather than places that create silos and severance and as a consequence create barriers to effective relationships... Developing inclusionality in my practice is always my aim but sometimes this way of working is very hard to achieve. This is because it is

contrary to our usual day to day practice, particularly within healthcare organisations where we have preferred to develop impositional practices.
(Naidoo, 2005, p.19)

JeKan Adler-Collins, in his PhD thesis (2007) entitled, “Developing an inclusional pedagogy of the unique: How do I clarify, live and explain my educational influences in my learning as I pedagogise my healing nurse curriculum in a Japanese University?”, states:

...I offer these panes, set in the frame of my selfhood, as a means of avoiding the separation of one from the other, and in so doing my reader and I co-create a journey of understanding and exploration. I believe I am being inclusional.

(Adler-Collins, 2007, p.18)

Eden Charles in the Abstract of his PhD thesis (2007), “How Can I Bring Ubuntu As A Living Standard of Judgement Into The Academy? Moving Beyond Decolonisation Through Societal Reidentification And Guiltless Recognition”, refers to the two key approaches he uses in his thesis and how these emerge in an awareness of inclusionality:

Two key approaches are identified and described in depth: ‘guiltless recognition’ and ‘societal re-identification’. These emerge from a perception of self that is distinct within but not isolated in an awareness of ‘inclusionality’.

(Charles, 2007, p.7)

Further in his Abstract, he refers to the fact that ‘Visual narratives are used to represent and help to communicate the inclusional meanings of these living standards of judgement’. I agree with Charles in that, I have explained the meanings of ‘living’, ‘empowerment’, ‘inclusive’ and ‘inclusional’, thus, I have given lexical expressions of the meanings of these words, however, visual narratives give an ostensive expression of these meanings and I demonstrate this throughout my thesis.

I refer to ‘inclusionality’ and its derivative, ‘inclusional’, throughout my Master’s dissertation (2009) in discussing my relationship with others. There was an exchange

of emails between Alan Rayner and myself at the time and I highlighted this in my dissertation:

In one of the emails, I express the following which relates to my understanding of inclusionality and my inclusional way of being:

When I was a teacher, this is something I valued – never authoritarian but enjoying the flow of interaction between teacher/learner, learner/teacher, all learning together, co-creating, reflecting and connecting through the participation of all. Not only as a teacher, but within my life and with whom I relate, I enjoy, feel and grow from this flow of interaction and participation. (Email sent 26 January, 2006).

(Jones, 2009, p.24)

At this stage, in clarifying the meanings of the words ‘inclusive’ and ‘inclusional’ and understanding the context in which I had previously used these words and how others were also using the word ‘inclusional’ in their theses, I decided to discuss the matter further with Jack Whitehead, visiting professor at the University of Cumbria and Marie Huxtable, visiting research fellow at the University of Cumbria. They suggested that I explore my ideas with fellow researchers who meet weekly at Conversation Café in Bath. I wanted to explain my dilemma and to determine other people’s perceptions of these terms. The session was video-recorded on 16th December 2016. If you click on the url below the still image, you will be able to view the full recording, the duration of which is 42:48 minutes. Within the text below the url, for ease of access, I indicate the minutes in brackets.

Image 1 **Members of Conversation Café**



Video-clip 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QbeJtliQRw&feature=youtu.be>

In this recording, I begin by explaining my dilemma in using the words ‘inclusive’ and ‘inclusional’ when referring to living empowerment in my thesis (2:44-3:38). I explain my understanding of inclusion as I worked as an Inclusion Officer and a Senior Inclusion Officer in assessing schools and awarding the Bath and North East Somerset IQM to inclusive schools as I have explained above (8:53-12:37). Joao explains that she sees inclusional as a movement; as a moving thing (16:18-16:42). This idea of inclusional being associated with movement is picked up throughout the discussion. Rachel describes the school in which her mother worked in the ‘80’s as a deputy head teacher as an inclusional school (17:13-19:43). She explains, “I have an embodied experience of my understanding of an inclusional school” (17:13-17:21). She believes that the school was run by love and compassion and felt that in my explanation of inclusion, she did not get a sense of love and compassion. Rachel refers to the fact that her mother now has dementia and is in a nursing home. Recently, she had discovered letters from the children to her mother when her mother retired from the school. She feels that the love and compassion is still moving through the children’s written word and is now being passed on to the caring staff. Love and compassion, she explains, is an energy which has movement and that it is something that changes (20:17-21:01). She states:

When one is operating from an inclusional position, one's living boundaries are the bit where there's – it's in the space in between – the relationship between me, you and the other.

(21:03-21:22).

William makes references to music. He refers to the conductor of an orchestra and demonstrates the actions of a conductor in communicating the soul of the music to the performers. He states that language seems inadequate to capture the soul of the music and its interpretation in the musicians' hands (26:36-27:33). William states that he tends to like the word, 'inclusional'. He feels that the word has a 6-8 rhythm and he taps this out with his hands. To him, the word 'inclusional' evokes dance and joyful energy (34:54-36:19).

Sonia uses her hands to reflect how I have been using my hands when I speak about 'inclusive' and 'inclusional' and she asks, "What does this mean?" (holding her hands to her chest) and, "What does this mean?" (drawing her hands from her chest and opening them out). She feels that she would like to know the stories as to what each of the visual hand movements mean. Sonia suggests that I would have lots of evidence to show what I mean by each of these hand movements. She feels that my stories would demonstrate the definition of what I mean by 'inclusive' and 'inclusional' (29:40-30:25). Sonia's interpretation is that hands to chest denotes the feeling of being included and in feeling that, you can then empower and create (hands opening outwards) (32:52-34:09).

As a result of this meeting, I was beginning to feel that I was contributing to a living 'inclusional' empowerment, however, I still did not feel satisfied as I felt it was more than that. I decided to revisit my Master's dissertation again to fully determine my understanding of the terms 'inclusion', 'inclusive' and 'inclusional'. In re-reading my dissertation again and in context of my present research on empowerment, I seemed to be reading it with fresh eyes and it helped me to get a better understanding of my meanings of 'inclusive' and 'inclusional' when I refer to 'living empowerment'. My thesis is building on research done for my M.A. In the Abstract of my Master's dissertation (2009), I state:

Inclusionality (Rayner, 2004) may be described as a relationally dynamic and responsive awareness of others which flows with a desire to live values of care, compassion, love, justice and democracy. I explicate the inclusional way in which I like to work with others, how my practice is based on the values I hold and how this is reflected in my relationship with other educators working in a Children's Service and schools.

(Jones, 2009, p.iv)

Further in my dissertation, I state:

Whilst inclusion may be seen to relate to the culture, policy and practice of a school, inclusionality may be seen to relate to the ontology of a school community; it is more to do with an inclusional way of being between one and the other.

(Jones, 2009, p.21)

I needed to finally determine that when referring to 'living empowerment', was I referring to 'living inclusive empowerment', 'living inclusional empowerment' or 'living inclusive and inclusional empowerment'? Through researching the meanings of these words individually, discussing these meanings with other researchers at Conversation Café, reading the theses of other Living Theory researchers, re-reading my Master's dissertation, and reflecting on the evidence I have gathered for my present research, I have determined that I am referring to 'living inclusive and inclusional empowerment'. By 'inclusive' empowerment I mean that which 'includes the other' and 'does not exclude the other' and is driven by my inclusive values. Inclusive empowerment, however, for me and how I use this term in my research, does not always involve a relational quality. It can merely refer to the act of 'including (being inclusive of) the other' and 'not excluding of the other'. By 'inclusional' empowerment, I mean that what emerges from this bedrock of inclusive values in the desire to empower the other through a quality of a relationship which is open, receptive, inter-actional and inter-relational. To refer to 'inclusive empowerment' only, in the context of this research, would deny the inclusional quality between one and the other. To refer to 'inclusional empowerment' only, would give a focus to this flow of interaction, this relational quality between one and the other, but would ignore the mere act of 'including the other', that is, the mere act of 'being inclusive of the other' and 'not excluding of the other'. Thus, I have

determined that in this research, I am referring to a living empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional.

In my research, I am evolving my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. My question is, 'How can I, as a statutory SEN manager, improve my practice in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which has an influence on me, my team and ultimately, children and young people with SEN and their families?

I am now going beyond the case study of an Inclusion Officer as described and explained in my dissertation but using my dissertation to reinterpret and reanalyse the ideas presented to describe and explain a more profound concept of improving my practice in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. In doing this, I am extending and transforming a living standard of judgement. I also realise that to demonstrate my meaning of 'living inclusive and inclusional empowerment', I need to show a multimedia account which includes written and visual expressions of meaning. Print alone lacks the energy and flows of meaning which I am trying to communicate. My thesis requires both. I draw on the ideas of Jousse (2009):

The original and capital sin of our written-style civilisation is that it considers itself singularly superior and unique, and believes, moreover, that everything not recorded in writings, does not exist.

(Jousse, 2009, bookcover)

Sienaert (2016) explores Jousse's ideas that people have embodied expressions which he refers to as gestes. Jousse was of the view that the mind, the body and the soul cannot be separated; rather that humans are a compound of all three. He uses the idea of water, the formula of which is H₂O; that to separate each part, you would not have water, thus our embodied movements, thoughts and ideas cannot be separated without changing the meanings. Thus, in my thesis, I draw on written and visual expressions of meaning to explain and clarify my understandings of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

Contribution to the ecology of knowledges

I locate my original contribution to knowledge within an ecology of knowledges as expressed by De Sousa Santos (2014):

... the ecology of knowledges confronts the logic of the monoculture of scientific knowledge and rigor by identifying other knowledges and criteria of rigor and validity that operate credibly in social practices pronounced non-existent by metonymic reason.

(De Sousa Santos, 2014, p.188)

De Sousa Santos argues that the knowledge of capitalistic societies is based on scientific knowledge and that it is perceived as superior and applied in non-capitalist contexts which can often be disastrous. He calls for greater recognition of other knowledges and states:

The ecology of knowledges...consists of granting “equality of opportunity” to the different kinds of knowledge involved in ever broader epistemological arguments with a view to maximising their respective contributions toward building “another possible world”, that is to say, a more just and democratic society, as well as one more balanced in its relations with nature. The point is not to ascribe the same validity to every kind of knowledge but rather to allow for a pragmatic discussion among alternative, valid criteria without immediately disqualifying whatever does not fit the epistemological canon of modern science.

(De Sousa Santos, 2014, p.190)

De Sousa Santos refers to ‘cognitive injustice’ which he explains is the failure to recognise the different ways of knowing amongst people across the world. In developing my living- theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment, I believe I am contributing to De Sousa Santos’ idea of an ecology of knowledges.

Structure of my thesis

In Chapter 1, I explain the background and context of my research. I begin by clarifying and contextualising the term ‘special educational needs’. I give an overview of my professional development and explain the political and legislative context, both national and local, at the time of my enquiry. Throughout the time of

my enquiry, significant changes have taken place which are having a huge impact on the public sector and consequently, local authority Children's Services in which I work. In 2010, the Coalition Government came into being, and since then we have seen the introduction of schools becoming academies and free schools developing, with responsibilities being placed more with schools than local authorities. In the world of SEN, a world in which I have spent my career, the biggest changes within the last thirty years were introduced by the government in September 2014 following the Children and Families Act in May of that year, and this has had a significant impact on my practice.

The local authority in which I work has had to make significant financial cuts and this is still ongoing with the recent announcement in 2016, of the authority having to make even further cuts of three and a half million pounds. Subsequently, this has and is having an impact on the Children's Services. It is within these national and local changes that I am undertaking my enquiry.

In Chapter 2, I explain my methodology as to how I have undertaken my research and the methods used. I explain that in conducting my research, I have generated my living-theory methodology (Whitehead, 2008a). By 'living-theory' I refer to the explanation that an individual gives for the educational influence in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations (Whitehead, 2008b, p.104). A Living Theory methodology describes how the enquiry is carried out as I work towards the development of my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. In generating my living-theory methodology, I, as a practitioner, offer my own explanations for what I do in my practice. In researching my practice, I have reflected on my values which are embodied in my educational practice (Whitehead, 1989, 2003) and have enquired as to whether I am living my values in my practice. My values then become explanatory principles and living standards of judgement (Laidlaw, 1996) on which I judge what I do.

The living-theory methodology focuses on the 'I' and in asking the question, 'How do I improve my practice?', I am asking if I am living my values in my practice. If I am not living my values in my practice, I may experience myself as a 'living contradiction' (Whitehead, 1989, pp.43-44). The Living Theory approach to my self-

study emphasises the importance of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

In conducting this self-study, I explain that I have generated my living-theory methodology because I want to research into my practice and to improve my practice. I want to produce explanations for what I am doing and why I am doing it. I want to generate new knowledge about my practice. In generating my living-theory methodology, I explain how I have used action reflection cycles as advocated by McNiff (2010), McNiff and Whitehead (2005) and Whitehead and McNiff (2006). I use these cycles to express my concerns, why I am concerned and what I have done to address my concerns. I clarify the reasons why I have used video-recordings and digital video-data and how this has contributed to my research.

I explain that in adopting this approach, I have been able to apply my own 'methodological inventiveness' (Dadds and Hart, 2001). By this, I mean that I have been able to develop my own way through my research. As such, I describe and explain how I have drawn insights from action research, self-study research, autoethnographic research and narrative research.

In validating my claim to knowledge, I have adopted Habermas' (1976) four criteria for social validity. These criteria relate to the communication between speaker and hearer. I explain how I collected and analysed my data and, finally, discuss my ethical considerations and how they are in line with my ontological stance, in that, whatever I do, I endeavour to have regard and respect of the other.

In Chapter 3, using an action reflection cycle, I focus on my role as a statutory SEN manager and explore the notion of empowerment. At the time, my manager as Head of the Education Inclusion Service, was researching into his practice into the development of a learning organisation. It was within this context that I started focussing on how I manage the SEN team and if I was living my values within my role. I explain, in this chapter, how I started asking myself such questions as, 'Does the SEN team feel empowered?', 'Was I being empowered by my manager?' and what was the role of self-empowerment?

I outline the impact of my manager leaving the local authority especially as he was not replaced for two years. I explain my reaction, at first, of feeling a sense of loss and disempowerment, however, as time went on, I explain how I responded to the greater responsibilities expected of me and the feeling of empowerment as I dealt with these responsibilities. I meet with four members of the SEN team to ascertain what empowerment means to them, whether they feel empowered and the influence this has on children and young people with SEN and their families. Throughout this chapter, I use evidence from video-data to demonstrate the influence of empowerment in my workplace. I determine that living empowerment is inherent in the workplace and it is inclusive and inclusional.

In Chapter 4, using an action reflection cycle, I reflect on my concerns as a statutory SEN manager at a time of significant change with the introduction of the new SEN legislation in England in September 2014. I discuss the concerns I felt over time and how I responded to these changes to ensure the inclusive and inclusional empowerment of the team, children and young people with SEN and their families.

In Chapter 5, I explain the educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations in creating my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. I use video-data as a means of reflection, to bring the reader into that moment in time, to clarify and communicate expressions of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment and to clarify the relational dynamic nature of my explanatory principles in my explanation of educational influence.

Chapter 6 is a conclusion of my thesis as I reflect on the aims of my study, my personal and professional development and my development as a researcher. I conclude by looking to future possibilities for the development of my research.

Summary

This thesis demonstrates the contribution I have made to the generation of new knowledge on empowerment as I have researched my practice to improve my practice. Through developing my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment whereby I have reflected on my values and evaluated whether I am

living my values in my practice, I believe that my research and practice on empowerment contributes to the literature on empowerment and offers an original contribution to knowledge. I hope that in my explanation of my contribution to living inclusive and inclusional empowerment, that I have created a sense of defamiliarisation, as referred to earlier, in that I have taken the reader 'somewhere which is simultaneously familiar and not'.

In my Introduction, I have explained why I am undertaking this research. I have stated my research question and aims, clarified my values, and discussed my original contribution to knowledge including my contribution to an ecology of knowledges. Finally, I have introduced each chapter of my thesis.

In my next chapter, Chapter 1, I clarify and contextualise the term 'special educational needs'. I give an overview of my professional development and describe the background and context of my research.

CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF MY RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain the background and context of my enquiry. I give an overview of the development of my professional career from 1975 to the present day. I explain the political, social, economic and educational landscape at the time of my enquiry from 2010 to the present day and conclude with the global context at the time. I begin by clarifying and contextualising the term ‘special educational needs’.

1.2 The term ‘special educational needs’

The term ‘special educational needs’ has been used for the last thirty-five years. It was introduced in the Education Act 1981 following the recommendations of the Warnock Report (Department of Education and Science (DES), 1978), replacing the twelve categories of disability which focussed on the identification and provision of handicapped ‘individuals’. The introduction of this term shifted the focus of assessment from a diagnosis of disability to the identification of SEN whereby special educational provision needs to be made (Frederickson and Cline, 2010). Whilst the term was initially welcomed (Runswick-Cole and Hodge, 2009), increasingly, there has been much contention over the concept of the term in theory and practice (Norwich, 2014). Runswick-Cole and Hodge (2009) argue that the term ‘special educational needs’, within policy and legislation, implies there being a problem within the child.

Debates over the implications of its use have ensued with some preferring such terms as ‘additional needs’ which was introduced by the Labour government as part of the Common Assessment Framework (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2006) to include all vulnerable children. Norwich (In Hallett and Hallett, 2010), highlights the fact that those who advocate the social model of disability, do not ascribe to the notion of ‘needs’ whether they be ‘additional’ or ‘special’ as it is associated more with the medical model of disability and thus has negative connotations. He argues the case for the necessity of the notion of needs, and whilst stating that SEN being about learning difficulties and disabilities has ‘outlived its

usefulness' (p.45), he is in favour of 'needs' as a concept in that it protects the additional resourcing for those pupils whatever their needs may be. This is very much the view of Hornby (2011) who agrees that such labels as SEN can be stigmatising, yet without them, children may not get the teaching and resources required. Those who support the social model of disability (for example, Runswick-Cole and Hodge, 2009; Booth and Ainscow, 2000, 2002, 2011) reject the idea of any labelling of pupils and look to a more inclusive model whereby barriers to participation and learning need to be removed. What I want to emphasise here is that whatever the debates on terminology and labelling, the term 'special educational needs' is a legal term with which I have worked since its introduction in 1981, hence this is the term I use throughout my thesis.

1.3 The development of my professional career

I have always felt that I wanted to make a difference to children and young people with SEN, as they are now described. As expressed in 'Clarifying my values' (Introduction), from the time I was a pupil in a comprehensive school in the 60's, when pupils were 'streamed' and placed in 'sets' as according to their ability, I was aware of those pupils who were placed in the 'bottom set', then referred to as 'remedials', 'retarded, backward, or slow learners' (Gross, 1995, p.1), as there did not seem to be the same opportunities presented to them as for those pupils placed in 'higher sets', as was determined at the time. I did not see them having opportunities, for example, to participate in school plays and concerts or to become monitors and prefects; in many ways, my perception was that these pupils had very low status and were very much excluded from the school community. Research studies indicate that this is still case (Frederickson and Cline, 2010). Warnock (2005) also highlights issues of bullying and the social rejection of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools. From a young age, I had always wanted to become a teacher. When I qualified as a teacher, although I had been trained to teach pupils in Infant Schools (4-11 years of age), I decided I specifically wanted to teach pupils who are now described as having SEN. I felt that, as a teacher, I would be in a position to contribute to making a difference to their lives and improve their life chances.

My whole career has been spent in the field of 'special educational needs', working directly as a teacher with children and young people with SEN in secondary schools and primary schools and then working, not so directly, for the local authority as an Inclusion Officer, a Senior Inclusion Officer and a statutory SEN manager. My aim, as a teacher, was to give recognition to children and young people with SEN, to encourage them to believe in themselves, to encourage them to achieve and to be proud of their achievements, for them to be included in all matters that concerned them and as a result, for them to feel confident in who they were and aware of the contribution they could make in their lives. As an officer and a manager in the local authority, although not directly involved with children and young people, my aim in working with fellow officers and schools, has been to encourage and influence their inclusion and to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEN. When I refer to the inclusion of children and young people with SEN, I am referring to the inclusive model, as mentioned, whereby barriers to participation and learning need to be removed.

In working as a SEN teacher in secondary schools in the '70's and 80's, my experience, as such, was that the status of a SEN teacher was low in comparison to the status of an English teacher or a history teacher, for example. Also, many teachers tended to drift into this role. It was then that I decided to do a post-graduate diploma in SEN as I felt the need to prove to others how seriously I took this role; that I had not drifted into it and that it was a serious commitment on my behalf to do the best I could for children and young people with SEN. My research, at the time, focussed on the move from the streaming of pupils as according to ability to the introduction of mixed ability classes in the comprehensive school in which I was a special needs teacher (Jones, 1988).

In 1997, I was appointed as a SENCO in a primary school. With the publication of the first Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (Department for Education (DfE), 1994), guidance was given on the provision that should be made for children with SEN and that a SENCO should be appointed in schools to oversee this process. Many SENCOs, however, tended to take on this role, sometimes having already taught children with SEN or appointed internally by a willing volunteer (Petersen in Hallett and Hallett, 2010). Research

reports and publications have been produced on the evolving role of the SENCO highlighting concerns about the role regarding a number of factors, for example, the time allocated to a SENCO to carry out their role; the support given to the SENCO by the head teacher and senior leadership team; the understanding of SEN funding and the role of TAs as SENCOs (Norwich in Hallett and Hallett, 2010). Rosen-Webb (2011) makes the point that there is a lack of clarity in the research literature and policy contexts regarding the role of SENCO. The role of SENCO has strengthened, however, since 2008 when it became a requirement for schools, except for special schools, to appoint a teacher as a SENCO (The Education (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) (England) Regulations, 2008). The role of SENCO was further strengthened in 2009 when it became mandatory for SENCOs, new to role since 2008, to achieve the National Award of SEN Coordination (The Education (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) (England) (Amendment) Regulations, 2009). Many teachers, now, tend to see the role of SENCO as part of the progression in the advancement of their career. As Peterson (In Hallett and Hallett, 2010) states:

As we enter the second decade of the twenty-first century we finally have high quality, professional development opportunities for our next generation of SENCOs. The National Award for SEN Coordination has been a long time coming but very welcome and the first step in the raised status that SENCOs deserve.

(Petersen in Hallett and Hallett, 2010, p.19)

The 'status' of children and young people with SEN in mainstream schools is now very varied depending on the inclusive culture of the school; whilst some schools embrace children and young people with SEN, other schools resist including them on roll for a variety of reasons. In my work on the IQM in the authority, I found that some schools did not wish to work towards the award as they did not want to be seen as being inclusive of children and young people with SEN as this would attract more children and young people with SEN. Also, many schools are of the view that including children and young people with SEN on their roll will be detrimental to the outcome of their attainment levels, in that pupils with SEN will 'bring down' their attainment scores. Schools are under much pressure from Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) for pupils to achieve good attainment scores and this will have a significant impact on the outcome of their Ofsted inspection (Galton and

MacBeath, 2015). Hodkinson (2010), Norwich (In Hallett and Hallett, 2010), and Tissot (2013) highlight the tensions for schools in raising standards and ensuring the inclusion of children with SEN. Slee (1998), in highlighting the emphasis on league tables which measures schools by the test performance of pupils, has argued for some time that schools promote those pupils with a strong academic record whilst abandoning those at risk of failure thus exercising exclusion on a daily basis. However, if a child or young person has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan, whatever the concerns and whatever a school's stance may be, if a parent requests a particular nursery, school or post-16 institution now, they cannot refuse to have a child or young person on roll, unless it is deemed that the school would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or that the attendance of the child or young person would make it incompatible with regard to the efficient education of other pupils, or that their inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources (DfE, 2014, para. 9.79). In my role as a statutory SEN manager, when a child or young person is issued with an EHC plan, the local authority is statutorily bound to consult with the school of parental choice, with some schools putting forward reasons why they cannot accept a child or young person on roll. It is these responses with which I am frequently confronted and it my responsibility to challenge such schools if it is seen that their reasons will not stand up legislatively. In most cases they do not. It is then that the local authority is able to direct the school to take the child or young person if it is still the parents' wish for their child to attend that school; if the school has academy status, the local authority can take the issue to the Secretary of State who is in the position to direct the school to take the child or young person onto its roll.

I shall now give a specific example of a time, since being a manager, when my principles were challenged when a head teacher refused to take a child on roll, and I explain my response. Jim (name anonymised) has a Statement of SEN, and is at a special school for pupils with behavioural difficulties. In the past, Jim had attended a number of mainstream primary schools with little success, but had settled well at his present school. Jim was to attend secondary school in the new academic year and it was his and his mother's wish that he attended a mainstream school. The local authority consulted with the school and were informed that his placement would be

incompatible with the efficient education of other children. Reasons given included the fact that the teaching assistant who would be supporting him did not work the required amount of time necessary; that the young person would find it very difficult settling into a mainstream school after attending a special school; that placements at mainstream schools had previously failed and that it was highly likely that this placement would fail; that his behaviour would be too disruptive and consequently affect the learning of other pupils. Being aware of the challenges that would be presented to the school, the local authority had allocated a considerable amount of funding to support this child's placement in mainstream school.

I met with the head teacher to discuss how the funding could be used to support this child, advised that a review should be held to discuss progress after three months of his attendance at the school, and that a local authority representative would attend the review. The head teacher did not agree to any of my suggestions and still refused to accept the child on roll. I informed the Head of Service, at the time, of the situation. Consequently, the school was directed by the local authority to place the child on roll and to implement the suggestions made. Ultimately, there were no statutory reasons to refuse a placement for this child. It was the parents' wish and his wish to attend the school and with the appropriate amount of funding in place to support him, the child deserved to have a chance at attending a mainstream school. This is an example of when my principles were challenged, and I determined what I believed was the best way forward for the child.

Moving from teaching to working for the local authority as an Inclusion Officer was a significant step for me. As a SEN teacher and SENCO in a primary school, my position before moving to the local authority, I had been very much focussed on the inclusion and participation of children with SEN in the school; empowering them in giving them a voice, actively listening to them and encouraging them to feel proud of their achievements. It was also a time when inclusion was very much on the government agenda. Following the Salamanca Statement in 1994, governments were called on to adopt as a matter of policy the principle of inclusive education whereby children should be educated in mainstream schools unless there were significant reasons why this should not be so:

The guiding principle that informs this **Framework** is that schools should accommodate **all children** regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions...There is an emerging consensus that children and youth with special educational needs should be included in the educational arrangements made for the majority of children. This has led to the concept of the inclusive school.

(United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 1994, p.6)

It was very much a focus of mine, at the time, that more children remained in my school, which was a mainstream school, rather than being referred to a special school as I felt that many of the referrals to special school were inappropriate and that the school was in a position to meet the needs of pupils with SEN and who had Statements of SEN. In saying this, I do believe that placements at special schools are appropriate, depending on the needs of the child or young person. If a child or young person has severe and complex needs, they may require more specialist provision which only a special school could provide (DfES, 2004). Special schools can be as inclusive as mainstream schools in their endeavour to remove barriers to participation and learning. I highlight the debate about mainstream schools and special schools in Section 1.4.

At this school, I also moved into leadership and management, following a successful Ofsted inspection which commended SEN, being promoted to a position on the senior leadership team where I had more influence in driving forward the inclusion and participation of children with SEN in the school. Being committed to the inclusion of children with SEN, I felt that in moving to work for the local authority, my influence would be greater in that I would be working with all schools in the local authority and would be in a position to spread my influence in the development of the inclusion of children and young people with SEN.

It is through my work in the local authority as an Inclusion Officer, a Senior Inclusion Officer and a statutory SEN manager, that I have been able to drive forward the inclusion of those children and young people with SEN in the authority. I refer here to the concept of inclusion being about the removal of barriers to participation and learning, and children and young people having a voice in matters that concerned them whether they are in a mainstream school or a special school, as

mentioned previously. In working with others in education, for example, SEN officers, educational psychologists, education welfare officers, the learning support service, the behaviour support service, the autism outreach service, the sensory support service, teachers, including SENCOs and head teachers; and health services including paediatricians, health visitors, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists; and social care and parent forums, I have been in a prime position to contribute to and influence the development of policy and practice of the inclusion of children and young people. As an Inclusion Officer and Senior Inclusion Officer, after much research, I set up the award of the Bath and North East Somerset IQM which schools could work towards and demonstrate the culture of inclusion in their schools and the inclusion of **all** pupils. Special schools and mainstream schools could work towards achieving this award. At this time, I also worked closely with SENCOs in schools and set up appropriate training in order for them to fulfil their roles in meeting the needs of and putting in appropriate provision for children and young people with SEN. I am still involved with our local university and I am the Lead in the authority with regard to the National Award for SEN Coordination which, as mentioned, is now a mandatory award for new SENCOs who have been in place since 2008. As a statutory SEN manager, I have been responsible for determining whether children and young people with SEN require a Statement of SEN, and since September 2014, when legislation changed, whether they need an EHC plan. In issuing Statements of SEN or EHC plans, I have to make decisions about appropriate funding and school placements to meet the needs of these children and young people.

There are many challenges within this role, one just described, when a school refuses to accept a child or young person on roll. Further challenges may come from schools and parents when a request is made for an assessment for a Statement of SEN or an EHC plan, or following an assessment, if it is not agreed to issue a Statement of SEN or an EHC plan. On issuing a Statement of SEN or an EHC plan other challenges may arise from the school about the funding for the child or young person. Parents may challenge the content of the Statement of SEN or an EHC plan in that they may disagree with the needs described or the provision stated especially if they perceive that the provision is not quantifiable or specific enough. Placements can also be an issue particularly if a parent wishes their child to attend a special independent school,

a significant cost to the local authority when it is felt that a local special school can meet the child or young person's needs. If parents disagree with the needs, provision or placement on the Statement of SEN or EHC plan, they can refer the case to the first tier Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) which can be stressful, time-consuming and expensive for parents and the local authority alike. Whilst many challenges may be presented in the role, I have always kept the child and young person at the centre, and within resources available, working with parents and schools, I make decisions as to what is best for the child and young person. I shall now give another example of when my principles were challenged when the local authority decided not to carry out a request for a statutory assessment, and again, I explain my response.

A request for a statutory assessment had been put in by the school for Harry (name anonymised). The SEN panel agreed that a statutory assessment should not be carried out as Harry did not meet our criteria. It was recognised that Harry had special educational needs in that he had difficulties in literacy. He was also exhibiting behavioural difficulties but it was felt that this was due to his personal circumstances at the time. Thus, it was determined that Harry did not have special educational needs to the extent that would require a Statement of SEN.

The school and parents expressed much concern that the request had been turned down. I met with the parents, SENCO and head teacher of the school, along with the Head of Service and local authority SEN specialists, to explain the reason for our decision. Having listened to parents and school, it was agreed that the local authority would fund a literacy assessment followed by specialist literacy support, and would also fund specialist behavioural support for an agreed period of time. A review was to be held after three months of the support being put in place. The parents and school felt that this provision was appropriate and were pleased with the outcome, despite the fact that a statutory assessment was not to be carried out. This is an example of when my principles were challenged, and in reviewing the situation with all involved, determined a way forward as to what was believed to be in the best interests of the child.

At the time of my enquiry, the political, economic, social and educational landscape was changing. In the next section, I highlight the changes and how they have impacted on my practice.

1.4 The political, economic, social and educational landscape

May 2010 saw a change of government from Labour to a Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition government. With this change of government, the education system was to undergo the biggest transformation since the Second World War with the Coalition, in line with cuts in public expenditure, announcing a programme of education cuts of £359 million. This has had a huge impact on cuts that have had to be made within local authorities including the authority in which I work which I describe later. The Academies Bill was introduced in 2010 which has seen the move from a state-run to a free market approach to schooling. Under Labour, schools could become academies to replace under-performing comprehensives and were almost exclusively opened in poor areas. However, under the Coalition government, all schools could apply for academy status. Shepherd (2010) raises the concerns of teachers, lawyers and parents who felt that this move was undemocratic. She highlights the view of David Wolfe, an education barrister at Matrix Chambers in London:

It is hard to escape the conclusion that this bill is undemocratic. What this does is remove the public process. Nobody, apart from the education secretary and the governors will be able to stop the process. It seems to be entirely out of kilter with the idea of a 'Big Society'. You are handing power to the governors to steal the school. If they want to change the ethos or make the pupils wear the uniform of Etonians, they will be able to, and parents and teachers will be powerless to stop them.

(Shepherd, 2010, no pagination)

Academies are free from local authority control and receive their funding directly from Whitehall giving them almost complete freedom to control their budgets; they are not bound to the National Curriculum, they can determine their own term-times and the length of the school day. However, they are still bound to SEN legislation and the same commitment as state maintained schools in that they cannot refuse to

take a child or young people with a Statement of SEN or an EHC plan if it is the parents' wish that their child attends that school.

The move of schools to academy status has had huge implications for local authorities with the loss of control of these schools and less ability to monitor outcomes and the curriculum. Multi-academy trusts (MATs) are developing which can include primary and secondary schools under an executive head teacher. Free schools which are funded in the same way as academies, can be set up by groups of parents, teachers, charities and trusts and again do not come under local authority control. Norwich (2014) contends that whilst academies and free schools were set up to ensure greater parental preference, they are in a position to control their intake to ensure higher academic standards, thus the tension between academic standards and the inclusion agenda.

Besides the introduction of the Academies Bill and the creation of free schools, the new primary curriculum proposed by Sir Jim Rose was abandoned, as have initiatives in personal, social and health education and citizenship. National curriculum levels, as we have known them, indicating the attainment of pupils, have been scrapped. This could have implications for pupils with SEN in that the identification and assessment of pupils with SEN is dependent on robust assessment systems to monitor progress and to identify when adequate progress is not being made (Norwich, 2014). The Building Schools for the Future programme set by the New Labour government has also been scrapped.

From the beginning, the Coalition government also made a pledge to 'remove the bias towards inclusion':

We believe the most vulnerable children deserve the very highest quality of care. We will improve diagnostic assessment for school children, prevent the unnecessary closure of special schools, and remove the bias towards inclusion.

(The Coalition, 2010, p.29)

Sarah Teather, the Children and Families minister at the time, spoke to The Disability News Service (5th June 2012), and informed them that it was very much

about parental choice giving parents the legal right to choose a special or mainstream school, or a free school or academy. The Disability News Service reports:

Disabled activists and allies in the inclusive education movement have repeatedly warned that the coalition's pledge and SEN policies will lead to a new generation of special schools.

They believe that government's reforms will make it harder for parents to secure a mainstream education for their disabled children and destroy years of progress towards a more inclusive system.

(Disability News Service, 5th June 2012)

After years of the drive for inclusion following the Salamanca Statement, 1994, calling on governments to adopt as a matter of principle the notion of mainstream education, and the government's stance that special schools are appropriate for children and young people with severe and complex needs only, and therefore, numbers should fall (DfES, 2004), this seemed to be quite a turnaround. Due to professional, political and voluntary sector scrutiny, the pledge was later dropped (Norwich, 2014). Runswick-Cole (2011), however, challenges whether there ever was a 'bias towards inclusion'; that whilst the UK government had signed up to international commitments on inclusion, she argues that the inclusion agenda has been compromised by successive governments who have focussed on school cultures and practices which have excluded non-white, poor and disabled children rather than focussing on the cementation of the link between the politics of disability and the politics of special education.

Of inclusive education, Slee (2012) states:

Go to Google scholar, type in inclusive education then stand back as it delivers by the truckload. I did this and had over 2,450,000 entries with the exact phrase inclusive education in 0.36 s.

(Slee, 2012, p. 898)

Slee contends that the vocabulary of inclusive education is a flawed vocabulary, yet it is distinctive and recognisable globally. He highlights the fact that much money and time have been spent in producing policies, modifying curriculum programmes, incorporating inclusive education items into school inspection schedules and

rebranding university departments from Special Education Departments to Departments or Schools of Special and Inclusive Education. Slee expresses his concern that ‘in spite of all this measurable activity, financial expenditure and optimistic talk, exclusion remains a real and present danger’ (p.898). Hodkinson (2012) states that since the introduction of the Salamanca Statement (1994) ‘the terms inclusion and inclusive education became part of governmental rhetoric, gaining status in schools and the mass media’ (p.6), however, he is critical of the government, local authorities and schools and suggests that, in practice, they present barriers to effective inclusion (Hodkinson, 2010).

Inclusion policies are often associated with debates about the placement of pupils in special schools and mainstream schools (Hodkinson, 2010; Warnock, 2005). Booth (2011), like Hodkinson, highlights the fact that inclusion is often associated with the ‘participation in *education*, or in *mainstream* education, of children and young people with impairments or those who are categorised as “having special educational needs”’ (p.305). Like Slee, he draws our attention to the fact that this perception of inclusion is seen in the light of ‘special needs education’ thus the linking of ‘special educational needs and inclusion’ so often seen in the names of higher education institutions departments and their courses. Hornby (2015) recognises that ‘inclusive education’ and ‘special education’ are based on different philosophies and postulates a theory of ‘inclusive special education’. Slee (2011) is of the view that inclusive education and special education need to be ‘decoupled’ (p.155); however, Tomlinson (2012) argues, that given the present situation, this is unlikely to happen in the near future. Tomlinson refers to ‘an expanded and increasingly expensive ‘SEN Industry’’ (p. 268) based on research undertaken in four different countries whereby there is increasing inclusion in mainstream education of children and young people with disabilities and learning difficulties. Tomlinson believes that governments have supported this growing industry as a result of professional, economic and parental vested interests.

Debates on inclusion and inclusive education have ensued over time. Warnock (2005) critically reviews the development of the inclusion of children with SEN, having chaired the committee that produced the Warnock Report (DES, 1978), which has been influential in the development of inclusive education in the United

Kingdom and internationally. Warnock infers that mistakes were made but feels that a 'radical revolution is now required' (p.15) and recommends the establishment of a government-funded independent Committee of Inquiry to examine the situation regarding SEN.

Warnock is highly critical of the Statement of SEN, now referred to as the EHC plan, and the processes surrounding it, as she believes them to be unnecessarily bureaucratic, possibly leading to contentions between schools, parents and local authorities. Whilst the original idea was that a Statement of SEN would give a child the right to provision to meet their needs, and that local authorities had a duty to ensure that this was the case, the criteria by which a child should receive a Statement of SEN was never made clear. Thus, discrepancies have arisen in local authorities with a child receiving a Statement of SEN in one authority, yet a child in another authority with the same level of need not receiving a Statement of SEN. Warnock does suggest that Statements of SEN could be used as 'passports' to special schools.

A second issue which arises for Warnock is the 'dilemma of difference' (Terzi, 2005), which highlights the contradiction in treating all children and young people the same, thus avoiding the 'labelling' of children and young people, whilst on the other hand, responding to individual needs. She implies that the term 'special educational needs', whilst serving to move away from categories of disability, led eventually to the notion that all children and young people with different needs were essentially the same.

Warnock, then moves on to what she describes as 'the most disastrous legacy of the 1978 Report' (p.19), that being the concept of inclusion which was formerly referred to as integration. In this respect, Warnock highlights the mainstream school versus special school debate and states:

Inclusion should mean being involved in a common enterprise of learning, rather than being necessarily under the same roof.

(Warnock, 2005, p.32)

Warnock is of the view that mainstream school is not appropriate for some pupils whose needs may be better served in a special school. She emphasises the fact that

inclusion is about being educated where you feel you belong and not about where you are geographically.

Norwich (2010) analyses the issues raised by Warnock and whilst supporting some of her views is critical of others in that he feels that she has taken too narrow a perspective and that her ideas require greater critical scrutiny. He is critical of the idea of Statements of SEN being used as 'passports' to special schools as this would fundamentally change the function of a Statement of SEN. He is very much in favour of the idea of a continuum of provision for children with SEN and infers his preference of special schools being on the same site as mainstream schools.

As Hornby (2011) points out, the term 'inclusion' is used in a number of ways, sometimes referring to the notion of inclusive schools or an inclusive society. He highlights the view of the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) (1997) which refers to inclusive education as furthering the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream schools whilst maintaining special schools for those children for whom it may be deemed appropriate. In contrast, the view of the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE), sees inclusion as all children being educated in mainstream schools with the abolition of special schools. Hornby states that many people favour the inclusion of most children with SEN in mainstream schools, but may not be in favour of full inclusion of all children with SEN in mainstream schools. Hornby contends that there is much confusion between the notions of inclusive education and social inclusion; social inclusion being about the inclusion of all, whatever their differences, within an inclusive society. Thus, social inclusion in education refers to the inclusion of all pupils whatever their differences, not only those with SEN, within mainstream schools.

Cigman (2007) refers to inclusive education as a 'contested concept' (p.776) and also highlights the notion of inclusive education being viewed by some as the inclusion of all children in mainstream school whilst by others, it is seen as the inclusion of most children but not all. She distinguishes between what she calls, 'universal inclusionists' and 'moderate inclusionists'. 'Moderate inclusionists', she states, recognise the need for special schools for the minority of children whilst 'universal

inclusionists' regard their existence as being in opposition to the notion of full inclusion of children in mainstream schools.

Cigman challenges the claim that special schools are humiliating and demeaning for those children who attend them. She agrees that special schools, historically, as a result of the 1944 Education Act, may have been perceived as demeaning and humiliating with the association with abnormality and the eleven categories of handicap. This, she claims, is a view which continues to be promoted by 'universal inclusionists' with regard to special schools of the late 20th and early 21st century. Cigman, however, believes that the 'demeaning' and 'humiliating' nature of special schools was addressed by the 1981 Education Act following the 1978 Warnock Report which abolished the eleven categories of handicap.

Cigman highlights the 'rights argument' whereby it is postulated that all children have a right to mainstream education. She argues that this 'rights talk' is problematic and inflationary' (p.780) and likens it to the duty argument, in that parents may feel duty bound to send their children to a mainstream school whatever their difficulties or disabilities. Also, in line with the duty argument, she states that schools, likewise, feel a duty to provide an education for all children whatever their difficulties or disabilities. Similarly, Hornby (2011) challenges the rights argument and states that just because someone has a human right, it does not mean that it is morally right. Thus, whilst children with SEN have a right to be educated in a mainstream school, it does not mean that, morally, it is the best choice for them. Secondly, Hornby points to priorities, suggesting that whilst children with SEN have a right to be educated in a mainstream school, they also have a right to an appropriate education to meet their needs.

Allan (2014), too, refers to inclusive education as a 'troubled, problematic and contested field' (p. 511) with antagonistic debates between so-called 'inclusionists', who advocate having children educated in mainstream schools, and 'special educationalists' who advocate for the continuation of special education. She cites the views of Kavale and Mostert (2004) who maintain that including all children in mainstream school may be harmful and call for evidence as to whether this may be the case or not. Some 'inclusionists', on the other hand, view special education as

wasteful, damaging and ineffective (Andrews *et al.*, 2000). Allan sees the troubles of inclusive education as a result of the contention between 'inclusionists' and 'special educationalists', the lack of analysis of the social model of disability which she contends has remained at an abstract level which is debated rather than being put to use, and finally, the rise of the SEN industry, as described by Tomlinson.

Shaw (2017) takes up the mainstream versus special schools' debate and presents the advantages and challenges of special schools and mainstream schools. She concludes that there continues to be a requirement for special schools in that there needs to be a continuum of provision with mainstream schools, including those with resourced provision, and special schools, working collaboratively to meet the needs of children with SEN. Finally, based on her review of the literature, she proposes the following recommendations for the policy and practice of special and mainstream schools:

- development of special-mainstream school partnership with strengthened links and expertise sharing;
- special education curriculum and pedagogy training for teachers and TAs in both special and mainstream schools;
- extension of the measures of school effectiveness to reflect aspects other than academic outcomes;
- accessing and taking into account the perspectives of all learners, using appropriate methodologies;
- research into outcomes for children educated in different types of provision;
- research into how societal attitudes towards people with disability and initiatives aimed at promoting positive attitudes can impact on inclusion.

(Shaw, 2017, p. 307)

Hodkinson (2010), argues that there are many challenges for teachers and pupils with regard to inclusive education and proposes that professional development for teachers and adequate funding for schools are essential, and suggests also that the development of partnerships between local authorities, schools, families and individual pupils, based on respect and mutual trust should prevail rather than the focus on examination results. Hodkinson contends that the level of interest in inclusive education is high but sees this as beneficial as educational policy continues to be questioned and analysed.

At this point, I would like to emphasise, that whilst these debates continue to ensue, specifically the debates on mainstream and special schools, although highlighting the tensions that exist, they are not central to my research. My concept of inclusion refers to a broader view of inclusion (Booth, 2011) and relates to the participation of all, the including of all, and the removing of barriers for this to happen, as already emphasised. It is based on such values as equality of opportunity, regard and respect of the other.

In 2014, the Children and Families Act was introduced, Part 3 of which focusses on SEN. This Act introduced the most significant changes in SEN since the Education Act 1981. It includes changes to SEN, health and social care and affects all children and young people with SEN in the age range of 0-25.

Following the Children and Families Act on March 13th, 2014, The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years, hereafter, referred to as the SEND Code of Practice (2014), received approval in July 2014. It came into force on 1st September 2014 and was updated in January 2015. The SEND Code of Practice (2014), provides statutory guidance for organisations working with and supporting children and young people with SEN and disabilities. Hence, whilst the Act became law in March 2014, the new system, with the statutory guidance of the new Code, came into place in September 2014. Norwich and Eaton (2014) and Norwich (2014), however, are critical of the Act in that they argue that an opportunity has been missed and fundamental questions have not been addressed, for example, the definition and nature of SEN and disability; also, the role of Statements of SEN, which has not been questioned despite the fact that alternative ideas had been suggested. They contend that much of what was proposed was not fundamentally new but rather was a tightening up, an extension and integration of practices and principles already in place. Norwich (2014) further argues that there is a need to integrate the SEN and disability legislative systems because at present the two different systems of provision responsibility is confusing and wasteful.

Nevertheless, of the SEND Code of Practice (2014), Edward Timpson, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families and Dan Poulter, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, state:

This new Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice will play a vital role in underpinning our major reform programme.

For children and young people this means that their experiences will be of a system which is less confrontational and more efficient. Their special educational needs and disabilities will be picked up at the earliest point with support routinely put in place quickly, and their parents will know what services they can reasonably expect to be provided. Children and young people and their parents or carers will be fully involved in decisions about their support and what they want to achieve. Importantly, the aspirations for children and young people will be raised through an increased focus on life outcomes, including employment and greater independence.

(DfE, 2014, p.11)

Inherent within the changes, the Act placed much emphasis on the consultation and participation of the child, parents and young person in decision-making and this formed the general principles of local authority functions. These principles are emphasised throughout the SEND Code of Practice (2014), and refers to this approach as a ‘person-centred approach’. It states:

By using this approach within a family context, professionals and local authorities can ensure that children, young people and parents are involved in all aspects of planning and decision-making.

(DfE, 2014, para. 9.23)

Whilst Norwich and Eaton (2014) contend that what was proposed was not fundamentally new, the implications of the Act were to have a huge impact on all working in the field of SEN. As a statutory SEN manager working in a local authority, significant changes were required in order to respond to the requirements of the Act and also what was seen as the biggest cultural change in SEN in the last thirty years. St Pauls Chambers (2014) comment that one of the main disadvantages for local authorities is the cost of implementing the new system at a time when local authority budgets are being cut. Also, they state that the new system will be more time-consuming than the current statutory assessment process in creating a more child- focussed system. I express my concerns and how I addressed my concerns in Chapter 4.

During the time of my enquiry, besides the educational landscape, the wider economic and social context has been for ever changing. As already stated, when the

Coalition government came into power in 2010, they announced significant cuts in public expenditure including £359 million cuts in education. This was to have a huge impact on all local authorities; local authorities' budgets and financial planning in the coming years reflected the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) announced in October 2010 which included a deficit reduction programme with significant cuts to local authority spending spread over a four-year period from 2011/2012 to 2014/2015 which was to continue following further reviews of public expenditure and costs. The table below shows a reduction in government grant funding, 2013-2016, in Bath and North East Somerset (Bath and North East Somerset, 2014).

| Reduction in Government Grant Funding | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | Total |
| £5.4 million | £5.0 million | £6.4 million | £16.8 million |
| -9.4% | -9.6% | -13.4% | -10.8% ave |

Table 1 Reduction in government grant funding in Bath and North East Somerset 2013-2016

Consequently, in Bath and North East Somerset, cuts have had to be made year on. Whilst the Council has worked towards protecting frontline services, within the last few years, there have been cutbacks to services with a reduction in budgets, slim-lining of services and redundancies. In 2013, it was recognised that there was to be a demographic change in the authority; that over the following three years, there was to be an increase in numbers of over-65s projected to be 6.7% of the population and over-85s projected to be 7.7% of the population. Also, the numbers of births are increasing in the authority and have been over the last ten years. In 2001, the number of live births was 1,662 and in 2012, the number has risen to 2,000. Over the next four years from 2016/17, the council needs to find £49 millions of savings to balance the budget as a result of the reduction in Government funding and the complex challenges such as the growth in the number of vulnerable and older people needing social care support (Bath and North East Somerset Council, 2017a).

Within the Education Inclusion Service, in which I work, there have been redundancies and the stream-lining of services, however, there has been an

expansion of the SEN team since 2014 in response to the Children and Families Act, to enforce not only our statutory duties but also our response in developing person-centred approaches to involve further, children and young people with SEN and their families in planning and decision-making. Team numbers have risen from eleven (8.8 full-time equivalent) to eighteen (14.2 full-time equivalent).

SEN budgets, however, have escalated with millions of pounds deficit. There are a number of reasons for this. There has been a significant increase in requests for EHC needs assessments and the increase in the issuing of EHC plans. The table below (Bath and North East Somerset Council, 2017b) shows the increase in Statements of SEN and EHC plans from 2006 to 2017. As seen, in 2006, there were 822 Statements of SEN in place, decreasing to 669 in 2009. The numbers have been steadily rising since then with a significant increase between 2015 to 2017 from 748 to 1062 Statements of SEN and EHC plans in place with a projected increase to 1165 in November 2017.

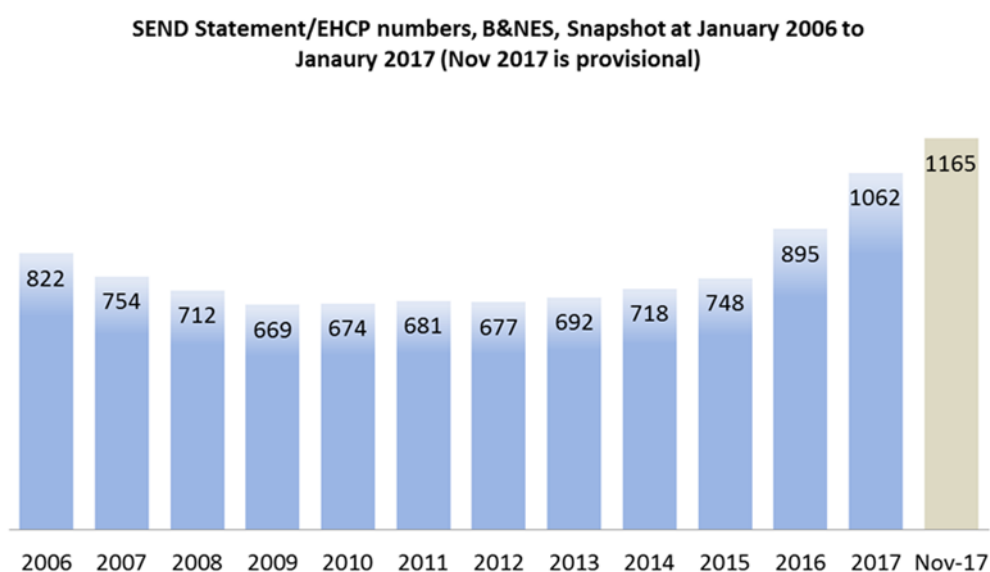


Table 2 Numbers of Statements of SEN and EHC plans 2006 to 2017

Also, our special schools are full which is in line with the national trend of rising numbers in special schools for the first time in thirty years (Norwich, 2014; DfE, 2016; Shaw, 2017). Norwich (2014) suggests that the rising numbers in special schools could be attributable to local authorities having lesser control with the increasing numbers of academies and free schools and the emphasis on raising

academic standards. Consequently, the local authority is having to place pupils in expensive out of authority special independent schools which has also seen a rise in numbers (DfE, 2016). At present, the local authority is looking at ways that we can reduce this deficit.

In the next section, I explain the global context at the time of my enquiry.

1.5 The global context

At the time of my enquiry, much interest was being expressed about the ‘ecology of knowledges’ and ‘knowledge democracy’ (De Sousa Santos, 2008, 2014; Hall, 2014, 2015; Hall and Tandon, 2015). Hall and Tandon (2015) describe knowledge democracy as follows:

First it acknowledges the importance of the existence of multiple epistemologies or ways of knowing as organic, spiritual and land-based systems, frameworks arising from our social movements, and the knowledge of the marginalised or excluded everywhere, or what is sometimes referred to as subaltern knowledge. Secondly it affirms that knowledge is both created in multiple forms including text, image, numbers, story, music, drama, poetry, ceremony and more. Third, and fundamental to our thinking about knowledge democracy is understanding that knowledge is a powerful tool for taking action to deepen democracy and to struggle for a fairer and healthier world. Knowledge democracy is about intentionally linking values of democracy and action to the process of using knowledge.

(Hall and Tandon, 2015, p.3)

In my Introduction, I highlighted the meaning of the ecology of knowledges as explained by De Sousa Santos (2014) and summarise here; that the ecology of knowledges is about giving the ‘equality of opportunity’ to different kinds of knowledge, that is, not necessarily giving the same validity to all kinds of knowledge but to be open to discussion as to what constitutes as knowledge rather than dismissing knowledge that does not fit the epistemological stance of modern science. In doing so, we can look to a more democratic society whereby all forms of knowledge are considered.

Thus, the ecology of knowledges and knowledge democracy is very much about the recognition and expression of all kinds of knowledge, as highlighted by Hall (2015), whether it be the knowledge of ‘unschooled women and men in rural Rajasthan’ (p.2), the knowledge of ‘traditional healers living in Mpumalanga province in South Africa (with) women and men whose health and medical knowledge has been learned through traditional apprenticeships’ (p.3), the shack dwellers of Durban, South Africa, who protested against the selling of the land promised to the poor for house building, and have now created their own university which focusses on the creation of knowledge about survival, hope and transformation with the shack dwellers being the scholars and teachers.

In 2012, Dr Budd Hall and Dr Rajesh Tandon were invited by UNESCO to create a UNESCO Chair to look at building research capacity in the global South focussing on the social responsibilities of universities and community-based research. As a consequence, the 5th Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA) and the 1st Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy has taken place in Cartagena, Columbia in June 2017, with presentations by Dr Budd Hall and Dr Rajesh Tandon. In 2015, Hall posed for himself the following questions:

1. How do I ‘decolonize’, ‘deracialise’, demasculanise and degender my inherited ‘intellectual spaces’?
2. How do I support the opening up of spaces for the flowering of epistemologies, ontologies, theories, methodologies, objects and questions other than those that have long been hegemonic, and that have exercised dominance over (perhaps have even suffocated) intellectual and scholarly thought and writing?
3. How do I contribute to the building of new academic cultures and, more widely, new inclusive institutional cultures that genuinely respect and appreciate difference and diversity – whether class, gender, national, linguistic, religious, sexual orientation, epistemological or methodological in nature?
4. How do I become a part of creating the new architecture of knowledge that allows co-construction of knowledge between intellectuals in academia and intellectuals located in community settings?

(Hall, 2015, p.12)

The setting up of the 1st global assembly on knowledge democracy perhaps goes somehow as a response to his own questions. Workshops are being run prior to the conference and participants are asked to consider the following questions:

- What knowledge ecologies are appropriate/recognised for our context? And why?
 - How can we (do we) address the democratisation of knowledge within our teaching and research?
 - What are the political and pragmatic implications of knowledge democratization? What principles/philosophies might inform them?
 - What research methodologies might advance such knowledge?
- (Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA), 2017)

This 1st global assembly for knowledge democracy has captured my interest as I have developed my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. Through a recognition of my values and demonstrating how I live my values in my practice, I am showing how my embodied knowledge and expressions of my embodied knowledge, have contributed to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which has an influence on me, my team and ultimately, children and young people with SEN and their families. I believe that my research contributes to an ecology of knowledges and knowledge democracy.

1.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have clarified and contextualised the term ‘special educational needs’ and I have given an overview of the development of my professional career. I have also explained the political, social, economic and educational landscape at the time and concluded with the global context at the time of my enquiry.

In my next chapter, I explain my methodology and how I have generated my own living-theory methodology (Whitehead, 2008a) by using a Living Theory research approach (Huxtable, 2016; Huxtable and Whitehead, 2017; Whitehead and Huxtable, 2016). I explain how my research has evolved from asking, ‘How do I improve my practice?’ ‘What are my values and am I living my values in my practice?’ I explain how my values form my explanatory principles and living standards of judgement on which I judge my practice.

CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, I discussed the background and context of my research, focussing on the development of my career from 1975 to the present day. I highlighted the political, social, economic and educational contexts from 2010 to the present day and concluded with the global context at the time of my enquiry.

In this chapter, I describe and explain the methodology I have used and how it has evolved throughout my research. In conducting my research, I have generated my own living-theory methodology (Whitehead, 2008a). In generating my own living-theory methodology, I explain the insights I have gained from action research, autoethnographic research, narrative research, self-study research and how these reflect my ontological and epistemological stance. I highlight how I have collected data and I discuss the issues of validity and ethical considerations.

By ‘living-theory’, I refer to the explanation that an individual gives for their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations in which they live and work (Whitehead, 2008b, p.104). In developing my living-theory, sometimes referred to as living-educational-theory, I include two action reflection cycles which are introduced further in this chapter and explained fully in Chapters 3 and 4.

A Living Theory methodology describes the broad philosophical underpinning of my research as I work towards the development of my living-theory. My living-theory methodology is grounded in my philosophical commitment to Living Theory research (Huxtable, 2016; Huxtable and Whitehead, 2017; Whitehead and Huxtable, 2016). By this, I mean that my doctoral enquiry, ‘How do I improve my professional practice as a statutory SEN manager?’, is grounded in my desire to improve my practice and to make an original contribution to educational theory and educational knowledge, this being my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

Living Theory research originated over forty years ago with Jack Whitehead when he conducted a systematic enquiry into the nature of educational theory. In trying to explain the educational influence in his own learning and that of his students, he determined that this was a condition that the disciplines in education lacked. Thus, his move from being a science teacher to being an educational theorist and the beginning of the evolution of Living Theory research.

As a Living Theory researcher, I am engaged in a form of self-study, practitioner-research concerned with asking and researching questions of the form, 'How do I improve my practice?' and generating valid values-based explanations of my educational influence in learning and values-based standards of judgement (Laidlaw, 1996). I am asking if I am living my values in my practice. If I am not living my values in my practice, I may experience myself as a 'living contradiction' (Whitehead, 1989, pp.43-44); if this were to be the case, I would ask what I am going to do about it. In conducting this self-study, through the course of my doctoral research, I produce valid explanations for what I am doing, why I am doing it and generate new knowledge about my practice.

2.2 Values and living standards of judgement

At this point, I would like to emphasise that my values are fundamental to my enquiry and that my enquiry has been borne out of the values I hold. This is central to Living Theory research. My embodied ontological and relational values are clarified in the course of my research and form my explanatory principles and living standards of judgement. As explained in my Introduction, I began my enquiry by reflecting into my values and asking what my values were, where they had they come from and how had they developed. On becoming a statutory SEN manager and in addressing the question, 'How do I improve my practice as a statutory SEN manager?', I needed to reflect on the person that I am. I needed to revisit and question what my values are and, what drives me to do what I do. I needed to know, as I began my new role, if I was living my values in my practice and what my standards of judgement were on which I determine what I do. As Booth (2011) states:

Educators may lose their sense of purpose when their activities become disconnected from the deep moral commitments that they initially brought to their profession. Linking educational development to values allows them to reconnect with these long-held, perhaps dormant, deep beliefs.

(Booth, 2011, pp. 308-309)

As a statutory SEN manager, when I make decisions about issuing EHC plans or previously, Statements of SEN, the provision for children and young people, the placements and the finances involved; in my relationships with my team and all those with whom I work, what is the influence of the values I hold? I am obviously guided within statutory frameworks in much of my decision-making, but sometimes decisions are dependent on my worldview, the experiences I have encountered, how I perceive the world and the person that I am:

Different people have different world-views. Yet, many people have similar world-views, which is just another way of saying that many people share similar beliefs about what living in his world is about. Similar world-views have associated with them similar sets of priority values. People live their values in particular ways because of the beliefs they hold about how those values should be lived. People filter the consequences of their actions through their values. Therefore, people's world-views, once established, are very stable.

(Chippendale, n.d., p.13)

Not only in my role as a statutory SEN manager but prior to this, as a SENCO responsible for the strategic direction of SEN in the school, as an Inclusion Officer and a Senior Inclusion Officer within the local authority, I have always tried to be led by my values, as expressed in 'Clarifying my values' (Introduction). Whilst conducting various professional roles within my career, my values have been of essence and have had an influence on decisions made and on my relationships with others. Exploring and understanding my values is fundamental to my research. It is the foundation of my enquiry. Toffler (1969, cited in Clawson and Vinson, 1978) states:

...Values are so inextricably woven into our language, thought and behaviour patterns that they have fascinated philosophers for millennia. Yet they have proved so "quick-silvery" and complex that, despite their role in human motivation, we remain desperately ignorant of the laws that govern them.

(Toffler, 1969, cited in Clawson and Vinson, 1978, p.396)

When I sent this chapter to a critical friend, she commented on the above quote:

‘quick silvery and complex’ indicates how hard values are to explain but they only seem that way to those trying to make general statements about them. This misses the really important point that values are clearly knowable by the owners of them even if they are hard to explain because they are held in the subconscious/ instinctual. Motivating values are uniquely constructed from life experience by individuals and built on emotions, beliefs, agendas towards meeting particular desirable ends. Living Theory research intends to uncover the individually constructed complexity of them.

(Feedback from a critical friend, 1st January 2018)

Schwartz has developed his theory of basic values which attempts to simplify the complexity of values. He highlights the fact that values have played an important role across all disciplines including sociology, psychology and anthropology; that they are used to characterise societies, cultural groups and individuals and they explain the motivational foundation of attitudes and behaviour. Schwartz (2012) identifies six main features of all values:

1. Values are beliefs.
2. Values refer to desirable goals.
3. Values transcend specific actions and situations.
4. Values serve as standards or criteria.
5. Values are ordered by importance.
6. The *relative* importance of multiple values guides action.

(Schwartz, 2012, pp.3-4)

Schwartz also defines ten broad values according to the motivation that underlines each of them. He states that these are recognised across cultures:

- Self-direction
- Stimulation
- Hedonism
- Achievement
- Power
- Security
- Conformity
- Tradition
- Benevolence
- Universalism

(Schwartz, 2012, pp. 5-7)

Schwartz explains the dynamic relations between them and that values can sometimes conflict with each other, for example, the achievement values can sometimes conflict with the benevolence values, in that pursuing achievement for self may conflict with those actions which enhance the welfare of others. On the other hand, values may be compatible, for example, achievement values and power values and can, in fact, strengthen the other. I am aware that in my role as a statutory SEN manager, that there is sometimes this conflict in values especially when it comes to the funding and placement of children and young people. Parents may express a preference for their child to attend an independent special school, for example, which can be very expensive. I have to consider this within resources available and the suitability of the cheaper option of a maintained special school or a special academy. Booth (2011) stresses the importance of becoming literate about values and understanding their implications for action as sometimes complex judgements need to be made about competing moral arguments.

In reflecting on my values, I establish what I have already learnt through my initial exploration of my values for my Master's dissertation, and further clarify them as expressed in my Introduction. Thus, I determine the significance of my inclusive values (Booth, 2005, 2011), my concept of inclusion and my inclusional way of being. The emergence of the significance of the notion of empowerment in my life, is influenced by the values I hold.

It is these values which drive what I do, how I relate to people, and why I relate to people in the way that I do. My values then become living standards of judgement on which I judge my practice.

My standards of judgement are the criteria on which I judge my practice. I am of the same view of Sullivan (2006) and Lomax (1994) who refer to the criteria of generalisability and replicability which is usually used to judge traditional types of research. Whilst generalisability and replicability may be pertinent to the more positivist approach of the social sciences, these criteria cannot be applied to the type of research I am doing. My research is to do with my learning as I reflect on my practice. I am reflecting on my practice, in my relationship with others within a particular context at a particular moment in time. These standards of judgement, in

line with my ontological values, are the foundation of my research. Others may be able to benefit from my research or learn from my research but their contexts and circumstances may be different.

2.3 Ontology, epistemology and methodology

Generating my own living-theory methodology aligns with my ontological and epistemological assumptions (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995). My ontological assumptions are that I see myself as part of the evolving world in which I live and a part of other people's lives and they a part of mine. I do not see myself as an outsider and separate. Similarly, 'my epistemological assumptions are that knowledge is created by individuals for themselves and with others; I am a part of that knowledge creation' (Jones, 2009, p.36). For me, a Living Theory methodology gives the researcher, who is also the practitioner, the ownership of the research; it is the practitioner-researcher's theory; it is the practitioner-researcher's explanation; it is the practitioner-researcher who is creating new knowledge.

Wilson (2008) in his argument for an Indigenous research paradigm opposes the dominant scientific approach to Indigenous research as, he explains, it is done *on* Indigenous people rather than *by* or *with* Indigenous people. He describes a research paradigm as being a set of underlying beliefs that guide the actions of a researcher. He explains:

These beliefs include the way that we view reality (ontology), how we think about or know this reality (epistemology), our ethics and morals (axiology) and how we go about gaining more knowledge about reality (methodology).

(Wilson, 2008, p.13)

Thus, he states that an Indigenous research paradigm is made up of an Indigenous ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology but that Indigenous researchers, that is, researchers whose ancestry is of the original inhabitants of Canada, Australia and other countries of the world, have tried to use the dominant research paradigms:

We have tried to include our cultures, traditional protocols and practices into the research process through adapting and adopting suitable methods. The problem with that is that we never really remove the tools from their underlying beliefs.

(Wilson, 2008, p.13)

He concludes that this has not worked as Indigenous beliefs are not consistent with dominant research beliefs and that ‘we will always face problems in trying to adapt dominant system tools to our use’ (p.13).

This view of Wilson, for me, demonstrates the dangers of doing research *on* others. In doing research *on* others, a different set of principles and beliefs may come into play which may not be consistent with the principles and beliefs of those being researched. Bruce Ferguson (2013) highlights this concern regarding her work with Maori practitioners in New Zealand:

And what are we doing to understand better the values of those with whom we work? If we don’t understand *their* values, and are not articulate about our own, then the possibility of transgression is much increased. These groups may be different ethnically, or in terms of beliefs or behaviours, and caution is required in any such work with ‘others’ than ourselves.

(Bruce Ferguson, 2013, p.38)

Bracken (2010) explores differing research traditions and demonstrates that the type of research tradition chosen will influence the types of questions asked, the approaches taken to respond to those questions and the ways that the findings are presented. Bracken refers to Beck’s (1979) view, that if the purpose of social science is to understand the social reality of people and the actions they take as a result of this, then surely it follows that an investigation of ontological distinctions is critical to the research process. I refer to Bracken’s view here in emphasising that the ontology of the individual cannot be ignored and will have implications for the epistemological assumptions of the individual and thus the methodological approach that individuals use. I like the diagrammatic representation of Wilson (2008) demonstrating the link between ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology.



(Wilson, 2008, p.70)

Figure 1 Wilson's link between ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology

He describes this circle as an Indigenous research paradigm and that each part blends into each other; that one part is not separate from another. He goes further by stating that as the parts of the paradigm are related, so the parts themselves all have to do with relationships:

The ontology and epistemology are based upon a process of relationships that form a mutual reality. The axiology and methodology are based upon maintaining accountability to these relationships.

(Wilson, 2008, pp.70-71)

When Wilson refers to relationships, he is referring not only to relations with people, but also to relations with the environment, land and the cosmos; all are inter-linked. Whilst Wilson is describing an Indigenous research paradigm, I believe that this link between methodology, epistemology, axiology and methodology and its relational quality is fundamental to my research; my ontology is linked to my epistemology and thus the methodology I have used. Exploring my values and experiences in life and reflecting on these have enabled me to understand how I have come to think and

to know; my thinking and knowing are inter-linked with my ontology. Thayer-Bacon (2003), in her discussion of relational epistemologies states:

How people begin to make sense of the world is due to their contextuality, including their own subjective experiences as well as their social setting and its past.

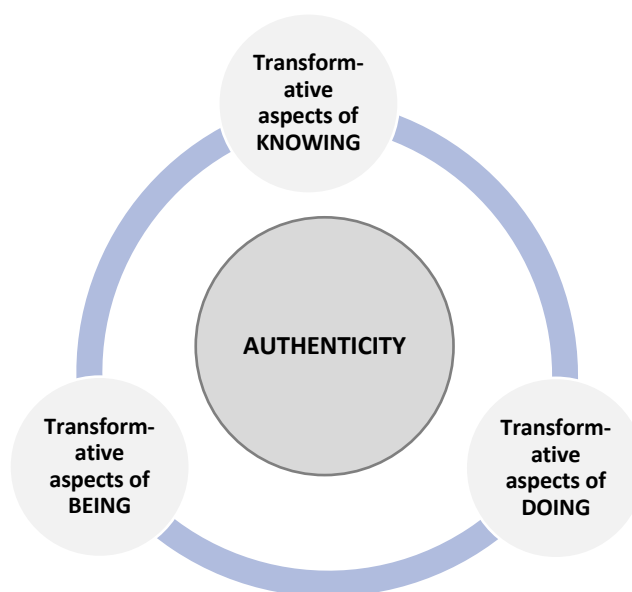
(Thayer-Bacon, 2003, pp.7-8)

Bamber (2016) refers to the ‘authentic self’ and argues that:

The authentic self emerges when the learning of self experiences the transformative aspect of knowing, being and doing in synergy.

(Bamber, 2016, p.52)

His diagrammatic representation which he describes as the centrality of authenticity, demonstrates his view:



(Bamber, 2016, p.53)

Figure 2 Bamber’s centrality of authenticity

Bamber stresses the inter-linking between knowing, being and doing; the three cannot be separated in the development of the authentic self. Bamber also argues that becoming authentic, is a deeply relational process and that the authentic self

‘recognises the potential of reconnecting the authentic self with itself, others and the broader context’ (p.54). Appiah (2005, cited in Bamber, 2016) is of the view that:

To value individuality properly just is to acknowledge the dependence of the good for each of us on relationships with others. Without these bonds, as I say, we could not come to be free selves, not least because we could not come to be selves at all.

(Appiah, 2005, cited in Bamber, 2016, p.54)

Bamber and Wilson, thus, emphasise the relational quality of research; that self and the ‘authentic self’, as described by Bamber, does not stand alone but stands in relationships and connections with others.

Fundamentally, then, the self is influenced by others, the environment, the culture in which we live and within the context of time. This, in turn, will influence our ways of knowing, of how we come to know the world and how we come to have knowledge. Understanding reality is dependent on how our thinking works and how we know the world in which we live. The inter-connectedness between ontology and epistemology will influence how we research, our methodology.

2.4 Methodological inventiveness

What Living Theory methodology means to me is that I do not have to choose between existing methodologies as advocated by Cresswell (2007). Cresswell describes very clearly five qualitative research processes: narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study. He reviews the similarities and differences between each and the challenges that each present so that a researcher is in a position to make an informed choice as to which methodology is the most appropriate for their research. Whitehead (2016) responds to each description by explaining the similarities of each to Living Theory research but clarifies that the fundamental difference is that in Living Theory research the individual goes further by giving an explanation of their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations. He explains:

A Living Theory researcher recognises that there is no existing methodology that is appropriate for exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering the question, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' The reason that no existing methodology can answer the question is because of the dynamic nature of the question. 'What I am doing' is continuously changing with the evolution of both 'I' and context. Hence the necessity for the Living Theory researcher of recognising the need to create an appropriate living-theory methodology in the course of its emergence in researching and answering the question and in generating a unique living-theory. Whilst having to create their own living-theory methodology Living Theory researchers are fortunate in having access to a wide range of insights from other methodological approaches.

(Whitehead, 2016, p.2)

In drawing insights from other research approaches, I would like to clarify that my approach could not be described as bricolage research. Simply expressed, bricolage, in qualitative research, is a term applied in using multiple methods to address a specific issue or problem. Rogers (2012) describes bricolage research as 'a critical, multi-perspectival, multi-theoretical and multi-methodological approach to enquiry' (p.1). It is an approach widely researched by Denzin and Lincoln (1999) and Kincheloe (2004) to name a few. As in bricolage research, I have drawn insights from various methodologies but the distinction between bricolage research and Living Theory research is that a Living Theory methodology makes explicit the methodology used to create a living-theory as an individual's explanation of educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence their practice and understanding. This requirement that distinguishes a Living Theory methodology is not a requirement of bricolage research.

In drawing insights from various forms of research, in the development of my living-theory, I can use my own methodological inventiveness as suggested by Dadds and Hart (2001) to create my own:

Perhaps the most important new insight for us both has been awareness that, for some practitioner-researchers, creating their own unique way through their research may be as important as their self-chosen research focus. We had understood for many years that substantive choice was fundamental to the motivation and effectiveness of a practitioner-research (Dadds 1995); that what practitioners chose to research, and their sense of control over this,

could be equally important to their motivation, their sense of identity within the research and their research outcomes.

(Dadds and Hart, 2001, p.166)

And:

No methodology is, or should be cast in stone, if we accept that professional intention should be informing research processes, not pre-set ideas about methods or techniques...

(Dadds and Hart, 2001, p.169)

I believe, in line with other practitioner-researchers, for example, Crotty (2012) and Pithouse-Morgan, Coia, Taylor and Samaras (2016), that through employing methodological inventiveness in my doctoral research, I have created my own way through my research. In doing so, I clarify and evolve my meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment as an explanatory principle in my explanation of my educational influence in my professional practice.

2.4.1 Insights from different research approaches

In the generation of my own living-theory methodology, as I create my own living-theory, I have drawn insights from the methodologies and methods of action research, autoethnographic research, self-study research and narrative research.

In finding ways to improve my practice and explaining why and how I have done so (McNiff, 2010), I have asked the question, 'How do I improve my practice?' (Whitehead, 1989). This has involved action research and methods of action reflection cycles as advocated by Whitehead and McNiff (2006). This form of research has been evolving since my Master's (2009) and it has continued in my doctoral enquiry. However, I have found limitations to this approach and have felt the need to explore other forms of research. Since becoming a statutory SEN manager, and engaging further and applying national legislation and policy, I have become more influential in the development of educational cultural influences within the local authority. I have, thus, drawn insights from autoethnographic research. My understanding of this form of research has been enhanced by the work of Pillay,

Naicker and Pithouse-Morgan (2016) who give educational, sociocultural and methodological insights to those interested in transformative, self-reflexive and creative research methodologies and methods.

Throughout my doctoral enquiry, I draw insights from self-study research. This form of enquiry also began when I did my Master's (2009) as I enquired into how I can improve my practice. To improve my practice, I have needed to reflect on my practice (Schön, 1983, 1991) and in reflecting on my practice, I have needed to reflect on self: to reflect on what I am doing, why I am doing it and the impact of what I am doing as a statutory SEN manager. Schön (1995) argued for the creation of a new epistemology. He believed that this would emerge from action research. I intend to contribute to this new epistemology through my original work on living inclusive and inclusional empowerment and Living Theory methodology. To clarify, in my understanding of epistemologies, they are distinguished by their units of appraisal (what is being judged) and their standards of judgement (how the claim to knowledge is being evaluated as valid). In a Living Theory, the unit of appraisal is the individual's explanation of their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations that influence practice and understanding. In a Living Theory, the standards of judgement are themselves living, as Laidlaw (1996) pointed out, and are clarified in the course of their emergence through practice. The originality of my contribution to knowledge is focussed on the meaning of my explanatory principle of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment and its use as a living standard of judgement in my epistemology.

Throughout my doctoral enquiry, I have also engaged in narrative research as, for instance, described by Bold (2012), Clandinin *et al.* (2016), Connelly and Clandinin (1990, 2000), and McNiff (2007). Throughout, I relate stories of self and others. It is through telling my stories and reflecting on them that I have developed a better understanding of my values and the strength of living these values in my practice. I have also developed my explanation of my educational influence that is my living-theory. Through my doctoral enquiry, the significance of empowerment has emerged which has made me focus on empowerment at work and my contribution to an empowered workforce and environment. I am aware that writing from my core

values alone does not provide the foundation required, and that an explanation as to how these values inform my research is needed (Vytiniorgu, 2016).

My evolving living-theory methodology has enabled me to utilise a variety of methodologies and methods, as mentioned, in the development of my explanation of my living-theory. It is through Living Theory methodology that I have felt empowered to be creative and innovative to provide a solid foundation and framework in researching and answering my question and making an original contribution to knowledge.

I will now explain further and describe the various forms of research with which I have engaged in the development and evolution of my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

2.4.1.1 Action research

I wanted to engage in a form of research which would enable me to respond to my fundamental question, ‘How do I improve my professional practice as a statutory SEN manager?’ In answering my question, the action research approach seemed to resonate with me with its engagement in continuous cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. It involves stages of action and research, followed by action. It requires the identification of a problem, collecting information, analysing, planning actions and implementing and monitoring outcomes.

The action research approach also resonated with my epistemological and ontological stance as described previously. In line with my original contribution to knowledge, which is my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment, the action research approach seems pertinent in that this approach empowers practitioners and participants in engaging them with research and the subsequent actions implemented (Meyer, 2000). Guojonsson (2013), in her development of action research in Iceland, also, refers to the empowering nature of action research:

...for me this idea of empowerment has many links and dimensions, including respect, connectedness, visions, values, learning, power and knowledge. In other words, one may become empowered in so many ways and through so many channels. Action research, I believe may provide such ways and channels.

(Guojonsson, 2013, p.45)

Swantz, (n.d., cited in Reason and Bradbury, 2001) refers to action research as a means of creating living knowledge, that is, 'knowledge which is valid for the people with whom I work and for myself' (p.1). Reason and Bradbury (2001) clarify that living knowledge is practical knowledge that is of benefit to people in their everyday lives. They concur that action research is about developing a new means of understanding through reflection and understanding on actions. They further stipulate that theory without action is meaningless and that action research in its participatory nature involves the participation with, for and by all stakeholders in the whole process of the research.

Kurt Lewin, a professor and social scientist in the USA, first coined the term 'action research' in 1944. Action research became popular in the UK in the 1970's with the influence of Lawrence Stenhouse who promoted action research for studying the theory and practice of teaching and the curriculum. It has been further developed by Carr and Kemmis (1986), Elliott (1991), Schön (1983), Whitehead (1989) and others. Lewin's (1947) model of the action research process consists of a three steps spiral process which includes planning, taking actions and finding out about the results of the actions taken. On the other hand, Zuber-Skerrit (1991) describes four phases: planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Thus, various models have developed over time but McNiff (2002) is of the view that 'there is no one 'correct' way'; you must decide what is right for you, and develop your own views' (p.4). She refers to the term, 'action research', as:

A practical way of looking at your own work to check that it is as you would like it to be. Because action research is done by you, it is often referred to as practitioner based research; and because it involves you thinking about and reflecting on your work, it can also be called a form of self-reflective practice.

(McNiff, 2002, p.1)

I like the idea that action research is self-reflective; that it is about self in order to get a better understanding of self to improve self and work. Carr and Kemmis (1986) postulate that:

Action research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out.

(Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p.162)

And Elliott (1991) states that:

...improving practice, when viewed as the realisation of the values which define its ends into concrete forms of action, necessarily involves a continuing process of reflection on the part of the practitioners.

(Elliott, 1991, p.50)

Elliot (2013) perceives educational action research as an activity of the spirit whereby educators become involved in a cooperative inquiry in which their values are negotiated in and through action and refined through mutual reflection on action. Taylor (1989, cited in Elliot, 2013) postulates such questions as:

In what ways are our values, goals and aspirations being invigorated or violated by our present life-system? How many parts of our personality can we live out, and what parts are we suppressing? How do we feel about our way of living in the world at any given time?

(Taylor, 1989, cited in Elliot, 2013, p.7)

Bruce Ferguson (2013) contends that educators need to understand and articulate their own values so that they can be accountable for their behaviour; they need to determine if their behaviour is virtuous and compatible with their espoused values and that they need the evidence to determine that they are living their values in their practice. Wood (2013) argues that if school leaders practice the values they hold in order to make the world a better place, then their practice and behaviour become more virtuous and that this involves critical self-reflection and the will to change.

Mc Niff (2002) emphasises the fact that action research is not only about actions but also about learning; that the process is not linear but rather a ‘zig-zag process of continual review and readjustment’ (p.11).

Whitehead (1989) has produced a typical action reflection cycle as a means to responding as to how you can improve your practice:

I experience problems when my educational values are negated in my practice.
I imagine ways of overcoming my problems.
I act on a chosen solution.
I evaluate the outcomes of my action.
I modify my problems, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations...
(and the cycle continues).

(Whitehead, 1989, p.43)

The practitioner’s action enquiry can then be built around the following questions as advocated by Whitehead and McNiff (2006):

- What is my concern?
- Why am I concerned?
- What experiences can I describe to show why I am concerned?
- What kind of data will I gather to show the situation as it unfolds?
- How do I explain my educational influences in learning?
- How do I show that any conclusions I come to are reasonably fair and accurate?
- How do I show the potential significance of my research?
- How do I show the implications of my research?
- How do I evaluate the evidence-based account of my learning?
- How do I modify my concerns, ideas and practices in the light of my evaluation?

(Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, pp.4-8)

Papers that I have written and presented at the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Conferences (2010, 2012) demonstrate how I have used the cycle above, as I have enquired and asked the question, ‘How do I improve my practice?’ In my thesis, I use these cycles to express my concerns, to explain why I am concerned, what I have done to address my concerns and to explain my educational influence in learning.

There are specifically two action reflection cycles within my research as described and explained fully in Chapters 3 and 4:

1. First action reflection cycle (Chapter 3). In this first action reflection cycle, having established the significance of empowerment, I endeavour to improve my practice by exploring empowerment in the workplace. Thus, I analyse the notion of empowerment and its influence in my practice. I have asked such questions as to how I am being empowered and if the SEN team is being empowered and if so, what is the influence on children and young people with SEN and their families? In addressing these questions, I began by having discussions with my manager on our understandings of empowerment in the workplace and have video-recorded conversations between us. I have also had discussions with his personal assistant (PA), and the three of us have responded to each other in writing and have video-recorded conversations over time. We have explored the notion of whether we feel empowered and the influence we have had on each other and how this influences our practice. I have also had discussions with my team. I focussed on four members in particular, each holding different roles, and video-recorded the meetings I had with them. I wanted to know if the team felt empowered and what influence this was having on their practice.

Greasley *et al.* (2005) highlight their criticism of the literature on empowerment in that there appears to be a lack of interest in the employee perspective and that it is likely that the perspective of empowerment from a manager's point of view may be quite different from an employee's point of view. They argue that the impact of empowerment on the individual 'remains a relatively unexplored area' (p.359). In this action reflection cycle, the employees' points of view with regard to empowerment are highlighted, and their perceptions are detailed.

In conducting this first action reflection cycle, it emerged that empowerment was 'living' in the workplace; that it was inclusive and inclusional and that it was having an influence on children, young people and families. Thus, in this first action reflection cycle, evidence is produced to show how I have created conditions whereby team members have felt empowered. This gives rise to my second action reflection cycle whereby I determined to further improve my practice.

2. Second action reflection cycle (Chapter 4). In this second action reflection cycle, I reflect on my concerns as a SEN manager at a time of significant change with the introduction of new SEN legislation in September 2014. I explain what my concerns were, why I was concerned, how I and the team responded to the changes and how we worked with children and young people with SEN and their families to ensure an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. In coming to a better understanding of managing change, I draw on the work of Fullan (2001) who articulates the core values and practices of leadership required at all levels within an organisation. Thus, in my second action reflection cycle, evidence is produced which demonstrates a further improvement in my role as statutory SEN manager as I drive forward in creating conditions, not only for the SEN team to feel empowered but for children and young people and their families to feel empowered also.

Like Sullivan (2006), I like the flexibility and adaptability of this form of enquiry as I develop my living-theory and respond to my question as to how I improve my practice as statutory SEN manager in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

Each action reflection cycle is connected in that each is concerned with a development and an improvement in my practice and follows a systematic approach to my enquiry. In each action reflection cycle I pose the following questions as advocated by Whitehead and McNiff (2006):

- What is my concern and why am I concerned?
- What kind of data have I gathered to show the situation as it unfolds?
- How do I explain my educational influence in my own learning and in the learning of others? (Chapter 3).

How do I explain my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations? (Chapter 4).

Each action reflection cycle begins with a question as to what my concern is and why I am concerned. This is followed by a presentation of the data I have gathered from

which I have drawn evidence in addressing my question. Finally, I reflect on my educational influences in learning, beginning with my educational influence in my own learning and in the learning of others (Chapter 3) and, my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations (Chapter 4). The two action reflection cycles are ongoing and demonstrate my journey as a statutory SEN manager as I address my concerns and seek to live my values in my practice to improve and develop my practice. They also demonstrate the involvement of my original contribution to knowledge which is my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

Noffke (1997), in line with Carr and Kemmis (1986), Elliott (1991) and Whitehead (1993), contends that the notion of practitioners questioning their work is an essential element in action research. She also highlights the views of Dadds (1995), that in action research, practitioners focus on subjectivity and reflection and is an exploration of self. Noffke sees that in examining personal theories and practices, concepts such as justice, democracy and freedom have a role to play as demonstrated by McNiff (1993). However, she sees that ‘these in turn, are seen as acting to encourage and support efforts to challenge trends within the educational system such as obstructing the realization of the “living educational theory” (Whitehead, 1993)’ (p.329). Noffke, challenges the notion that the exploration of self-awareness, whilst being vital, ‘only begins to address the social basis of personal belief systems’ (p.329). I agree with Noffke when she states that the process of personal transformation through self-reflection and examination of practice is necessary for social change, but it is not enough.

It is with this in mind, that whilst action research, through the engagement with action reflection cycles, has enabled me to respond to my question as to how I can improve my practice, it has its limitations as I have engaged with cultural contexts and national legislation and my pursuit in aligning these to living my values. To this end I have looked to autoethnographic research to help me further respond to my question, ‘How do I improve my practice as a statutory SEN manager?’

2.4.1.2 Autoethnographic research

Throughout the time I have been undertaking my enquiry, I have had to engage with the political agenda and this is detailed in Chapter 1. In 2011, I became a statutory SEN manager. As the name suggests, I have had to engage with national policy and legislation on the education of children and young people with SEN. In September 2014, significant changes came into force with the introduction of the Children and Families Act earlier in the year, Part 3 of which focusses on SEN. This had a huge impact on my practice with the emphasis being on person-centred approaches, and children, young people and families being at centre of all decision-making. In line with my values and my focus on contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment, processes and procedures were revised and the team was extended to further ensure the inclusive and inclusional empowerment of children, young people and families.

Ellis (2004) defines autoethnography as ‘research, writing, story and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social and political’ (p.xix). With my focus on my values and my engagement with political contexts, the autoethnographic approach seems to be pertinent. Ellingson and Ellis (2008) are of the view that autoethnography brings together the researcher and the researched, the personal and political, the objective and subjective; that these are not distinct from the other. They claim that it is a:

response to the alienating effects on both researchers and audiences of impersonal, passionless, abstract claims of truth generated by such research practices and clothed in exclusionary scientific discourse.

(Ellingson and Ellis, 2008, p.450)

Engaging with this approach aligns with my ontological and epistemological stance in that research should not be done on people but with other people (McNiff, 2010), and that research cannot exclude the emotions, subjectivity and the researcher’s influence on research. Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) draw our attention to the stance of some researchers who believe that research should be objective, for example, Atkinson (1997), Buzard (2003) and Delamont (2009), yet is challenged by others who believe that this is not possible, for example, Bochner (2002), Denzin and

Lincoln (2000) and Rorty (1982). Undertaking autoethnographic research recognises the influence of personal experience in research. Thus, an autoethnographer tries to make cultural experiences engaging and personal experience meaningful. They also produce accessible texts which may reach a wider and more diverse audience which could make social and personal change possible for more people (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011).

Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) raise the issue of validity in autoethnographic writings. They state:

For autoethnographers, validity means that a work seeks verisimilitude; it evokes in readers a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable, and possible, a feeling that what has been represented could be true...An autoethnography can also be judged in terms of whether it helps readers communicate with others different from themselves or offer a way to improve the lives of participants and readers or the author's own. (Ellis, 2004, p.124).

(Ellis, Adams, Bochner, 2011, p.282)

Denzin (2000) is of the view that autoethnographic writing has the possibility to change the world and make it a better place. In writing up my research, I hope that it will improve the lives of others, and change the world for the better (Holman Jones, 2005).

2.4.1.3 Narrative research

Throughout my enquiry, I have drawn insights from narrative research. As highlighted above, in this self-study, I tell stories. I tell stories about my life; my teaching career and my work in a local authority. However, these are not stories for the sake of it; they are not just mere descriptions of what has happened. My stories are written to understand and explain who I am. There is a significance in each of the stories I tell as to my development as a person in the expression of my values in my personal and professional life. In telling my stories, I am relating my experiences as I have perceived them in that moment in time, in the context in which I have lived.

Webster and Mertova (2007) state:

Narrative is not an objective reconstruction of life – it is a rendition of how life is perceived. As such, it is based on the respondent's life experiences and entails chosen parts of their lives.

(Webster and Mertova, 2007, p.3)

It is through telling my stories and reflecting on my stories that I have seen themes developing of which I have been previously unaware. I have seen the strength of living my values and the emergence of these values throughout time going right back to when I was a child. I have seen these values emerging and standing the test of time throughout my teaching career and, recently, working for a local authority. In sharing my stories with others, I have come to realise the significance of aspects of myself which I hadn't realised before. In telling my stories, I am connecting to my life experiences. I like the ideas expressed by Dyson and Genishi (1994):

Stories help to make sense of, evaluate, and integrate the tensions inherent in experience: the past with the present, the fictional with the 'real', the official with the unofficial, personal with the professional, the canonical with the different and unexpected. Stories help us transform the present and shape the future for our students and ourselves so that it will be richer or better than the past.

(Dyson and Genishi, 1994, pp.242-243)

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) contend:

Experience happens narratively...Therefore, educational experience should be studied narratively.

(Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.19)

These stories contribute to my research as I enquire into how I live my values in my practice to improve my practice.

Besides telling my stories, I also ask for the stories of people with whom I work. These are stories about how we work together, the relationship between us, how they feel empowered at work in the way we work together. In telling their stories, I reflect on what they say and analyse the information. Are they all saying the same? Are there any patterns and common themes between the stories? It is through listening to their stories that I can reflect on my practice to improve my practice.

In using narratives in my research, I am demonstrating the human side of learning. Also, in using narratives, themes and outcomes arise as stories are told; they are not pre-determined. I understand that there may be some resistance to using narrative as a means of research as it may be seen to be less rigorous. Bold (2012) draws on her experience as a lecturer working with undergraduate and postgraduate students in education and training where she has met with resistance from students in using qualitative methods including narrative methods in research due to the fact they have never been encouraged to use such methods for a variety of reasons including the fact that they perceive such research as not being valid and reliable. I agree with Bold when she states:

I would like to assure you that narrative does not mean losing rigour in your approach to research. A narrative approach requires rigorous collection, collation and synthesis of appropriate data followed by critical analysis and reflection. It requires the ability to communicate, orally and in writing, the research story from first conceptions of an area of interest to thoughtful and thought-provoking conclusions. A narrative approach opens doors to alternative ways of conducting and disseminating research that is illuminative, novel and accessible to readers. Narrative is also a means of developing and nurturing the skills of critical reflection and reflexivity that are essential for anyone conducting research into their own practice, and therefore very useful for action research projects.

(Bold, 2012, pp.2-3)

I further agree with Bold when she says that research methods need to be fit for purpose. If I am conducting research into self and questioning how I can improve my practice, adopting a narrative approach which is subjective would seem to be appropriate rather than adopting a more objective approach in which I may not capture what I am looking for.

We encounter stories as a child and we learn from them. Stories have been told throughout generations and are a part of our culture and history. They are a reflection of our life's journey (Webster and Mertova, 2007).

2.4.1.4 Self-study research

My enquiry is a self-study as I enquire into my practice. As a self-study, I am enquiring into how I can improve my practice. To improve my practice, I need to reflect on my practice (Schön, 1983, 1991). In reflecting on my practice, I need to reflect on self: to reflect on what I am doing, why I am doing it and the influence of what I am doing. And this is the significant question: as I reflect on my practice to improve my practice, what influence am I having? Another way of looking at this is, what is the significance of improving practice if it is not having an influence? I am reminded of the quote by Mahatma Gandhi, “Be the change that you wish to see in the world.” In other words, if you wish to see change, you need to change self. What is the point of self-study if it improves or changes self but changes or improves nothing else? Or, could it be argued that through improving or changing self, it follows that this will have an influence, for example, throwing a pebble into the middle of the pond, not only affects the point where it hits the water, but the action ripples outwards far beyond? Is this what happens when self-study is undertaken? The improvement or change within the individual has a rippling effect, an influence on all around them. This, I believe, is the value in self-study; that in transforming self, that with which you are connected is also transformed.

I have been involved in self-study research for some time, initially, reflecting on my role as a mentor in supporting SENCOs through courses at our local university. My Master’s dissertation (Jones, 2009) was a self-study of my practice as an Inclusion Officer and I reflected on the work I was doing at the time with SENCOs and also my work on the development and implementation of the award of the IQM which schools could work towards to demonstrate their culture and practice of inclusion.

I have found self-study to be challenging; it is challenging because it challenges self. Also, it is challenging because it exposes self. To undertake self-study requires the individual to be open and honest about themselves and their practice and it requires the individual to be open to criticism from self and others. Self-study can make an individual feel very vulnerable. It is because of these factors that an individual needs to be resilient; resilient to exposure and criticism. Dadds (1993) sums it up in her abstract:

Studying one's own professional work is no straightforward matter and adopting the reflective mode is not simply a cerebral activity. As we study our teaching, we are studying the images we hold of ourselves as teachers. Where these established self-images are challenged, questioned and perhaps threatened in the learning process we may experience feelings of instability, anxiety, negativity, even depression. This is especially so if the 'self' we come to see in self-study is not the 'self' we think we are, or the 'self' we would like to be. Thinking about our work in self-evaluation can thus be a highly charged emotional experience, one from which we may be tempted to retreat, thus endangering further learning.

(Dadds, 1993, p.287)

Despite the emotional aspect of self-study, I have not been inclined to shy away from it. Firstly, I have got to a point in my life whereby I feel that this is me, these are my values and what I live by, and in stating this, I feel that I am being true to myself and to those with whom I relate. Secondly, I feel that the learning experience is invaluable and has enabled me to move on as an individual and improve my practice. Consequently, improving my practice has, I believe, influenced those with whom I work and has helped to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

However, I could not have done this alone. Throughout the time I have been doing my research, I have had a support group, Conversation Café, which meets every week. For me, this group has given me the security and support whereby I have felt that I can present myself and my work openly and honestly. Initially, I wrote about my values. I felt uncomfortable, at first, about presenting my paper to the group. I felt that I was presenting something that was very personal to me, however, I felt it was necessary to do. I have always lived with the fact that as long as I am honest and true to my values then I can live by whatever I say and do; whatever people may have said about my paper, I felt I could accept it, because it represented me and the person that I am. Within the group, there has been the feeling of trust between us. As I have opened myself up to them, they have opened themselves up to me. Conversation Café has been the foundation on which I have developed a confidence to be able to share my work with others.

Self-study research is comparatively new and started gathering momentum in the 1980's. Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) point to four developments in education

which gave rise to the beginnings of self-study: the introduction of naturalistic and qualitative research methods; the influence of the reconceptualist movement in curriculum studies; the involvement of international researchers in teacher education and finally, the re-emergence of action research in its many variations.

Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) highlight the significance of quality in self-study research and the importance of the researcher having the correct balance between biography and history: ‘...tipping too far toward the self-side produces solipsism or a confessional, and tipping too far the other way turns self-study into traditional research’ (p.15). They refer to Pinnegar’s (1998) description of self-study as being a mongrel; that whilst the study is about the practice of the researcher, it is a fine-line between the self and other; that its methods are borrowed, thus, in order to assert authority, the study must do so through the frames of the borrowed methodology and the ‘virtuosity of scholarship’ (p.15) of the writing itself. They state that these factors can present challenges for the researcher. Thus, they present a set of inter-related guidelines for establishing quality:

1. Autobiographical self-studies should ring true and enable connection.
2. Self-studies should promote insight and interpretation.
3. Autobiographical self-study research must engage history forthrightly and the author must take an honest stand.
4. Biographical and autobiographical self-studies in teacher education. are about the problems and issues that make someone an educator.
5. Authentic voice is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the scholarly standing of a biographical self-study.
6. The autobiographical self-study researcher has an ineluctable obligation to seek to improve the learning situation not only for the self but for the other.
7. Powerful autobiographical self-studies portray character development and include dramatic actions. Something genuine is at stake in the story.
8. Quality autobiographical self-studies attend carefully to persons in context or setting.
9. Quality autobiographical self-studies offer fresh perspectives on established truths.

The following guidelines refer to correspondence, email and recorded conversation.

10. Self-studies that rely on correspondence should provide the reader with an inside look at participants’ thinking and feeling.
11. To be scholarship, edited conversation or correspondence must not only have coherence and structure, but that coherence and structure should provide argumentation and convincing evidence.

12. Self-studies that rely on correspondence bring with them the necessity to select, frame, arrange, and footnote the correspondence in ways that demonstrate wholeness.
 13. Interpretations made of self-study data should not only reveal but also interrogate the relationships, contradictions and limits of views presented.
 14. Effective correspondence self-studies contain complication or tension.
- (Bullough and Pinnegar, 2001, pp. 16-20)

In response to Bullough and Pinnegar's emphasis on quality in self-study, Feldman (2003) highlights the necessity to demonstrate validity, also, in self-study, due to the political and moral factors of educational research; political because of its implications for teachers, schools and students and therefore, ultimately for policy makers, and moral because we want our research to be worthy of trust; to be well-grounded, just and credible. Feldman suggests four ways in which we can increase the validity of our self-studies, which I summarise here:

1. Provide clear and detailed description of how we collect data and make explicit what counts as data in our work.
2. Provide clear and detailed descriptions of how we constructed the representation from our data.
3. Extend triangulation beyond multiple sources of data to include exploration of multiple ways to represent the same self-study.
4. Provide evidence of the value of the changes in our ways of being teacher educators.

(Feldman, 2003, pp. 27-28)

Tidwell, Heston and Fitzgerald (2009) stress the need for self-study to be trustworthy and highlight the difficulty in achieving this due to the fact that whilst in traditional research, a clearly defined question is set, in self-study, whilst the focus is on the very open question, 'How can I improve my practice?', many do not begin with a specific, formal question and many of those that do, may change as the research evolves. Consequently, methods are not necessarily chosen as a result of the question; rather methods emerge as a study unfolds.

In summary, self-study, as an established genre of educational research, must demonstrate quality and validity. Self-reflection in self-study focusses on the question, 'How can I improve my practice?' Self-study can be challenging to the individual as it requires the individual to be open, and thus open to possible criticism

from self and others. Having the support of others and presenting your views whereby trust is shared, gives confidence which can be built on over time.

2.5 Validity

How do I know that when I make a claim to knowledge that it is valid? In other words, how do I know that what I describe, descriptive validity, presents a true and accurate picture of what I am describing, and as I move to analysing and explaining and giving reasons and explanations for my claim, explanatory validity, how do I know that what I am saying is consistent and truthful? And how do I know that the methods I use are appropriate, suitable and fit for purpose in gathering my data and drawing out my evidence? McNiff (2002) and Whitehead (2008a) argue that both personal and social validity are necessary in practitioners making their claims to knowledge. Thus, with regard to personal validity, as a practitioner, it is I, who set the criteria for how I conduct my research. It is I, who take responsibility for what I do. I develop my standards of judgement based on the values I hold. These standards of judgement become the criteria on which I judge my practice. This is very much the view of Polanyi (1958) who argues that the individual can decide to understand the world from their own point of view and it is they who can make claims to originality and exercise our own judgements. Having made a personal judgement to the claims I am making, McNiff and Whitehead (2005) suggest the establishment of a validation group whereby these claims can be critically scrutinized.

Throughout my enquiry I discuss my work at Conversation Café, as mentioned. This group started a number of years ago when my colleague and I invited a group of people together within the local authority to share together the different projects we were doing. Throughout this time, people within the community and fellow national and international researchers have attended the sessions. Nine years on, the group meets once a week. We discuss our values, our concerns and what drives us to do what we do. We take our writings to this group and discuss how our writings can be improved and whether they demonstrate us living our values in our practice.

I have found the support of this group to be invaluable. I have discussed my work with this group. Not only does the group give support but also it serves as a

validation group using Habermas' (1976) criteria for social validity. People within the group also serve as critical friends and, individually, respond to conversations and writings.

As stated, in validating my claim to knowledge, I adopt Habermas' (1976) four criteria for social validity. These criteria relate to the communication between speaker and hearer:

- The speaker must choose a comprehensible expression, so that speaker and hearer can understand one another;
 - The speaker must have the intention of communicating a true proposition...so that the hearer can share the knowledge of the speaker;
 - The speaker must want to express his intentions truthfully so that the hearer can believe the utterance of the speaker;
 - The speaker must choose an utterance that is right...and can agree with one another in the utterance with respect to a recognized normative background;
- (Habermas, 1976, pp. 2-3)

Whitehead applies these criteria to all forms of communication including written text, and simplifies the above stating that what is being said must be:

- Comprehensible, in that a form of language is used that is commonly understood by all;
 - Truthful, in that all recognize these as true accounts and not fabrications;
 - Sincere, so that all parties can trust what the other says;
 - Appropriate for the context, while recognizing the unspoken cultural norms in which their discourses are embedded.
- (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.102)

2.6 Data collection

There are many ways in which data can be gathered which include written methods and live methods. Written methods may include field notes, reflection journals and diaries, questionnaires, surveys and record sheets, whilst live methods may include interviews, role play and audio- and video-recordings (McNiff and Whitehead, 2005). In undertaking my research, I have used a variety of written methods which include a reflective journal whereby I have written about my practice and reflected on my thoughts and feelings at the time. In exploring my values, I refer to my

Master's dissertation for an analysis of its significance in my doctoral enquiry. This has enabled me to further clarify and fully realise the values and ideas that I hold. Extracts from reports which refer to my practice are used and also evaluations of presentations I have given and workshops with which I have been involved. Data has been drawn from a variety of meetings I have attended over time and emails received. Live methods have been used which include meetings with my manager and his PA and with team members on their understanding of empowerment. These meetings have been video-recorded.

Many decisions need to be made in selecting which methods are used in collecting data. Thus, I chose to meet with team members rather than send them a questionnaire. I have used questionnaires in previous research; however, at the time, I wanted to draw data from a wide range of staff in a large comprehensive school in which I was teaching. This method, at the time, was appropriate and involved much analysis and the production of tables. Care needed to be taken, however, as to whether I asked closed questions or open questions. Closed questions were easy to analyse but were more limited in the information given; open questions, on the other hand, gave additional information but were more difficult to analyse. This method was not appropriate to my present research and the type of researcher I have become. My previous research, completed many years ago, was done 'on' people rather than 'with' them. My present research is being done 'with' the people with whom I work and with whom I relate. I wanted to meet with members of the team to ascertain their views and I wanted the discussions to be built on the good relationships we had with each other, and which I further wished to develop, whereby they could give their views freely, built on the values of trust, respect and regard of the other. Whilst I sent them a list of areas we could cover, I was open to any issues and points of discussion that they wanted to raise. My discussions with the team were pre-arranged with dates and venues organised, however, my discussions with my manager and his PA were spontaneous.

With regard to the recording of the meetings, a few options were open to me. I could have made notes of our meetings, or I could have done audio-recordings or video-recordings. In taking notes of our meetings, my time would have been taken in writing down our conversations. In this respect, it would be possible to 'miss' much

of the discussion and not record it, and consequently, I may not have all the information I required. More importantly though, I would not have had the interaction and engagement between one and the other as I would have been preoccupied. This was not an option for me. I could have done audio-recordings of our discussion which would have captured all our conversations and could be transcribed and analysed as would be done with a video-recording. However, this would not have provided the non-verbal language and interactions between us which a video-recording can demonstrate. In using video, I have been able to produce a multimedia account which entails a visual as well as a written explanation of my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. Other methods would not have achieved this.

In discussing empowerment, four members of the SEN team agreed to meet with me and further agreed for our meetings to be video-recorded. When I first began my research, there were eight members in the SEN team: two full-time Senior Inclusion Officers; two full-time Senior Case Officers; one full-time Case Officer and two part-time Case Officers; and one part-time administrative officer. To be truly inclusive, I could have decided to meet with them all individually, however, I was mindful of how long it would take to transcribe all of the recordings and I did not believe that the results would be any different in selecting a fewer number. I anticipated that meeting with members individually would take forty-five minutes to an hour. My understanding was that an experienced person would take an hour to transcribe fifteen minutes of a video/audio recording. Thus, an hour of video/audio recording would take four hours. I was not experienced, and therefore, I was aware that this exercise would take much longer. Alternatively, I could have met them all as a group which again, would be inclusive and would not take as long, but I did not feel that I would be able to elicit the individual and specific responses that I was looking for. I had a very good relationship with each member of the team and meeting them individually seemed to me to be the appropriate way forward.

I did feel that it was important to meet with a cross-section of team members, according to their roles, as their standpoints and perceptions of empowerment may be different. I, thus, decided to meet with one Senior Inclusion Officer; the two Senior Case Officers, with one focussed on children and young people who were pre-

sixteen, and the other, on young people who were post-sixteen and in colleges; and the part-time administrative officer. One Senior Inclusion Officer was already meeting with my manager as a participant in his research, and being mindful of the time commitment he was giving to this, I did not want to take up more of his time in his being directly involved in my enquiry. The other Senior Inclusion Officer had already shown much interest in my enquiry. She had started doing her own research into empowerment and had written about empowerment which she sent to me as highlighted in Chapter 3. It seemed obvious to me that she be further included in my research. I decided not to involve the three Case Officers as their workloads were excessive and I felt uncomfortable about approaching them and asking them to give time to my enquiry. Thus, the four members of the team who became participants in my research were established. The first meetings took place between September 2013 and May 2014. When I decided to meet with team members three years later to establish further their views on empowerment, whilst the team had grown, it seemed appropriate to approach the same four team members. These meetings took place between August and September 2017.

My collection of data undertook much analysis in the selection of data which could demonstrate my standards of judgement and thus provide evidence which supported my claim to knowledge. My claim to knowledge involves how I have influenced my own learning and the learning of others. So, in selecting data in terms of demonstrating my standards of judgements, I am looking for those values by which I judge my practice. If data had been produced whereby I found myself a 'living contradiction', that is, not living my values in my practice, I would have highlighted this and determined what I would do about it.

Having established the significance of empowerment, I focus on empowerment in my role as statutory SEN manager as I question, 'What is empowerment?' 'Am I being empowered?' 'Is the SEN team being empowered?' 'Are children and young people with SEN and their families being empowered?' 'What can I do as a SEN manager to create conditions whereby the team, children, young people and families may feel empowered?' As my enquiry progresses, as demonstrated in action reflection cycle one (Chapter 3) and action reflection cycle two (Chapter 4), I draw on the data which provides the evidence of the emergence and embedding of

empowerment in the workplace and which responds to my research question, 'How can I, as statutory SEN manager, improve my practice in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which has an influence on me, my team and ultimately, children and young people with SEN and their families?' As McNiff and Whitehead (2005) suggest, in deciding which data is relevant or not, it is pertinent to relate it to your research question. As stated, evidence drawn from the data in my first action reflection cycle (Chapter 3), determined that empowerment was 'living' in the workplace, and that it was inclusive and inclusional. My second action reflection cycle (Chapter 4) highlights my concerns with the introduction of the SEND reforms, and my drive to ensure the continued involvement of an environment of living and inclusive empowerment, not only within the team, but also with children, young people and families with whom we work. Evidence is drawn from the data which clarifies this. My meetings with the four team members, as expressed in Chapter 5, provide evidence that an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment continues to evolve, not only within the team but with children, young people and families with whom we work.

Through using video-recordings, I have been able to reflect on my practice (Farren and Whitehead, 2006). Throughout this enquiry, I use video-recordings to gather data to show my relationship with others, and to capture those moments when I feel empowered or that others are demonstrating empowerment. If the data were to show otherwise, I would determine what I intended to do about it. Sometimes video-recordings capture moments of conversations I am having with colleagues. As I look at the video-footage, I carefully select those video-clips which provide the evidence I am looking for. I then reflect on those video-clips and ask, 'What am I learning from what I am seeing in this clip? Is what I am seeing helping me to move on in my practice? Is it helping me to improve my practice?' As with narrative, I tell my story and reflect on my story, so with video-clips, I look at the clip and reflect on what I see and hear. I then write about my reflections. I believe that the video-clips coupled with the text give another dimension to the evidence I am trying to show. I also use the process of empathetic resonance (Whitehead, 2010a, 2012), which demonstrates how this data can be used to clarify and communicate my embodied expressions of meaning. This can be done with digital visual data by downloading the video-clip

from the link and opening it up in 'Quicktime'. This allows you to move the cursor backwards and forwards. As Whitehead (2010b) explains:

The method (of empathetic resonance) involves the use of video-data where a cursor is moved backwards and forwards along the video-data coming to rest at the point of strongest resonance with the researcher's receptivity and response to the expression of the energy-flowing value she is seeking to represent and communicate.

(Whitehead, 2010b, p.2)

To clarify, I have used video-recordings and digital video-data:

- i) to give me the opportunity to recall a moment in time in order to analyse and reflect on it to enhance my learning (Roth, 2007, cited in Jewitt, 2012).
- ii) as part of one of my research methods.
- iii) to clarify and communicate embodied expressions of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment:
 - to give visual meanings as well as written meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment
 - to bring to the reader into that moment in time and can give the reader a sense of 'being there and being with' (Goldman, 2007, pp.30-32, cited in Jewitt, 2012, p5).
 - to allow the reader to see, not only that gaze, that expression but also to see the bodily movements, which cannot be captured in text or still images.
- iv) to validate if I am communicating and clarifying my meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

In Chapter 5, in explaining my educational influences in learning, I reflect on my learning in using video-recordings and digital visual data in clarifying and communicating my embodied expressions of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. I give a specific example of how I have used digital video-data using empathetic resonance to demonstrate 'living empowerment' and I show how taking this piece of work to my validation group influenced my writing.

Having met with team members, I needed to transcribe each of the video-recordings. I had the option of sending it to a company who did transcriptions or to do the

transcriptions myself. Sending it to a company would have saved me a lot of time, however, I wanted to do the transcriptions myself because in this respect, I would become very familiar with what each person was saying, how they were saying it and in viewing the video-recordings would become familiar with their non-verbal language. I felt it would put me in a better position in analysing this data.

The transcriptions took a considerable amount of time, as each meeting was approximately fifty minutes in length. In the first draft of transcriptions, I included the 'umms' and 'aahs' but in the second draft, I excluded these as it made for better reading. On completion of the transcriptions, I read through each one and did a thematic analysis, making notes in the margins when a particular theme arose, for example, if 'team empowerment' was mentioned, I would put this in the margin and if examples were given I would make a note of these. Having completed this thematic analysis of the transcriptions, I then produced a mind map of each transcription, so that on one page all the information of one meeting with themes and examples were written. I give an example of such a mind map in Appendix A. I found this approach to be invaluable as I did not need to look through pages of transcriptions and notes of themes and examples in the margins; rather I just needed to look at a mind map of each of the meetings. This made it much easier in comparing what each person was saying, and in the writing up the summaries of my meetings with the team members.

2.7 Ethical considerations

In undertaking my research, I have considered the ethical implications and have referred to Liverpool Hope University's web page on research for guidance. I have completed the university's Research Ethics Clearance Form which clearly explains the details of my proposed research study, the risk and ethical procedures of my study, and the confidentiality and anonymity of my data. The details of this form have been approved by the university's Research Ethics Sub-Committee. I have also used the British Educational Research (BERA) Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research, 2011.

In following the ethical guidelines protocols, I understand that voluntary informed consent is paramount. Any participants in my research have been fully informed of the aims of my research and the need for their involvement. Video, as mentioned, has been much used in my research. Permission has been sought beforehand for the video camera and video-clips to be used. If permission is not granted or the participant feels uncomfortable about their involvement, then the video camera and video-clips are not used. This is the case regarding a participant's involvement in any aspect of my research; their right not to grant permission is respected.

Participants have been informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time. They will not be made to feel uncomfortable about this and their wish will be respected. I understand that if someone wishes to withdraw, I need to consider if I have had a part to play in this in the way that I may have behaved towards them or whether I have said something that may have made them feel uncomfortable. If this were to be the case, I may need to consider a different approach which may be more conducive to the participant.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults are not directly involved in my research, however, if they are referred to in my study I have ensured their anonymity in order that they cannot be identified.

Participants are fully aware of their right to confidentiality and anonymity. If participants do not wish to be named then this right is respected. Conversely, if participants wish to be named, this is respected also.

I am fully aware of the legal requirements in relation to the storage and use of personal data as set down by the Data Protection Act (1998) and any subsequent similar acts.

Thus, I have followed the correct procedures and ticked the boxes as ethically required in conducting my enquiry. But is this enough? Since beginning my enquiry, I have been very aware that even though I have followed the right ethical guidelines and protocols as required by the university, I need to be sensitive to ethical dilemmas

that can arise with the type of research I am undertaking. My enquiry is a qualitative, reflective self-study of my practice. My practice is based in a local authority, therefore, my study is based in the organisation in which I work. Besides conducting my enquiry within my organisation, some of the people I manage and my manager are also involved. Thus, my research would be considered as 'insider' research. As Norton (2009), states, what if our research shows the organisation in which we work in a bad light or even that of the participants? This could give rise to a number of ethical dilemmas. Stutchbury and Fox (2009) also point out that undertaking research which involves the interaction of people will have an ethical dimension and that some of the issues can be complex. They contend that these issues may emerge and change as the enquiry progresses.

As Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) suggest, it is wise for the researcher to discuss the research with all parties involved. Besides giving all participants an information sheet, as required by the university, I have fully engaged with them throughout the process. My manager and I have discussed my research as it has evolved, informally and formally; it has been a part of my annual PDR (Personal Development Review) and progress has been evaluated. Likewise, discussions have ensued with team members who have participated. My research on empowerment has become a part of conversations we have and has become a part of the collaborative process in which we work. I am very mindful that I am the manager of some of the participants, and that there may be a possibility that some may be reticent in giving their opinions for fear that it may be in conflict with my views and thus, could result in me responding to them negatively, personally and professionally. But, in the type of research I am doing, this has not been an issue. My ethical considerations are in line with my ontological stance and my values in that whatever I do, I endeavour to have a regard and respect of the other. Thus, in undertaking my enquiry, first and foremost, is that I have regard and respect of those involved.

Trust is another important value inherent within my research and the development of rapport, trust and confidence with all participants has been very important to me, and I believe with them also. Whilst, I am manager of the team, I am doing research 'with' participants and my enquiry has evolved 'with' them. I have been focussed on enabling the talents, skills and motivation of those within the team. They are a part of

the research process and the outcomes that have emerged as a result of the collaborative and participative relationships that we have. One of the biggest ethical dilemmas that have emerged for me has been the issue of time. I have been very mindful of how busy the team is and have been conscious of the time they have given, for example, in video-recording our discussions. To address this, participants and I agreed when the video-recordings should take place to suit my timings and their timings. I informed them that the video-recordings would be no more than an hour, unless they wished otherwise, and finally, to ensure that our discussions were focussed, I gave them a written list of areas we could cover well in advance of our meetings. Consequently, the time factor did not become an issue for us because again, it was a collaborative process.

There has been much debate on the appropriateness of the ethical guidelines process with regards to practitioner-research (for example, Brindley and Bowker, 2013; Brydon-Miller and Coghlan, 2018; Eikeland, 2006; Stutchbury and Fox, 2009; Wood, 2017). Wood (2017) discusses the ethical implications of community-based research with regard to her work in South Africa; she is critical of a 'once-off ethical approval' (p.2) by universities, and supports the idea of ongoing critical reflection involving all parties in the research. Wood is of the view that current review board requirements need to be rethought, as they are not conducive to the development and strengthening of relationships which are ethically acceptable to all within the research process. Wood explains that the ethics review boards of universities are based on principles developed initially to protect people from 'unscrupulous biomedical research(ers)' (p.3) and whilst guidelines have been amended to address social sciences and qualitative approaches, they still fall short of the nature of participatory and community research which involves collaboration, the generation of democratic knowledge and social action. Brindley and Bowker (2013) highlight the fact that within their research, schools undertaking action research, rather than developing their own ethical guidelines are referred to such ethical guidelines as the BERA guidelines. They see this as schools ticking boxes and paying lip service to ethical principles which are generalised, rather than developing their own ethical policies and engaging with ethical issues as they arise within the context of the school. Eikeland (2006) considers the ethical aspects of practitioner-research and conventional social research and refers to conventional research ethics as a

'condescending ethics' unfit for action research because of its practice of 'othering' human beings as research subjects' (p.37). He highlights the work of Zeni (2001) who considered setting up an alternative ethics code for action research but decided against it 'for fear of constructing another Procrustean bed' (pp. 46-47).

Suggestions have been postulated as to how ethical implications of practitioner-research may be reconsidered. Wood offers suggestions as to how the principles of respect, beneficence and justice in traditional research can be rethought to make these principles relevant to community-based research. Stutchbury and Fox present a framework based on the work of Seedhouse (1998) and Flinders (1992). The framework, they believe, besides encouraging researchers to think practically and to consider factors relevant to their situation, helps to take into account how to behave and how to ensure the integrity of the research. The framework, they explain, incorporates the principles in such guidelines as the BERA (2004) and ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) (2005) frameworks but goes further in that consideration is given regarding consequences of the research, methodological issues, and has the ability to trace back the decision-making involved at various stages of the research.

Brydon-Miller and Coghlan (2018) propose the notion of first, second and third person values-based ethics in educational research. I like the definition of ethics as cited in their paper:

a practical science focused on how we put values into action. It is the study of ethical relationships we have with human beings, sentient creatures and the physical world in which we live. It is the study of what we value in these relationships and the decisions we make based on those values. (Yoak and Brydon-Miller 2014, 306).

(Brydon-Miller and Coghlan, 2018, p. 1)

Brydon-Miller and Coghlan take the stance that if action researchers know their values and seek to act them out, then their practice may be better informed. This is very much in line with my way of thinking as I explore my values and ask whether I am living them in my practice. Brydon-Miller and Coghlan are of the view that ethics is not about having a set of rules or weighing up the risks and benefits of

research but rather the expression of responsible and reasonable beings that action researchers aspire to through first, second and third person enquiry and practice. They explain that a set of ethical rules ensures that the research undertaken meets required standards, based on meeting basic values such as autonomy, beneficence and justice which in turn will influence the recruitment of subjects, the notion of informed consent, confidentiality and data protection. However, they contend that the character of the researcher and their relationship with their research subjects are not considered, but rather are seen as opportunities for coercion or possible sources of bias. Brydon-Miller and Coghlan suggest that in first person research, the researcher identifies their values through a structured ethical reflection process. A shared set of values is then developed in second person practice and finally the combination of first and second person practices contributes to a third person practice which aims at creating communities of enquiry leading to dissemination and discussion in a more public arena. In identifying and sharing values, and through structured ethical reflection, questions and issues arising throughout the research can be addressed as the research progresses. They see this as far more productive with a greater engagement of all within the process rather than the traditional research ethics process which has no input by the researchers themselves.

Thus, in conducting my research, whilst following the ethical requirements of the university and such guidelines as the BERA guidelines, I have also been mindful of the ethical issues that can arise in undertaking practitioner-research within my organisation and conducting my enquiry with my manager and those with whom I manage. My research has been conducted in collaboration with others based on the values of trust, respect and regard of the other. The whole point of my exploration has been to live my values within my practice and this has been the foundation in addressing the ethical implications of my enquiry. As Norton (2009) suggests, it is the responsibility of the researcher to think ethically 'and, in the end, it comes down to moral responsibility and integrity' (p.189).

Finally, I am fully aware of my responsibilities to educational professionals, policy makers and the general public and have every intention of making public and communicating my findings on living inclusive and inclusional empowerment, as stated in the BERA Ethical Guidelines (2011):

Researchers have a responsibility to seek to make public the results of their research for the benefit of educational professionals, policy makers and a wider public understanding of educational policy and practice...

Educational researchers must endeavour to communicate their findings, and the practical significance of their research, in a clear, straightforward fashion and in language judged appropriate to the intended audience.

(BERA, 2011, p.10)

2.8 Summary

In this chapter, I have described and explained the methodology I have used and how it has evolved throughout my research. In generating my living-theory methodology (Whitehead, 2008a), I explain the insights I have gained from action research, autoethnographic research, narrative research, self-study research and how these reflect my ontological and epistemological stance. I describe how I have collected data and I have discussed the issues of validity and ethical considerations.

In my next chapter I focus on my role as a statutory SEN manager, as I seek to improve my practice, and explore the notion of empowerment. I focus on such questions as, 'What is empowerment?' 'What does it mean to me as I manage a team of people?' 'Is empowerment being demonstrated in my practice?' In responding to these questions, I highlight my educational influence in my learning and the learning of others.

CHAPTER 3 FIRST ACTION REFLECTION CYCLE: AN EXPLORATION OF EMPOWERMENT – A REFLECTION OF THE INFLUENCE OF EMPOWERMENT IN MY WORKPLACE

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, I explained the methodology I have used in undertaking my research. In line with a Living Theory research approach, I explained how I have generated my own living-theory methodology and have drawn insights from action research, autoethnographic research, narrative research and self-study research. In asking how I improve my practice, I explained that I reflect on my values and ask whether I am living my values in my practice. These values become explanatory principles and standards of judgement on which I judge my practice.

The realisation of the significance of empowerment gives rise to my first action reflection cycle as I seek to improve my practice. Thus, in this chapter, I explore the notion of empowerment in my role as a statutory SEN manager. I use video-clips to bring the reader into 'that moment in time' and I use digital visual data to clarify embodied expressions of my relational meanings of empowerment. In my research of empowerment, I explore the literature on empowerment and its articulation with the notion of power. I analyse the influence of empowerment in my workplace. 'What is empowerment and what does it mean to me?' 'Am I being empowered?' 'Is the SEN team being empowered?' If so, 'Is this having an influence on children and young people with SEN and their families?' I determine that empowerment is 'living' in the workplace which is inclusive and inclusional.

In conducting this first action enquiry, I focus on the following questions:

- What is my concern and why am I concerned?
- What kind of data have I gathered to show the situation as it unfolds?
- How do I explain my educational influence in my own learning and in the learning of others?

3.2 What is my concern and why am I concerned?

In coming to the realisation of the force of empowerment in my life, I needed to understand what this means and a number of questions arose for me at the time:

1. What is empowerment and more specifically, what is the meaning of empowerment to me? I understand that it is a force that I see in my personal and professional life: the idea of being empowered, empowering others, and indeed, self-empowerment, but I needed to analyse its meaning in order to determine what it means to me.
2. Is empowerment 'living' in the workplace? Is the SEN team being empowered? If so, what is its influence on them? Am I being empowered? Is my manager empowering me? If so, what is its influence on me?
3. And then, the 'so what question'? It is all very well, being and feeling empowered, but what influence is this having on children and young people with SEN and their families?

Firstly, I decided to explore the literature on empowerment in order to understand what it means for me. Empowerment is a term that was first used in the seventeenth century and used, legally, to mean to invest with authority, to authorise. Gradually, the term became more generalised to mean 'to enable or permit.' The modern use of the term is very much bound with the Civil Rights Movement which sought political empowerment for its followers (The Free Dictionary, 2012). Indeed, in the 20th century, there have been many examples of political empowerment led by such people as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Vaclav Havel and Lech Walensa. The term has also been associated with the women's movement (The Free Dictionary, 2012).

The Oxford English Dictionary (2017) defines empowerment as 'the authority or power given to someone to do something' and also 'the process of becoming stronger and more confident especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights'. Reviewing definitions of empowerment reveal similarities but also differences (Narayan, 2002). Rappaport (1984, cited in Page and Czuba, 1999) states that empowerment may easily be defined by its absence but that it is difficult to

define in action as it takes on different forms in different people and contexts. Zimmerman (1984, cited in Page and Czuba, 1999) is of the view that a single definition of empowerment may present it as prescriptive and formulaic which may contradict the very concept of empowerment. Page and Czuba (1999), however, believe that a common understanding of empowerment is necessary and postulate a general definition that empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process which enables people to gain control over their own lives; that it fosters power in people to use in their own lives, their communities and in their society, by taking up issues that they believe to be pertinent.

Narayan (2002) highlights the fact that many definitions point to enhancing the quality of one's life through having power and control over decisions and resources; also, that most definitions look at the inequalities of entire social groups rather than focus on individual characteristics. Terms associated with empowerment include self-power, self-reliance, own choice, independence, own decision-making. Empowerment may be viewed as the extension of freedom of choice and action. This is very much in line with the thinking of Sen (1985, 1999, cited in Narayan, 2002), who has highlighted the importance of fundamental freedom for all and the individual freedom to choose and achieve different outcomes. Sen (1999) is of the view that diverse freedoms are composed of five categories which are individually important, interlinked and complement each other. They are: political freedoms, social opportunities, economic empowerment, protective security and transparency guarantees.

Clutterbuck and Kernaghan (1994) contend that a lack of understanding of empowerment derives from a lack of clarity as to what power is and how we should regard it (p.13). Hardy and Leiba-O' Sullivan (1998) agree that in mainstream management research into empowerment, the mention of power is expunged. They highlight the views of Thomas and Velthouse (1990) in which they comment that the link between power and empowerment is completely severed:

To empower means to give power to. Power, however, has several meanings. In a legal sense, power can mean authority, so that empowerment can mean authorization. Power also may be used to describe capacity, as in the self-

efficacy definition of Conger and Kanungo. However, power also means energy. Thus, to empower can mean to energise.
(Thomas and Velthouse, 1990, cited in Hardy and Leiba-O' Sullivan, 1998, p. 471)

Conger and Kanungo (1988) argue that the attention on the construct of empowerment has not been given the same analytical focus as the construct of power; that empowerment has been viewed as a sharing of power or the delegating of power with subordinates and thus the exploration of the construct of empowerment has been considered no further beyond the concept of power. Consequently, they are of the view that such an approach has serious flaws and focus on the integrating of the different approaches to empowerment in the management and psychology literatures. They contend that the empowerment construct has been derived from the constructs of power and control and since these have been used in the literature in two different ways, so too, should empowerment be considered in two different ways; as a relational construct and as a motivational construct.

They explain that in the management and social influence literature, power is viewed as a relational construct, whereby an individual or organisation has power or control over another, and with regard to the social exchange theory, power is seen as the dependence of one on another. Thus, empowerment, as a relational dynamic is one whereby management practices focus on the sharing or the delegating of power with subordinates. In this sense, empowerment is seen as a movement of power from higher levels to lower levels within a hierarchy. In the psychology literature, however, power and control are viewed as a motivational construct whereby it is recognised that individuals have a need of power and that this need is met when individuals feel that they have power, autonomy or a sense of control, and consequently, have a belief in their own effectiveness (Liu, Chiu and Fellows, 2007). Liu, Chiu and Fellows refer to the views of Whetton and Cameron (1984) who view empowerment as a means whereby individuals are motivated through heightening their sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). Power as a motivational factor reflects an individual's need for self-determination (Deci, 1975), thus, employees may feel more powerful if managers use strategies and techniques which strengthen the individual's sense of self-determination or self-efficacy (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). However, Conger and Kanungo go on to explain their distinction between

self-efficacy and the internal-needs states of self-determination (Deci, 1975) and self-actualisation (Maslow, 1954). Self-efficacy, they state, is sometimes seen to derive from such notions as self-determination and the need for self-actualisation, however, they prefer not to explain empowerment from the content or need theory approach in that:

We assume that everyone has an internal need for self-determination and a need to control and cope with environmental demands. Differences in the strength of this need among individuals can be explained by analyzing the underlying motivational process. We therefore follow the process theory approach to empowerment as a motivational phenomena by relating it to expectancy (Lawler, 1973) and self-efficacy theories (Bandura, 1977, 1986) (Conger and Kanungo, 1988, p.474)

Empowerment, then, can be seen as managers enabling the motivation of individuals/employees by enhancing their self-efficacy. Conger and Kanungo contend that in the management literature, the constructs of power and empowerment as relational, in having control over limited resources, and motivational, whereby individuals have a sense of self-efficacy, are often fused. However, they state that empowerment is more often than not seen as a means of delegating rather than enabling. Conger and Kanungo conclude that they see empowerment as a motivational construct whereby managers enable rather than simply delegate with the idea of delegation being too constrictive. They define empowerment as:

a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organisational members through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal organisational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information. (Conger and Kanungo, 1988, p.474)

I was drawn to this notion of empowerment, as described by Conger and Kanungo, in that it is a process of enablement in which managers enable and create conditions whereby team members may be motivated through their own sense of personal efficacy. Empowerment, for me, is not about giving people power; rather, it is about enabling people to demonstrate the power that is already within them whether it be their motivation, their talents, their passions. It is about individuals having their own 'power from within' to develop their own capabilities in a way that they wish to,

rather than power be thrust upon them by someone else; it is about the individual being enabled to use their own 'power from within'. In my exploration of empowerment and its articulation with the notion of power, I felt I was getting a better understanding of how I view empowerment and how I wish to empower others in my role as statutory SEN manager. Later in the chapter, I explore further these notions of enablement and the 'power from within'.

3.3 What kind of data have I gathered to show the situation as it unfolds?

After identifying the key theme of empowerment when reflecting on my values, and consequently, reviewing some of the literature on empowerment, my manager, Nigel, and I decided to have a discussion on empowerment. He was fully aware of my research which aligned with his research on the development of a learning organisation and we had regular conversations about this. We decided to video-record our discussion. We also decided to write about and give examples of our working practice and the relationship we had between us. Our intention was to understand what we each meant by empowerment and our influences on each other. Firstly, I focus on our discussion about our views on empowerment which we video-recorded on May 14th, 2012. Below the still image is a link to a video-clip which is 26:38 minutes in length.

Image 2 Chris and Nigel discussing empowerment



Video-clip 2 <https://youtu.be/9x9YME2Gv6E>

Using this video-clip has helped me to reflect on our discussion. As I view the video-clip, I am struck by the relational and inclusional quality between us which text alone could not demonstrate. My first thought is that Nigel and I are very comfortable within this space and very much at ease with each other. In fact, in the first minute of the video, in setting up the recording, there is much laughter between us which prepares the way for our discussion. I would not feel at ease with many people in a small room with a video camera on us, having to sit reasonably close to someone so that we are both in the frame of the camera, but this is not an issue for me in my discussion with Nigel and I do not believe it is for him either.

It is interesting that Nigel has very much the same idea of empowerment as I do in that we both look for the talent that we have in our teams and support people to develop further. I believe this to be quite significant in that there is an empowerment cycle here; Nigel empowers me and I empower my team. I wonder that if we both had different perceptions of empowerment whether this would be the case.

Throughout the discussion, the elements of trust, risk-taking and confidence in the other arises within this notion of empowerment and it is a mutual trust, risk-taking and confidence in the other, not a singular sense of trust and confidence on one side

or the other. Gradually, Nigel learns to trust me and I learn to trust Nigel; likewise, his confidence in me develops and my confidence in him increases. Consequently, as a result of this mutual trust in and confidence of the other, an openness develops between us.

We discuss the issue of risk-taking and that this is a part of the enabling/empowerment process; that the enabler needs to take risks, because, for example, the person being enabled may not be able to see the task through thus the responsibility lies on the enabler; it certainly is a risk for the enabler. However, it is through taking risks and seeing the person who is enabled being successful that the enabler and the person being enabled become confident. Again, it is a two-way process.

Kanter (1981), in her research into power, power-sharing and effective leadership highlights the changing role of leaders and the emergence of empowerment and power-sharing, so rather than leadership being a 'top-down' process, it may now be seen as a process whereby there is a greater share in power with the workforce having a voice in making decisions. In this respect, she contends that there are new demands on leaders and sees their role as one of 'enabling' rather than 'controlling'. She argues that leaders need to create an environment whereby 'followers' can discover their own talents and skills. Greasley *et al.* (2005) take up the notion of employees being enabled; that if managers enable employees by giving them opportunities to make decisions and to feel trusted, then it is possible for them to feel empowered. Laverack (2005) sees the practitioner as an 'enabler' whereby in this empowering relationship and in engaging in a non-coercive dialogue, the client and practitioner can work together to address and resolve problems. Laverack contends that power cannot be given but must be taken by those individuals who seek it, thus conditions need to be created to make it possible for power to be gained in this enabling relationship. Thompson (2007), in his discussion on empowerment, has the same idea of Laverack's view on power; that empowerment is not something that can be done to or for people, rather, it is something that can only be done with them. Thompson cites the views of Bounds and Hepburn (1996) in that others cannot empower an individual but that individuals can be enabled to empower themselves. This is very much the view of Wenger (2014) who argues that the terms, 'empower' and 'enable' are often used interchangeably, however, he sees it important to

distinguish between the two as it makes a difference as to how we relate to people. He explains that the term 'empower' focusses on a hierarchical power whereby authority is granted or rescinded by the holder of the power; the term, 'enable', however, focusses on ensuring that others have the skills and capabilities to do a job well and giving them opportunities to develop new skills and capabilities, thus for them to take up their own power. Wenger postulates a variety of activities whereby managers may enable their staff: monitoring boundaries; monitoring and stewarding team dynamics; showing trust and belief; being available; communicating respectfully; coaching people to learn from mistakes; encouraging problem-solving.

Throughout my thesis, in my role as a manager, I refer to the idea of enablement whereby I state that I want to enable the release of talent within the team; in my discussions with team members, we discuss how they have felt enabled to do their jobs and how I have enabled the release of their talents. Clutterbuck and Kernaghan, in their discussion of managers in an empowering organisation highlight a number of new roles that such managers need to take on which includes them being a 'developer of talent' (p.115):

The manager tracks the employee's progress and provides help and encouragement. He or she takes a personal interest in developing employees' careers by ensuring they are aware of opportunities and inspiring him or her to take them up.

(Clutterbuck and Kernaghan, 1994, pp. 115-116)

Like Kanter, they refer to the role of a manager as being one of inspiration to their team. Clutterbuck and Kernaghan go as far as to say that managers should be rewarded for releasing the potential within their team and that this should be a part of the appraisal system. I am of the same view as Clutterbuck and Kernaghan, in ensuring that opportunities are presented to the team in order for them to develop and this is emphasised throughout my thesis.

As I reflect further on the video-clip of Nigel and me, I am affirmed by my desire to enable the releasing of talent within the team. As Nigel speaks, I recall that his enabling of me, has had a huge impact on my professional development and sense of achievement, as I have moved from being an Inclusion Officer to a Senior Inclusion

Officer and now a statutory SEN manager. I know that nothing will give me more pleasure than to see individuals in my team ‘grow’ as I enable them to release their talents. This view of empowerment, as expressed by Nigel and me, is very much in line with Scarnati and Scarnati’s (2002) view of empowerment at work in that:

Every organisation is rich in talent, and the value of the gold we mine is in the team of people we lead. Like the letters of the alphabet, what is important is the manner in which individuals join together to empower each other mutually as a meaningful team. Team work and empowerment are essential elements of quality.

(Scarnati and Scarnati, 2002, p.110)

Scarnati and Scarnati emphasise the recognition of talent and the significance of a team empowering each other.

Secondly, after our discussion on empowerment, Nigel and I, decided to write about and give examples of our working relationship. Below is an extract from our writings which highlights how I have felt empowered by Nigel. My examples, in italics, and Nigel’s reflections in bold italics are recorded in our written reflections, *Mutual Influences* (2012):

Example 1

Nigel has always known how committed I feel to this initiative (development of the IQM) and when we were invited to attend the launch of the Manchester Standard which was its inclusion kite mark, Nigel enthusiastically agreed that we should go... Attending the event...gave me greater confidence in how I was developing our Inclusion Quality Mark. It also shifted forward my relationship with Nigel as my trust in him grew. I felt that he was putting his trust in me and thus empowering me because he could perceive how enthusiastic I was about what I was doing.

Nigel’s reflection on this is as follows:

We both went to Manchester to see what they were doing in terms of recognising inclusion in schools. Chris was determined to learn and

improve her practice. Eventually, Chris decided to proceed with a particular Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM). I'm not sure how Chris actually saw my role in all this but my intention was to be supportive of Chris and empower her to make the decision; to release the undoubted talent she has in this area. I believe now that I fully trusted Chris to do the 'right thing' as I knew her values and motivation were in the right place. The direction of travel was the right one and I did not need to be directive or make the decision for her as I knew the decision she would make would be the right one. The learning for me was that if, as a leader and manager, I have 'good' people around me (i.e. those with the right values and moral purpose) then they are highly unlikely to make the wrong decisions; my job is to empower them, monitor and nudge when necessary and to psychologically 'hold' her so that she would never fail.

Example 2

Nigel has supported me in furthering my career and with his leadership, I have become a Senior Inclusion Officer and now a SEN manager. This has given me a tremendous feeling of being empowered. Nigel has also supported me in my professional development and this too has given me the feeling of being empowered. When I did my MA, he was extremely encouraging throughout. When I was stuck and could not progress with my writing, he wrote about me and it gave me the breakthrough I needed to progress. When I had my first paper accepted for the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Conference in 2006, Nigel immediately said he would come to support me.

Since becoming a manager, I continue to feel empowered by him. How can I not when he writes the following of me?:

Chris has gone from strength to strength and is now deservedly SEN Manager where she shows the same determination and talent for building relationships as she always has in the past.

Development of the 'essence' between Chris and me:

More than any of the other person I work with, Chris and I discuss our values openly and frequently; we do so in depth and we do so in a way that always brings us back to why we do things, our moral purpose. I truly know and believe that Chris is passionate about addressing inequality and is especially dedicated to addressing any issues relating to children and young people who may be vulnerable. It is in her very being...Our relationship... is full of trust, openness and honesty and has been from the start.

Those who know Chris will recognise that she is always cheerful and positive; she is determined to get things done and will not allow little things to get in her way. This is a rare and highly prized talent and makes my life as a manager so much easier. Chris is always open to new ideas and it is easy for me to try to empower her. Empowerment for me is not delegation and is not based on power relationships but is one of an authentic relationship between us.

The examples above and Nigel's reflections demonstrate again the trust we feel between us and the confidence we have in each other. It highlights the openness and honesty which has developed between us. It highlights specifically the relational and inclusional quality of our relationship. We both make references as to how Nigel empowers me and our views about this. As Nigel concludes, 'Empowerment for me is not delegation and is not based on power relationships but is one of an authentic relationship between us'.

I would now like to focus on another video-clip which, to me, demonstrates empowerment at work and the influence of Nigel as a manager empowering other members of his team. Sandra is Nigel's PA and is my administrative officer.

In this video-clip, which is 2:21 minutes in length, Sandra is speaking about how she felt following a meeting with medical professionals about organising a conference. Nigel and Sandra had previously been involved in discussing a conference on ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) with medical professionals and Sandra was going to be the organiser. Nigel and Sandra were meant to have attended this

meeting but Nigel had decided, prior to the meeting, that he would not attend and that Sandra could attend without him. However, he decided not to inform Sandra...I was sitting next to Sandra on that particular morning. She was extremely anxious with only minutes to go before the meeting and no sign of Nigel. She knew that she had to go because she was organising the conference.

Image 3 **Nigel, Sandra and Chris discussing the impact of Sandra's attendance at a meeting**



Video-clip 3 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bOEvdTD15nQ>

This video-clip demonstrates how empowered Sandra felt following the meeting; she describes how she was feeling on top of the world and was quite overwhelmed as to how welcomed, included and valued she felt. She explains that when she left the meeting, she walked through the office and felt that she was grinning from ear to ear with her head held high, 'knowing' that she could do that. She explains that she felt so reassured when the paediatrician said to her, "You will be at the conference...you will be, we need you."

As Sandra is speaking, she is smiling with her arm movements mirroring what she is saying. She describes then what happened when she got back to her desk and Nigel and I were sitting there. I particularly like the way she wobbles from side to side, gesturing to Nigel and I sitting each side of her, recalling the moment, putting out her

arms and splaying her hands with a sense of achievement, stating so proudly, “Ha, I did it!” This video-clip takes us to that ‘moment in time’ as we listen to Sandra. But not only that, as Sandra is speaking, I see her demonstrating empowerment in her bodily movements and expressions. If you download the video-clip from the link and open it in ‘Quicktime’, this allows you to move the cursor backwards and forwards. If you move the cursor to around 57 seconds, I sense a moment of accomplishment as Sandra splays her hands and what may be described as empathetic resonance as I ‘see’ Sandra’s expressions of empowerment.

Nigel had known that Sandra was quite capable of attending that meeting on her own, however, he also knew that if he had told Sandra beforehand that he had no intentions of attending, Sandra would have objected and would have been extremely nervous. As it was, with Nigel not being there, Sandra had no choice but to attend in his absence, and get on with it however she felt. This is an example of Nigel knowing Sandra’s talents and what she is capable of. It could be construed as risky as Sandra’s nerves could have got the better of her and the meeting could have been a disaster with Sandra’s confidence being knocked and her feeling deflated. But this was not the case. This aligns very much with Pardo del Val and Lloyd’s (2002) idea of empowerment whereby employees are involved in the decision-making process and members are invited to be responsible for the quality of their tasks and encouraged to think strategically.

This experience has proved to Sandra what she didn’t realise; it empowered her to use her talents and the response from those at the meeting has made her feel further empowered. In this respect, I believe that Sandra is demonstrating self-empowerment in that she is taking charge of the situation and using her skills, talents and knowledge to do so. Jordaan (2016) refers to empowerment as gaining knowledge and understanding, and thus, self-empowerment as gaining knowledge and understanding of self. He describes the characteristics of empowerment as: having decision-making power of your own; having access to information and resources; having a range of options determined by yourself; having the ability to exercise assertiveness; having a belief in self; having the ability to learn new skills; having the ability to change others’ perceptions; involving in the growth process and changes; increasing one’s positive self-image. He explains that to be self-empowered you have

to have the personal knowledge and belief in self to perform the above and the following qualities need to be demonstrated: self-knowledge; self-appreciation; vision; power of purpose; commitment; contribution. Famularo (2002) describes the cycle of self-empowerment whereby the individual has a dream or a vision which is fuelled by passion, but to enable the individual to achieve their vision, tools such as principles, character, morals, virtues, personality, values and ethics need to be in place.

When I think of self-empowerment, I think of Randy Pausch who was a professor at Carnegie Mellon University. He was a father of three children and was suffering from pancreatic cancer. With only a few months to live, he gave his last lecture on September 18th, 2007, to an audience of four hundred people which was entitled, ‘Achieving Your Childhood Dreams’ and focussed on how to live your life (Pausch and Zaslow, 2008). In his conclusion he states, “If you live properly, the dreams will come to you.” Here is the link to the video-clip which is 10:10 minutes in length.

Image 4 Randy Pausch at his last lecture



Video-clip 4 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BODHsU3hDo4>

I find this video-clip inspirational in that this is a man with only a few months to live who has decided to take control of what life he has left; he has chosen that the time he has left will be fun and that he is going to enjoy himself. Besides passing on the message of how to live life to his audience he explains at the end that he is passing

this message on to his own children who will see it when they are older. Randy Pausch is demonstrating all the qualities of self-empowerment, as described previously, and is taking his life into his own hands.

I believe that I have been in situations whereby I have felt self-empowered. When Nigel, my manager, resigned, he was not replaced for two years and I was in a position whereby I took on greater responsibilities. I wrote the following two years after Nigel left:

As manager of the SEN team, the impact of the Head of Service leaving with no permanent replacement, has been significant in many ways. It has been a time which has involved taking on responsibilities over and above my role as manager, making decisions over and above my role as manager and leading a team through a time of significant political changes in special educational needs. It has been a time of stress, anxiety and frustration but it has also been a time that I have felt empowered and have thrived on the responsibility given to me...

Throughout this time, I was well supported by the Interim Head of the Education Outcomes Service who was in place for a few months and then by a Senior Manager who took on the role of Interim Lead for SEN for a period of time until a Head of Service was appointed.

(Reflective Journal, 13th March 2015)

I now give two examples of the responsibilities I was undertook whereby I felt empowered. The first refers to the Case Review Action Meetings (CRAM) which were held weekly to discuss serious cases and to make decisions on the way forward. The second concerns the special schools in the local authority being filled to capacity.

- Case Review Action Meetings (CRAM)

One of the first responsibilities that myself and the two Senior Inclusion Officers took on was the decision-making at the Case Review Action Meetings (CRAM). These meetings had always been held weekly and were held to discuss 'serious' cases and decisions made as to the way forward. Frequently, discussions revolve around school placements which have broken down, and with no provision locally, whether to place a pupil in an out of authority independent special school at a significant cost, or it could revolve around a mainstream school which may be refusing to take a pupil because of challenging behaviour. Discussions and issues are many and various. Previously, meetings would consist of the SEN manager, the two Senior Inclusion Officers and the Head of Service. We were now without the Head of Service and at first felt vulnerable. Personally, I felt that between us and with a collaborative approach and collaborative discussions, we could make informed decision.

Over the two years, we continued to meet weekly. In that time, we became more and more confident in our decision-making and did not feel the need to involve a more Senior Manager. For my part, although I know that the two Senior Inclusion Officers felt the same, as long as we were living our values and putting the children first with regard to our decision-making, then I could bear the responsibility of whatever decision was made. However, decisions were never made lightly. We considered all options available and there were significant costs to consider. After thrashing out each option, a decision would be made as to the way forward. These meetings have been mentally stimulating and with each difficult decision made, I have felt a great source of satisfaction, in that 'no stone has been left unturned' in coming to the best way forward for each child. I have felt empowered in that I have been enabled to take on that responsibility and have had the confidence of the senior manager to do so. Whilst I have felt the 'burden' of the decision-making, I have felt that I can live with each decision because it has been made with the child in mind, and that has been my guiding principle.

(Reflective Journal, 13th March 2015)

I would now like to give a specific example, discussed at CRAM, of when, initially, my principles were challenged. I explain my stance and how, following discussions with all concerned, a decision was made in what I believed was in the best interests of the young person. The example concerns a case when a head teacher permanently excluded a pupil with a Statement of SEN. Permanent exclusions of pupils with a Statement of SEN or an EHC plan is a cause for concern and can be avoided. In order to address this, the local authority requests that schools inform us if a placement is breaking down; that a review is held and a local authority representative be invited to the review. In this way, reasons for the breakdown can be discussed, present provision can be examined and further funding and support can be considered or a placement at another school may be deemed as the most appropriate way forward for the pupil. Following this procedure, a permanent exclusion can be avoided. Whilst most schools adhere to this protocol, some do not.

I was informed that a pupil with a Statement of SEN had been permanently excluded from a mainstream school. I contacted the head teacher and asked if I could meet with him to discuss his reasons for the exclusion and for him to consider withdrawing the exclusion. He agreed to meet with me and following the meeting, agreed to hold a review with consideration to withdrawing the exclusion pending the outcome of the review. On reading the paperwork, and in having discussions with those attending the review, including school representatives, the pupil, parents and specialist teachers, it appeared that the school had put in the provision as stated on the Statement of SEN. Specialists had been involved, the pupil's progress had been monitored over time, the school had put in funding from their own resources over and above that which the local authority had put in place, yet the pupil's behaviour had deteriorated. Suggestions were put forward to increase funding to put more support in place and further specialist involvement, however, it was felt that a placement at a local behaviour special school would be the most appropriate way forward and in the best interests of the pupil. The head teacher agreed to withdraw the exclusion if such a placement could be confirmed. Further discussions took place with the head teacher of the special school who agreed to take him, and the pupil was taken off roll of the mainstream school and placed on roll at the school for pupils with behavioural difficulties.

- Special Schools in the local authority being filled to capacity.

One of the biggest issues in this authority and one that is reflected nationally, has been that our special schools have been filled to capacity. This issue would previously have been taken on by the Head of the Education Inclusion Service but I have taken on this role because of my understanding, knowledge and experience in SEN and have worked in liaison with the Interim Lead in SEN (my manager) and have felt empowered by the experience. Of huge concern has been the escalating costs of placing pupils out of county resulting in a huge deficit budget.

When I started to realise that we were placing more and more pupils out of authority at significant costs, I raised this with my manager and have since been involved with him and the Senior Leaders as to how to address the issue.

(Reflective Journal, 13th March 2015)

I believe that these two examples, 'CRAM' and 'Special Schools in the local authority being filled to capacity' demonstrate self-empowerment as described by Jordaan (2012) in that I found myself in situations to which I had to respond. I felt confident in my knowledge of SEN and I felt confident in the knowledge of the two Senior Inclusion Officers with whom I closely worked. I also felt that our values aligned, in that at the heart of any decisions made, were the children and young people with SEN. I enjoyed very much being involved in and learning more about the complex strategic issues in the authority. I also developed very good inclusional working relationships with a wide range of colleagues that I would not have otherwise met. The new Head of Service was appointed in June 2015 when it was agreed with which SEN responsibilities I would continue.

3.3.1 My role as a statutory SEN manager

I became a statutory SEN manager in 2011. The purpose of my job as stated in my job description is as follows:

- Under the direction of the Head of Service, ensure that the SEN team is effectively organised and managed to enable the Authority to meet its statutory responsibilities for children and young people with special educational needs. This involves the identification of special educational needs and arrangements of appropriate provision within allocated budgets.
- To support the Head of Service in the strategic development of the SEN team area of responsibility. Write, update and review policies and report to elected members. Interpret and advise on changing legislation. Plan and develop working practices in line with relevant legislation and efficient service delivery. Monitor and manage the extensive budgets relating to SEN.
- Promote inclusive practice across the Local Authority through the development and implementation of strategic initiatives such as the Inclusion Quality Mark, training and development of SENCOs etc

(Job Description of Statutory SEN Manager, March 2011)

The job is complex requiring considerable knowledge, experience and attributes. Significant decisions are required to be made in accordance with the law. Does a child or young person require an EHC plan or prior to the new SEN legislation in England, 2014, does a child or young person require a Statement of SEN? If so, how much funding is required to meet the provision in the plan or Statement of SEN? What is the appropriate placement for the child or young person in accordance with parental wishes; is it special school or mainstream school?

Besides the decision-making aspect of the job, the team needs to be managed. As stated previously, there has been a significant increase in numbers in the team to match the increasing demand. Also, relationships have to be established with all stakeholders: schools, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, social workers, parents, carers, children and young people.

I perceived the job to be hugely responsible and I remember reflecting at the time why I would want to take on such a job and whether I would be able to do it. My writings at the time reflect my thinking:

Do I feel daunted by this? A little! However, I just feel driven to do the job. I was driven to apply for it and now I am driven to do the best I possibly can for children and young people within the resources available. Where does this drive and desire come from? I am not sure but it is something I have felt all my career regarding children and young people with SEN.

Having the opportunity to be a statutory SEN manager was more than I would have ever hoped for.

3.3.2 My vision as a manager of the SEN team

At the time, I wrote what my vision was as statutory SEN manager:

My vision as a manager of the SEN team is to have a team whereby the individuals within the team feel empowered. In order for this to happen I do believe that members of the team should be allowed to take the initiative and to take on responsibilities as according to their interests and strengths. This means that as a manager, I have to allow them to have control in their particular areas of strength for them to develop as they see fit. I want to see a team 'grow' as individuals; to feel that they are making a contribution because of what they have to offer. I want them to feel proud of what they are doing and proud to be a part of the team...

Nothing gives me more pleasure than to see people grow; to see the happiness they feel when they are achieving and nothing makes me sadder than to see people unmotivated or even worse, stifled. I enjoy the energy that is created when people take on responsibilities and see their contributions being valued.

(Reflective Journal, November 3rd 2011)

Thus, I determined that as a statutory SEN manager, I wanted the team to feel empowered; I wanted them to capitalise on their talents, interests, strengths and motivations and I wanted to see the team 'grow'.

Whilst the notion of empowerment is significant to me for reasons given, not all managers or team members may regard it as so important. Fundamentally, many managers may feel that to empower others may mean losing power oneself; in this sense, power may be seen as 'zero-sum' and perceived as a 'win/lose' situation:

My power-over you, plus your absence of power, equals zero (thus the term, 'zero-sum'). I win and you lose. For you to gain power you must seize it from me. If you can, you win and I lose.

(Laverack, 2005, pp. 31-32)

Kanter (1981) highlights this issue of power, in that managers may not want to give up the power that they have; that many middle managers may already feel powerless and consequently may be resistant to any processes which take away the limited authority they may already have. Much of the literature on empowerment (eg. Ransom, 1994)) suggests that middle managers may be resistant to empowerment because of fear; a fear of a loss of control, a loss of power and possibly a loss of their position. Some managers may perceive that having power maybe necessary to do their jobs and that some feel a great satisfaction when they were more punishing in their approach (Hollander and Offermann,1990). Thompson (2007) however, believes that the idea of empowerment involving the giving away of power, is a fallacy in that power is not something that can be possessed in a physical sense. Rather, power is about:

dispositions, institutionalised patterns, relationships and structures and, in order to appreciate the complexities of power and empowerment, we have to look at matters in a much more sophisticated way than just seeing empowerment as 'giving away' power.

(Thompson, 2007, p.60)

Thompson concludes that this idea of giving away power is dangerous, misleading and oversimplified, but it is a view that is widely held. Foucault (1978) too, does not see power as something that can be 'given away'. He sees power as a relational force inherent in all social bodies which are connected by mutual influence. It is not something which stands alone and possessed by an individual to achieve certain outcomes:

Power is not something that is acquired, seized or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations.

(Foucault, 1978, p.94)

Thus, Foucault's notion of power is that it is ever present and not something that can be fought for and over.

Fear is a theme which emerges in Lowe's (1994) research into empowerment in that junior staff fear punishment as they are unused to taking risks; they feel fear of failure and not being supported should things go wrong; and they fear losing their job should they make mistakes or that they are not needed. Greasley *et al.* (2005) highlight the fact that employees may feel fear with increased levels of responsibility and accountability.

Many managers may resist the idea of distributing their power and involving the team in decision-making as it is the manager who has the ultimate responsibility should things go wrong (Hollander and Offermann, 1990). As Kanter also points out, encouraging participation and involving the team in decision-making is time-consuming and making decisions autocratically is less time-consuming than making decisions democratically. Giving team members responsibilities and involving them in decision-making, may also mean that members attend team meetings which may also be time-consuming. Managers and team members alike may feel that this investment in time may not be worth it and team members may feel that they are inadequately paid for the extra responsibility.

Klagge (1998) summarises comments from a focus group of middle managers in his research. One of the responses refers to what empowerment is not:

The authority to do anything one wants regardless of job descriptions, supervisor directions, span of control, or assigned responsibilities. Neither is it the ability to "job dump" or "scape goat".

Conversely, they describe empowerment as:

The way of the future which places the responsibility for decisions and actions at the lowest possible level within the organization and gives that level the tools, resources and authority needed to decide and act.

As Klagge points out, there are certainly positive benefits to the organisation and also to the employee with regard to empowerment. For example, for the organisation,

there may be increases in productivity and strategic effectiveness; and for the employee, the benefits may include personal growth, professional development and improved morale. However, there are challenges for management, in that there may be a threat to jobs and those who survive face such challenges as changed responsibilities, increased communication and a reduction in their decision-making. The challenge for employees is that there may be a threat of being 'dumped upon' as managers delegate possibly difficult responsibilities under the notion of empowerment.

Conger and Kanungo state that whilst there are many positive aspects to empowerment, there may also be negative effects, in that 'subordinates' may become overconfident and as a result, misjudgements may be made which could result in tactical or strategic errors. In this respect, they suggest that perhaps a process of checks and balances may need to be put in place.

It is through thinking of my role as a manager and how I wish to empower my team that I started to explore the notions of 'power over', 'power to', 'power with' and 'power from within'. Lukes (1974) and Morriss (2002) refer to the terms, 'power over' and 'power to'. Morriss considers the difference between 'power over' and 'power to' and states that whilst someone has the 'power to' get someone to do something, that it is not natural to claim that someone has 'power over' another to do something.

Thompson (2007), in his discussion on power and empowerment, takes up four notions of different types of power. He refers to 'power to' as a means of individuals achieving their goals and helping people to achieve their potential. 'Power over', he explains, is to do with unequal power relations or relations of dominance. He distinguishes between a 'power over' which is socially legitimate, for example, in the context of child protection and to which he refers to an exercise of authority, as opposed to a 'power over' whereby individuals may be abused and oppressed. 'Power with' is a means of creating a collaborative approach with people working together and in partnership, whilst 'power from within' refers to the notion of resources which includes the inner resources of an individual which is to do with an individual's strength and resilience that can be drawn upon.

Laverack (2005), in his articulation of empowerment and power in Public Health also refers to the notions of 'power over', 'power-from-within' and 'power with' and his view is very much in line with that of Thompson. He sees that whilst 'power over' can be seen as dominance and hegemonic, it does not necessarily need to be viewed negatively; like Thompson, he gives what he describes as a 'healthy' 'power over' with legislation being in place to control diseases through quarantine. Whilst Laverack sees 'power over' as resource dependant and being 'capacity' reliant on some form of material product, he feels it ignores that power is also to do social relations which includes the relationship that one has with oneself which he refers to as 'power from within'. Like Thompson, Laverack views 'power from within' as a personal power to do with self-esteem, self-knowledge and self-discipline. He sees it as a means of empowerment whereby the individual gains a sense of control over their lives. He highlights the views of Wartenberg (1990) who contends that in male-dominated societies, women still have power, the 'power from within'. Laverack relates these two forms of power with the notion of 'power with':

Power-with describes a different set of social relationships, in which power-over is used carefully and deliberately to increase other people's power-from-within, rather than to dominate or exploit them. Power-over transforms to power-with only when it has effectively reached its end, when the submissive person in the relationship has accrued enough power-from-within to exercise his or her own choices and decisions. The person with the power-over chooses not to command or exert control, but to suggest and to begin a discussion that will increase the other's sense of power-from-within.

(Laverack, 2005, pp. 30-31)

Laverack describes this transformative use of 'power over' as a means whereby self-discipline and self-vigilance is required by all in the relationship, especially by the more dominant person to ensure that 'power over' does not become a form of domination.

Both Thompson and Laverack relate each of these forms of power to the notion of empowerment and both see an intertwining of these different forms of power, some greater than others at different times, in empowering practices. As Laverack explains, in the relationship between the practitioner and client, when developing an empowering professional-client relationship, 'power over' is carefully and

deliberately used to increase the 'power from within' of their client. And as Thompson articulates in his explanation of 'power from within' whereby professionals can draw on people's strengths and inner resources:

If people do not have sense of 'power from within', it is unlikely that they will feel comfortable with maximising their 'power to', resisting 'power over' and playing a positive role in 'power with'

(Thompson, 2007, p.63)

Thompson further highlights the fact that the notion of 'power from within', whilst playing a central role, has featured very little in the literature on empowerment. As stated previously, this notion of a 'power from within' very much resonated with me as I explored my role as manager and in coming to an understanding of what empowerment meant to me.

Empowering people is very much central to the philosophy of Buddhism which takes as its stance that individuals have the power and capacity within themselves to overcome suffering and to become stronger because of it. The philosophy is based on the belief that individuals have tremendous reserves of compassion, creative energy, wisdom and courage. In Buddhism, the relationship between a mentor and disciple is fundamental to the development of the human being. The mentor reminds and reassures the disciple of the capacity within them of the potential for growth and the recognition of unrealised possibilities. The mentor provides inspiration to the disciple not merely through teaching but by their own way of being. The empowerment of others is the focus of a mentor's life; a mentor helps them to perceive their own weaknesses and address them with courage (Soka Gakkai International, 2010). I liked the idea of the recognition of the fact that the power lies within the individuals themselves.

As a manager, it may be seen that I have 'power over' as in the hierarchical structure within the organisation. My perception is that I have the 'power to' encourage people to realise their strengths and talents. I can use the notion of having the 'power with' team members to work collaboratively with them and in partnership to draw out and enable their 'power from within'. The idea of empowerment, for me, is very much entwined with how I view relationships; how I relate to others and how others relate

to me. This view of empowerment also aligns with my values of having a respect and regard of the other and the idea that everyone has something to give. As a manager, I want to empower people in the sense that I want to enable their 'power from within', whether that be their knowledge, skills, talents or motivation. I want people to have a voice, to be involved in decision-making and to be given opportunities to 'grow'. Whatever, challenges I may face, I am driven to live this value of empowerment and to create conditions for this to happen. This is my stance on empowerment as evidenced throughout my thesis.

In exploring empowerment in my role as manager, I was drawn to the idea of Servant Leadership. But what does this mean? Is it a contradiction in terms? How can a person be a servant and a leader? When I first heard the term 'Servant Leadership', I felt off-put by the word, 'servant'. I equated the word, 'servant' with being servile. I did not perceive the concept of Servant Leadership as being of an equal relationship between the manager and the team. The word 'servant' seems to imply subservience and this, as a manager, is not what I was about – the idea of me being subservient to my team or conversely, they being subservient to me, did not fit with the person I am or the manager that I am. I do not align myself with the idea of power relationships in this sense. In my relationship with others, whether I am a manager, a friend or a mother, I am about respecting the other for who they are; I see us as different with differing strengths and weaknesses, differing gifts and talents. Whatever, we all have something to give and to offer.

As I enquired further into Servant Leadership, I came to see leadership as not necessarily taking charge or being the dominant person, rather it fitted in with my idea of empowerment, that is, being an enabler. Also, I began to question the idea of being a servant. What is the leader a servant of? Is the leader a servant to the needs of others or rather is the leader a servant of a cause? If being a servant to the needs of others, what are those needs? Do I identify those needs or does the individual identify their needs? A servant leader could also be a servant to a cause. I am reminded of the words of Lilla Watson (1985), quoted in an email (2nd August 2010) by a colleague responding to practitioner-researchers discussing Servant Leadership:

If you've come to help us, we don't need your help.
But if you've come because your liberation is bound up
With ours, then let us work together.

Thus, more and more, I was beginning to see Servant Leadership as working with others, sharing with others, having a vision and sharing goals; everyone using their talents, sharing information and learning from mistakes (McGee-Cooper and Trammell, 2002). I like the way that Covey (1997) equates Servant Leadership with empowerment:

You've got to produce more for less and with greater speed than you've ever done before. The only way you can do that in a sustained way is through the empowerment of people. And the only way you get empowerment is through high-trust cultures and through the empowerment philosophy that turns bosses into servants and coaches...Leaders are learning that this kind of empowerment, which is what Servant Leadership represents, is one of *the* key principles that, based on practice, not talk, will be the deciding point between an organisation's enduring success or its eventual extinction.

(Covey, 1997, p.xi)

The concept of Servant Leadership dates back to the 4th century BC. when Kautilya (1915), also known as Chanakya, an Indian statesman and philosopher, chief advisor and Prime Minister of the Indian Emperor Chandragupta, the first ruler of the Mauryan Empire, refers to the king as a paid servant who enjoys the resources of the state together with his people. The idea of Servant Leadership can also be found in the New Testament of the Holy Bible:

But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

(The Holy Bible, Luke. 22:26, King James version)

Throughout the New Testament, we read about the works and actions of Jesus who very much comes across as one who is wanting to serve his people. An example of this is when Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. This is a humble act demonstrating Jesus' love and compassion. Also, books on Islam refer to the leader of a people being their servant, for example:

In Islam, the leader of people is supposed to be the servant of the people, and as was his wont, this King of Islam was out that night to ascertain for himself the weal and woe of his people.

(Khan, 1964, p.83)

Alan Rayner, previously a lecturer at Bath University and responding in an email to practitioner-researchers discussing Servant Leadership (email 3rd August 2010) draws the distinction between ‘leading with servility’ which he equates with doing what is bidden, and ‘leading with humility’ which he equates with responding receptively and reflectively to need. He is of the opinion that Servant Leadership refers to the latter rather than the former. Also, that servility serves totalitarianism and hierarchy whether from top down or bottom up, however, he feels that humility does not. He continues that there is no absolute ‘top’ or ‘bottom’ in natural inclusional geometry, rather that there is only radial and tangential; ‘figural’ and ‘transfigural’; local and non-local. He attaches the following poem, which he has written and clarifies his views:

Humility of the Valley

Life doesn't strive
To secure its foundation
Upon the rocky serrations of the High-minded
Where Men build castles in the air
To furnish that false sense of superiority
Which comes from the pretence
Of overlooking all around
To the edge of infinity

Life thrives
In the seclusion of the valleys
Where dampness accumulates
In the earthy humidity
Of humility
Warmly tucked in
To the bed of sea and land
Rich with variety
Exuding
Intruding
Out and into the cosiness
Of each lovingly enveloped
In the other's influence

Wisdom cannot be found
On peaks of adaptive fitness
Running with Red Queens
But only in that radiant depth
That reaches everywhere
Through the heart of somewhere.

Robert Greenleaf (1970) adopted the phrase, ‘Servant Leadership’ and states:

The servant-leader *is* servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is *leader* first perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions... The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature...the difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that the other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? *And* what is the effect of the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?

(Greenleaf, 1970, p.6)

I believe that there are many factors about Servant Leadership which I find appealing which aligns with my idea of empowerment. But, as with empowerment, these factors are borne out of the values I hold and the way that I perceive relationships.

Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas (1995), who investigate empowerment and its relevance to management and organisations, provide us with the characteristics associated with the states of empowerment and disempowerment as shown in Table 3:

| Associated with empowerment | Associated with disempowerment |
|---|---|
| Accepting of responsibility Being active Boldness Creative Energetic Enjoys life Happy Healthy Imaginative Independent Individualistic Innovative Interesting Motivated Prepared to take risks Observant Satisfied with job Sensitive to subtleties Uses full potential as a human being Uses intelligence to the full | Avoiding taking responsibility Being passive Timidity Conventional Lethargic Gets little joy out of life Depressed and miserable Many health problems Dull and unimaginative Dependent Conforming Sticks to routines Dull and boring Unmotivated Reluctant to take risks Unobservant Frustrated in job Not sensitive to subtleties Uses only a fraction of potential Does not use intelligence to the full |

(Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas (1995, p.27)

Table 3 States of empowerment and disempowerment

It may be obvious that the characteristics of empowerment as provided by Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas above, are the characteristics that may be sought in individuals by companies and conversely, the characteristics of disempowerment are not conducive to the development within companies. The characteristics of empowerment is what I wanted to nurture within the SEN Team.

Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas suggest that there are two aspects to becoming empowered, the first is concerned with the objective, whereby consideration is given to what we are authorised or given permission to do, and the second is concerned with our own personal perception of the power that we have been given. They further explain that the two may not necessarily match, as the individual's understanding of them being empowered may be greater than that they have been given, thus they may be seen as overstepping the mark. Conversely, if their sense of empowerment is not as great as that which they have been given, they may be perceived as not pulling their weight or not making the contribution which is expected of them. Liu, Chiu and

Fellows (2007) also, define work empowerment as being multi-dimensional in nature, involving the delegation of power by managers and then involving the perception and internalisation of this power by the individuals. Later in the chapter, I explore members of the team's understanding of empowerment and ask whether they feel that they are being empowered and what it means to them.

3.3.3 The SEN team

When I became a statutory SEN manager, the team was very established and had been working with each other for a number of years. The team consisted of two full-time Senior Inclusion Officers, one of whom had been newly appointed, two full-time Senior Case Officers, one of whom had just become a part of the team, one full-time Case Officer and two part-time Case Officers. One part-time administrative officer worked with the team. Each was very knowledgeable in what they were doing. One of the previous managers who had been in place for a number of years had built up the team over time, putting in processes and systems which enabled the team to work efficiently and effectively. Thus, I was taking on a team whose knowledge of the systems and processes was far greater than mine. We are a statutory service and they were fully aware of the timescales in which they had to work and they took much pride in meeting those timescales. Getting out a final Statement of SEN within twenty-six weeks had to be reported to the Department of Education and our results were excellent in achieving this. The team was also fully aware of other statutory regulations with which they worked.

After some time as their manager, I spoke to the team about my research; about living my values through my practice and the emergence of the notion of empowerment; the development of myself and the team and the influence on children and young people with SEN and their families. The team was very interested and some started to do some research themselves on empowerment. One of the Senior Inclusion Officer's in the team decided on her own initiative to do some reading on empowerment. She then sent me the following piece of writing which came as a surprise to me as I had not expected it:

EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment of staff, although paramount to creating a successful working environment can only work in my opinion if it is a two way process involving trust both on the part of the manager and the staff.

I firmly believe that my manager, Christine Jones empowers me and the rest of the team by bringing her personal values for life into the work place.

The most important value for me is trust. Susan Heathfield¹ puts trust as the No. 4 in her top 10 empowerment list:

“4. Trust People

Trust the intentions of people to do the right thing, make the right decision, and make choices that, while maybe not exactly what you would decide, still work. When employees receive clear expectations from their manager, they relax and trust you. They focus their energy on accomplishing, not on wondering, worrying, and second-guessing.”

Chris trusts me to do my job, to monitor a budget of £1.4m, make decisions, etc without questioning or monitoring everything I do. The trust is that if I have a query or problem I will raise this with Chris but unless this arises there is no need for Chris to oversee what I am doing. This makes me feel that I can do my job to a high enough standard, gives me self-confidence and the knowledge that the support is there when or if I need it.

Trust is a two-way process, as I believe all empowerment is. The team that I work with is also very supportive and trusting of my decisions. They also feel comfortable enough to voice their opinions when they differ from mine. To enable them to do this shows that I trust and want to hear their opinions. They also trust me and know that I will listen and make a final decision based on everything I have heard. Chris is also prepared to listen to me and trust

my judgement so that we can discuss our work and come to a mutually agreed decision. In this way, we trust each other.

Absolute trust is a very empowering emotion but will only last as long as it is not abused. Once trust is broken it can be very hard to repair, damaging work relationships. To empower an employee that has broken your trust would take a very “brave” person. Chris lives and works by her values and would find a broken trust very disappointing, however, I believe that if it were at all possible Chris would work very hard to reinstate her trust of the person concerned by supporting them and working with them.

In some extreme circumstances, though once trust is broken this can lead to disciplinary measures and trust may never be able to be restored.

A further value that is important to me is No. 1 in Susan Heathfield’s top 10:

“1. Demonstrate that you value people

Your regard for people shines through in all of your actions and words. Your facial expression, your body language, and your words express what you are thinking about the people who report to you. Your goal is to demonstrate your appreciation for each person's unique value. No matter how an employee is performing on his or her current task, your value for the employee as a human being should never falter and always be visible.”

To live and work to this value is putting high expectations on the individual, but Chris demonstrates this on a daily basis. I know that Chris values me as a person through the way she talks to me, reacts and supports me. I also try to support her, again this is a two-way process in that Chris’s appreciation of me in turn means that I value her as a person and try to support her and treat her the same way; she treats me.

I firmly believe that it is Chris’s leadership of the team as a whole that leads to the mutual respect, support and trust that the team as a whole encompass.

Steve Farber² states the following which I believe are important aspects of the working environment that Chris has established within the SEN team:

“Your job as an Extreme Leader is to help create a culture so vibrant and healthy that when people wake up in the morning and think about the imminent workday, they won’t be overcome with a sense of dread and won’t doubt whether or not they can survive the day. Instead, they should be filled with hope and the knowledge that they can bring themselves fully into their work and do something cool, something significant, something meaningful.

What is it that distinguishes a great company or organization from others as a desirable employer? Is it the salary and benefits package? Maybe. Could it be the company/org has a great reputation in its business sector and therefore is the presumed “best” place to work? Perhaps. Or, is it something more simple, and basic, such as it is a pleasant and professional place to work?”

Chris’s enthusiasm for this subject empowered me to write this and to look at my values.

When it comes to dealing with people in general, work colleagues, friends, parents, school staff, etc I do firmly believe that this quote from an ABBA song is very applicable:

“I believe in angels, something good in everything I see”

(¹Susan Heathfield is a Human Resources expert. She is a management and organisation development consultant who specialises in human resources issues and in management development to create forward thinking workplaces. Susan is also a professional facilitator, speaker, trainer, and writer.

² Steve Farber, author of Greater Than Yourself: The Ultimate Lesson of True Leadership, the president of Extreme Leadership, is a leadership consultant and speaker, and the author of the national bestseller "The Radical Leap, and The Radical Edge". He lives in San Diego, California.)

(Senior Inclusion Officer’s writing on empowerment, June 2013)

As in the discussion between Nigel and me on empowerment, the Senior Inclusion Officer writes about the importance of trust and, like Nigel and me, feels that it is a two-way process between manager and team members. She feels that we trust each other, in that I let her get on with the job and consequently, that gives her a lot of self-confidence. The Senior Inclusion Officer also feels that the members of the team that she supports, trust her. She highlights the importance of demonstrating that you value people and states that in our relationship with each other, we both demonstrate this, and that I demonstrate this in relationship with the team on a daily basis. She feels that I empower her and the team and bring my personal values into the workplace. I see this piece of writing as a demonstration of empowerment as living in the workplace; it is inclusive of all the team and inclusionary in the quality of relationships between us. I particularly like the Senior Inclusion Officer's reference to Steve Farber when he questions what distinguishes a great company from another as a desirable employer. He postulates that it could be something quite simple in that it could be a pleasant and professional place to work. I would hope that as a manager of the SEN team that this would be their stance.

Ongori (2009) highlights the benefits of employee empowerment to the organisation and the individual: that employees feel a part of the success of the organisation and feel valued through having opportunities in decision-making; empowerment creates a sense of belonging and builds commitment; employees develop a sense of trust through effective communication, and are a part of creating their own destiny whereby delegation, empowerment and education become the focus of the leader; employee well-being is improved and an organisation becomes more effective; employees are in a position to make quick decisions which result in better service delivery; good relationships develop between the employee and the customer which promotes a good image of the organisation. Nykodym *et al.* (1994) point to empowered employees as having less conflict and ambiguity in their role as they have a feeling of greater control and Mullins and Peacock (1991) argue that empowered employees feel a greater sense of job satisfaction, and are more highly motivated as they feel a greater involvement in the achievement of organisational goals.

After the Senior Inclusion Officer produced her writing on empowerment, I then decided to speak, specifically, with four members of the team about empowerment and video-recorded our sessions. These sessions took place between September 2013 and May 2014, prior to the SEND reforms of September 2014 when SEND Practitioners were then referred to as Case Officers. I chose a cross-section of people from the team. One was a Senior Case Officer – pre-16 (Team member A), another a Senior Case Officer – post 16 (Team member B), a SEN administrative officer (Team member C) and a Senior Inclusion Officer (Team member D). In choosing people with different roles in the team, I hoped to get a better understanding of the various perspectives of empowerment within the team. All agreed to be video-recorded and I gave them a written description of my research and also the consent form for them to sign. Prior to meeting up with them, I sent them a written list of areas we would cover when we met in order for them to prepare for our meeting. The list consisted of such notions as to how they felt empowered and what impact this had on them, the team and ultimately children and young people with SEN and their families. Also, I wanted to understand further what their understanding of empowerment was and whether they perceived empowerment to be ‘living’ within the team. I transcribed the four video-recordings and extracted video-clips to support evidence produced.

3.3.4 What evidence has been produced from the meetings with the four team members?

In this section, I give examples that were described as to the four team members’ perceptions of empowerment; how they and the team members felt empowered and the influence on them, the team, schools, parents and children and young people with SEN. With each video-clip, I include a still image and a transcription of what is said in the video-clip. In viewing the video-clip, the reader is brought into that moment in time which gives the reader a sense of ‘being there and being with’ (Goldman, 2007, pp.30-32, cited in Jewitt, 2012, p.5) and is able to see the bodily movements, gestures (Jewitt, 2012) and expressions which a transcription or still image are not able to offer. I am of the view that the inclusion of video-clips gives a visual perspective which cannot be captured in still images or text alone. I believe that these video-clips demonstrate the inclusional relationships I have with the team members,

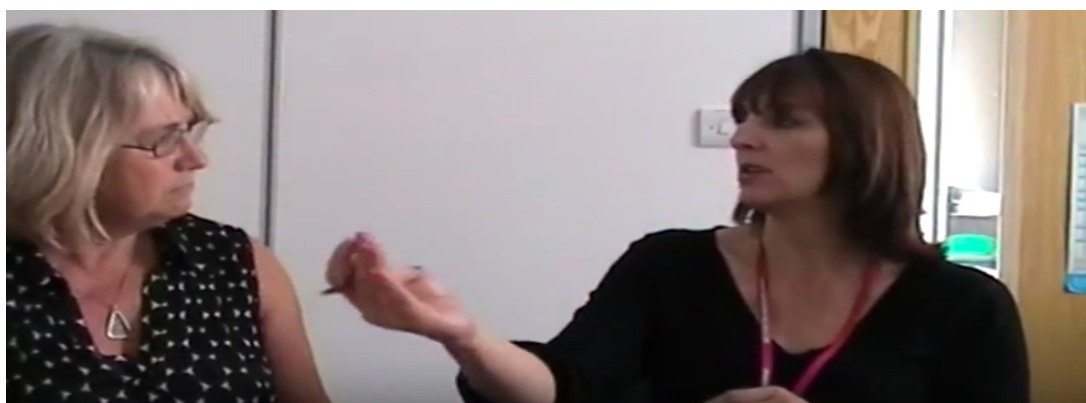
not only in what they say but also, in the way we relate to each other. Also, that the examples demonstrate inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

3.3.4.1 Team member A.

A. gives a number of examples of how she has felt empowered. Her first example refers to public speaking, when she and a Senior Inclusion Officer did a number of power-point presentations to a variety of professionals about how to set out their advice in their reports as this would be a great help to Case Officers who draw information from reports to compile Statements of SEN. A. feels that I have trusted her and that the experience has given her courage and has made her face her fears. She feels that the experience empowers you to do more. She states:

You've trusted me...and it's like you say, it's the courage and it's facing the fear – you do it once and you think, that wasn't too bad and then I suppose it empowers you to do more and it's making you face your fears, and giving you the courage to keep doing it. It's a challenge, isn't it?

Image 5 Team member A and Chris discussing empowerment



Video-clip 5 https://youtu.be/riYNS_runT4

The experience of speaking to professionals had a very positive influence on A. and she felt empowered by the very nature of interacting with professionals, and the fact that they were actually “taking notice” of what she was saying reaffirmed for her that she is an “expert in her field.” As a result of she and her colleague explaining to professionals how to set out their reports and advising them on quantity and

specificity, she felt that results have been very positive in that professionals are now writing reports in the style that enables Case Officers to write better Statements of SEN. Ultimately, this is having an influence on the child and young person in the setting as schools are “getting concrete, accurate information for them to be able to support the child in the setting.” A. explains that schools have informed her that they prefer the new format of Statements of SEN with objectives and provision being in tabular form reflecting the new format within the professionals’ reports; teachers are now able to follow Statements of SEN easier as they are “concise” and “they are going to be able to implement it better” which “is having a knock-on effect on the child.” A. stated that she has had a lot of feedback from parents on how well the Statements of SEN are written and how clear they are. A. takes great pride in writing effective Statements of SEN and refers to how things have changed:

I was looking back at an old Statement and the change since what we did a few years ago. I’m a bit embarrassed really because I’m sort of praising us all up here. I think our Statements are brilliant...I’m really proud of our Statements. When you look at our Statements compared to, you know, in comparison to other local authorities, I just think they shine...And I’m really proud of that.

A’s second example of how she has felt empowered or enabled to do her job is with regard to the SEN budgeting:

I feel enabled there – and that’s, sort of grown, as you know, we’ve been through quite a challenging year with the funding reform and it’s been constant change. Basically, you’re starting from square one with what we knew, how budgeting was before but I do feel empowered there because you trust me, you trust my knowledge and expertise with that even though I’m quite new to it as well.

A. states that she feels a “sense of ownership” (Lowe, 1994) with the responsibility; that she feels very confident when she goes to finance meetings in that she knows what she is speaking about and is able to challenge others at the meeting if need be.

She believes that because she is confident in her knowledge about budgeting that this has an influence on the Case Officers as she is able to advise them on the correct procedures and also that this has an influence on the parents who ring for information

and advice. Ultimately, she feels that the parents in this authority “feel that they can trust that we know what we are talking about.”

A. explains the third example whereby she has felt empowered and that is to do with her work with the Early Years Transition Funding. This work involves being a part of the Panel which makes decisions based on paperwork sent in as to which children with SEN should receive extra funding to support their transition from pre-school into school in order that they are better included in school. A. is a member of the Panel and keeps a list of all the children whereby it is agreed to issue funding and she keeps account of all the funding going out.

3.3.4.2 Team member B.

B. gives some examples as to how I recognise and enable the release of the talent in the team. Firstly, she refers to the SEN team meetings and she states that the team meetings are “an arena for discussion of ideas and it’s all very open.”

The second example that B. refers to is the way I walk around the office and talk to people to get their opinions:

...and the way that you are approachable enough to come up, and for me just to come up to you and say what I think and ask your advice, and that you actually ask open questions, like, “What do you think of this? What do you think this means?” and so on. I think it’s just your approach – it’s very empowering because it enables me to think, “Well, alright – Chris has sanctioned (me) to go away and think about that or to do that.”

Image 6 **Team member B and Chris discussing empowerment**



Video-clip 6 <https://youtu.be/yRTUPBVT9oo>

B. feels that I plant the seed and allow people to come to their own conclusions. She gives an example of the draft SEND Code of Practice (2014) being discussed at a team meeting when I invited everyone to give their own responses to the Draft Code. B. refers again to a previous team meeting when everyone was feeling nervous about the SEND reforms and I made it clear that the team would be consulted every step of the way. She felt that the team were very reassured by this. B. refers to the fact that everything is transparent in the team; that people talk openly in the office about everything and that the team are supportive of each other:

...it's being open, approachable; it does empower people to feel confident enough to express their opinions and I think it's that feeling that you're one of the team, that you're not this, sort of, someone stuck away in an office, you have to book an appointment to see-type person; it's very good and I think that really works in terms of empowering people enough to feel confident to express what they think.

The third example that B. gives of how I recognise and enable the release of talent in the team is my approach to interviews when interviewing for the Complex Case Liaison Officer and the SEN Case Officer. Besides the main interview Panel which consisted of myself and two Senior Officers in the team, I also arranged for a further

two Senior Officers to meet with the candidates prior to their interview to explain the posts in detail and to respond to any questions. These two officers would also take the candidates to meet the team and at the end of the day would feedback on their and the team's opinions of the candidates as to how they would fit into the team. At first B. states that she questioned whether too many people were involved in the process but concluded that "getting everyone on board with who is being appointed really worked. That was very good."

B. then gives examples of how she has personally felt empowered. B. speaks about the responsibility that she has been given in helping to set up a mentoring service in colleges for young people who are at risk of being NEET (not in education, employment or training). She feels she has been encouraged to be proactive; that her ideas were supported and that 'she has been able to run with it.' As a result, young people were beginning to engage with the service. She felt that the support I had given her made her feel that she is able to achieve more and that she can express ideas which are welcomed and taken on board. The impact, she believes, has been significant in that these young people have not become NEET or involved in the Justice system and are included in education. In this light, empowerment may be seen as strengthening of the individual's perception of their own effectiveness. This aligns with the ideas of Whetton and Cameron (1984) who see empowerment as a motivational factor to enhance self-efficacy thus enabling power to produce effects. From this it may be deduced that people who are empowered are more likely to be effective and their performance may be increased.

B. commented on the influence of being empowered and the influence it has on young people and families. She feels that she and the team are so motivated that all give 100% and that issues are dealt with quickly. She feels that the authority has a good reputation and that "the children and young people get the best possible service and best choices available to them because we are all at the top of our game."

3.3.4.3 Team member C.

C. feels that I enable her to make decisions and take control of her work; that I am supportive in everything she does and that she feels appreciated. She feels that I bring out the best and states that she has found this an absolutely, totally, different way of managing. Greasley *et al.* (2005) point to the benefits of empowerment; that whilst it may be beneficial to the organisation, it may also be beneficial to the individual as there may be reduced conflict and ambiguity in their role as they have greater control, thus there is less emotional strain on the employee (Nykodym *et al.*, 1994); also, that employees have greater motivation, job satisfaction and loyalty (Mullins and Peacock, 1991). C feels that her job is to support all of the team and to be the first port of call in the team for telephone calls from everyone including the public. She does not feel that she has a direct role in supporting and working with children, young people and families as have the Case Officers who follow a case through and develop a relationship with families.

About empowerment, C. states:

I read a bit about it and I think you do empower. I do feel that I am able to get on with my job, so I think you're ok with it (laughter). I think whatever you're doing, you're doing it right (laughter).

Image 7 Team member C discussing empowerment



Video-clip 7 <https://youtu.be/7ISPIeMLdsM>

C. states that sometimes parents ring up feeling very distraught and upset about their children and she is able to respond to them. She recalled one telephone conversation when a parent rung up who was very upset at the fact that her child had dyslexia; that the school had not recognised this and consequently, her child was falling behind. C. felt she was able to empathise with her and that the parent was very grateful and sent her an email thanking her.

3.3.4.4 Team member D.

D. speaks much about the value of empowerment and how she feels I empower her and the team. She agrees with my idea of empowerment in that the power is within the individual and refers to a piece of writing on empowerment that she did for me some time ago when she wrote about the importance of trust and demonstrating how you value people. She states:

I said about empowerment being a lot to do with trust, and I think it's a lot to do with trust because if you trust somebody to go and do something and you don't question it all the time, then you're empowering them because you're giving them that responsibility, you're giving them the feel that they can use

their own initiative...and I think you do that a lot and I think that that's the way that you do it with the team and with me...

Image 8 Team member D and Chris discussing empowerment



Video-clip 8 <https://youtu.be/UG-K5G-INIo>

D. refers to how she feels a member of the team has been empowered as a result of me giving her more responsibility because I trusted her to do a good job which has resulted in her feeling more confident in her ability. D. also refers to the development of our practice in the light of forthcoming SEN legislation and how I've empowered the team by assigning them to various working groups according to their interests and strengths:

It's made us all feel a part of it and empowered us and also, you've given it to the people related to the groups that talk to our talents or the talents that you think we have (and what is) relative to what you think their experience, knowledge, talents are which is great.

D. speaks about one of her strengths which is people skills and her ability to listen and to empathise with parents when speaking about their children because "(you know) that the child is their life, their world." She quotes one parent's response at the end of a meeting:

Thank you, you have listened to me. You have listened to what I had to say and you have taken on board what you can and I do feel listened to.

D. refers to another of her strengths which are her organisational skills and gives an example of how she worked at home to address her emails with no distractions “because I knew there were schools and parents who were desperate for responses from me...I can’t bear if I think there’s a parent sitting at home worrying about their child and waiting for me to respond.”

Again, D. speaks about the importance of trust. In her writing on empowerment, D states:

Chris trusts me to do my job, to monitor a budget of £1.4 million, make decisions, etc. without questioning or monitoring everything I do. The trust is that if I have a query or problem I will raise this with Chris but unless this arises there is no need for Chris to oversee what I am doing. This makes me feel that I can do my job to a high enough standard, gives me self-confidence and the knowledge that the support is there when or if I need it.

D. feels that I trust her in her ability to talk to parents and to make decisions about children “and that is how I think the biggest way that you empower me really.” She feels that she gets support from me which gives her confidence and in turn gives confidence to the parents. She feels that she can meet with parents and offer a variety of choices as to the way forward about their children and that I will not be critical of her suggestions. D. speaks further about meetings that she has attended when she has spoken with parents about outcomes for their children. (At the time, we were piloting EHC plans with the focus on ‘outcomes’ prior to the introduction of the forthcoming SEN legislation 2014). Their children are included in these meetings “and the little boy was there chatting and it was brilliant.” At one of these meetings a parent said that an outcome she would like would be for her to be able to sit down and read with her son, to share a simple book with him and for him to be able to read it with her because at the time he was unable to read. Another outcome she said she would like would be for him to write a card which said, ‘To mummy’, with his name on the card as he was unable to do that at the time. D. then ensured that these outcomes were included in his EHC plan and the provision to achieve these were discussed with the appropriate professionals and also included in the plan.

D. speaks further about the responsibility she has of the Transport Budget and the challenges it presents in overseeing that children and young people with SEN get the transport from home to school that they require and if necessary an escort to accompany them. Sometimes parent may ring up to say that the taxi has not turned up or that the taxi is late. It is then her job to contact the appropriate people to ensure that all is in place for the child to get to school and ready to learn. I know that D. takes these responsibilities very seriously to allay any further anxieties the families may have.

3.4 How do I explain my educational influence in my own learning and in the learning of others?

In this action reflection cycle, I have demonstrated an improvement in my practice through focussing on empowerment in my role as statutory SEN manager. On the realisation of the significance of empowerment, I have endeavoured to create conditions whereby the team may feel empowered. Through an exploration of the literature, I have clarified my stance on empowerment, and I summarise here, in that it is not about the transference or the giving of power to another. This aligns with Foucault's (1978) notion of power, whereby power is not something that is owned by someone, but rather, it is something that is always present and not to be fought over. This is very much the view of Thompson (2007) who does not see empowerment as the giving away of power and believes that this notion is a fallacy. Rather, it is about recognising and acknowledging the power within the other (Laverack, 2005; Thompson, 2007) whether it be their motivation, skills or talents. It is about managers presenting opportunities to employees and inspiring them to take them up (Clutterbuck and Kernaghan, 1994) and about creating a sense of belonging whereby employees develop a sense of trust (Ongori, 2009). Managers encourage people to use their initiative so that they feel excited about what they are doing (Hardy and Leiba-O' Sullivan, 1998). Thus, for me, empowerment is about enablement (Greasley *et al.*, 2004; Kanter, 1981; Laverack, 2005; Mazzei, 2014; Wenger, 2014), in that managers enable the release of power within individuals and create conditions for this to happen (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Laverack, 2005).

The four team members give many examples of how they have felt empowered through responsibilities I have given them and by my inclusive and inclusional way of being which gives rise to an empowering environment. In my discussions with the four team members the following emerged:

- All four members of the team felt that they were being empowered by me as their manager and that this was having an influence on them, the team, schools, parents and the inclusion of children and young people with SEN.
- Some members believed that a culture of empowerment was developing within the team with them feeling empowered and they also empowering other members of the team.
- Trust and respect for the other within the team were mentioned throughout.

Through my conversations with Nigel, my manager, and team members, I do believe that empowerment is 'living' within the workplace; it is a 'living' empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional. My manager empowers me, I empower members of the team, and members of the team empower each other, as according to their role. People can put forward their opinions in an open and honest environment. People feel included; they feel they have a voice and feel they have opportunities to develop their interests and talents (Clutterbuck and Kernaghan, 1994; Kanter, 1981; Wenger, 2014). Empowerment within the team is inclusional because of the quality of relationships we have with each other and those with whom we work including children and young people with SEN and their families.

Examples given by the four team members and my conversations with my manager respond to my research question and demonstrate how I am improving my practice in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which has an influence on me, my team, and ultimately, children and young people with SEN and their families. I believe that I am showing how my actions influence other people's learning and how their learning influences their actions (McNiff, 2017).

Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas (1995) allude to the work of Harrison and Stokes (1991) who identify that a culture of an organisation can promote empowerment or disempowerment. They describe four different types of cultures: power, role, achievement and support. The power organisation is hierarchical with obedience being the chief virtue rather than individuals being encouraged to take on responsibility and to use their initiative. In the role culture, employers have to abide by a system of structures and procedures which dictate how things should be done. Both these cultures can be seen to be disempowering. The achievement culture engages the individual who experiences considerable satisfaction as the rewards are not only financial, and they are perceived as being equal contributors to the success of the company. Finally, the support culture is very much based on mutual trust whereby the individual is valued:

A support culture fosters warmth and even love, not just driving enthusiasm. People like to come to work in the morning, not only because they like work, but because they care for the people they work with. Because they feel cared for, they are more human in their interactions with others; customers, suppliers, the public and their fellow workers (p.7).

(Harrison and Stokes, 1991, cited in Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas, 1995, p.30)

This support culture, as described by Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas, aligns very much with the Senior Inclusion Officer's view of 'the working environment that Chris has established within the SEN team' mentioned earlier in the chapter on her writing on empowerment.

Unlike the power and role cultures, the achievement and support cultures are empowering. Thus, Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas (1995) conclude that to create an empowered workforce, the following is required:

- Having organisational structures in place which facilitate empowerment;
- Creating an organisational culture of self-organised learners;
- A non-authoritarian approach to manager-subordinate relations in the company.

(Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas (1995, p.30)

I believe that these factors are inherent in the SEN team. We have organisational structures in place with which the whole team work and this is explained in Chapter 4; the team consists of self-organised learners who thrive on taking the initiative and being given responsibility as evidenced in my meetings with team members. As a manager, I do not take an authoritative approach with the team, rather, I am of the view that each has skills, knowledge and experience from which we all learn which I have emphasised throughout my research.

Examples given in this chapter also demonstrate that through being empowered, that this has an influence on children and young people with SEN and their families and our relationships with them. As stated above, in my discussions with four members of the team, families have confidence in us. I believe that we are working in an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment; inclusive because it is including of all and inclusional in how we relate to each other and children, young people and their families. This is an environment I want to nurture.

3.5 Summary

In this chapter, I have explored empowerment in my role as a statutory SEN manager. I began by researching into the literature on empowerment and determined an explanation which reflected my values. Through discussions with my manager and members of the team, all of which were video-recorded, I have determined that empowerment is 'living' in the workplace and it is an empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional. I have reflected on the educational influence in my own learning and the learning of others and clarify this further in Chapters 4 and 5.

In my next chapter, I express my concerns as a statutory SEN manager at a time of change with new SEN legislation being introduced. I conduct my second action reflection cycle and focus on further creating conditions for the team to feel empowered, but not only this, also, how this can be extended to our work in the local authority with children, young people with SEN and their families. Thus, I explain how I responded to the changes, how it influenced the team, and how we worked with children and young people with SEN and their families to ensure an environment of living empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional. I conclude

with an explanation of my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations.

CHAPTER 4 SECOND ACTION REFLECTION CYCLE: A REFLECTION OF MY CONCERNS AS A STATUTORY SEN MANAGER AT A TIME OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, I explored the notion of empowerment in my role as a statutory SEN manager. I explored the literature on empowerment and its articulation with the notion of power, and determined an explanation which resonated with my values. Following discussions with my manager and members of the team, I concluded that empowerment is 'living' in the workplace and it is an empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional.

In this chapter, I am seeking to clarify further my original claim to knowledge with my explanatory principle of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment and my contribution to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. This chapter includes reflections on my concerns as a statutory SEN manager at a time of significant change with the introduction of the new SEN legislation in England in September 2014, and referred to as the SEND reforms. I reflect on my feelings and perceptions about the forthcoming changes from the time I became a statutory SEN manager in 2011 through to the implementation of the reforms. I explain how I and the team responded to the reforms and how we worked with children and young people with SEN and their families to ensure an environment of living empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional.

Thus, I conduct my second action reflection cycle which shows a continued improvement in my practice in further developing an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. I focus, not only on empowerment within the team but empowerment within the authority as we work with children, young people and families. Firstly, I explain how I focussed on enhancing the team's involvement and sense of empowerment in processes to address the SEND reforms, for example, in involving members of the team in the work streams in order that they were a part of the evolution of the SEND reforms in the authority. In further developing an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment, I focus on the involvement and empowerment of children and young people with SEN and families

in the authority, for example, how I, in collaboration with others, developed the process whereby SEND Practitioners meet with children, young people and families to inform them of the statutory assessment process and to ascertain their views and concerns. Another example that I explain is the setting up of booklets for children, young people and families in order for them to have their say and for their views to be included in EHC plans.

In conducting this second action enquiry, I focus on the following questions:

- What is my concern and why am I concerned?
- What kind of data have I gathered to show the situation as it unfolds?
- How do I explain my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations?

Before focussing on the above questions, I begin by setting the scene of the reforms followed by my reflections leading up to the reforms and it is here that I begin to indicate my concern as to why I was concerned and what I intended to do about it.

4.2 Setting the scene of the SEND reforms

In September 2014, the SEND reforms were implemented following the Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3 of which focusses on SEN. The key changes about the new system are:

- Statements of SEN and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) to be replaced with EHC plans and to be available to children and young people with more complex needs from 0-25 years. Under the previous system, Statements of SEN were only issued to those children and young people between 2-16 years of age, in the main. Also, EHC plans to be completed within twenty weeks; Statements of SEN were required to be completed within twenty-six weeks. All Statements of SEN need to be transferred to EHC plans by April 2018.

- The Act, not only covers maintained schools, but academies, free schools, independent schools and colleges. Institutions must admit children and young people where named on the EHC plan.
- A greater focus on high aspirations and improving outcomes for children and young people.
- The categories of School Action and School Action Plus, under the previous legislation, to be replaced with SEN Support.
- Local authorities to publish and maintain a Local Offer which sets out information on education, health and social care provision that is available for children and young people with SEN or disabilities.
- The option of a Personal Budget for children and young people with an EHC plan if the parent or young person request it. The Personal Budget is the amount of funding identified to secure provision in an EHC plan.
- Joint planning and commissioning of services to ensure close co-operation between education, health and social care.

The Act places much emphasis on the involvement and participation of the child, parents and young people. The SEND Code of Practice (2014) refers to this approach as a person-centred approach and states:

By using this approach within a family context, professionals and local authorities can ensure that children, young people and parents are involved in all aspects of planning and decision-making.

(DfE, 2014, para. 9.23)

In speaking about the reforms following the introduction of Children and Families Bill in 2013, Edward Timpson, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, at a conference in London on 10th December, 2013 which I attended, referred to the reforms as a “change in culture”. Throughout this chapter I will be referring to this 'change in culture' and how I as a statutory SEN Manager responded to it.

4.2.1 My reflections leading up to the SEND reforms

On becoming a manager of the SEN team in 2011, I was fully aware of the changes and challenges that lay ahead and wrote at the time:

I am also aware that a number of challenges will be presented to the Service in the coming years which will have a significant impact on the Service mainly due to the outcomes of the Green Paper; also, the Restructure of the Service due to financial pressures at both local and national levels. The Service will need to respond to legislation developed as a result of the Green Paper. Of great significance will be the outcome of the proposal to put in place a new reformed assessment process for children with complex needs, with a single multi-agency approach and an 'Education, Health and Care Plan' for 0-25, to replace the current statutory SEN assessment and statement – to be in place by 2014. In the shorter term, the time limit for statutory assessments is to be reduced. Also, of significance, is the outcome of the proposal of the option of a personal budget by 2014 for all families whose children have an 'Education, Health and Care Plan'. There is to be a revised SEN Code of Practice to reflect changes made and the Service will need to respond to these changes... At this time of significant change, the SEN manager needs to ensure that the team remains focussed on the present statutory processes whilst ensuring that systems and processes evolve to respond to future legislation and developments within the Education Inclusion Service and Statutory SEN Service.

(Reflective Journal, 2011)

Whilst being concerned about responding to the changes in ensuring that statutory frameworks in line with the new legislation were in place, I was also concerned about the impact of these changes on the team. Fullan (2001) cites Lewin and Regine (2000):

It is time, say Lewin and Regine, to alter our perspective: “to pay as much attention to how we treat people – co-workers, subordinates, customers – as we now typically pay attention to structures, strategies, and statistics” (p.27).

(Lewin and Regine, 2000, cited in Fullan, 2001, p.53)

Fullan (2001) also cites Kouzes and Posner (1998):

What separates effective from ineffective leaders conclude Kouzes and Posner, is how much they “really care about the people [they] lead” (p.149).
(Kouzes and Posner, 1998, cited in Fullan, 2001, p.55)

4.3 What is my concern and why am I concerned?

I expressed my concerns about the impact on the team in my reflective journal in 2014. I begin by describing the context, then explaining my concern, why I was concerned and what I intended to do about it:

The context

I am managing a team at a time of significant changes which are about to take place in the coming year. As a manager, I want the team to feel empowered; to feel that their talents, skills knowledge and motivation are being recognised.

Over the years, processes, systems and procedures have been put in place to support the working of the team. The team like this, because they feel it helps them to do the best they can; if they have a query from professionals, schools or parents, if they adhere to the correct process, system, procedure, they ‘know’ they are giving out the right information. Also, it creates uniformity across the team; that everyone is following the same process, system, procedure; that we are all ‘singing from the same hymn sheet’. When a new procedure or policy is introduced, the team like to know about it immediately, so again, each SEN Officer can give out the same, updated information so that there is no confusion within the team, and our ‘customers’ are not confused either with mixed messages.

The new SEN reforms present significant changes to the way the team works and how they work with other teams. There will possibly be changes to the structure of team and there will be changes to policy and practice.

My concern

My concern is how I, as a SEN manager, can support the team through these changes to ensure a team that still feels empowered.

Why am I concerned? Why is this an important issue for me?

I am concerned because I am anxious that the team may lose confidence and feel disempowered. I am concerned because I believe that part of the security that the team feels is the result of processes, systems and procedures in place which have developed over time and that these now may be subject to change. I am concerned because the roles within the team may change and further skills within the team may need to be developed. How will the team respond to this? I believe that some will relish the opportunity whilst others may start doubting their abilities. Some may become very concerned about their future roles.

I am concerned about the role of the SEN team as we work with other services, for example, social care and health, because looking at the work of the Pathfinders, that is, those authorities which have been piloting and trialling the reforms, the implementation of the reforms have been very much led by social care, and SEN teams in other authorities have become very much disempowered with significant members of the SEN teams leaving. I have become further concerned when I have felt that the statutory aspects of the reforms are not being realised or given the significance required, especially with regard to the development of the Education, Health and Care Plan. Statutorily, very little is changing with the new reforms and the SEN team is very knowledgeable regarding statutory processes. Much work over the years has ensured robust statutory decision-making and much work has gone in to working with parents and listening to the voice of the parent. Tribunals, over the years, for example, have been at a minimum. As a team, we know the implications of ill-informed statutory decision-making, and, as a

manager, with the reforms ahead, it is essential that the voice of the SEN team in these matters is recognised.

What am I going to do about it?

I intend to fully participate in the development of the reforms and also to involve team members. The involvement of team members is essential, as I want the individual members within the team to have ownership of the developments and for their input to be a part of the evolution of the reforms. I do not want myself to be the only member of the team to be involved and to merely inform them of developments. I believe that the team's involvement will empower them as their voice is heard and their skills, experience and talents are utilised. At present, I am a member of the core steering group and also a member of each of the work streams. Various members of the SEN team are also involved in some of the work streams, depending on their interests, skills and knowledge.

To ensure the confidence of the team, and keeping them fully up-to-date with what is happening, SEN(D) reforms has become a standing item on the SEN meeting agenda since September 2013. This also gives team members the opportunity to air their opinions, doubts and concerns. It also gives me the opportunity to reassure the team.

A pilot is to be held in which each Case Officer will see a case through from the time a request for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment comes in to the completed Education, Health and Care Plan. I shall be monitoring this carefully and getting feedback from the Case Officers.

I intend to inform the team of any significant updates in between team meetings and I will ask them to speak to me if they have any concerns.

I intend to keep fully updated of the reforms by attending conferences and 'pathfinder' support.

Finally, I will have catch-up meetings with the Lead on SEN(D) reforms.

Thus, I was determined that I and the team would be fully involved in the implementation of the reforms in our authority.

Fullan (2001) describes change as follows:

Change is a double-edged sword. Its relentless pace these days runs us off our feet. Yet when things are unsettled, we can find new ways to move ahead and to create breakthroughs not possible in stagnant societies. If you ask people to brainstorm words to describe change, they come up with a mixture of negative and positive terms. On the one side, *fear, anxiety, loss, danger, panic*; on the other *exhilaration, risk-taking, excitement, improvements, energising*. For better or worse, change arouses emotions, and when emotions intensify, leadership is key.

(Fullan, 2001, p.1)

It was these mixture of emotions that was felt by myself and the team. As Fullan states, at a time of change, leadership is key. Fullan gives us a framework for leadership which consists of five components of leadership: pursuing moral purpose, understanding the change process, developing relationships, fostering knowledge, building and striving for coherence. Leaders, he explains, need to embrace these components with energy, enthusiasm and hopefulness. He states that if leaders follow this framework:

...the rewards and benefits will be enormous. It is an exciting proposition. The culture of change beckons.

(Fullan, 2001, p.11)

I shall now draw on data from the summer of 2013 when we first started addressing the reforms in our authority to the present day and how the reforms influenced how we have worked, in line with my drive to ensure an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

As manager of the SEN team and a member of the SEND Reform Steering Group, I needed to embrace this 'change in culture' and guide the team through to a successful implementation of the reforms. Campbell (2014) explains that managers

need to manage their own reaction to the changes as well as the team's reactions; they need to deal with uncertainty and manage increased workloads and the impact on the team. She stresses the importance of communicating effectively, reinforcing and integrating the changes and being a good advocate in order to lead the team confidently into the 'relative unknown' (p.80).

In the following section 'What kind of data have I gathered as the situation unfolds?', I will highlight aspects of what I did in managing the team through this time of change to ensure the involvement and well-being of the team. Also, I highlight how I and the team contributed to the involvement of parents, children and young people in the spirit of the reforms using person-centred approaches and in line with living inclusive and inclusionary empowerment.

4.4 What kind of data have I gathered as the situation unfolds?

4.4.1 The work streams

Development of the work streams began in the summer of 2013. A SEND Reform Steering Group was formed (work stream 6), and consisted of representatives across education, health, social care and parent carer forums. As stated, I was a member of the SEND Reform Steering Group which put me in a good position as to the development of the implementation of the reforms. Galpin (1996) states:

The steering committee should contain at least a few people from the organization's management who have decision-making authority but it does not have to be limited to management...Because a steering committee often includes senior members of an organization's management, it is usually not a full-time entity. Rather the team members establish a meeting schedule to review project progress, resolve issues, and make key decisions as needed.
(Galpin, 1996, p.20)

It was agreed that there would be six work streams and that a timescale would be in place and actions monitored on a regular basis by the Steering Group to ensure that

we were ready for the reforms. A meeting schedule was put in place. Campbell (2014) highlights the need to prepare for change:

Successful organisations prepare for change. They ensure everything that needs to be in place to support a change is ready by the time it is delivered. They place a strong focus on preparing both internal and external people and environments so that change can be adopted and embedded as easily as possible. Indeed, this concept of ‘readiness’ is at the heart of the need to *prepare* an organisation for change.

(Campbell, 2014, pp.168-169)

Each of the work streams was to be split into sub-groups incorporating people with the associated knowledge and expertise. As stated previously, I was also determined that SEN team members would be involved and included in the work streams and to take a lead in the sub-groups. As Fullan (2001) states:

Ultimately, your leadership in a culture of change will be judged as effective or ineffective not by who you are as a leader but by *what leadership you produce in others*.

(Fullan, 2001, p.137)

And Goleman (2002):

There are many leaders, not just one. Leadership is distributed. It resides not solely in the individual at the top, but in every person at every level who, in one way or another, acts as a leader to a group of followers – whatever in the organisation that person is, whether shop steward, team head, or CEO.

(Goleman, 2002, p.xv)

I am of the same view as Fullan and Goleman as I seek the talents, knowledge and skills within the team in line with my drive to create conditions whereby they feel empowered.

Throughout the year and beyond, the SEND Reform Steering Group met regularly to monitor each of the work streams to ensure that all would be in place by September 2014.

I am now going to focus on three of the work streams with which the SEN team were specifically involved and included, and I will demonstrate how a living inclusive and inclusional environment of empowerment continued to evolve to include the SEN team and children and young people with SEN and their families. The three work streams on which I focus are:

1. Engagement and Communication.
2. Integrated Assessment and Planning.
3. Workforce Development.

4.4.1.1 Engagement and Communication

The purpose of this work stream was established at our first meeting on 19th September 2013:

- To ensure effective engagement of all key stakeholders at all stages and in each work stream of the project.
- Develop and implement a project communication strategy.
- Establish webpages and other means of communication.
- Organise stakeholder events.

(Minutes of Engagement and Communication Work Stream Meeting, 19th September 2013)

It was the remit of this work stream to ensure that all stakeholders were updated on the SEND reforms and to inform them as to what progress was being made in the authority. It also encouraged stakeholders to contribute to the development of the SEND reforms. A website and Facebook page were set up devoted to the SEND reforms so that local authority officers and the public could access information easily. As early as October 2013, an event was held for parent/carers with input from the Assistant Director for the Council for Disabled Children, the strategic director of People and Communities in the authority and local authority managers including myself. This was the first of many conferences and briefings, not only for parents but for schools, including SENCOs and governors, local authority officers, health and social care officers.

Members of the SEN team were involved and included as ‘briefers’ to update stakeholders on the implementation of the reforms. Here is an extract of a letter sent to parents from myself, the SEND Reform Project Lead and Manager of the Family Information Service in the Summer Term, 2014, updating them on the SEND reforms and informing them of such briefings:

We are in the process of organising a number of school briefing sessions for parents to introduce the reforms and what they mean in practice – please look at our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/sendreform to find out about future sessions from September onwards.

A comprehensive **Introduction to SEND Reform training programme** has also been developed which will be open to the wider children’s workforce and parents to prepare for the forthcoming changes. The following sessions (all 9.30-2.30) have been organised:

Friday 5th September – Fosse Way School
Monday 22nd September – Fry’s Club, Keynsham
Monday 6th October – Fry’s Club, Keynsham

A two-day session on **Person Centred Practice** which is central to SEND Reform has also been organised:

Wednesday 24th and Thursday 25th September, 9.30 – 3.30 (Fry’s Club, Keynsham – *you must attend on both days in order to complete this training*).

All sessions are free and lunch and refreshments will be provided. Places are limited – if you would like to book a place, please visit www.bathnes.gov.uk/childrensworkforcetraining to download a booking form and return to childrens_workforcetraining@bathnes.gov.uk

Further details regarding these sessions will be updated on our Facebook page and our website www.bathnes.gov.uk/sendreform

Please find enclosed our SEND reform Jargon Buster leaflet which explains some of the terms and phrases which are key to understanding the reforms. Also enclosed is correspondence from Edward Timpson MP, Minister for Children and Families.

For more information about SEND reform follow the link to the Council webpages www.bathnes.gov.uk/SEND_reform.

If you have any questions regarding the reforms, please email SEND_info@bathnes.gov.uk

(Extract of a letter sent to parents, Summer Term 2014)

What I want to impress here is the commitment of the SEND Reform Steering Group with the support of senior leaders in the authority to involve and include all stakeholders including parents to ensure that they were fully informed, updated and involved in the evolution of the SEND reforms. It was at one of these events that stakeholders voted on the logo we have used for the SEND reforms in our authority.

A SEND Reform Conference for parents was held again in October 2014. Forty parents and sixteen professionals attended the event. Feedback was informative:

I was well-informed on things I wasn't aware of. Peace of mind and things I need to do.

Moved my understanding of where B&NES (our local authority) is and progress.

Thank you for providing much needed info to those who need it! A minefield for us SEN parents.

(Feedback from SEND Reform Conference, October 2014)

The SEND reforms, with its focus on person-centred approaches gave us the opportunity to create opportunities whereby parents and all stakeholders felt included and empowered. This emphasis is very much in line with my values to create conditions whereby individuals feel empowered. Being involved in most of the SEND reform work streams put me in a position to drive this forward in the authority.

My involvement of another work stream, 'Integrated Assessment and Planning', further demonstrates how my drive in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment was reinforced in the SEND developments to involve children and young people with SEN and their families

4.4.1.2 Integrated Assessment and Planning

This work stream looked at the processes and documentation to be put in place associated with EHC plans. We wanted to develop statutory processes focussing on person-centred planning and processes to involve more fully children, young people

and families in matters that concerned them. We saw person-centred planning and processes as the thrust of the reforms and we wanted to embrace it fully in how we involved children, young people and families. A timeline needed to be developed highlighting the process from the time an EHC needs assessment request came in to the completion of the EHC plan. As stated previously, the process was now to take twenty weeks, not twenty-six weeks as was the case with Statements of SEN. Documentation for the EHC planning process needed to be developed and a format for an EHC plan needed to be devised. Finally, a pilot of the EHC planning process was to be undertaken. As so much work needed to be covered with regard to this work stream, four sub-groups were formed with each group focussing on the following:

- a) The statutory process and timeline.
- b) The development of the documentation for the EHC planning process.
- c) The development of the format of EHC plans.
- d) The pilot of the EHC planning process.

Leads from each of the sub-groups, which had been drawn from the SEN team, met regularly to ensure developments dove-tailed with each other. Firstly, I focus on the development of our statutory process and timeline.

- a) The statutory process and timeline

The previous statutory timeline covered twenty-six weeks and was clearly described in diagrammatic form in the SEN Code of Practice (2001, para. 8:133) indicating the number of weeks each part of the process should take. Case Officers would be very much office-based, writing letters or speaking with schools, parents and advice givers on the phone, preparing and collating information for the SEN Panel in order for the Panel to make a decision as to whether to carry out a statutory assessment and if agreed, at a later stage, making the decision as to whether to issue a Statement of SEN. The SEND reforms, with the principles of promoting the participation of parents and young people in decision-making and in line with my notion of living inclusive and inclusionary empowerment, gave us the opportunity of re-thinking as to how to involve them within the development of our statutory processes. We were

eager that we wanted to meet more with parents, children and young people and decided that as part of the process, meetings would be set up with them, and that Case Officers, to be called, initially, SEND Lead Workers then SEND Lead Practitioners and finally, SEND Practitioners, instead of being office-based, would be a part of these meetings. The Lamb Inquiry (2009) had already highlighted a lack of parental confidence in the SEN assessment process and one of its recommendations, as stated in the Foreword of the report refers to increasing the voice of the parent:

- **A stronger voice for parents**

Parents have told us that *good, honest and open communication* is one of the important components of building confidence and good relationships. Face to face communication with parents, treating them as equal partners with expertise in their children's needs is crucial to establishing and sustaining confidence. Where things go wrong, the root cause can often be traced to poor communication between school, local authority and parent.

(DCSF, 2009, p.3)

Another recommendation includes the need to strengthen the voice of the child:

- **A more accountable system that delivers better services**

In a system characterised by extreme variation we cannot – and should not – have to rely on parents to police the system. To do this we need to ensure that we build in accountability at every level, from what children tell us through to national systems of monitoring and redress...The voice of the child needs to be strengthened within the system...

(DCSF, 2009, p.5)

At the end of a statutory process, we, the SEN team, has always asked parents/carers to complete a form, 'The Parent(s)/ Carer(s) Perspective' to elicit their views on the process. It is mainly a tick box exercise but question 4 asks, 'Please tell us what else we could have done to make the process easier for you?' Feedback from parents had shown positive responses:

Nothing. It was excellent.

(19th June 2013)

I found the process very easy to understand and all went very smoothly. I found everyone very understanding and helpful.

(1st July 2013)

I do not think you could have done anything to make the process any easier as the amount of support I received was fantastic and I cannot fault the department in any shape or form.

(4th July 2013)

Not all responses were as positive as the next response shows:

While I was able to tick mostly yes's on the above questions one critical element was not met for me during the whole process – and that was some of the appreciation of the anxiety levels I was experiencing and little understanding and empathy given as a result.

(21st October 2013)

However, if parents are not happy, the Senior Inclusion Officer, usually, will try to meet up with them if we feel it could make a difference, as the next response shows.

In this particular case, the Case Officer also attended the meeting:

I was unhappy with my daughter's proposed statement and contacted the Case Officer who arranged a meeting with herself and a Senior Inclusion Officer. This meeting was exceptionally helpful and productive. I felt listened to and my concerns were all addressed. I had not expected such helpfulness or such a proactive response to my concerns. Everything was sorted out quickly and efficiently, and the second proposed statement was perfectly acceptable. I was very impressed with the way my concerns were dealt with. Thank you.

(29th October 2013)

Whilst we felt that we already had a good relationship with parents and our processes, as such, were mainly agreeable to them, we saw the reforms as a means of strengthening our relationship with parents. I saw this as an opportunity whereby conditions could be created to make parents feel included and empowered and I saw the process as being inclusional in developing stronger relationships with parents.

Initially, it was agreed that three meetings would be set up with parents:

- Face to Face Meetings – to take place within six weeks of the process. It was agreed that SEND Practitioners would meet up with the parents and child or young person to inform them, in detail, of the process and to respond to any concerns they may have. Also, it was a good opportunity for parents to meet the person with whom they would be communicating throughout the process.
- Assessment Planning Meetings – to take place within twelve weeks of the process. These meetings were optional and gave parents and young people the opportunity to meet up with SEND Practitioners and other professionals involved if there were any further concerns.
- Outcomes Meetings – to take place within twelve weeks of the process. The purpose of these meetings was for the parents and child or young person, if they chose to, to meet up with the SEND Practitioner and all advice givers to discuss outcomes for the child or young person. Following the meeting, the SEND Practitioner would collate the outcomes and draw them up under Section E of the EHC plan.

Determining outcomes for children and young people with EHC plans was another thrust of the Children and Families Act 2014 (s.37) and its associated Regulations (The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations, 2014, (s.12)).

Previously, Statements of SEN had objectives which changed very little over time but now outcomes for the child or young person needed to be determined. The SEND Code of Practice (2014) gives guidance on outcomes:

EHC plans **must** specify the outcomes sought for the child or young person in Section E.

(DfE, 2014, para. 9.64)

An outcome can be defined as the benefit or difference made to an individual as a result of an intervention. It should be personal and not expressed from a service perspective; it should be something that those involved have control and influence over, and while it does not have to be formal or accredited, it should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART).

(DfE, 2014, para. 9.66)

Outcomes will usually set out what needs to be achieved by the end of a phase or stage of education in order to enable the child to progress successfully to the next stage or phase.

(DfE, 2014, para. 9.68)

Whilst the three meetings were set up initially, over time just one of the meetings remained as part of the process. The Face to Face Meetings were highly regarded by the parents and I highlight the feedback we received below. Parents told us how beneficial they were and how it helped them to understand the process; also, how good it was to meet the person with whom they would be speaking on the phone or via email during the process. SEND Practitioners also felt that these meetings were very productive and, likewise, felt that meeting the parent and sometimes the child or young person gave them a greater perspective and understanding of the parents', children and young people's views. It gave parents, children and young people the opportunity to engage with each SEND Practitioner in an inclusional way. Again, I draw on feedback which is highlighted later in the chapter. The offer of an Assessment Planning Meeting was rarely taken up as the Face to Face Meetings were so successful and parents or the young person could always phone the SEND Practitioner. The Outcomes Meetings discontinued after a year and I shall explain the reason for this later in this chapter. I have included examples of feedback we received from these meetings following the pilot of our EHC plans.

We now had a timeline we could work to however, we were concerned about the completion of the process within twenty weeks, especially with the added three meetings to arrange. We were also aware that the Pathfinders had completed very few EHC plans within twenty weeks. I shall now discuss the development of the documentation for the EHC planning process.

b) The development of the documentation for the EHC planning process

In line with person-centred processes and my drive in contributing to an environment of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment, and as agreed with members of the SEND Reform Steering Group, it was decided to produce booklets for parents, children and young people as part of the assessment process. In doing this, it was felt

that the parent, child and young person would have a voice and be further included in the process. The booklets would form part of the appendices to the EHC plan along with advice givers' reports. Also, the information obtained from the booklets could be included in the EHC plan. Three booklets were developed:

- Preparing for your Assessment - to be completed by the child with support, if needed, from a member of their family, teacher or TA. Again, to personalise the booklet, a photo of the child was asked for to be put on the front of the booklet. The booklet is child friendly and has headings such as:
 - Important people in my life.
 - What I like and dislike doing.
 - What people like and admire about me.
 - Important to me and important for me.
 - How I communicate.

The booklet has been reviewed every year, and as One Page Profiles have improved and are now received for almost every child, so the headings in the booklets have been amended. Also, all feedback given is considered. I shall explain further what One Page Profiles are in the next section, 'The development of the EHC plan format'.

- My Future My Choice - to be completed by young people from Year 9 onwards. Again, the young person is asked for a photograph to be put on the front of the booklet. As the young person is older, we include such headings as:
 - Work and Training.
 - School/College.
 - Transport and Travel.

This booklet has been reviewed annually and amended accordingly, for example, we were informed by the SEND Partnership Service, a service that supports parents of

children with SEN, that some young people were complaining that the booklet was too long. With this in mind, an Advocacy Service that we commissioned was asked to work with young people on improving the booklet. Consequently, the booklet is now briefer in line with the wishes of the young people involved.

- Parental contribution to the assessment process - to be completed by parents and includes such headings as:
 - Introduction to your child.
 - Together – what do you like to do together and what are you unable to do together?
 - Your child – strengths and difficulties.
 - What would you like your child to be able to achieve and what would enable your child to do this?

Again, these booklets are reviewed annually and up-dated in line with feedback from parents.

In writing up EHC plans, SEND Practitioners find the information in these booklets invaluable, and include the information in the EHC plan which further makes the plan more personalised. These booklets are still used and considered essential as part of the process whereby the voice of the child, young person and parents is powerful. I felt that parents, children and young people were being included and empowered. I shall now discuss the development of the format of EHC plans.

c) The development of the format of EHC plans

We were already aware what was needed in the development of the format for EHC plans as the Children and Families Bill 2013 had been published in February followed by the Indicative Draft SEND Code of Practice (2013a) in March and the draft SEND Code of Practice (2013b) in October. We also looked very much to the work of the Pathfinders, those local authorities who had been trialling and piloting

the forthcoming reforms and we were receiving much support from our local pathfinder in the form of training and workshops.

It was clear that the EHC plan needed to be set out in sections (The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations, 2014, s.12) and this was clarified in the SEND Code of Practice (2014). What I want to emphasise here, in the development of the format for our EHC plans, is the extent that we considered the voice of the child and their parents and young people. We wanted to bring the child 'alive' in our EHC plans and we wanted to fully reflect their hopes, aspirations, needs, outcomes and provision. This was in line with my drive to contribute to an environment of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment. It was decided that on the first page of the EHC plans that there would be a photograph of the child, chosen by them and their parents, or a photograph of the young person chosen by them. In Section A, the views, interests and aspirations of the child and their parents or the young person, it was decided to include the child's or young person's One Page Profile. A One Page Profile gives all the information about a child or young person on one page under a variety of headings. The One Page Profile is written by the child or young person and with support if needed. If the child or young person is not able to complete their One Page Profile, their parent or someone who works closely with them, perhaps a teacher or TA, complete it for or with them. Headings such as the following are used in One Page Profiles:

- What people like and admire about me.
- What is important to me.
- What is important for me.
- How best to support me.
- My hopes, dreams and aspirations for the future.

The SEN team, advice givers from education, health and social care, parents and schools undertook much training on person-centred thinking and one of the first things I remember being asked to do was to write our own One Page Profile. Helen

Sanderson Associates, a social enterprise which works internationally to embed person-centred practices state:

We believe that one page profiles are the foundation of personalisation, and can lead to positive change for people, whatever their age or circumstances. They provide us with an at-a-glance way of knowing what really matters to people, that can be taken with them as they move through services and come into contact with people.

(Helen Sanderson Associates, One-Page Profiles, p.1)

I have looked at the EHC plans that many other authorities have developed and, at my time of writing, there are very few authorities that have the child's or young person's picture on the front or have incorporated One Page Profiles into their plans. When I look at one of our EHC plans and see the picture of the child on the front page and then turn over and read their One Page Profile, I am always moved, but more than this, I feel that the plan is not a cold statutory document as was a Statement of SEN, but rather, it is a living reflection of that child or young person. I believe that this approach is empowering for children, their parents and the young person as they can take ownership and control in many ways as to what they would like to be included in the plans. Also, they can make it as personal as they wish. Some One Page Profiles include pictures perhaps of the child or young person and their families or pictures of their pets or their hobbies. Some young people do not like to include pictures of themselves but rather a picture of something in which they are interested or something a bit more abstract.

d) The pilot of the EHC planning process

In the Spring Term of 2014, we were now ready to pilot the statutory process and timeline and to produce completed EHC plans. It was decided to pilot six EHC needs assessments with permission from the parents and young person. It was felt that this was manageable if spread between six Case Officers and supported by their Senior Inclusion Officer. Five children and a young person were chosen to cover a range of phases and age groups and with different types of SEN. When completed, feedback on the three meetings were requested from parents and Case Officers (for the pilot they were called SEND Lead Workers). Feedback was also requested from the Early

Years Area SENCO and the Placements and Budgets Officer who were also involved. Feedback included positive comments as well as expressions of concern. Names of individuals have not been used. The names of children or young people have been replaced with 'child' or 'young person', the names of professionals have been replaced with their positions and the name of a parent has been replaced with 'mum'.

Examples of feedback from the Face to Face meetings were as follows:

Very happy that the Senior Inclusion Officer and SEND Lead Worker were happy to visit us at home, good to see child in his home environment. Process and upcoming meetings well explained and flow chart very clear.

(Parent A, August 2014)

More written info on assessment would make it clearer. However, everybody has tried to be helpful and sensitive to the situation and replied to all my questions quickly.

(Parent B, August 2014)

Good to engage with child and mum face to face & I think it was a positive experience for all. Concern: It took 2 ½ hours – such a dedication of time will be impossible with current workload.

(SEND Lead Worker, August 2014)

Examples of feedback from the Assessment Planning Meetings were as follows:

Very positive and cohesive. All professionals now have very good all round 'picture' of child to take forwards.

(Parent A, August 2014)

Meeting felt comfortable as TAC (Team around the child) is already in place so professionals all know each other & family are used to this approach.

(Early Years Area SENCO, August 2014)

Examples of feedback from the Outcomes Meetings are as follows:

This was a very positive and useful meeting as it allowed all the professionals to come together and at various points compare notes; and with young person's/ mum's input at various points it allowed full picture of support

needs required at college to emerge, as this would translate from the school to college environments.

(Placements and Budgets Officer, August 2014)

Unfortunately, as EP (Educational Psychologist) was the only advice giver present we could only concentrate on the outcomes an EP would cover – behaviour, self-esteem, attention & listening, social communication & learning... To make the outcomes meeting effective all advice givers (or more than one) need to be present at this meeting.

(Senior (SEND) Lead Worker, August 2014)

We did not receive feedback from parents on the Outcomes Meetings. However, feedback from parents on the Face to Face Meetings and the Assessment Planning Meetings were encouraging and that good relationships were being established.

As stated, as we implemented our new processes as from September 2014, it was gradually realised that to put in place three meetings within the timescale given was logistically almost impossible and was causing much stress for the SEND Lead Workers who were trying to organise these. Feedback above was particularly pertinent. One SEND Lead Worker commented about the length of meetings being two and a half hours. It was to emerge that many meetings were to take this amount of time. As the SEND Lead Worker states, 'such a dedication of time will be impossible with current workload'. Regarding the Outcomes Meetings, as feedback indicates above, not many advice givers were able to attend these meetings because of the short time scales. It was to emerge that these meetings tended to include the parents and SEND Lead Worker only and did not serve to fulfil the aim of the meetings which was to include all advice givers in discussion with parents about outcomes. These issues were to be addressed at the end of the academic year 2015, when I arranged an Away Day for the SEN team to evaluate our processes and I shall discuss this later in the chapter.

4.4.1.3 Workforce Development

This work stream focussed on all aspects of competencies, skills and training necessary for the workforce in responding to the reforms. In responding to the reforms, much training was needed.

Carnall (1999) draws our attention to competence development in handling change.

He states:

In any change setting we move from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence via conscious incompetence and then conscious competence.

(Carnall, 1999, p.74)

Carnall likens the process to learning to drive and describes the initial process as awareness raising. As we move from conscious incompetence to conscious competence, we engage in the next process of skill building which includes change workshops, staff training and surveys. The final process is developing excellence through long practice when the competence becomes so practiced that it becomes embedded in the organisation.

I can liken the workforce development in the authority to this process as described by Carnall. Intensive training and skill-building took place over the following two years in the form of workshops, conferences and training sessions for the SEN team, advice givers, schools including SENCOs and governors and parents.

We were fortunate that an officer in the local authority, the Person-Centred Planning Coordinator, later to become a member of the SEN team, had been trained by Helen Sanderson Associates in person-centred approaches and planning. This was to pay such dividends, and training in person-centred approaches, planning and tools for the SEN team and all stakeholders was planned over time. Besides being trained, I wanted members of the SEN team to have the opportunity to be trainers. This was very much in line with my drive for the team to be included, to feel empowered and to work with others in an inclusional way. There was much talent in the team and members who were very knowledgeable. Also, some members were ambitious and wanted to develop their skills further in this respect. Members of the team came forward and a training programme was put in place offering training to advice givers and schools.

SEND Practitioners (previously Case Officers/ SEND Lead Workers), also had the opportunity of attending annual South West SEN Regional Conferences on writing

EHC plans. This was an opportunity for them to meet colleagues in other authorities to compare notes on EHC plans and the writing of them.

One of the members of the SEN team, the Placement and Budget Officer, also had the remit of overseeing Personal Budgets. The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3, states:

- 1) A local authority that maintains an EHC plan, or is securing the preparation of an EHC plan, for a child or young person must prepare a personal budget for him or her if asked to do so by the child's parent or young person.
 - 2) The authority prepares a "personal budget" for the child or young person if it identifies an amount as available to secure particular provision that is specified, or proposed to be specified, in the EHC plan, with a view to the child's parent or the young person being involved in securing the provision
- (Children and Families Act 2014, s.49 (1, 2))

The Placement and Budgets Officer was involved in much training on Personal Budgets for the SEN team and all stakeholders, and she developed the local authority policy on Personal Budgets.

A Senior Inclusion Officer and a SEND Practitioner provided much training for advice givers on Outcomes and the sort of information we look for in their reports to be included in our EHC plans. These two officers were also involved in briefing parents and did much training with SENCOs on the new SEND processes.

Despite the fact that we were in the early stages of learning about our new processes, being trained ourselves, and requests for EHC needs assessments increasing, the trainers in the SEN team were committed to carrying out the necessary training. Despite a huge impact on their time, they never once complained but rather were elated at the success of their training sessions overall and felt that their own skills were improving and their confidence increasing. I felt that despite the challenges of the reforms, an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment was continuing to evolve.

4.4.2 The initial expansion of the SEN team

In this section, I want to highlight the concerns I had with the introduction of the reforms regarding the capacity of the SEN team in addressing the changes.

In line with my values, I wanted the team to feel empowered and I wanted to create conditions for them to feel empowered in that they had opportunities to use their skills, talents, motivation and knowledge. As already stated, the role of Case Officer was to change in that they would be going out and meeting with parents, children and young people. Their job descriptions needed to reflect this. Besides this and following comments from the pilot of our new process as previously stated, we needed more SEND Lead Workers, as they were initially called. I expressed my concerns about their amended job descriptions in my reflective journal:

Job descriptions were amended accordingly to reflect their change in role. There was some apprehension at the time as a nearby local authority had downgraded the job description of the Case Officers causing low morale for those in the SEN team in that authority. This would have been unacceptable if this were to happen in our authority as I did not want the team to feel a lack of confidence and to feel disempowered. If it had been agreed that the job description was at the same level as previous, then this would be acceptable. The job description came back and it had been upgraded. This really helped towards the well-being and confidence within the team.

(Reflective Journal, 18th October 2014)

As a manager, this decision to upgrade their roles was a huge relief. The Case Officers were also pleased and relieved with the result as it meant that their change in role, in going out and meeting with children, young people and families was being recognised and supported. The next issue, as stated, was the need to increase the team as much of their time was now spent in meeting with parents, children and young people. I expressed my concerns again in my reflective journal:

Because of this change in their role, it was necessary to employ more Case Officers to cover the workload. Looking at the number of cases that Case

Officers managed, it was determined that 5.4 more Case Officers were required. There was much tension at the time as to whether this would be agreed as we knew that local authorities were cutting back on their expenditure. Fortunately, it was agreed that 5.4 more Case Officers would be taken on but we did not know at that stage whether the appointments would be fixed term or permanent. Again, this caused some anxiety in the SEN team as we felt that these needed to be long-term appointments because of the demand of the role; this was not going to wane. Also, to advertise a fixed term appointment, we believed, would attract a different calibre of person than advertising a permanent post. Many discussions took place between myself, senior members in the SEN team and the Lead on the SEND reforms reinforcing these facts. Again, fortunately, it was agreed that the posts should be made permanent. From my perspective, I was beginning to feel much (more) confidence in the decision-making of Senior Officers and Members in the local authority in recognising the significance of the reforms and the impact of these changes on the SEN team.

(Reflective Journal, 18th October 2014)

A significant shift occurred for me at this time because, as stated, I was beginning to feel a greater confidence in senior leaders in the authority and also local authority Members of the council. I felt they were listening to me and the needs of the team; that they were recognising the significance of the reforms in enforcing person-centred approaches and my drive to embrace and contribute to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment, working more closely with parents, children and young people.

My reflective journal details the recruitment process and my drive for members of the team to be involved in the decision-making process and to feel empowered throughout that time:

We received fifty applications for the SEND Lead Practitioner post and the applications were of a high standard. We shortlisted and decided to interview eleven people. As always, and in line with my drive for members of the team to have an input and to contribute to the decision-making process when we

hold interviews, a number of the SEN team members are involved. Two senior members of the team and myself form the interview panel, two members of the team meet the candidates initially and tell them about the role, respond to any questions they may have and introduce them to the team, and a SEN Administrative Officer deals with the paperwork. At the end of interviews the two members of the team feedback on their and the team's perceptions of each candidate. This often has an influence on our ultimate decision. I believe that their involvement empowers them and makes them feel that their opinions matter. We appointed 4.4 people at the time and later appointed the sixth person. We were so pleased with the high calibre of candidates and the diversity of their backgrounds... We felt that these newly appointed people would add to the richness of the team. Ultimately, these people had the same values as each of us in the team, that is, that they were driven to do their best for children and young people and this strongly presented itself throughout the interviews.

We were now a team of sixteen people. I was fully aware that there would be a change of the dynamics within the team but ultimately, I was determined that members of the SEN team would feel empowered and that their talents, skills, knowledge and experience would be recognised, utilised and furthered.

(Reflective Journal, 18th October 2014)

Thus, the SEN team, as we embarked on the reforms, was established. However, there was much to learn. As a manager, I needed to manage a bigger team, and as stated, I was fully aware that there would be a change in the dynamics of the team moving from a small well-established team who had worked with each other for a number of years to a larger team from a variety of backgrounds. However, I was confident in our recruitment and that we had a team of people with a variety of skills and experience, all driven with the same purpose and values, that is to do our best for children and young people within our remit and resources. Time was to confirm that my feelings then were not misplaced and a dynamic, hard-working, committed and dedicated team evolved. I am of the same view as Helen Sanderson Associates on Values-Based Recruitment. They state:

Values-based recruitment is about attracting and keeping people who have compatible values, attitudes and aspirations to work in a care, support or educational environment.

In a care, support or educational role, the way that people connect interact with each other and for the people they work for is critical. How well a person performs, how happy they are, and how well the team works together is a product of the alignment of individual and collective values. Ultimately, this determines how well the organisation is able to support people, and how long people stay productively in their roles.

Traditional recruitment struggles to place effective emphasis on these factors. By taking a new approach to recruiting through a consciously values-based process, we are better able to support people well and to build a healthy, happy workforce that wants to stay.

(Helen Sanderson Associates, Values-Based Recruitment, p.1)

In this respect, Mayo (2016) highlights a company called Suma which is a market leader in wholefood distribution and based in Yorkshire. In 2015, it delivered its best trading performance for 35 years. Bob Cannell of that company states:

It is easier to teach a member to be an accountant than teach an accountant to be a member. We recruit for values and train for skills.

(Mayo, 2016, p.38)

The senior members of the SEN team and myself have often commended ourselves on our recruitment process and we often discuss the fact that the people we take on have values that align with ours and this an aspect which is teased out throughout the interview.

With the embedding of the SEN reforms, I now want to discuss my concerns in the first year of the reforms and what I did to address my concerns.

4.4.3 The academic year 2014-2015

The first year of the reforms was of much concern for me as manager of the team; all team members needed to work with the new processes including writing EHC plans and the newer members needed to understand the importance of working within the statutory framework. Although the team had expanded to include new members, the

workload was excessive; requests for EHC needs assessments were increasing and the numbers of EHC plans were increasing as referred to in Chapter 1. I became very concerned about their well-being.

Besides this, the team were having to transfer Statements of SEN to EHC plans:

By 1 April 2018, local authorities **must** have transferred all children and young people with statements of SEN to the new SEN and disability system who meet the criteria for an EHC plan. Local authorities must conduct a Transfer Review – that is an EHC needs assessment in accordance with The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (referred to in this document as the ‘SEND Regulations 2014’)

(DfE, 2015, para. 1.8)

I understand that as a manager how important it is to be available for your team, to meet with them and listen to them. Blanchard, Oncken and Burrows (2011) highlight Blanchard's view:

My staff knew, as does anyone who's experienced it, how frustrating it is to work for a boss who has no time for them. So now I endeavour always to have more time for them than they have for me.

(Blanchard, Oncken and Burrows, 2011, p.71)

I met individually with members of the team throughout May and June 2015 to establish what each of their concerns were and what support they required. I took notes at the meetings. Certain themes kept coming through:

Managing (with workload). Haven't touched Transfer Reviews. Focussing on new requests...Few times, felt overwhelmed – always worried about forgetting something. Working all hours...Admin. Tasks huge – can be up to three hours a day two or three times a week; printing, photocopying, scanning especially sending out drafts. If Admin team increased, would make a huge difference.

Love job. Contact with families and schools are effective. Team, very supportive – lovely team (but) heavy workload – not meeting deadlines – don't like this because I feel I'm letting people down.

Can't sustain level of input. Worked to 7.00 yesterday. Frequently working lots of hours overtime.

Really enjoy coming into work. Coming in on Sunday – helps to manage workload.

Enjoy job – variety – getting out and about, writing plans, processing reviews. Team meetings really good...support always available and issues easily resolved.

Work - manic – no time to reflect. Don't get a lot out of Outcomes Meetings – lots of time has to be allocated.

Really interesting learning new things, but much more stressful – need to develop new skills.

(Feedback from meetings with members of the SEN team, May and June 2015)

The responses from the team were of no surprise to me, and the situation could not continue. It was unacceptable to me that members of the team were doing so much overtime, working until late and coming in on weekends. Also, there was a dissatisfaction amongst the team that deadlines were not being met. I am reminded of the 'terrors of performativity' (Ball, 2003) whereby individual practitioners are pressurised into the meeting of targets and indicators which can lead to 'inner conflicts, inauthenticity and resistance' (p.215). Overall, however, people did feel supported and commended certain members of the team for the support they were given, and fundamentally, people enjoyed the job. Yet we needed to get to a situation whereby the team felt in greater control and able to work at their own pace.

At this point, it is pertinent to stress that it was not only the SEN team that was struggling with the workload. Other services in education, health and social care were struggling also, especially in the area of advice giving and completing their reports within the required timescales. SEND Practitioners spent much time chasing up reports in order to complete EHC plans within the required time. There were many conflicts and struggles between the SEN team and other services and within other services themselves regarding this issue. I shall give an example of conflicts that arose with the SEN team and the Adult Service. Prior to the SEND reforms, the Adult Service had not been directly involved in the statutory assessment process, as Statements of SEN ceased when a young person reached the ages of sixteen or eighteen, depending on when they left school. With the SEND reforms, young people, and adults up to the age of twenty-five could continue with an EHC plan, or, put in a request to the local authority for an EHC needs assessment which could lead

to the issuing of an EHC plan. The Adult Service, initially, was not set up to give advice for adults regarding such requests from the local authority. It had specific criteria to access their service, which conflicted with the assessing of adults and giving advice regarding a request for an EHC needs assessment. Initially, SEND Practitioners spent much time contacting many personnel in the service, with the same response, that the adult for which advice was requested did not meet their criteria. This was a cause for much frustration and stress for the SEN team, and for me as a manager, as advice was needed to determine whether an EHC plan was appropriate, and the advice was required within a specific time frame. Many meetings were held with senior members of the service over time, as it was a situation to which they statutorily needed to respond. Eventually, the service changed their criteria, and included seeing those adults for which the local authority requested advice. It is examples such as this with which we were confronted with the introduction of the SEND reforms which had a significant impact on the stress and added workload for the SEN team.

Carnall (1999) states:

In the middle of the change process, just as learning is at its fastest, self-esteem is at its lowest. Thus, it is that people need encouragement, support, role models (the super user concept) and the security which comes from being able to go through the learning process in clear and incremental steps and at their own pace. *Do things fast by moving slowly* becomes the watchword!

(Carnall, 1999, p.75)

Senior leaders were already aware of the workload we were experiencing and I was in discussion with them about expanding the team further. I decided to arrange a SEN Away Day at a highly regarded Conference Centre at the end of July 2015, so that we could reflect and thrash out these issues and decide on a way forward for the academic year 2015-2016. I wanted to involve the team as fully as possible in deciding how we should move forward. I felt that it would give them some ownership at such a 'low' time and help them to feel included and empowered.

It was at the Away Day I informed the team that discussions were taking place to expand the team further. The day was extremely successful with issues being

discussed, amendments made to the format of our EHC plans and further clarification about Outcomes. The following decisions were made as to the way forward:

- No Outcomes Meetings.
- More input into Face to Face Meetings.
- SEND Lead Practitioners to use 'Independent' (a company that is commissioned to write EHC plans for local authorities).

(Minutes of SEN Away Day, 21st July 2015)

SEND Practitioners felt that the way forward was manageable and looked to the new academic year 2015-2016 with optimism as to the management of their workload. Not all, however, were in agreement with one of the decisions made. Some services were critical of the decision that the Outcomes Meetings were to be stopped. I received much opposition over a long period of time as to this decision. In essence, the notion of Outcomes Meetings was of considerable value; SEND Practitioners, parents, pupils and specialist advice givers coming together to discuss outcomes for the pupil. Logistically, however, it was almost an impossible task for the SEND Practitioners who arranged the Outcomes Meetings. The meetings had to be conducted within twelve weeks of the time that the decision was made to carry out an EHC needs assessment. Frequently, advice givers' diaries were already full and it was impossible to agree on a date. SEND Practitioners spent much time in contacting people with no date being agreed. As in the pilot of the EHC planning process, many meetings were held with the SEND Practitioner, parents and sometimes the pupil but no advice giver to discuss outcomes for the pupil. Even though criticism of the decision to stop the Outcomes Meetings ensued for some time, nobody could come up with a solution to the problem and I am still convinced that the decision was the right one.

This period in time was the most challenging for the team and for me as a manager but the situation was to improve with a further expansion of the team. I shall now discuss the SEN Process Review which took place throughout August 2015, the outcome of which was to determine a further expansion of the team.

4.4.4 The SEN process review

In June 2015, after two years without a Head of Service, a new Head of Service was appointed. After many discussions with him, expressing my concern about the capacity within the team to deal with the workload, an internal SEN Process Review was conducted. Recommendations were made and the following was determined:

It is the conclusion of this report that the primary way (that) capacity in the SEND Practitioners can be increased (is) by shifting most of their admin processes to the admin team. In order for this to happen, then there needs to be an increase in FTE (full time equivalent) of the admin team of at least 3 FTE.

(SEN Process Review Report, September 2015)

Further discussions took place with the Head of Service over the following months and it was finally agreed to appoint two FTE administrative staff to support the SEND Practitioners. Also, because of the challenge for the team in the workload regarding the transfer review process in transferring Statements of SEN to EHC plans, it was agreed to appoint two FTE SEND Practitioners to each work in two of our special schools, their responsibility being to be involved in the transfer review process concluding with the writing of EHC plans.

There had been much concern expressed by many schools regarding the process of transferring of Statements of SEN to EHC plans. Ultimately, it was the responsibility of the local authority to undertake this task. However, as part of this process, we asked schools to organise meetings and to invite the parents, pupil, and specialists involved with the monitoring of the pupil's progress. The aim of these meetings was to have an update on the pupil's needs, provision, and outcomes to meet the pupil's needs. In this way, the local authority would have the required information to develop an EHC plan. Many schools, though, were concerned about undertaking this responsibility and felt that a local authority SEN officer should organise the review, or at least be in attendance at the review and chair the meeting. These requests were reasonable, but it was impossible for a local authority officer to attend every meeting throughout the authority. Understandably, schools lacked confidence in conducting these meetings. It was a very difficult time for schools and the local authority, resulting in many 'transfer meetings' not being held, or parents not being

informed that the meeting would be a 'transfer meeting'. Many parents, also, expressed their concerns. Discussions took place with schools and parents at this time. Consequently, much guidance was given to schools on how to conduct these meetings and it was agreed that a local authority SEN representative would attend if the school or parent felt it was absolutely necessary. Of particular concern was the situation with special schools, as they needed to go through this process with all of their pupils. This involved a considerable number of pupils, as almost half the pupils with Statements of SEN in the authority were in our special schools. Hence, the decision to appoint two FTE SEND Practitioners to work in two of our biggest special schools, was not only welcomed by the special schools but SEND Practitioners also.

The team has now expanded from eight to eighteen members with six more members to be taken on; our new EHC Plans are in place and have been revised, new documents have been produced and since revised with regard to the statutory assessment process, including documents for advice givers, parents, children and young people to complete. All Statements of SEN have to be transferred to EHC Plans by April 2018 and documents, as above, have been produced and since revised to support this process. If parents or young people request a Personal Budget, systems are now in place to support this process.

4.5 How do I explain my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations?

It has been an intense three years for the SEN team with a considerable rise in requests for EHC plans and with the process of transferring Statements of SEN to EHC plans. As a statutory SEN manager, I have been much focussed on ensuring that person-centred planning and approaches are embedded into our system in line with my drive in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. This has resulted in a change of role for the Case Officers, now called SEND Practitioners, in that they meet with children, young people and their families during the process of EHC needs assessments being carried out. Also, new documentation ensures that we have the voice of the child, young people and parents

which is ultimately demonstrated in EHC Plans. We have had to work very closely with our advice givers in education, health and social care. Consequently, much training and skill-building has taken place for the SEN team and also our advice givers, and workshops and conferences have been held for schools and parents. As a statutory SEN manager, I have closely monitored the well-being of the team at a time of such intensity.

In working through the SEND reforms and responding to the principles of the Children and Families Act 2014 in the involvement of children, young people and parents, ensuring person-centred approaches as advocated in the SEND Code of Practice (2014), and my drive, in line with my values, has seen the continued evolution of an environment of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment. This environment of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment has been inclusive and inclusional of me, my team and children and young people with SEN and their families.

Fullan (2001)) highlights the fact that in a culture of change, the lessons for developing leaders 'are more tortoise-like than hare-like' (p.121) as slow learning takes place within the context over time. Claxton (1997, cited in Fullan, 2001) refers to the term 'slow knowing' (p.122) and highlights the fact that in situations that are complex, "the more patient, less deliberate modes are particularly suited (p.3)" (p.121). This had certainly been the case with the SEND reforms and my response to them. Whilst I was aware that statutory targets had to be met and reported to the Department of Education, that is, we had to report what percentage of our plans were completed within twenty weeks, it was not something I focussed on as I knew that in time our percentages would be good. Initially, 30% of our plans were completed within twenty weeks but has now risen to 87% (2017). I was also fully aware of the 'implementation dip' as described by Fullan:

The implementation dip is literally a dip in performance and confidence as one encounters an innovation that requires new skills and new understandings.

(Fullan, 2001, p.40)

As Fullan emphasises:

Leaders who understand the implementation dip know that people are experiencing two kinds of problems when they are in the dip – the social-psychological fear of change, and the lack of technical know-how or skills to make the change work. It should be obvious that leaders need affiliative and coaching styles in these situations. The affiliative leader pays attention to people, focuses on building emotional bonds, builds relationships, and heals rifts. The leader as coach helps people develop and invests in their capacity building (Goleman, 2000).

(Fullan, 2001, p.41)

For me, what was more important was ensuring the well-being of the team at the time and our focus in involving children, young people and parents; also, embedding good practice to ensure an environment whereby the team, children, young people and parents could ultimately feel empowered in an inclusive and inclusional way. As Fullan states:

In the long run, however, effectiveness depends on developing internal commitment in which the ideas and intrinsic motivation of the vast majority of organizational members become activated. Along the way, authoritative ideas, democratic empowerment, affiliative bonds, and coaching will all be needed.

(Fullan, 2001, p.46)

Fullan alludes to Von Krough, Ichijo and Nonaka (2000) who refer to the fact that a culture of care is necessary when it comes to successful performance ‘which they define in five dimensions: mutual trust, active empathy, access to help, lenience in judgement, and courage’ (p.82).

Evidence produced in this chapter has shown how I, as a manager, have improved my practice in line with my values, and have ensured the participation of myself, the SEN team, children and young people with SEN and their families. As a member of the SEND Reform Steering Group, I was in a position to enforce my values and my drive to contribute to an environment of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment. I involved myself in all of the work streams and ensured that team members were also involved and a part of the sub-groups. Documentation was created to include the participation and voice of the child, young person and their

parents, and statutory processes were developed which included meetings with them. We focussed on developing EHC plans to reflect the aspirations and views of the child, young person and their parents. The team was very much involved in the training of our advice givers and SENCOs which tapped into their talents, motivation and ambitions. We worked closely with parents to ensure they were up to date with the SEND reforms and to ensure that they had an understanding of the development of our new statutory processes and the EHC plans. Also, I have demonstrated my awareness and described my consequent actions in improving the well-being and building the capacity of the team in order to meet the challenges of the reforms in line with my drive in contributing to an environment of living, inclusive and inclusionary empowerment.

Dr. Carol Robinson of the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) has worked closely with us throughout the reforms in advising about the quality of our plans and also working with us on ensuring good practice is in place for young people and adults (14-25 years). She states in her blog:

We have all seen the headlines about councils struggling to make ends meet leading to loss of staff and big reductions in non-statutory services. It is altogether a depressing picture, but one local area has given me a sense of gratitude for a beleaguered but committed workforce...Over the last 22 months, I have been working with people in B&NES (Bath and North East Somerset) council and various partner organisations to try and support a joined-up approach to implementing the SEND reforms for children and young people...This has all been in the context of those aforesaid budget cuts, government targets for both the timeliness of education, health and care plans and recent changes to the locally commissioned health and care services...Despite this, I have found council staff in the SEND team, disabled children's service, Youth Connect and the Employment & Skills, Economy and Culture department incredibly committed. The same is true for staff at Bath College and the Employment Inclusion Service...Whilst they would be quick to say nothing is perfect for children and young people with special educational needs, they have worked together to make a whole range of jointly agreed things to happen...I cannot help but be impressed by people's ability to persevere even when they find themselves in anything but ideal circumstances...Everyone I have worked with in B&NES always seem to be driven by a desire to make things better for the children and young people they work with so isn't time we gave them credit for that?

(Robinson, 2017, no pagination)

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have expressed my concerns as a statutory SEN manager at a time of significant change with new SEN legislation being introduced in September 2014. I have explained how I responded to the changes, how my responses influenced the team and how we worked with children and young people with SEN and their families to ensure an environment of living empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional. I have reflected on my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations.

In my next chapter, I give a detailed explanation of my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations.

CHAPTER 5 AN EXPLANATION OF MY EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCE IN MY OWN LEARNING, IN THE LEARNING OF OTHERS AND THE LEARNING OF SOCIAL FORMATIONS IN CREATING MY LIVING-THEORY OF LIVING INCLUSIVE AND INCLUSIONAL EMPOWERMENT

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, I focussed on my concerns as a statutory SEN manager at a time of significant change with the introduction of the SEND reforms in September 2014. I reflected on my concerns about the forthcoming changes and what I intended doing about it when I was appointed statutory SEN manager. I explain what I and the team did in response to the new SEN legislation and how we worked with children and young people with SEN and their families to ensure an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

In this chapter, I explain my educational influence in my own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations. I clarify and communicate my meanings of my embodied expressions of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. As previous, I use video-recordings and digital visual data in a multimedia narrative to express my meanings. I use these meanings as explanatory principles and living standards of judgement in my contribution to educational knowledge as I explain my educational influences in learning.

Hence, I begin this chapter by explaining the meaning of educational influences in learning. I then focus on the meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment as an explanatory principle and a living standard of judgement in an explanation of my educational influence in:

1. my own learning.
2. the learning of others.
3. the learning of social formations.

5.2 What are educational influences in learning?

Whitehead (2005) explains that his interest lies in educational theories that explain the educational influence in our own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations. For him, an educational influence involves:

An intentional relationship that involves both originality of mind and critical judgement.

(Whitehead, 2005, p.4)

Huxtable (2012) draws on Whitehead's explanation and for her to have had an educational influence in the learning of another, she states:

I need evidence that what I have offered has been transmuted by them to contribute to their progress to giving expression to their best intent, which is informed by their values.

(Huxtable, 2012, p.37)

Whitehead and McNiff (2006) state that, 'research is about learning in an informed way' (p.112); that the learning of a practitioner doing research can influence the development of their own learning and the learning of others in the interests of good social order.

In my living-theory, I am explaining my educational influences in learning with the values I use to give meaning and purpose to my life and that I believe carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. In my original contribution to educational knowledge, I am seeking to legitimate living inclusive and inclusional empowerment as an explanatory principle and a living standard of judgment for Living Theory research. Living Theory research does not, as yet, include living, inclusive inclusional empowerment as an explanatory principle and a living standard of judgment.

5.3 My educational influence in my own learning

5.3.1 The emergence of the notion of empowerment.

My learning during this time has been significant. At the beginning of my learning journey, I did not expect to arrive where I am today. I began my doctoral research with a proposal entitled, 'How do I promote inclusion whilst living my values and developing standards of judgement to which I hold myself accountable?' Being a self-study and focussing on my practice, I started to reflect on my values. The clarification of my inclusive values of fairness, a good work ethic, justice, love, hope, trust, peace, determination, equality of opportunity, respect and regard of the other, my concept of inclusion and my inclusional way of being were of no surprise to me, however, I had been unaware of the significance of empowerment in my life as it emerged through the reflection of my values. This was to have an impact on my research, the development of my thesis, my original contribution to knowledge and my personal development.

On becoming a statutory SEN manager with the realisation of the significance of empowerment in my life, I decided to focus on empowerment in the workplace. But what did I mean by empowerment? I instinctively knew, what I would describe as my embodied knowledge (Whitehead, 2005) or my tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958), that for me, it was not about giving power to people as this denoted a power stance which was contrary to my values. This was to lead me to an exploration of the literature on empowerment and its articulation with the notion of power which highlighted for me an explanation of empowerment which aligned with my values. As a manager, it is about having the 'power to' and the 'power with' to draw out and enable this 'power from within', as expressed in Chapter 3. It is this explanation of empowerment with which I have worked throughout my research.

5.3.2 My discomfort in asking, 'How do I empower people?'

In establishing an explanation of empowerment which was in line with my values, I started asking such questions as, 'How do I empower people?' 'Do you feel you

empower others?' I started to feel very uncomfortable in exploring empowerment with these types of questions even though I have made it clear from the beginning that empowerment, for me, is about 'enabling' the other, not 'giving power' to the other. It was the phrasing of the question that concerned me. Each time I asked such questions, I always felt I had to explain my understanding of empowerment. I expressed my concern many times at Conversation Café, the PhD weekends at Liverpool Hope University with fellow researchers and with critical friends. In discussions with them, I tried to analyse why I felt uncomfortable. I came to the realisation that in asking these questions, I felt it was denoting a power stance which did not align with my values; I felt I was being patronising. We explored how I could rephrase my questions to draw out the appropriate response without denoting a power stance or being patronising. As a result of these discussions, instead of asking, 'Do I empower you?' I started asking such questions as, 'Can you give examples of how I have recognised and enabled the release of your talents, knowledge, skills and motivation?' Phrasing the question in this way, encapsulates my meaning of empowerment without me having to explain it, in that it draws on the notions of having a 'power to' and a 'power with' to enable the 'power from within'. Also, I feel it is far more respectful. The question makes the assumption that the person has talents, knowledge, skills and motivation. The question focusses on how I recognise and enable the release of these attributes. Instead of asking the question, 'How do I/we empower children, young people and families?' I now ask the question, 'Have I/we created conditions whereby children, young people and families may feel empowered?' This aligns with the ideas of Conger and Kanungo (1988), as stated, who refer to empowerment as being a motivational construct in that it is an enabling process whereby conditions are created to increase motivation. This rephrasing of the question again does not denote a power stance and is not patronising; it focusses more on what I/we have done to enable children, young people and families to feel more empowered.

5.3.3 My claim to be contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment

I am claiming that an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment has evolved in the workplace and that I, the team and the influence of my previous

manager, have contributed to this environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment to ensure the involvement and empowerment of all, including children and young people with SEN and their families. This claim has its roots in my reflection of my values and my pursuit of living my values in my practice to improve my practice and to offer an original contribution to knowledge. I am of the same view of Sullivan (2006) when she says:

It could be argued that the main difference between my work and that of theorists such as Rawls, Kant and Young, is that my living theory is emerging from my practice, whereas Rawls, Kant and Young are operating at a conceptual level only. I am dealing with the lived reality of injustice and inequality, in contrast to the abstract theorising of Rawls, Kant and Young. Rawls's theory of justice, which draws on the moral philosophising of Kant, applies to an idealised world, in contrast to my practice of engagement with real people, in a complex world, fraught with contradiction, injustice and imperfection.

(Sullivan, 2006, p.244)

Like Sullivan, much of what I have read in the literature, and I refer here to the literature on empowerment, is based on theories developed by those who are addressing empowerment from at a conceptual level only, for example, Conger and Kanungo (1988), Carson and King (2005) and Ongori (2009). I am theorising on my practice which is driven by my values to improve what I am doing. I maintained this stance at my Confirmation Event in January 2013 which confirmed that I continued working towards the award for PhD. I highlight this later in the chapter.

In discussions with my manager and with my team (Chapter 3) and fellow researchers at Conversation Café (Introduction), I determined that an environment of living empowerment was emerging in the workplace which was inclusive and inclusional. Prior to the SEND reforms, when I met with four members of the SEN team, they emphasised that there was much trust in the relational quality between us and each other and that the environment was such that that there was an openness and honesty in which all felt included; that they had a voice and that opportunities were presented to them whereby they could use and develop their interests and talents. Through examples given by the team, it was felt that this notion of empowerment which was inclusive and inclusional was having an influence on children and young people with SEN and their families and our relationships with them.

The introduction of the SEND reforms, with new legislation as presented in the Children and Families Act 2014, presented challenges for me as a team manager and also the team (Chapter 4). It was also a learning experience for us all. I determined that the team would be involved in the implementation of the reforms in the authority through participation in work streams, sub-groups and the training of the workforce and stakeholders as according to their interests and talents. I and the team engaged with the principles of the reforms, in the involvement and participation of children and young people with SEN and their families using person-centred approaches as advocated in the SEN Code of Practice (2014) and in line with my notion of empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional.

As was agreed with members of the SEND Reform Steering Group, documentation was produced to capture the voice of children, young people and their families and processes were developed so that the team met with children, young people and families to secure their further involvement and to develop more inclusional relationships. We worked to ensure that the child was at the centre of our EHC plans with their photograph on the front and included their One Page Profiles with their and their families' aspirations clearly described as well as their needs and the provision required to meet their needs.

Whilst the workload has been significant over the last three years with the rise in requests for EHC needs assessments, I have been constantly mindful of the well-being of the team and consequently the team has increased from eight to eighteen members with six more to be taken on. The increase in team members has now made the workload more manageable and with more administrative staff employed to take on the administrative tasks of the SEND Practitioners, it has allowed the SEND Practitioners to be more involved with and responsive to children and young people with SEN and their families and to use their skills for which they were initially employed. Whilst the implementation of the SEND reforms presented much uncertainty and a lacking of confidence, three years on, the team are confident, knowledgeable and motivated, as I shall evidence later in the chapter. We are a team who have supported each other throughout the reforms and this has been a contributory factor to our success. I have learnt, that despite challenges, it is possible to see these challenges through in being committed to our values and being driven by

the purpose of our roles, that is, to do the best we can for children and young people with SEN. I believe that my influence in contributing to living inclusive and inclusional empowerment has also been a factor in the successful implementation of the reforms and the success of the team in seeing them through.

5.3.4 My learning through using video-recordings and digital visual data as I clarify and communicate my embodied expressions of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment

In Chapter 2, I clarified the reasons why I use video-recordings and digital visual data throughout my research and thesis. Here I take each of those points and clarify further:

i) to give me the opportunity to recall a moment in time in order to analyse and reflect on it to enhance my learning (Roth, 2007, cited in Jewitt, 2012).

Throughout my thesis, I have used video-clips, whereby I have been able to look back to that moment in time and to look, listen and reflect on what I am seeing and hearing. Whilst transcriptions serve to recall what has been said, it does not capture the energy that can be seen in a video-clip.

ii) as part of one of my research methods.

Video has been used by researchers for many years in the learning sciences, in workplace studies and the home (Jewitt, 2012). Living Educational Theorists have used video in their multimedia narratives to communicate their living-educational-theories and their living-theory methodologies (Whitehead, 2010, p.1), for example, Hartog (2004); Naidoo (2005); Charles (2007); Crotty (2012) and Huxtable (2012). I recognise the contribution that this method is making to my research. With each video-clip, I also include a still image. In this respect, I like the way that Keizer-Remmers (2017) has used photographs using the Social Photo Matrix (SPM) method for her research into cosmopolitanism. Keizer-Remmers uses photographs taken by her students in an Institution for Higher Education to elicit their views on cosmopolitanism. Her presentation of a selection of these photographs and the

discussion that takes place with her students offers a fascinating insight into the unconscious images they have of the institution in which they are studying and which reflect their notions of cosmopolitanism. I like the way that this visual participatory approach recently developed by Burkard Sievers (2007) provides a rich medium for insights to be drawn. However, with regard to my research, I do recognise the limitations of using still images only. In using video-clips in my thesis, I have been able to demonstrate my living standard of judgement of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which still images and text alone could not portray. In this sense, I believe that my research is making an original contribution to the literature on living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

iii) to communicate embodied expressions of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment:

- to give visual meanings as well as written meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.
- to bring to the reader into that moment in time and can give the reader a sense of 'being there and being with' (Goldman, 2007, pp.30-32, cited in Jewitt, 2012, p5).
- to allow the reader to see, not only that gaze, that expression but also to see the bodily movements, which cannot be captured in text or still images.

Throughout this thesis, I have learnt that with the inclusion of video-clips, I have been able to clarify and communicate my meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment and I have been able to communicate this to the reader in a way that text alone could not do. In using empathetic resonance, with visual digital data, I am able to clarify my meaning of my energy-flowing value of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment, in a way that contributes to the clarification of relationships between energy and motivation, energy and meaning and energy and value (Vasilyuk, 1991):

The Energy Paradigm

Conceptions involving energy are very current in psychology, but they have been very poorly worked out from the methodological standpoint. It is not clear to what extent these conceptions are merely models of our understanding and to what extent they can be given ontological status.

Equally problematic are the conceptual links between energy and motivation, energy and meaning, energy and value although it is obvious that in fact there are certain links: we know how ‘energetically’ a person can act when positively motivated, we know that the meaningfulness of a project lends additional strength to the people engaged in it, but we have very little idea of how to link up into one whole the physiological theory of activation, the psychology of motivation, and the ideas of energy which have been elaborated mainly in the field of physics.

(Vasilyuk, 1991, pp.63-64)

In Chapter 2, I stated that I would give a specific example of how I have used digital video-data using empathetic resonance to demonstrate ‘living empowerment’ and that I would show how my writing was influenced as a result of taking this piece of work to my validation group. This particular video-clip is taken from my Confirmation Event in January 2013, referred to earlier in the chapter. Three examiners and myself are at the meeting and the examiners will determine whether I am working at a level whereby I continue my studies at PhD level. It was agreed by all that the event be video-recorded and, following the event, was shown at a practitioner-researcher seminar, Conversation Café and the Thursday evening Continuing Professional Development (CPD) group at the University of Bath. It gave people viewing the video-clip the opportunity ‘to be in that moment in time’ and to give me their reflections of what they heard and saw. I include some of their feedback below. I and others viewing the clip can use the process of empathetic resonance, (Whitehead, 2010a, 2012) which demonstrates how this data can be used to clarify and communicate my embodied expressions of meaning. This can be done with digital visual data by downloading the video-clip from the link and opening it up in ‘Quicktime’. Here is a reminder of Whitehead’s (2010b) explanation of empathetic resonance:

The method (of empathetic resonance) involves the use of video-data where a cursor is moved backwards and forwards along the video-data coming to rest at the point of strongest resonance with the researcher’s receptivity and response to the expression of the energy-flowing value she is seeking to represent and communicate.

(Whitehead, 2010b, p.2)

I would now like to use this particular video-clip to demonstrate my learning and to demonstrate the reasons, as explained above, as to why I use video. This video-clip,

for me, allows me to reflect on that moment in time and, as stated, allows the reader to be with me in that moment in time, but, significantly, it demonstrates what I mean by ‘living empowerment’ and I am able to use the method of empathetic resonance to pinpoint that flow of energy whereby I am ‘living’ empowerment. In the video-clip, I am discussing with the Panel that my research on living empowerment is based and driven by my values rather than driven by an analysis of what other researchers are saying about empowerment. Below is a still image taken from the video-clip and below the still image is the link to a 3:42 minutes clip from the complete version where I am responding to my experience of doing a traditional ‘literature review’.

Image 9 **Chris discussing empowerment at her Confirmation Event**



Video-clip 9 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDOnjxrvQm4>

I would like to take you through the video-clip as to what is being said and to give you some of my reflections. In the beginning (0:00-0:25), I am explaining that much of the research on empowerment has been conducted by researchers analysing the research of others and determining from that, their idea of empowerment. I am questioning at the time whether this is valid. Having the opportunity to reflect on this video-clip, I now feel that this question is inappropriate as I do accept the validity of analysing documentary evidence. A more appropriate question may have been, whether this type of research was authentic. One of the Panel members is now explaining to me why this type of research is valid (0:27-0:50). Whilst the Panel

member is speaking, you can hear me responding by repeating, "Yes, yes", and nodding my head. As I watch the clip, I can see that I am anxious to move on. I explain that not a lot of the literature focusses on being empowered from the point of view of a person being empowered and that much of my literature research on empowerment is often explained from a managerial, organisational point of view (0:50-1:41). I then explain that what is important to me is where this idea of empowerment comes from and that I have not seen in the literature that it is borne out of the values that a person holds and who is actually practising it in the workplace (1:42-2:11). It is at that point that one of the Panel members wishes to respond to what I am saying (2:11) but I am anxious to press on, and I hold up my hand saying, "And if I can just go on..." I then explain that I am living this in the workplace and this is why I am calling it, 'living empowerment' (2:11-2:30). I further go on to explain that in discussions with my manager, that he has the same idea of empowerment which is borne out of the values he holds. I claim in the video-clip, that a culture of empowerment is emerging in our workplace in that I am being empowered by my manager and that the SEN team is being empowered by me. I state that I feel that my research on empowerment could make a contribution to the literature on empowerment that I have not seen as yet (2:30-3:41).

As I view the video-clip, I see my bodily movements which are very animated as I use my hands in reflection of what I am saying. I see myself looking from one to the other as I am speaking. If you move the cursor backwards and forwards along the clip, my movements are speeded up. If you rest the cursor at 2:11 minutes, you may sense the point of resistance as I push forward my point that I am living my value of empowerment in the workplace. This is the point of empathetic resonance, that is, the point of strongest resonance with my receptivity and response to the expression of the energy-flowing value I am seeking to represent and communicate. I believe that in this video-clip, whilst I am speaking about 'living empowerment', I am also demonstrating 'living empowerment' in my responses to the examiners and in my bodily movements. At this point, I am not excluding any participant but expressing my desire to carry on with what I am saying. I felt, at the time, a feeling of empowerment; I felt passionate about what I was saying. I felt that the examiners were listening to me and enabling me to press my point forward.

People who viewed the clip, following the event, were able to give me their responses and this response sums up my own feelings about the power of the video-clip:

As Chris also communicates her meanings of 'living empowerment' I'm wondering if you are like me in experiencing Chris' communication as an embodied expression of 'living empowerment' with her 'life-affirming energy and value of empowerment'. This meaning of 'living empowerment' seems to me to be original (and relationally dynamic)... I am suggesting that the visual data enables meanings of 'living empowerment' to be communicated with greater validity than can be communicated with a printed text-based medium.

(Email from Jack Whitehead to members of Conversation Café, 14th January 2013)

A member of the group responded:

There is no doubting Chris's passion for empowerment which shows particularly strongly in the non-verbal communication.

(Email from member of Conversation Café, 21st January 2013)

I believe that this video-clip demonstrates my 'life-affirming energy and value of empowerment' in a way that cannot be explained in text and still images. This is an example of how I have used digital video-data using empathetic resonance to demonstrate 'living empowerment'.

iv) to validate if I am communicating and clarifying my meanings of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

Throughout the time I have been doing my research, I have taken my work to Conversation Café and the group has acted as a validation group led by Jack Whitehead. Above, I have given a specific example as to the reasons I use video-recordings and I show how I have used digital video-data using empathetic resonance to demonstrate 'living empowerment'. I stated that I would also show how my writing was influenced as a result of taking this piece of work to my validation group. I took my first draft of writing to the group and the session was video-recorded. The aim of taking this piece of work to a validation group was to get feedback on the clarity of my writing as to why this video-clip is so important to my

research. My first draft included the video-clip, a still image and writing, in italics, on the video-clip from my reflective journal which I had done two years later on 30th March 2015 when I reflected on the video-clip. The validation group engaged with the discussion and offered many ideas as to how I could strengthen my writing as to why this video-clip was so important to include. Basically, it was felt that my writing needed a stronger framing and that I needed to explain more clearly to the reader the significance of this video-clip. Below the still image is a link to an extract from the validation session on 29th December, 2017 which is 1:10 minutes in length.

Image 10 Chris discussing her work at a validation group meeting



Video-clip 10 <https://youtu.be/Sdv7WmM-xP0>

Sonia is Chief Executive of a Carers' Centre in the authority and is doing her PhD at Cumbria University. Sonia feels that what I am saying in my first draft is all there but I need to 'take the reader by the hand' and 'spell out' why this video-clip is important to my research. I could understand what Sonia and others were saying. I needed to state clearly what this video-clip was showing and I needed to go through the video-clip and highlight certain points.

With the feedback received, I relooked at what I had written and produced the piece of writing, as above, on the video-clip. This time, I have taken the reader through the video-clip with the timings in brackets. I have particularly highlighted the point of

empathetic resonance (2:11 minutes) where I am filled with an energy to press my point forward and in doing so, I believe I am demonstrating 'living empowerment'. Through taking my work to a validation group, I believe that what I am trying to say, is now a lot clearer as my writing has a better framing and highlights more distinctly the points I wish to make.

In using this method of video-recordings and digital video-data using the process of empathetic resonance, I am contributing to Living Educational Theory research. I also believe that my research is contributing to the global context of what is understood as knowledge and ways of knowing (De Sousa Santos, 2014). In presenting video-clips and using the method of empathetic resonance, I am demonstrating a way of knowing which contributes to the global question of what counts as knowledge.

5.4 My educational influence in the learning of others

My claim to the emergence of an environment of living inclusive and inclusionary empowerment in the workplace, as already stated, was challenged with the introduction of SEND reforms and its impact on the team and ultimately the influence on children and young people with SEN and their families. Before the implementation of the reforms, over a period of a few months in 2013 and 2014, I had met with four team members and video-recorded the meetings. As stated at the time (Chapter 3), the following was established:

- All four members of the team felt that they were being empowered by me as their manager and that this was having an impact on them, the team, schools, parents and the inclusion of children and young people.
- Some members believed that a culture of empowerment was developing within the team with them feeling empowered and they also empowering other members of the team.
- Trust and respect for the other within the team were mentioned throughout.

Whilst I could feel that despite the challenges, this environment was still existent in the workplace, I needed to ascertain the views of the team. I also wanted to draw out my educational influence in their learning of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. Three years after the implementation of the SEND reforms, with the situation being more settled and stabilised, I decided to meet with the same four members, which, as previous, I have called team members A., B., C. and D. to ascertain their views. As explained in Chapter 3, each of these team members has different positions within the team. I video-recorded the meetings and as previous, I sent them a list of areas we could cover for them to consider before we met. The video-recordings took place in August and September 2017. Transcriptions have been made of the four video-recordings. In viewing the video-recordings and looking at the transcriptions, my learning was enhanced as I perceived the situation through the eyes of the team members. I shall now summarise the discussions of each of the four team members. I include a still image of each and a brief video-clip from which I have drawn one of their quotes. You can access the video-clips by clicking on the url below the still images. I include the quote in my text so that the reader has a written as well a visual representation of that moment in time.

5.4.1 Team member A.

Team Member A. details the challenges that the SEND reforms presented to the team and herself, for example:

- Person-centred approaches because it was new. Also, having built a relationship with a parent, the challenge of delivering a decision to the parent that they would find unfavourable.
- Completing EHC plans within twenty weeks as opposed to completing statements in twenty-six weeks as was previous.
- Working with Further Education (FE) colleges with regard to provision, as previously young people did not have Statements of SEN if they attended colleges but now young people could have EHC plans and it was about managing parental expectations.

- New processes and tools, for example, Face to Face meetings, Outcomes Meetings (now eliminated from process because of the logistics in getting all involved to attend), development of booklets for parents, children and young people to express their views.
- Many new staff taken on and the implications of training.

Team member A. also highlights the challenge of the office move that took place in November 2014, two months after the implementation of the reforms.

A. stresses that her concerns lay in the fact that because everything was so new to the team, the team lacked confidence in giving out information to schools and our advice givers:

We were developing and we couldn't give them that which they've always been used to; that conviction in what we were saying because we didn't know. That was a big challenge.

Three years on, A. feels that the situation has much improved:

It's started to get better definitely. We took more people on and 'conversions' (transfer of statements to EHC plans) are going down and we've perfected the Face to Face meetings. When we were going out originally, we had a crib sheet and we didn't want to be there with a crib sheet; we wanted it to be a two-way conversation with a flow, so we've perfected that, we've perfected what we need to say, what we don't need to say. It's all new because that first year, we just didn't know...everyone is (now) confident in what they're saying.

A. highlights how I have enabled the release of her talents, knowledge, skills and motivation:

I was given your trust in training the team, I attended lots of strategic groups at that time about our process(es) and what we were doing about statementing and what needed to happen...So, knowing someone has trust in you, it makes you feel empowered because you believe in yourself so you use your skill... if your manager believes in you, it gives you a confidence to believe in yourself.

Booth (2011) includes trust in his framework of inclusive values:

Trust is closely related to ideas of responsibility and trustworthiness. Trust is needed for the development of self-respect and mutual respect in professional practice. The less people are trusted, the less trustworthy they become. People feel free to speak their minds when they trust that others will engage in respectful dialogue without seeking advantage from it.

(Booth, 2011, p.311)

In speaking about parents, A. draws attention to the fact that since the introduction of systematically meeting with parents, SEND Practitioners are receiving a lot more phone-calls from them. She believes that this is because, parents, having met the SEND Practitioner, feel more comfortable in contacting them. A. feels that parents, now, feel more empowered:

I think parents are feeling more empowered because they are more part of the process, whereas before, we included their views but we didn't meet with them, so you're building that relationship up, so obviously, they feel empowered because they are – I hope that they feel they are part of the process, and that relationship with the SEND Practitioner is closer because they've met with them.

Image 11 **Team member A discussing empowerment**



Video-clip 11 https://youtu.be/_uikbzxpbog

In asking A. what kept her motivated in the midst of the challenges, she stresses the fact that the team have always been well-respected and there was a need to get back to a team who prided themselves on a good reputation. Ultimately, for A. the driving

factor was about the child and seeing that a child with additional needs is having their needs met in the school setting.

5.4.2 Team member B.

Team member B. is the Placements and Budgets Officer in the team and much of her work involves Post-16 Education and working with Post-16 institutions. She moved into this role prior to the SEND reforms in preparation for the introduction of Personal Budgets for young people and parents of children with EHC plans; also with the introduction of young people having EHC plans in Post-16 institutions. B. feels that she has developed much over the last few years:

I've developed as the SEND reforms have been implemented if you like; it's been running tandem.

B. recognises the challenges that came with the SEND reforms for she and the team with all the changes that needed to take place:

One of the issues was managing and implementing the new processes in the context of a landscape of flux...managers had to manage that distress and anxiety, if you like, and at the same time keep the team motivated.

B. acknowledges the fact that working with FE colleges was a new area for us. For her, it was about aligning pre-16 and post-16 processes. But she feels she has been very much encouraged by me, as her manager:

You've helped me overall to see the bigger picture and you've helped me develop/broaden my skills from the narrow focus I had on further education in terms of my career, so I've started to look at pre-16 commissioning, and in that way, I've actually moved up a level and been able to gather enough experience and confidence through your encouragement and your guidance to be able to consider applying for promotion.

Throughout, B. speaks about how she has developed and progressed throughout the SEND reforms. Besides learning to see the bigger picture, she feels that undertaking a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree, with her dissertation on Personal Budgets, has enhanced her learning and she highlights the support I gave her:

I think that was great for us to compare notes of our studies... I feel you steered me to use the knowledge and the better performance that I've gained from doing that qualification to use it in my role...I've bounced off you and in bouncing off you in our supervision meetings, I've been able to come to my own conclusions. You haven't actually stood there and told me but you've enabled me to find the answer through perhaps a very considered question or steering me in a certain way, so all through my studies, I got quite a good mark there, and I think without your support, it would have been a lot more difficult to achieve, and relating that to my new job in how I'm performing now and my new confidence, so it all ties in.

B. feels that in her role, she has learnt a lot about contracts and in this respect, she has worked closely with the West of England Network, consisting of commissioners of local authorities and representatives from colleges; she feels she has had an influence on the development of good practice throughout the West of England. B refers to the West of England Network being very supportive and she has realised the importance of the development of good relationships with the members of this network in being able to share and discuss the shared issues in each of the authorities. She feels that I have influenced her in this respect:

I think you helped me realise how important relationships are and networking is, and how important it is to keep that group going and to go to conferences and do presentations if necessary at work, and I've always been a bit (B. makes a face and both laugh) but I've realised over the years how important that is.

Image 12 **Team member B discussing empowerment**



Video-clip 12 <https://youtu.be/C7AFOV5Gnm8>

Throughout, B. refers to the fact that her growing skills, knowledge, confidence and the fact that she's been given the freedom to develop and initiate processes and to be proactive have had an influence on children young people and families. She highlights the first Personal Budget that she set up which involved the development of a creative package for a parent around her son's supported living arrangements. Rather than him being placed in an out of authority institution, the parent could engage with the creative package to ensure the young person remained within the local authority. In setting this up, B. worked closely with social care. B. has seen photographs of the young man and she noted that he seems very happy.

B. gives another example of her and the SEN team's involvement with another young man who was encouraged to take a course at college but issues regarding transport had to be resolved. That young man now has his own company. B. states that some Personal Budgets have been set up for parents to home educate their children and, in this respect, she feels that parents have felt empowered:

Some of them have been set up to genuinely to empower parents too, for example, home education, to empower them to take on that responsibility.

B. refers to her role in the development of setting up an independent travel training contract for young people whereby young people are provided with trainers to support them in travelling independently. B. highlights the benefits for young people:

Once they are travel-trained, it really does open doors for the young person because of all your transferable skills. It's a whole new world for them...it's communication skills, it's looking at timetables, it's talking to bus drivers, giving them money 'cos sometimes all it takes is just a couple of weeks with a travel buddy and several young people have benefitted already.

B. read out some of the feedback that she had received from young people. For anonymity, I have replaced the name of the person with 'My travel buddy':

My travel buddy was really friendly and helpful. She made me feel confident.

One young person responded to the question as to what they liked about the project:

The way people are very confident. They're always polite, they explain how it will be done.

I agreed with B. that this was a great confidence-builder for young people which encouraged transferable skills and independence. B. states that some parents ring up thanking her for putting this initiative in place; for some parents, however, it is an anxious time with "letting go" of their children.

B. refers to how the team are very confident now; that they are coming on in leaps and bounds and that they're "moving up". In this respect, B. is referring to those members of the team who are being promoted with one leaving to train and study to become a Speech and Language Therapist and another, to train and study to become an Educational Psychologist. B. reflects on my influence on the team and ultimately on children and young people:

I feel that your morale-boosting manner, can I say it like that, has been inspirational to the team because your optimism which is quite infectious, and your ability to always see the bright side of things, and to portray that and to pass that to the team has definitely helped the team move forward through the SEND reforms and, obviously, that will have a good impact on children and young people, so the more the team has benefitted individually and as a team,

the more children and young people benefit. So perhaps in terms of the effect it's having on children and young people, it's an indirect effect, obviously, but a very strong effect all the same; good team leadership, motivational team leadership has been absolutely vital over the last few years as we've implemented the SEND reforms.

5.4.3 Team member C.

Team member C. recognises the challenges of the reforms in that they presented a different way of working. Also, she feels that the team has been under considerable pressure in implementing new processes and in dealing with the increased workload. C. highlights the fact that the team has had to learn how to write EHC plans and that social skills and communication skills are very much needed with the team going out and meeting with families. C. feels that the role of SEND Practitioner is now much more challenging.

To enhance her knowledge, C. explains that she attended a Face to Face to meeting as an observer the previous week. The meeting had made quite an impression on her and she was impressed with how the SEND Practitioner managed the meeting. It also helped to enhance C's understanding because, as she explains:

When you are reading about something, it isn't the same as seeing it, is it, and hearing it from a parent?

C. feels that she has remained motivated because of the team spirit and the support from managers:

I think we've got an amazing team and the support we get from managers. I always feel so well informed.

She feels that the team have remained motivated because of the above reasons and also because they want to do the best for children and young people.

C. explains how I have enabled the release of her and the team's talents, knowledge, skills, interests and motivation:

Well, training and things like that. I've always been encouraged to go on any training... You've always made me feel that I was capable of things. And really, a lot of the time, you let me get on with things and let me use my initiative. The team, well probably, they feel the same way, you've encouraged them – and being valued as well, that's really important isn't it, to be valued? I've always felt that you've valued my expertise, whatever it may be (C. laughs).

Image 13 **Team member C discussing empowerment**



Video-clip 13 https://youtu.be/7Z3c_UrLZPE

C. continues that all of this has given her confidence and states that she would not like to work for someone who is always telling her what to do; rather she likes to take things on and “go with it.” C. explains how she has supported people in the team and how well they’ve progressed:

I’ve helped them when they’ve needed anything done and I’ve shown them what to do and, obviously, they can now run with things because they’re good at what they’re doing, so it’s encouraging really.

C. like the three other members of the team, feel that we’ve created conditions whereby children, young people and families may feel empowered by the creation of pupil and parent booklets whereby they can give their views and also, the Face to Face meetings whereby they meet their SEND Practitioner and good relationships can be built. C. raises an interesting point with regard to the feedback we receive from parents when the statutory process has been completed. She explains that we do not receive the amount of feedback from parents as we did prior to the reforms. Team member C. and I speculated as to why this was the case. Parents and young

people now have to access the feedback form electronically whereas previously, we sent them a hard copy. Parents and young people may find it off-putting having to respond electronically. On the other hand, we discussed the fact that because they now meet with SEND Practitioners and feel more comfortable with phoning them if issues arise, that they do not feel the need to complete a feedback form.

5.4.4 Team member D.

Team member D. refers back to the beginning of the SEND reforms when we all felt quite overwhelmed and anxious with the “massive, massive changes” of the reforms. However, she feels that the team working together and supporting each other have brought us successfully through the reforms to where we are today:

I think the challenges have been the massive change, the massive workload. The workload has just been, well, breaking really... Without the support of our colleagues, we probably wouldn't have managed to keep going and be motivated because somebody at that point has stepped in... we have been there for each other, so I think that's what keeps you motivated; the fact that when you go in, you've got a great team to work with and lovely people to work with.

D. feels that much progress has been made over the last three years with regard to our EHC plans. She feels that our EHC plans have very much improved:

We can't believe the journey and how quickly those (EHC) plans have already evolved in three years and how different they are now... I'm really impressed with our plans... The SEND Practitioners love the plans because we've come completely round. They all like writing plans.

D. refers to the office move to the new building. Initially, because of lack of desks, the SEN team were spread throughout the office. Since more desks have been obtained, the team are now sitting together and D. feels that this has made a big difference in that it's easier to ask for support and learn from each other. Like team member A., D. feels that a big motivational factor in getting through the reforms is that, “we're doing something for the child or young person at the heart of it all, and the family.”

D. speaks about how I have enabled the release of her talents, knowledge, skills and motivation:

You always encouraged me to do things and if I asked if I could do a meeting in your stead or have a go, then you were always happy to let me have that opportunity, and (you were) very supportive if I came to you; we would discuss things, we would bounce ideas off each other, we would work together, and I think by doing that you empower me and make me feel I could do those sort of things.

D. also feels that she and I encourage the team and give them opportunities. D. then highlights the different strengths within the team and how we utilise those strengths, for example, one member of the team is extremely knowledgeable about SEN law and his views are always highly regarded. Another member of the team is very artistic so she has been given the responsibility of producing our leaflets. D. comments on how we encourage people to go on courses to increase their knowledge and skills; that one of the administrative staff has just completed an Excel course and three of the SEND Practitioners are just beginning to do a NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) in SEN.

D. states that we do create conditions for children, young people and families to feel empowered, highlighting the parent and pupil booklets that we have produced. Also, she refers to the Advocacy Service that we commission who work with children and young people in encouraging them to give their views. She cites another example of a young person, with whom the Advocacy Service had worked, who stated his views very clearly at his review meeting about what he wanted to do in that he had decided that he wanted to start attending school full-time and get his qualifications. Like team member B., D. highlights the value of independent travel for young people:

I so, so want it for the young people (independence in travelling) and it so empowers them when they can go to town and meet their friends or go to their friend's house.

D. feels that we're all learning together:

...we're all learning together, everybody, not just the SEN team – we've got the schools and the educational psychologists, the speech and language

(service) – we're all learning all the time and going forward doing more and more, so it's been a massive journey when you look at it, when you look back.

D. looks forward to March 2018 when all Statements of SEN will have been transferred to EHC plans when we can start further improving on what we have done:

We are coming out the other end and I know we've got lots to do and the journey will never end but by March we will only be working on EHC plans. (The transfer of statements to EHC plans will be completed by March 2018). (It) will be a huge weight lifted and will be amazing, and then we can really feel how we are going to start looking at improving plans, working more with schools, more with parents, and we won't be working with two laws (1996 Education Act and Children and Families Act 2014). It will make a huge difference. That bit will end in March which will be great, then we can go forward again, another journey with the plans.

Image 14 **Team member D discussing empowerment**



Video-clip 14 <https://youtu.be/fEwDKj6WeOQ>

In reflecting on the views of the four team members prior to the reforms and three years following the reforms, the learning of these team members can be established. Each has felt empowered in their roles and each can give examples of when they have felt empowered. This is very much evidenced with all discussions I have had with team members (Chapter 3 and Chapter 5). They feel that this has been based on such factors as enablement, whereby they feel that I have enabled them to use their

skills, talents, motivation, knowledge and interests. In turn, they feel that they have enabled members of the team similarly. This idea of empowerment is inclusive, in that it is including of all, and inclusional since it is about the quality of relationships within the team and the relationships we have with others including children, young people and families.

Trust and respect are other factors which arise in my discussions with team members whereby they feel I have trusted them and that there is a shared trust and respect for the other within the team. This, as mentioned, concurs with Booth's (2011) idea of inclusion being about putting particular values, such as trust, into action. Booth is of the view that in professional practice, trust is needed for the development of self-respect and mutual respect; that when people trust that others will engage in respectful dialogue, they feel free to speak their minds.

The four team members feel that opportunities have been presented for them to develop. Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan (1998) acknowledge that empowerment practices may be positive for individuals in that they feel a greater autonomy, have more opportunities to use their initiative, may feel more excited and passionate about their work, thus individuals may enjoy being empowered. Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan conclude that whilst empowerment practices carry the risk of exploitation, it can also create an environment which may improve the working experience of employees. Not one team member mentioned or alluded to being exploited or coerced into something that they did not want to do.

Specific examples of learning include the learning of the new processes implemented as a result of the SEND reforms. Whilst team members felt a lack of confidence at the time with so much to learn, with the guiding principle of keeping children, young people and families at the heart of the developments, and with conditions in place to enable all to feel empowered, they have learnt that we can work through such times to a position of confidence again. Team members highlight the value of working together and supporting each other, and claim that this is a factor contributing to the success in implementing the SEND reforms. This is particularly emphasised by team members C. and D. (Chapter 5). Fullan (2001) emphasises the importance of having

a moral purpose and developing good relationships in driving forward a culture of change.

The four team members believe that the environment within the workplace has had an influence on the inclusive and inclusional empowerment of children, young people and families. As indicated in my first discussions with the team members (Chapter 3), they feel that parents trust us in that "we know what we are talking about"(Team member A), and that they get "the best possible service and best choices available to them because we are at the top of our game" (Team member B). With the implementation of the SEND reforms, this has helped us focus on person-centred approaches (Helen Sanderson Associates, n.d.) whereby the emphasis has been on listening to and including children, young people and families in the development of processes within the authority. Team members A. and C. highlight the significance of the Face to Face meetings (Chapter 5) whereby the SEND Practitioner now meets with parents and that good relationships are developed with them as a result. Team member B. gives specific examples of parents and young people having the option of a Personal Budget which is fully explained to them and that they receive support throughout the process. Also, that young people have access to the Advocacy Service commissioned by the local authority to support them in giving their views. Team member D. gives an example of how a young person was supported by the Advocacy Service at his review meeting. Team member D. agrees with team member B. with regard to the empowering nature of the development of independent travel for young people. Team members C. and D. highlight the value of the pupil and parent booklets whereby children, young people and parents can give their views.

There is no doubt that there has been much pressure on the team with the challenges of implementing the SEND reforms and this is clearly articulated in my discussions with them. However, as team member D. states, "We are coming out the other end." The four team members have given examples of how they have felt empowered and have given examples of their learning. All believe that this had had an influence on the empowerment of children, young people and families. In meeting with the four team members three years following the SEND reforms, I believe that my claim to the emergence of an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment

can still be established and that I have had an educational influence in the learning of the four team members.

5.5 My educational influence in the learning of social formations

A social formation is a social structure, whatever the level, for example, a family, a university, and a business (INIP, 2012). A social formation may be described as ‘a group of people who come together with a common focus.’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.121). In the context within which I work, examples of social formations are, the SEN team, services such as the Educational Psychology Service and the Speech and Language Therapy Service, the South West SEN Network, the West of England network, local authorities, pre-schools, schools, colleges to name a few. Social formations with which I also engage include the government and university. In this section, I consider the influences in the learning of social formations with which I am involved.

5.5.1 The SEN team

In meeting with the four members of the team individually in 2013/14 and 2017, discussions took place on how I have recognised and enabled the release of talents, knowledge, skills and motivation and the influence on them, the team, and children, young people and families. The results of these discussions have been highlighted in Chapter 3 and this chapter. I now want to draw specific attention and give examples of the influences of living, inclusive and inclusional empowerment on the SEN team as a whole.

- The team are confident.

Whilst team confidence took a dip initially with the implementation of the SEND reforms, team member B. states how the team are very confident now and that this has resulted in promotions within the team and the progression of others in their careers, one to train and study to become a Speech and Language Therapist and the other to study and train to become an Educational Psychologist.

- The team value being involved in making decisions.

Through my meetings with the four team members, I have given many examples of how team members value being involved in making decisions. As Ongori (2009) states:

Employees feel most valued through empowerment, especially when they are involved in (the) decision-making process of the organisation.
(Ongori, 2009, p.12)

At this point, I would like to give an example of a team member who applied for promotion in another local authority but decided to withdraw on the day that he was interviewed. When I spoke to him the following day, he gave me the reasons why he had withdrawn. He felt that decisions in that authority were made at the top and he felt that his views would not be considered. He felt that in this authority, and as part of the SEN team, he is part of the decision-making process regarding his cases. In being a part of the decision-making process, he said that he is determined to see things through; that he is driven to see things through for the benefit of children, young people and families. He felt that within the SEN team, he is able to live by his values. He added, that to carry out decisions made by other people, if you are not in agreement with their decision, would be very difficult to see through because the commitment would not be there. I do believe that this team member was realising that he would see himself as a 'living contradiction' (Whitehead, 1989, p.43-43) if he had been offered and taken up this position. Mayo (2016), refers to the fact that once you have 'experienced that voice and those values, you do not want to let them go' (p. 38). He highlights the example of Debbie Harley, who works for a worker-owned coop manufacturer who feels very much like this team member in that she feels that she could not see herself working anywhere whereby she could not be a part of the decision-making process. This is an example of how team members value having the ownership and decision-making responsibilities in the work that they do and feel that they can live to their values and thus do their best for children, young people and families.

- The team feel that their talents, skills, knowledge and motivation are valued whatever their position.

There is a structural chart to show the positions of members within the SEN team, however, this chart does not reflect real life or how influence works within the team (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). Team member D. highlighted the fact that we encourage and utilise people's talents in the team (Chapter 5). She refers to one of the administrative staff who is very artistic and now produces the SEN leaflets. This particular person has now become the team's health representative also. As team member D. states:

We have a culture that people feel they can do that so she didn't feel she couldn't do that, for example, she felt that within the team nobody would say, "No, don't do that," or "You should be doing your admin work, you shouldn't be doing health leaflets," because that's not the way we are.

These examples highlight my educational influence in the learning of the SEN team in working within a living, inclusive and inclusional environment.

5.5.2 The local authority in which I work

- Training to advice givers from different services

Members of the SEN team had expressed their motivation and interest in undertaking training for advice givers from the various services with which we work, for example, the Speech and Language Therapy Service, the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Service, the Educational Psychologist Service and the Occupational Therapy Service (Chapter 4). Training was put in place with the ultimate aim of advice givers giving the appropriate advice to incorporate within our EHC plans. Poor advice from our advice givers, can result in the production of a poor EHC plan. That is not to say that poor advice from our advice givers is the only reason for the production of a poor plan. It depends, also, on the skill of the SEND Practitioner in extracting the appropriate information. The team has always taken great pride in producing good

Statements of SEN prior to the reforms. As team member A. stated in 2013 (Chapter 3):

I think our statements are brilliant...I'm really proud of our statements. When you look at our statements compared to, you know, in comparison to other local authorities, I just think they shine...And I'm really proud of that.

As a result of the training since the reforms, the advice we receive has considerably improved, and as a result, besides the development of the skill of the SEN team in writing EHC plans, this has been a contributory factor, in our much improved EHC plans, as stated by team member D. above in my meeting with her in September 2017.

- Conferences and workshops for schools, parents and professionals

Conferences and workshops regarding the SEND legislation 2014 and the development of our new processes have been provided to schools, parents and professionals within the authority (Chapter 4). Conferences and workshops have covered all SEND legislation, for example, Personal Budgets, person-centred approaches and outcomes for children and young people. Members of the SEN team have been very much involved in the delivery of these conferences and workshops.

- Development of policies regarding independent travel training, personal budgets and our Local First Policy

The Independent Travel Training Policy, Personal Budgets Policy and our Local First Policy (which encourages provision from local post-16 institutions to be firstly considered before looking at the provision from out of authority post-16 institutions, which could result in greater costs) have been developed by team member B. as highlighted in my discussion with her above. Team member B. stated how she has been allowed to take the initiative and been enabled to come to her own conclusions. These policies are now widely published in the authority.

- Development of EHC plans, processes and good practice

In Chapter 4, I described the development of our EHC plans and SEN processes within the authority to ensure the inclusive and inclusional empowerment of parents, children and young people. The drive in developing our EHC plans and processes was to ensure that children, young people and families were at the centre and to ensure that their views, hopes and aspirations were heard. Not all authorities, at the time of writing, have developed their plans and processes as we have done whereby the child's photograph and One Page Profile is included in their plans; whereby booklets have been produced for parents, young people and children; whereby SEND Practitioners meet with parents, children and young people at Face to Face meetings. Parental confidence has grown with good relationships developing between parents and SEND Practitioners with SEND Practitioners receiving more phone-calls as it is felt that parents are more confident in contacting the SEND Practitioner having already met with them. SEN team members believe that we have created conditions for children, young people and parents to feel more empowered as indicated in my meetings with them as described in Chapter 3 and earlier in this chapter.

The SEN team has worked closely with the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) as explained in Chapter 4. One of their representatives has worked closely with me on developing good practice with quality assuring our EHC plans ensuring the involvement of children, young people and families. She has also worked closely with teams across the authority focussing on employment outcomes and education, health and care planning for the 14-25 age group. In her blog, 9th May 2017, Dr Carol Robinson commends the work being done in Bath and North East Somerset which includes the SEN team. I referred to her blog and quoted from it in Chapter 4. Her blog can be accessed by clicking on this link:

<https://www.ndti.org.uk/blog/going-well-despite-adversity>

5.5.3 Other local authorities with whom I work

- The South West SEN Regional Network

The South West SEN Regional Network is a forum for SEN representatives in all authorities in the South West of England, ranging from the Scilly Isles to Gloucester. It is a forum whereby SEN issues are discussed and good practice shared. The network meets three times a year. I attend all meetings with another member of the SEN team, usually one of the Senior Inclusion Officers. It is at this forum that one of our team members has presented on the work within the authority on Personal Budgets to highlight good practice in the authority. The network has recently set up Moderation Meetings for EHC plans in order to moderate plans across the authorities in the South West. It is at these meetings that plans will be shared between all the authorities in the south west with the aim of developing good practice across all authorities. I believe that the plans we produce will contribute to the development of good practice in the authorities in the South West with regard to the involvement, participation and establishment of good relationships with children, young people and families.

- The West of England Network

The West of England Network is a forum including all SEN Commissioners and colleges from all authorities in the West of England. Issues, concerns and good practice is shared. Two representatives from the SEN team attend these meetings held three times a year. One member of the SEN team has developed a contract template which is going to be used in all authorities in the West of England as an example of good practice.

5.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have explained the meaning of educational influences in learning and explained and described my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations. I have used video-recordings and digital video-data using empathetic resonance to help communicate and clarify my meaning of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment as an explanatory principle through which I judge improvements in my practice and as a standard of judgement through which I judge the validity of my contribution to knowledge.

My next chapter is a conclusion of my thesis where I reflect on the aims of my research and reflect on my personal development, my professional development and my development as a researcher. I then look to the future implications of my research.

CHAPTER 6 FINAL REFLECTIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

6.1 Introduction

In this thesis, I have described and explained the emergence of my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. My living-theory has emerged through a reflection of my values which have formed my explanatory principles and my living standards of judgement on which I judge my practice. It has been a long journey on an untrodden path in which I have come to dead ends, I have lost my way but, eventually, I have found a way through; I have felt down-hearted, immobilised, enlightened and energised. It has been a journey in which, whatever my feelings and emotions, I have been driven by an inner determination to know myself, to know my practice and to know myself as a researcher. I can now say that I know myself better, I know my practice better and I know myself as a researcher better.

In this chapter, I reflect on the aims of my study, as stated in my Introduction and ask whether these aims have been achieved. I reflect on my personal development, my professional development and my development as a researcher. I then look to future possibilities for the development of my research. Finally, I pose the question of social validation.

6.2 Aims of my study and have I achieved them?

The aims of my study, as stated in my Introduction are:

- To research into my practice to improve my practice by generating my living-theory methodology.
- To offer an original contribution to educational knowledge by reflecting on my values and developing a new standard of judgement of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.
- To determine the influence of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment on me, my team and ultimately, the children and young people with SEN and their families within the authority.

I now ask, have I achieved my aims? I address each of the aims below.

- To research into my practice to improve my practice by generating my living-theory methodology.

In this thesis, I have researched into my practice as a statutory SEN manager in a small local authority. Through generating my living-theory methodology, I have drawn insights from action research, autoethnographic research, narrative research and self-study research. In telling my stories and reflecting on them, I have come to understand better who I am and why I do what I do. In reflecting on my practice as a statutory SEN manager, I have come to a better understanding of the type of manager that I am and the way in which I manage my team. As a researcher, I have enjoyed the freedom that methodological inventiveness (Dadds and Hart, 2001) has allowed me as I have journeyed on the untrodden path. Using action reflection cycles to structure my enquiries has helped to pinpoint my concerns, why I am concerned and what I have done about it. Using video-recordings has enabled me to produce a multimedia account which entails a visual as well as a written explanation of my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. It has also allowed others to be there in that moment of time with me. In using digital video-data I have been able to use the method of empathetic resonance to capture those moments of strongest resonance of the meanings I am seeking to communicate.

- To offer an original contribution to educational knowledge by reflecting on my values and developing a new standard of judgement of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment.

In reflecting on my values from my early years to my practice as a teacher and working for the local authority, as expressed in 'Clarifying my values' (Introduction), I came to the realisation of the significance of empowerment throughout my life. I was already aware of the significance of my inclusive values, my concept of inclusion and my inclusional way of being. I explored the meaning of the words, 'empowerment', 'inclusive', 'inclusional' and 'living' to determine whether I was contributing to 'living inclusive empowerment', 'living inclusional empowerment' or

‘living inclusive and inclusional empowerment’ (Introduction). I discussed my dilemma with fellow researchers at Conversation Café and finally determined that I was contributing to living inclusive and inclusional empowerment and that my original claim to knowledge is my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. I have also enquired into what is meant by an original contribution to knowledge. I liked the ideas expressed by Pat Thomson (2015), professor at Nottingham University, Convenor for Research in Arts, Creativity and Literacy, and a frequent PhD examiner on the meaning of an original contribution to knowledge, as explained in my Introduction. As expressed then, in reading my thesis, I hope that examiners will determine that I have taken them ‘somewhere which is simultaneously familiar and not’ in my explanation of my original contribution to knowledge which is my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment and a new standard of judgement on which I judge my practice.

- To determine the influence of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment on me, my team and ultimately, the children and young people with SEN and their families within the authority.

In this thesis, I have drawn evidence from data which shows that empowerment is ‘living’ in the workplace and that it is an inclusive and inclusional empowerment (Chapters 3, 4 and 5). I have shown how this has had an influence on me, my team and how this has had a further influence on children and young people with SEN and their families. Evidence shows the influence of my manager, at the time, in discussions with him, that our ideas of empowerment very much aligned; that it is very much to do with recognising people’s talents, knowledge, skills and motivation, and enabling the release of these for people to develop further (Chapter 3). Also, that our idea of empowerment is based very much on a mutual trust and confidence in the other. These ideas of empowerment were reinforced in our shared examples of the mutual influences we have on each other and highlights the relational quality of our relationship. I show how he recognised my talents and motivation and also the talents of his and my administrative officer. Evidence produced shows how my team have felt empowered and this, in turn, was having an influence on children and young people with SEN and their families. Like my manager and me, they were of the view

that trust and respect for the other were essential elements in empowerment between one and the other.

I have highlighted my concerns at a time of significant change with the introduction of the SEND reforms in September 2014 (Chapter 4). I explain what I did to ensure the inclusive and inclusional empowerment of the team in their involvement in work streams and their participation in the implementation of the reforms within the authority. I show how we engaged with the SEND reforms in using person-centred approaches to ensure the inclusive and inclusional empowerment of children and young people with SEN and their families. We developed EHC plans so that the child or young person was at the centre of their plan and we ensured the views and involvement of children and young people with SEN and their families through developing pupil and parental booklets and meeting with them as part of the development of our processes. In this respect, I am showing that empowerment is living and that it is inclusive and inclusional of all.

I have given a detailed explanation of my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations (Chapter 5) in the evolution of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment in the workplace.

6.3 My reflections on my personal development

My doctoral journey began eight years ago. Much has happened during this time. In my personal life, my husband and I moved from a very comfortable semi-detached house to a two-hundred-year-old house which needed complete renovation which is still ongoing. This move has meant that we lived in a touring caravan for twelve months; on moving into the annexe of the house, we had no naturally flowing hot water or heating for a number of years. It is within these circumstances that my research has evolved.

I have felt all the joys and lows of studying for a PhD: the joys of my successful Confirmation Event which determined the continuation of my PhD studies; the joys of my successful annual monitoring reviews; the joys of making a breakthrough after

weeks of feeling lost and wondering what I am about. And the lows: looking at a blank page and wondering where to go next; the hours spent questioning the significance of what I was doing; periods of self-doubt and questioning. In discussions with other students doing a PhD, these feelings are typical. So, what has kept me going? Firstly, it is the love and support of my family who have taken such interest in my work, have been so encouraging and accepting of the time I have not been able to spend with them. Secondly, without a doubt, self-motivation and self-determination, but fundamentally, it is a 'knowing' that I have something to say which is of significance to me and a belief that it is of significance to others. My doctoral journey has been about unearthing my 'knowing' and articulating it for myself and for public scrutiny.

Personally, I have come to know myself better and realise the extent of my self-determination, self-motivation and resilience. I have come to understand myself further and my drive in contributing to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment. As Wilson (2008) states:

If research doesn't change you as a person, then you haven't done it right.

(Wilson, 2008, p.135)

6.4 My reflections on my professional development

Professionally, I have moved from being a Senior Inclusion Officer to a statutory SEN manager. On becoming a manager, I have seen the team grow from eight people to eighteen people. I have managed the team through a time of significant change with new SEN legislation being introduced in September 2014 and the absence of a Head of Service from Easter 2013 to June 2015. In November 2014, the SEN team as with other teams, moved offices from one building to another. There have been many changes for me and the team. When I first became a manager, the team was confident and felt they had the trust and regard of parents. They felt empowered and that this had an influence on children and young people with SEN and their families (Chapter 3). At the time of the changes (Chapter 4), team members lacked confidence with new processes being put in place and the workload rising, one of the

results being not meeting our statutory timescales of completing EHC plans which the team had always previously been proud where Statements of SEN were concerned. Also, team members lacked confidence in giving information to parents and other stakeholders as everything was so new (Chapter 5). Three years after the reforms, the team's confidence has been renewed and they feel empowered. It is a team whereby people have moved on with some internal promotions and two people leaving to train and qualify as a speech and language therapist and an educational psychologist (Chapter 5). The team trust me and each other. Knowledge, skills, talents and motivations are recognised and enabled and the team is encouraged to take the initiative. Team members are valued as we work together and support each other. I have determined that an environment of empowerment which is inclusive and inclusional is 'living' in the workplace and this has had an influence on children and young people with SEN and their families in the authority. It is working with my values that has sustained me throughout my career and in my role as a statutory SEN manager.

6.5 My reflections on my development as a researcher

I began my doctoral journey by reflecting on my values and from this has emerged the notion of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which has become a standard of judgement on which I have judged my practice. My research has focussed on how I can improve what I am doing, thus I have generated my living-theory methodology whereby practitioners ask, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' and 'What are my educational influences in my learning, in the learning of others and the learning of social formations?' (Whitehead, 2008b, p.104). I did not set out with a hypothesis to prove or disprove an issue as is the case with the positivistic scientific model of social research (Hitchcock and Hughes,1995) whereby:

Most people would accept that positivism is based upon the view that the natural sciences provide the only foundation for true knowledge and that the methods, techniques and modes of operation of the natural sciences offer the best framework for investigation of the social world.

(Hitchcock and Hughes,1995, p.21)

Through employing ‘methodological inventiveness’ (Dadds and Hart, 2001), I have been able to weave my way through my research and this has enabled me to arrive at my claim to know.

As I continued with my research, I became more and more interested in the validity of knowledge claims and the hierarchical nature of what counts as knowledge as highlighted in the Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. McNiff (2006) draws our attention to her concerns about epistemological hegemonies whereby:

...knowledge is often used as a means of social division and how people are frequently categorised into those who know and those who don’t...these categorisations tend to be understood as hierarchical, with some forms of knowledge deemed as more worthwhile than others.

(McNiff, 2006, p.1)

McNiff (2009) focusses on the need to reconceptualise educational theory with a move from the hegemony of traditional propositional theory to an increased engagement with living theory comprised of the explanatory narratives of practitioners. She is of the view that practitioners are knowledge creators, all capable of being theorists of their own practice.

The hierarchical nature of what counts as knowledge is contrary to my notion of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment in that each individual is a bearer of knowledge which is based on their own unique experiences and development, for example, I do not have the administrative knowledge of the administrative staff with whom I work; I do not have the knowledge of being a child in care and becoming a leader of a carers’ charity (Hutchison, 2017); I do not have the knowledge of one who has lived in an oppressed state.

Wilson (2008) highlights the problems with the dominant scientific approach to Indigenous research and tells the story of two Indigenous students defending their theses and presenting them to an audience of academics and members of the community. The audience liked the way their work was presented and valued what they had done. Wilson, however, was later to hear that both of these students were heavily criticised by the ‘dominant system academics’ on their panels for their

research methodologies; the methods they had used were reflective of the communities in which they had done their research. Consequently, they both had to spend much time re-writing their theses.

De Sousa Santos (2014), in his book, “Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide”, refers to ‘cognitive injustice’ which is the failure to recognise the different ways of knowing around the world. He is critical of the dominant epistemologies which he calls ‘Northern epistemologies’ and calls for a validation of the epistemologies of the south.

In beginning my enquiry, I did not expect to be drawn to such notions as ‘epistemological hegemonies’ and ‘cognitive injustice’ but my reading on these has filled me with the desire to know more. I have asked myself why I am drawn to such notions and I do believe that it is based on my notion of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment for all which would make the world a better place to be with the hope of the flourishing of the future of humanity (Whitehead, 2005). In this sense, I hope that my research will contribute to the ecology of knowledges as described by De Sousa Santos (2014):

The ecology of knowledges aims to create a new kind of relation, a pragmatic relation, between scientific knowledge and other kinds of knowledge. It consists of granting “equality of opportunity” to the different kinds of knowledge involved in ever broader epistemological arguments with a view to maximising their respective contributions toward building “another possible world,” that is to say, a more just and democratic society, as well as one more balanced in its relations with nature.

(De Sousa Santos, 2014, p.190)

6.6 The journey continues...

I have determined that an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment has emerged in the workplace which has had an influence on me, the SEN team, children and young people with SEN and their families. Living inclusive and inclusional empowerment has become, for me, a standard of judgement on which I judge my practice and has educational influences in my own learning, in the

learning of others and the learning of social formations (Chapters 3, 4 and 5). Whilst I am concluding my thesis, I see much potential in the development of my research in the strengthening and understanding of influences.

I have highlighted the influence of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment on children and young people with SEN and their families, with the involvement of them in the development of EHC plans. There is much to be developed here whereby children, young people and their parents may wish to be involved in the co-creation of EHC plans. This point was highlighted by team member D. (Chapter 5) when I met with her in August 2017:

Going forward, I want to enable the SEND Practitioners to have more time to work with families to get them more involved in writing plans.

Another step forward with regard to the involvement of families in our decision-making processes is to have a parent and a young person representative on our SEN Panel when decisions are made to carry out an EHC needs assessment or to issue an EHC plan based on the evidence provided. At present, and as mentioned previously, the SEN Panel consists of representatives from education, health and social care but we have never had parents or young people involved. In the past, when such discussions have taken place, the issue of confidentiality has been raised as a reason not to include a parent or a young person, however, I do believe that this is an issue that can be addressed.

In implementing the above two developments, I believe that young people and parents would feel further included and empowered in an inclusional way.

A further development of inclusive and inclusional empowerment may be considered with schools. At present, the local authority makes decisions on the appropriate school placements for a child when a present placement breaks down. By law, parents are already asked which placement is their preference. I believe that school representation on the panel that makes these decisions, presently called Case Review Action Meetings (CRAM) and referred to in Chapter 3, would be extremely beneficial, in that schools would come to realise the difficulty that the local authority

has in making such decisions and consequently, schools may consider, in collaboration with the local authority, creative ways in which such children and young people may be more included before the breakdown in placement occurs.

I see my future research as ongoing as I continue to ask, 'How can I improve my practice?' I am now interested in asking such questions as, 'How can I further contribute to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment as we develop our policies and practices in the authority in which I work?' As we work with children and young people with SEN and their families, 'How can living inclusive and inclusional empowerment be further embedded?' 'What are their views?' 'What would they like to be implemented?' 'How can I further contribute to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment as we work with schools and services within the authority?' 'How can I further contribute to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment as I work with other authorities?' Ultimately, 'How can I contribute to an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment across different contexts?' The motivational factor for me, in the exploration of my research, is that I am of the view that living in an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment would make the world a much better place to be for all.

6.7 The validity of my claim of the emergence of an environment of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment

Whitehead and McNiff (2006) state:

Validity is about establishing the truth value, or trustworthiness, of a claim to knowledge.

(Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.97)

They explain that there are two processes of validity; personal validation and social validation. In personally validating my account, I have critically reflected on what I have written and produced evidence to support my claims. I believe that my claims are true and sincere. In addressing social validation, I adopt Habermas' criteria for social validity (1976) and in using this, I now ask you, the reader:

- Is my account comprehensible? Do you understand what I am saying? Have I expressed myself in a form of language you understand?
- Does my account come across as truthful? Have I provided enough evidence for you to believe that what I have written are true accounts and not made up or interpreted inaccurately?
- Does my account come across as sincere? By this I mean, do you see me living my values in my practice from which living inclusive and inclusional empowerment has emerged?
- Have I expressed the normative contexts in which I work clearly?

6.8 Conclusion

I am now putting forward my thesis to be legitimated by the Academy. I am presenting my original claim to knowledge which is my living-theory of living inclusive and inclusional empowerment which has become an explanatory principle and a living standard of judgement on which I judge my practice and founded on the values I hold.

REFERENCES

- Action Research Network of the Americas (2017). *Brief on Regional Workshops Prior to the Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy, 16 June, 2017, Cartagena, Colombia* [online]. Available from: <http://arnaweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/PreAssemblyWorkshop-Brief.pdf> [accessed 1 June 2017].
- Adler-Collins, J. (2007) *Developing an inclusional pedagogy of the unique: How do I clarify, live and explain my educational influences in my learning as I pedagogise my healing nurse curriculum in a Japanese University?* PhD Thesis, University of Bath.
- Allan, J. (2014) Inclusive education and the arts. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, **44** (4), pp.511-523.
- Andrews, J., Carnine, D., Coutinho, M., Edgar, E., Forness, S., Fuchs, L., Jordan, D., Kauffman, J., Patton, J., Paul, J., Rosell, J., Rueda, R., Schiller, E., Skrtic, T. and Wong, J. (2000) Bridging the special education divide. *Remedial and Special Education*, **21** (5), pp. 258-267.
- Anon. (2012) Teather defends pledge to ‘remove the bias towards inclusion’. *Disability News Service* [online]. 14 June. Available from: www.disabilitynewsservice.com/teather-defends-pledge-to-remove-the-bias-towards-inclusion [accessed 20 April 2017].
- Appiah, K. A. (2005) *The Ethics of Identity*. Woodstock: Princeton University Press.
- Atkinson, P. (1997) Narrative Turn or Blind Alley? *Qualitative Health Research*, **7** (3), pp.325-344.
- Ball, S. J. (2003) The teacher’s soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, **18** (2), pp.215-228.
- Bamber, P. M. (2016) *Transformative Education through International Service-Learning*. London: Routledge.
- Bandura, A. (1977) Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, **84** (2), pp.191-215.
- Bandura, A. (1986) *Social Foundations of thought and action: A social-cognitive view*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bath and North East Somerset Council (2014) *Budget Challenges* [online]. Available from: <http://bathnes.gov.uk/services/your-council-and-democracy/budgets-and-spending/budget-201415-explained/budget-challenges/> [accessed 20 April 2017].

Bath and North East Somerset Council (2017a) *Living within our means-Council approves budget for 2017/18* [online]. Available from: <http://familymatters-uk.co.uk/living-within-means-council-approves-budget-201718/> [accessed 14 February 2017].

Bath and North East Somerset Council (2017b) *Special Educational Needs* [online]. Available from: <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/your-council-and-democracy/local-research-and-statistics/wiki/special-educational-needs> [accessed December 2017].

Beck, A. T., Rush, A. J., Shaw, B. F. and Emery, G. (1979) *Cognitive Therapy of Depression*. New York: The Guilford Press.

BERA (2011) *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. Available from: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/ethical-guidelines> [accessed 16 January 2013].

Blanchard, K. H., Carlos, J. P. and Randolph, A. (2001) *Empowerment Takes More than a Minute*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Blanchard, K., Oncken, W. Jr., and Burrows, H. (2011) *The One Minute Manager Meets The Monkey*. London: Harper Collins.

Bochner, A. P. (1997) It's about time: Narrative and the divided self. *Qualitative Inquiry*, **3** (4), pp.418-438.

Bochner, A. P. (2001) Narrative's Virtues. *Qualitative Inquiry*, **7** (2), pp.131-157.

Bochner, A. P. (2002) Perspectives on inquiry 111: The moral of stories. In Mark L. Knapp & John A. Daly (eds.) *Handbook of interpersonal communication* (3rd ed. pp. 73-101. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bold, C. (2012) *Using Narrative in Research*. London: Sage.

Booth, T. (2005) Keeping the Future Alive: putting inclusive values into action. *Forum*, **47** (2), pp.151-158.

Booth, T. (2011) The name of the rose: Inclusive values into action in teacher education. *Prospects*, **41** (3), pp.303-318.

Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2000, 2002, 2011) *The index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE.

Bounds, J. and Hepburn, H. (1996) *Empowerment and Older People*. Birmingham: Pepar.

Bracken, S. (2010) Discussing the importance of ontology and epistemology awareness in practitioner research [online]. *Worcester Journal of Learning and Teaching*, (4). Available from:

<https://eprints.worc.ac.uk/843/1/FinalSBrackenPractitionerResearch.pdf>
[accessed 21 January 2018].

Brindley, S. and Bowker, A. (2013) Towards an understanding of the place of ethics in school-based action research in the United Kingdom. *Educational Action Research*, **21** (3), pp.289-306.

Bruce Ferguson, P. (2013) To act or not to act? That is the question! In McNiff, J. (ed.) (2013) *Value and Virtue in Practice-Based Research*. Dorset: September Books, pp.33-42.

Brydon-Miller, M. and Coghlan, D. (2018) First-, second- and third-person values-based ethics in educational action research: personal resonance, mutual regard and social responsibility. *Educational Action Research*.

Bullough, R. V. Jr. and Pinnegar, S. (2001) Guidelines for Quality in Autobiographical Forms of Self-Study Research. *Educational Researcher*, **30** (3), pp.13-21.

Buzard, J. (2003) On autoethnographic authority. *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, **16** (1), pp.61-69.

Campbell, H. (2014) *Managing Organisational Change*. London: Kogan Page.

Carnall, C. A. (1999) *Managing Change in Organisations* (3rd ed.). London: Prentice Hall.

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986) *Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research*. London: Falmer Press.

Carson, C. M. and King, J. E. Jr. (2005) Leaving leadership: solving leadership problems through empowerment. *Management Decision*, **43** (7/8), pp.1049-1053.

Charles, E. (2007) *How Can I bring Ubuntu As A Living Standard Of Judgement Into The Academy? Moving Beyond Decolonisation Through Societal Reidentification And Guiltless Recognition*. PhD Thesis, University of Bath. Available from: <http://actionresearch.net/living/edenphd.shtml>
[accessed 3 October 2017]

Children and Families Bill 2013. London: Stationery Office.

Children and Families Act 2014. London: Stationery Office.

Chippendale, P. (no date) What Future Do We Want? Values, Ethics and Principles. *New Wisdom 111* [online], pp.9-15. Available from: www.minessence.net/PDFs/AVIAccred/Newwiz3_ch1_values_ethics_principles.pdf
[accessed 2 November 2017].

Cigman, R. (2007) A Question of Universality: Inclusive Education and the Principle of Respect. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, **41** (4), pp.775-793.

- Clandinin, D. J. (ed.) (2007) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*. London: Sage.
- Clandinin, D. J., Caine, V., Lessard, S. & Huber, J. (2016) *Engaging in Narrative Inquiries with Children and Youth*. London: Routledge.
- Clandinin, D. J. and Connelly, F. M. (2000) *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Clawson, C. J. and Vinson, D. E. (1978) Human Values: a Historical and Interdisciplinary Analysis. *Advances in Consumer Research*, **5**, pp.396-402.
- Claxton, G. (1997) *Hare brained and tortoise mind*. London: Fourth Estate.
- Clutterbuck, D. and Kernaghan, S. (1994) *The Power of Empowerment*. London: BCA.
- Conger, J. A. and Kanungo, R. N. (1988) The empowerment process: integrating theory and practice. *Academy of Management Review*, **13** (3), pp.471-482.
- Connelly, F. M., Clandinin, D. J. (1990) Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, **19** (5), pp.2-14.
- Connelly, F. M. and Clandinin, D. J. (1998) *Teachers as curriculum planners: narratives of experience*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Connelly, F. M. and Clandinin, D. J. (1999) *Shaping a Professional Identity: Stories of Educational Practice*. Canada: The Althouse Press.
- Covey, S. R. (1997) Servant-Leadership from the Inside Out. In Spears, L. C. (ed.) *Insights on Leadership: Service, Stewardship, Spirit and Servant-Leadership*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. California, London, New Delhi: Sage.
- Crotty, Y. (2012) *How Am I Bringing An Educationally Entrepreneurial Spirit Into Higher Education?* PhD Thesis, Dublin City University.
- Dadds, M. (1993) The Feeling of Thinking in Professional Self-study. *Educational Action Research*, **1** (2), pp.287-303.
- Dadds, M. (1995) *Passionate Enquiry and School Development: a story about teacher action research*. London: Falmer Press.
- Dadds, M. and Hart, S. (2001) *Doing Practitioner Research Differently*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- De Sousa Santos, B. (ed.) (2008) *Another knowledge is possible: Beyond Northern epistemologies*. London: Verso.

De Sousa Santos, B. (2014) *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*. London: Paradigm Publishers.

Deci, E.L. (1975) *Intrinsic Motivation*. New York: Plenum.

Delamont, S. (2009) The only honest thing: Autoethnography, reflexivity and small crises in fieldwork. *Ethnography and Education*, **4** (1), pp. 51-63.

Denzin, N. K (2000) Aesthetics and Qualitative Inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, **6** (2), pp.256-265.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.) (1999) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed. pp.1-28). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009) *Lamb Inquiry: Special Educational Needs and Parental Confidence*. Nottingham: Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Department for Education (1994) *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs*. London: HMSO.

Department for Education (2013a) *Indicative Draft: The (0-25) Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. London: Department for Education.

Department for Education (2013b) *Draft Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice: for 0- 25 years*. London: Department for Education.

Department for Education (2014) *Special Educational Needs & Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years*. London: Department for Education.

Department for Education (2015) *Transition to the new 0-25 special educational needs and disability system*. 3rd ed. London: Department for Education.

Department for Education (2016) *Special educational needs in England: National Statistics: January 2016*. London: Department for Education.

Department for Education and Skills (2001) *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. London: Department for Education and Skills.

Department for Education and Skills (2004) *Removing Barriers to Achievement*. Nottingham: Department for Education and Skills.

Department for Education and Skills (2006) *The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: practitioners' guide*. Nottingham: Department for Education and Skills.

Department of Education and Science (1978) *Special Educational Needs: Report of the committee of enquiry into the education of handicapped children and young people*. (The Warnock Report). London: HMSO.

Dyson, A. H., Genishi, C. (1994) *The Need for Story: Cultural Diversity in Classroom and Community*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Economic and Social Research Council (2005) *Research Ethics Framework*. Swindon: ESRC.

Education Act 1981. London: HMSO.

Education Act 1993. London: HMSO.

Education Act 1996. London: HMSO.

Eikeland, O. (2006) Condensing ethics and action research. *Action Research*, **4** (1), pp.37-47.

Ellingson, L. L. and Ellis, C. (2008) Autoethnography as constructionist project. In J.A. Holstein and J.F. Gubrium (eds.) *Handbook of constructionist research*. New York: Guilford Press.

Elliott, J. (1991) *Action Research for Educational Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Elliot, J. (2013) The spiritual dimension of teaching: a view of educational action research. In McNiff, J. (ed.) (2013) *Value and Virtue in Practice-Based Research*. Dorset: September Books, pp.6-16.

Ellis, C. (2004) *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E. and Bochner, A. P. (2011) Autoethnography: An Overview. *Historical Social Research*, **36** (4), pp.273-290.

Famularo, D. (2002) *The Cycle of Self Empowerment*. Los Angeles: Alfred Publishing Co. Inc.

Farren, M. & Whitehead, J. (2006) Educational Influences in Learning with Visual Narratives. In Childs, M., & Riley, K. (eds.) (2006) *Developing Innovative Video Resources For Students Everywhere*. Glasgow: Glasgow Calendonian University.

Feldman, A. (2003) Validity and Quality in Self-Study. *Educational Researcher*, **32** (3), pp.26-28.

Flinders, D. (1992) In search of ethical guidance: Constructing a basis for dialogue. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, **5** (2), pp.101-115.

- Foucault, M. (1978) *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1, An Introduction* (trans. Hurley, R.), New York: Pantheon.
- Frederickson, N. and Cline, T. (2010) *Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and Diversity* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Frost, R. (1916) *The Road Not Taken*. In Frost, R. (2016) *Mountain Interval*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Fullan, M. (2001) *Leading in a Culture of Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Galpin, T. J. (1996) *The Human Side of Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Galton, M. and MacBeath, J. (2015) *Inclusion: statements of intent*. Cambridge: H2 Associates.
- Goldman, R. (2007) Video representations and the perspectivity framework. In Goldman, R., Pea, R., Barron B. and Derry, S. (eds.) (2007) *Video Research in the learning sciences*. Routledge: New York, pp.3-38.
- Goleman, D. (2000). Leadership that gets results. *Harvard Business Review*, **78** (2), pp.78-90.
- Goleman, D. (2002) *The New Leaders*. London: Time Warner Paperbacks.
- Goodall, B. H. L. (2006) *A need to know: The clandestine history of a CIA family*. Walnut Creek, CA: left Coast Press.
- Greasley, K., Bryman, A., Dainty, A., Price, A., Soetanto, R. and King, N. (2005) Employee Perceptions of Empowerment. *Employee Relations*, **27** (4), pp.354-368.
- Greenleaf, R. (1970) *The Servant as Leader*. USA: The Greenleaf Centre for Servant Leadership.
- Gross, J. (1995) *Special Educational Needs in the Primary School*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Guojonsson, H. (2013) Action Research in Iceland: Glimpses and Reflections. In McNiff, J. (ed.) (2013) *Value and Virtue in Practice-Based Research*. Dorset: September Books, pp.43-53.
- Habermas, J. (1976) *Communication and the Evolution of Society*. London: Heinemann.
- Hall, B. L. (2014) Towards a holistic and inclusive ecology of knowledge. Paper presented at the *Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO*, June 6th, 2014, Victoria, British Columbia.
- Hall, B. L. (2015) Beyond Epistemicide: Knowledge Democracy and Higher Education. Paper presented at the *International Symposium on Higher Education in*

the Age of Neo Liberalism and Audit Cultures, July 23-25, 2015 at the University of Regina.

Hall, B. L. and Tandon, R. (2015) Are We Killing Knowledge Systems? Knowledge, Democracy and Transformation. Paper presented at the *International Symposium on Higher Education* in the Age of Neo Liberalism and Audit Cultures, July 23-25, 2015 at the University of Regina.

Hallett, F. and Hallett, G. (2010) *Transforming the Role of SENCO*. Maidenhead, Open University Press.

Hardy, C., Leiba-O'Sullivan, S. (1998) The power behind empowerment: Implications for research and practice. *Human relations; Thousand Oaks*, **51** (4), pp.451-483.

Harrison, R. and Stokes, H. (1991) *Working with Organization Culture*. Roffey Park Institute.

Hartog, M. (2004) *A Self Study Of A Higher Education Tutor: How Can I Improve My Practice?* PhD Thesis, University of Bath. Available from: <http://actionresearch.net/living/hartog.shtml>. [accessed 3 October 2017].

Helen Sanderson Associates (n. d) *One Page Profiles*. Available from: <http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/one-page-profiles/> [accessed 6 July 2017].

Helen Sanderson Associates (n. d) *Values-Based Recruitment*. Available from: <http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/values-based-recruitment/> [accessed 6 July 2017].

Hitchcock, G. and Hughes, D. (1995) *Researcher and the Teacher: A Qualitative Introduction to School-based Research* (2nd ed.). London and New York: Routledge.

Hodkinson, A. (2010) Inclusive and special education in the English educational system: historical perspectives, recent developments and future challenges. *British Journal of Special Education*, **37** (2), pp.61-67.

Hodkinson, A. (2012) Illusionary Inclusion – what went wrong with New Labour's landmark educational policy? *British Journal of Special Education*, **39** (1), pp.4-11.

Hollander, E. P., & Offermann, L. R. (1990) Power and leadership in organizations: Relationships in transition. *American Psychologist*, **45** (2), pp.179-189.

Holman Jones, S. (2005) Autoethnography: Making the personal political. In Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (2nd ed., pp. 763-791). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications.

Hornby, G. (2011) Inclusive education for children with special educational needs: a critique. *International Journal of Disability, Development & Education*, **58** (3), pp.321-329.

Hutchison, S. (2017) *How does my lived experience, from being a 'child in care to being a leader of a carers' charity, sustain the hope that I can be the change I want to see in the world? My living theory of caring as mutuality*. Draft PhD thesis, Cumbria University.

Huxtable, M. (2012) *How do I Evolve Living-Educational-Theory Praxis in Living-boundaries?* PhD Thesis, University of Bath.

Huxtable, M. (2016) Integrating personal, political, and professional educational practice that gives meaning and purpose to my life and work, *EJOLTS*, **9** (2), pp.1-23.

Huxtable, M., & Whitehead, J. (2017) Enhancing Professionalism in Education through Inquiry Learning: a Living Theory Research Approach. In Boyd, P. & Szplit, A. (eds.) (2017) *Teachers and Teacher Educators Learning Through Inquiry: International Perspectives*. Kielce Krakow; Wydawnictwo Attyka.

INIP (2012) *Social Formation (Definition of Concept)* [online]. INIP. Available from:
<http://koleksyon-inip.org/social-formation-definition-of-concept/>
[accessed 10 October 2017].

Jewitt, C. (2012) *An Introduction to using video for research*. London: Institute of Education.

Jones, C. (1988) *An Assessment of the Provision for Pupils with Special Needs at Brune Park School: An Evaluation of the Whole School Approach*. Dissertation for Diploma in Professional Studies in Education (Special Education). King Alfred's College, Winchester.

Jones, C. (2009) *How Do I Improve My Practice as an Inclusion Officer Working in a Children's Service*. M.A. Dissertation, Bath Spa University.

Jones, C. (2010) How Can I Improve My Practice as a Senior Inclusion Officer in contributing to the development of the Knowledge and Skills of Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) through my involvement in the implementation of the National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination? Paper presented at the *British Educational Research Association Conference*, University of Warwick on 3rd September, 2010.

Jones, C. (2012) How Can I Improve My Practice as a Manager of Special Educational Needs? A Continuing Enquiry. Paper presented at the *British Educational Research Association Conference*, University of Manchester on 5th September, 2012.

- Jordaan, P. (2016) *Self-Empowerment*. Available from: <http://www.iempowerself.com> [accessed 12 December 2016].
- Jousse, M. (2009) *The Oral Style*. Presented and translated from the French by Edgard Sienaert and Joan Conolly. Durban: Desk Top Publishing.
- Kanter, R. M. (1981) Power, Leadership and Participatory Management. *Theory into Practice*, **20** (4), pp.219-224.
- Kautilya (1915) *Arthashastra*. Translated from Sanskrit by Shamasastri, R. Bangalore: Government Press.
- Kavale, K. and Mostert, M. (2004) *The positive side of special education: Minimizing its fads, fancies and follies*. Lanham Md: Scarecrow Education.
- Keizer-Remmer, A. (2017) *Underneath the surface of cosmopolitanism – in search of cosmopolitanism in higher education*. PhD. Thesis, University of Humanistic Studies, Utrecht.
- Khan, M. M. Y. (1964) *The Golden Deeds of Islam*. Trinidad: The College Press.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2004) Introduction: the power of the bricolage: expanding research methods. In Kincheloe, J. L. & Berry, K. S. (eds.) *Rigour and complexity in educational research: Conceptualising the bricolage*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Klagge, J. (1998) The empowerment squeeze - views from the middle management position. *Journal of Management Development*, **17** (8), pp.548-558.
- Kouzes, J. M. and Posner, B. Z. (1998) *Encouraging the heart: A leader's guide to rewarding and recognising others*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Laidlaw, M. (1996) *How Can I Create My Own Living Educational Theory As I Offer You An Account Of My Own Educational Development*. PhD Thesis, University of Bath.
- Laverack, G. (2005) *Public Health: Power, Empowerment and Professional Practice*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lawler, E. E., 111 (1973) *Motivation in work organisations*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Lewin, K. (1946) Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues*, **2** (4), pp.34-46.
- Lewin, K. (1947) Frontiers in group dynamics. *Human Relations*, **1** (1), pp.5-41.
- Lewin, R. and Regine, B. (2000) *The soul at work*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

- Liu, A. M. M., Chiu, W. M. and Fellows, R. (2007) Enhancing commitment through work empowerment. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, **14** (6), pp.568-580.
- Liverpool Hope University (2016) *Postgraduate Research Handbook 2016/17*. Liverpool: Liverpool Hope University Press.
- Lomax, P. (1994) Standards, criteria and the problematic of action research within an award bearing course. *Educational Action Research*, **2** (1), pp.113-126.
- Lowe, P. (1994) Empowerment: Management Dilemma, Leadership Challenge. *Executive Development*, **7** (6), pp.23-24.
- Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: A Radical View* London: Macmillan.
- Maslow, A. H. (1954) *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper.
- Mazzei, A. (2014) Internal communication for employee enablement: Strategies in American and Italian companies. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, **19** (1), pp.82-95.
- McClelland, D. C. (1975) *Power: The inner experience*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- McGee-Cooper, A. and Trammell, D. (2002) From Hero-as-Leader to Servant-as-Leader. In Spears, L. C. and Lawrence, M. (eds.) *Focus on Leadership: Servant Leadership for the 21st Century*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- McNiff, J. (1993) *Teaching as Learning: An Action Research Approach*. London: Routledge.
- McNiff, J. (2002) *Action research for professional development. Concise advice for new action researchers*. Available from:
<http://www.jeanmcniff.com/userfiles/file/Publications/AR%20Booklet.doc>
 [accessed 14 January 2018].
- McNiff, J. (2006) How do I contribute to the transformation of epistemological hegemonies for sustainable social evolution? Paper presented at the symposium, How do we explain the significance of our self-study enquiries for the future of educational research? at the *British Educational Research Association Conference*, University of Warwick on 8th September 2006.
- McNiff, J. (2007) My Story Is My Living Educational Theory. In Clandinin, J. (ed.) (2007) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*. London: Sage.
- McNiff, J. (2009) How Do I Contribute to a Reconceptualisation of Educational Theory for Moral Accountability in the Creation of Sustainable Social Orders? Paper presented at the Practitioner Research Special Interest Group Symposium, Academic practitioner-researchers: shifting the epistemological centre in higher education, at the *British Educational Research Association Conference*, University of Manchester, September 2009.

McNiff, J. (2010) *Action Research for Professional Development*. Dorset: September Books.

McNiff, J. (2017) *Action Research: All You Need to Know*. London: Sage.

McNiff, J. and Whitehead, J. (2005) *Action Research for Teachers. A practical guide*. London: David Fulton.

Meyer, J. (2000) Using qualitative methods in health-related action research. *British Medical Journal*, **320**, pp.178-181.

Morriss, P. (2002) *Power: A philosophical analysis* (2nd ed.). Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Mullins, L. J. and Peacock, A. (1991) Managing through people: regulating the employment relationship. *Administrator*, December, pp.45-55.

Naidoo, M. (2005) *I am Because We Are. (My never-ending story). The emergence of a living theory of inclusional and responsive practice*. PhD Thesis, University of Bath.

Narayan, D. (2002) *Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook*. Washington DC: The World Bank.

Noffke, S. (1997) Professional, Personal, and Political Dimensions of Action Research. In Apple, M. (ed.) *Review of Research in Education*. Washington, DC: AERA, pp. 305-342.

Norton, L. S. (2009) *Action Research in Teaching & Learning*. Oxon: Routledge.

Norwich, B. (2010) A Response to 'Special Educational Needs: A New Look'. In Terzi, L. (ed.) (2010) *Special Educational Needs: A New Look*. London: Continuum.

Norwich, B. (2014) Changing policy and legislation and its effects on inclusive and special education: a perspective from England. *British Journal of Special Education*, **41** (4), pp.403-425.

Norwich, B. and Eaton, A. (2014) The new special educational needs (SEN) legislation in England and implications for services for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Journal: Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, **20** (2), pp. 117-132.

Nykodym, N., Simonetti, J. L., Warren, R. N. and Welling, B. (1994) Employee Empowerment. *Empowerment in Organisations*, **2** (4), pp.45-55.

Ongori, H. (2009) Managing behind the scenes: A view point on employee empowerment. *African Journal of Business Management*, **3** (1), pp.9-15.

Online Etymology Dictionary (2017) [online]. Available from: <http://www.etymonline.com>

[accessed 28 February 2017].

Oxford English Dictionary (2017) [online]. Available from:
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com>
[accessed 28 February 2017].

Page, N., Czuba, C. E. (1999) Empowerment: What is it? *Journal of Extension*, **37** (5), pp.1-4.

Pardo Del Val, M. and Lloyd, B. (2003) Measuring Empowerment. *Leadership & Organisation Development Journal*, **24** (2), pp.102-108.

Pausch, R. and Zaslow, J. (2008) *The Last Lecture*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

Pillay, D., Naicker, I. and Pithouse-Morgan, K. (eds.) (2016) *Academic Autoethnographies*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Pinnegar, S. (1998) Introduction to methodology. In Hamilton, M. (ed.) *Reconceptualising teacher education* (pp.31-33). London: Falmer.

Pithouse-Morgan, K., Coia, L., Taylor, M. and Samaras, A. P. (2016) Exploring Methodological Inventiveness Through Collective Artful Self-Study Research. *LEARNing Landscapes*, **9** (2), pp.443-460.

Polanyi, M. (1958) *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*. London: Routledge.

Ransom, J. W. (1994) Empowerment leads to competitive success. *National Productivity Review*, Summer, pp.321-325.

Rappaport, J. (1984) Studies in Empowerment: Introduction to the issue. *Prevention in Human Services*, **3**, pp.1-7.

Rayner, A. (2006) *Inclusionality: Essays and Talks about Inclusionality by Alan Rayner*. Available from:
<https://people.bath.ac.uk/bssadmr/inclusionality/>
[accessed 28 May 2007].

Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (eds.) (2001) *Handbook of Action Research. Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage.

Richardson, L. (1997) *Fields of play: Constructing an academic life*. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press.

Robinson, C. (2017) *Going well despite diversity...* [blog post]. Available from:
<https://www.ndti.org.uk/blog/going-well-despite-adversity>
[accessed 28 June 2017].

Rogers, M. (2012) Contextualising Theories and Practices of Bricolage Research. *The Qualitative Report*, **17** (48), pp.1-17. Available from:

<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR17/rogers.pdf>
[accessed 2 September 2016].

Rorty, R. (1982) *Consequences of pragmatism (essays 1972-1980)*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Rosen-Webb, S. (2011) Nobody tells you how to be a SENCO. *British Journal of Special Education*, **38** (4), pp.159-168.

Roth, W. M. (2007) Epistemic mediation: Video data as filters for the objectification of teaching by teachers. In Goldman, R., Pea, R., Barron B. and Derry, S. (eds.) (2007) *Video Research in the learning sciences*. Routledge: New York, pp. 367-382.

Runswick-Cole, K. (2011) Time to end the bias towards inclusive education? *British Journal of Special Education*, **38** (3), pp.112-119.

Runswick-Cole, K. and Hodge, N. (2009) Needs or Rights? A challenge to the discourse of special education, *British Journal of Special Education*, **36** (4), pp.189-283.

Russell, C. (1999) *Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video*. London: Duke University Press.

Rustemier, S. (2002) *Social and Educational Justice: the human rights framework for inclusion*. Bristol: Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education.

Scarnati, J. T. and Scarnati B. J. (2002) Empowerment: the key to quality. *The TQM magazine*, **14** (2), pp.110-119.

Schön, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books.

Schön, D. (ed.) (1991) *The Reflective Turn: Case Studies In and On Educational Practice*. New York: Teachers Press, Columbia University.

Schön, D. (1995) The New Scholarship Requires a New Epistemology. *Change*, Nov/Dec. **27** (6), pp.27-34.

Schwartz, S. H. (2012) An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, **2** (1). Available from:
<http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/orpc/vol2/iss1/11>
[accessed 7 January 2017].

Seedhouse, D. (1998) *Ethics: The Heart of Health Care*. Chichester: Wiley.

Sen, A. (1985) Well-being, Agency and Freedom. The Dewey Lectures 1984. *The Journal of Philosophy*, **82** (4), pp.169-221.

Sen A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*. Oxford: OUP.

- Shaw, A. (2017) Inclusion: the role of special and mainstream schools. *British Journal of Special Education*, **44** (3), pp.292-312.
- Shepherd, J. (2010) Academies bill is anti-democratic, lawyers warn. *The Guardian* [online], 6 June. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2010/jun/06/academies-bill-gove-teachers-authorities> [accessed 12 May 2017].
- Sienaert, E. (ed.) (2016) *In Search of Coherence: Introducing Marcel Jousse's Anthropology of Mimism*. Milton, Canada: Pickwick Publishers.
- Sievers, B. (2007) Pictures from below the Surface of the University: The Social Photo-Matrix as a method to promote the understanding of the unconscious in organisations. *Organisational and Social Dynamics*, **8** (2), pp.234-254.
- Slee, R. (1998) High Reliability Organisations and Liability Students – The Politics of Recognition. In Slee, R., Weiner, G. and Tomlinson, S. (eds.) *School effectiveness for whom?* London: Falmer Press, pp.101-114.
- Slee, R. (2011) *The irregular school*. London: Routledge.
- Slee, R. (2012) How do we make inclusive education happen when exclusion is a political predisposition? *International Journal of Inclusive Education* (2013), **17** (8), pp.895-907.
- Soka Gakkai International (2010) The Oneness of Mentor and Disciple. *Soka Gakkai International Quarterly*, January, 2010, pp.1-3. Available from: www.sgi.org/buddhism/buddhist-concepts/the-oneness-of-mentor-and-disciple.html [accessed 1 December 2016].
- St. Pauls Chambers (2014) *Changes in Special Educational Needs Law* [online]. Available from: <http://www.stpaulschambers.com/changes-in-special-educational-needs-law> [accessed 5 March 2017].
- Stutchbury, K. and Fox, A. (2009) Ethics in educational research: introducing a methodological tool for effective ethical analysis. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, **39** (4), pp.489-504.
- Sullivan, B. (2006) *A living theory of a practice of social justice: realizing the right of traveller children to educational equality*. PhD thesis. University of Limerick.
- Taylor, C. (1989) *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.
- Terzi, L. (2005) Beyond the Dilemma of Difference: The Capability Approach to Disability and Special Educational Needs. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, **39** (3), pp.443-459.

Thayer-Bacon, B. (2003) *Relational '(e)pistemologies'*. New York: Lang.
The Coalition (2010) *Coalition: our programme for government*. London: Cabinet Office.

The Education (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) (England) Regulations 2008. (SI 2008/2945). London: Stationery Office.

The Education (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009. (SI 2009/1387). London: Stationery Office.

The Free Dictionary (2012) [online]. Available from:
<https://www.thefreedictionary.com>
[accessed 26 February 2012. (Content now changed).

The Holy Bible containing the old and new testaments. (n.d.) [Authorised King James Version] London: Collins Bible.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. (SI 2014/1530). London: Stationery Office.

Thomas, K. W. and Velthouse, B. A. (1990) Cognitive elements of empowerment: An "interpretive" model of intrinsic task motivation. *Academy of Management Review*, **15** (4), pp.666-681.

Thomson, P. (2015) What is an "original contribution"? *Patter* [online], 15 May. Available from:
<https://patthomson.net/2015/05/11/what-is-an-original-contribution/>
[accessed 16 March 2017].

Thompson, N. (2007) *Power and empowerment*. Dorset: Russell House Publishing Ltd.

Tidwell, D. L., Heston, M. L., Fitzgerald, L. M. (eds.) (2009) *Research Methods for the Self-Study of Practice*. New York: Springer Publishing.

Tissot, C. (2013) The role of SENCos as leaders. *British Journal of Special Education*, **40** (1), pp.33-40.

Toffler, A (1969) Value Impact Forecaster - A Profession of the Future. In Baler, K. and Rescher, N. (eds.) (1969) *Values and the Future*. New York: The Free Press, p.4.

Tomlinson, S. (2012) The irresistible rise of the SEN industry. *Oxford Review of Education*, **38** (3), pp.267-286.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. (1994) *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: UNESCO.

Van Oudtshoorn, M. and Thomas, L. (1995) A management synopsis of empowerment. *Training for Quality*, **3** (3), pp.25-32.

- Vasilyuk, F. (1991) *The Psychology of Experiencing: the Resolution of Life's Critical Situations*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Von Krogh, G., Ichijo, K., and Nonaka, I. (2000) *Enabling knowledge creation: How to unlock the mystery of tacit knowledge and release the power of innovation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Vytiniorgu, R. (2016) I am a Theorist: Learning to Name My World with a New Literary Humanism. *Educational Journal of Living Theories*, **9** (1), pp.91-111.
- Warnock, M. (2005) *Special Educational Needs: A New Look*. London: Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain.
- Wartenberg, T. E. (1990) *The Forms of Power: From Domination to Transformation*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Webster, L., Mertova, P. (2007) *Using Narrative Inquiry as a research method*. London: Routledge.
- Wenger, J. (2014) *Why you can't empower someone* [online]. Available from: <https://medium.com/@johnqshift/why-you-cant-empower-someone-1053ddbb765c> [accessed 10 October, 2018].
- Whetton, D. A. and Cameron, K. S. (1984) *Developing Management Skills*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Whitehead, J. (1989) Creating a living educational theory from questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, **19** (1), pp.41-52.
- Whitehead, J. (1993) *The Growth of Educational Knowledge: Creating Your Own Living Educational Theories*. Brighton: Hyde Publications.
- Whitehead, J. (2003) Creating our living educational theories in teaching and learning to care: using multi-media to communicate the meanings and influence of our embodied educational values, *Teaching Today for Tomorrow*, **19**, pp.18-22.
- Whitehead, J. (2005) *Do These Living Educational Theories Validly Explain Educational Influences in Learning With Values of Humanity?* Available from: www.jackwhitehead.com/monday/jwedth.htm [accessed March 8 2016].
- Whitehead, J. (2008a) *How Do I Influence the Generation Of Living Educational Theories For Personal and Social Accountability in Improving Practice? Using A Living Theory Methodology In Improving Educational Practice*. Available from: <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwLTM080508.pdf> [accessed January 10 2016].

Whitehead, J. (2008b) Using a living theory methodology in improving practice and generating educational knowledge in living theories, *Educational Journal of Living Theories*, **1** (1), pp.103-126.

Whitehead, J. (2010a) *Meanings of Empathetic Resonance and Validity in Visual Narratives: A passion for compassion and loving what we are doing*. Available from: www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwempatheticresonancepaperopt.pdf [accessed 9 November 2017].

Whitehead, J. (2010b) Creating An Educational Epistemology In The Multi-Media Narratives Of Living Educational Theories And Living Theory Methodologies. Presented at the *British Educational Research Association Annual Conference*, University of Warwick, 1-4 September, 2010.

Whitehead, J. (2012) To Know Is Not Enough, Or Is It? Presented at the symposium, To Know is Not Enough: Action Research as the Core of Educational Research at the *American Educational Research Association*, University of Vancouver, 14 April, 2012. Available from: www.actionresearch.net/writings/aera12/jwaera12noffke200212.pdf. [accessed 9 November 2017].

Whitehead, J. (2016) *Justifying your creation of a living theory methodology in the creation of your living educational theory*. Available from: www.actionresearch.net/writings/arsup/livingtheorymethodologies.pdf [accessed 27 August 2016].

Whitehead, J. and Huxtable, M. (2016) Creating a profession of educators with the living-theories of master and doctor educators. *Gifted Education International*, **32** (1), pp. 6-25.

Whitehead, J. and McNiff, J. (2006) *Action Research Living Theory*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Wilson, S. (2008) *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Canada: Fernwood Publishing.

Wood, L. (2017) The Ethical Implications of Community-Based Research: A Call to Rethink Current Review Board Requirements. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, **16**, pp.1-7.

Wood, W. with Damons, B. (2013) Developing virtuous leaders: An action research approach to improving school leadership in a South African context. In McNiff, J. (ed.) (2013) *Value and Virtue in Practice-Based Research*. Dorset: September Books, pp.54-68.

Yoak, S. D. and Brydon-Miller, M. (2014) Ethics and Moral Decision-making. In Coghlan, D. and Brydon-Miller, M. (eds.) (2014) *The Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research, Volume 1*, London: Sage, pp. 306-309.

Zeni, J. (ed.) (2001) *Ethical issues in practitioner research*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Zimmerman, M. A. (1984) Taking aim on empowerment research: On the distinction between individual and psychological conceptions. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, **18** (1), pp.169-177.

Zuber-Skerrit, O. (1991) Eliciting personal constructs of research, teaching and/or professional development. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* **4** (4), pp.333-40.

APPENDIX A – MIND MAP OF TRANSCRIPTION OF MEETING WITH TEAM MEMBER D – AUGUST 2017

