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"Does the drive towards interprofessional practice and the creation of the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) provide a case for European Social Pedagogy and its practices to be introduced into the landscape of working with children and young people in Wales?"

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

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This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of BA (Hons) Youth and Community Work

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DOES THE DRIVE TOWARDS INTERPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND THE CREATION OF THE 2020 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORKFORCE STRATEGY (DCSF, 2008) PROVIDE A CASE FOR EUROPEAN SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AND ITS PRACTICES TO BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LANDSCAPE OF WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN WALES?

University of Wales, Newport
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ABSTRACT

Social pedagogy can be seen across almost every facet of the different welfare systems in Europe. Yet, the interest for social pedagogy in the UK is still its infancy. Only in very recent history have pilot programmes and theoretical discourse started to emerge in England and Scotland, particularly in the contexts of working with children and young people in residential care settings (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2012). European social pedagogy crosses many professional boundaries and significantly challenges the professional constructs we have in place throughout the welfare state in the UK (Trodd and Chivers, 2011).

As this landscape of working with children and young people moves towards integration (DFCS, 2008; Welsh Government, 2012), it forces us re-evaluate the positioning of different professions and consider what impact the introduction of social pedagogy could have upon the workforce. Very little, if any, research and theoretical exploration has been conducted into the contextualisation of social pedagogy in Wales (Thempra, 2013). The theoretical discussion seeks to explore this and outline some of the opportunities and challenges this would place upon youth work in Wales as it moves towards becoming a significant contributor to an integrated and

interprofessional landscape. This research highlights the significant disconnect between youth work in Wales and the social lifeworlds of young people; exploring how the conceptual framework of European social pedagogy could be used to address this.

INTRODUCTION

The history of youth work shows us that youth work practitioners have always been closely aligned to young people (Jeffs and Smith, 2005). Found to be present and in a state of *'be[ing] with'* (Young, 2006, p.62) young people, youth work practitioners have constantly responded to supporting the needs of young people and that of their respective communities (Smith, 2002). History illustrates that young people, from whichever perspective; problematized or not, have constantly *"been under the microscope and of central concern to adults and of the state"* (France, 2007, p.1). But now, in an increasingly complex society, the needs of young people have become more challenging, convoluted and demanding (Wood and Hine, 2009). It has consequentially resulted in a pressing need to rethink how society protects, provides for and nurtures its children and young people. Practices, interventions and methodologies that were once exclusive to the field of professional youth work can now be seen to be utilised and implemented amongst a vast array other professions from the formal education, community safety, health, and social care sectors (Wood and Hine, 2009).

Although not a new concept in practice (Pugh and Duffy, 2006), the notions of partnership working and interprofessionalism have held strong positions of influence in shaping government policies since the late 1990s (Wood and

Hine, 2009). The paradigm for a renewed drive of such practices was as a result of the development of significant governmental policy drivers, reviews and legislation seeking to transform the professional landscapes of social policy and that of the welfare state. Publications such as *'Working Together'* (DoH, 1999), '*The Victoria Climbie Inquiry'* (Laming, 2003) and *'Every Child Matters'* (DfES, 2003) have all resulted in increased efforts to create a culture of *'joined-up'* services amongst organisations working with children and young people. They have sought to establish a *"mindset [within these organisations] that looks for ways to work together"* (Trodd and Chivers, 2011, p.1).

The aspirational values of such drivers were to establish a common framework for services working with children, young people, their families, and their respective communities. This renewed paradigm recognised that no single agency could meet the increasingly complex and dynamic needs of the populations they seek to serve (Bridges et al, 2011). The pro interprofessionalism response sought to address the *"individual, collective and institutional failures in the system [which were] intended to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable children are met"* (Laming, 2003, p.73). Consequentially, these new policy drivers introduced greater expectations for, both, statutory and non-statutory service providers to plan together, work collaboratively with one another, and interprofessionally achieve shared goals and outcomes (Welsh Assembly Government, 2012).

Generated from this ideological standpoint was an expert group of leading practitioners, professionals and academics from the arena of working with children and young people; the Children's Workforce Development Council.

Its role was to oversee and inform the creation and development of the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008). The publication made a central commitment, by the then Labour administration, to ensuring the establishment of a common framework by which all practitioners and leaders working with children and young people could plan, deliver and evaluate services from (DCSF, 2008). It sought to further support the process of integrating services and recognised the need to develop a strong cross-sector interprofessional workforce capable of withstanding the complexities of working with children and young people in order to drive up the standards of service delivery (DCSF, 2008).

The integration of services, implementation of the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) and the desire to realise interprofessionalism does, however, contain many contentions and implications for supporting, maintaining and nurturing such a workforce into reality (Trodd and Chivers, 2011). Over the course of this discussion, it will be undertaking an epistemological position in exploring whether or not the creation of the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) provides a case for the conceptual framework and practices European Social Pedagogy to be introduced into landscape of working with children and young people in Wales.

Due to the far-reaching scope of the discussion and a newly emerging interest for social pedagogy in UK (Cameron and Moss, 2011), it will be necessary to undertake desk-based research to explore the themes of this discussion. There is also a distinct lack of theoretical exploration and literature, if any,

exploring the relevance of a socio-pedagogic context for Wales (Thempra, 2013). It is, therefore, important to acknowledge that part of this discussion will be drawing from the theoretical discourse and knowledge on social pedagogy's applicability currently emerging from England and Scotland. The desk-based discussion and research will aim to provide a contextual analysis of social pedagogy's relevance to Wales and explore some of the potential opportunities, challenges and implications that such an introduction would have on its existing children and young people's workforce, paying particular attention to the potential impact it would have on the positioning and practices of youth work within the principality. It will also take into consideration and explore the notions of 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) and the national drive towards interprofessionalism and the integration of services as to what relevance this would have for the introduction of European social pedagogy. It will seek to outline some the similarities and differences between youth work in Wales and European social pedagogy to conclude whether or not such an introduction would be beneficial for the field of working with children and young people in Wales.

THE CONTINENTAL CONTEXT OF WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

According to Cameron and Moss (2011), the practice of European Social Pedagogy can be described as a professional field within which the practices of care and education are connected. Rawlings and Paliokosta (2011) move to suggest that, although the presence of European Social Pedagogy is evident beyond the field of working specifically with children and young people, there are many lessons to be learnt from this model. The cross-

boundary practice and profession of European Social Pedagogy challenges *"many of the divisions and specialisms we have put in place in developing our human services"* (Cameron and Moss, 2011, p.7) in Wales and the UK. The introduction of this profession into Wales and the UK could seek to address the challenges of interprofessionalism and realise the ideals of the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008).

Although the profession of European Social Pedagogy can be seen to be widely implemented, celebrated and valued in many of the countries across the European continent, it is unable to align or attribute itself to a single definition and model of practice (Cameron and Moss, 2011). Across the continent, the existence and models of social pedagogic practices varies significantly and consequentially, European Social Pedagogues can be found to be operating in an equally diverse amount of organisations, departments and practice settings. This vastly diverse presence, in almost all facets of European social welfare, has led to the practice becoming a *"widely misunderstood member of the social professions"* (Lorenz, 2008, p.625).

The breadth and varying practises of European Social Pedagogy are, however, immersed in a commonality of fundamental core values and principles (Cameron and Moss, 2011). Despite the diversities of practice in European Social Pedagogy, professionals in this context (whether they are referred to as social educators, animateurs, pedagogues or social pedagogues (along with other variants), place a central and imperative focus upon the social development of children and young people through positive relationships (Hamalainen, 2003) and the delivery of *"education in its broadest*

sense" (Cameron and Moss, 2011, p.13). With this notion in mind, it is important to acknowledge the underpinning nature of social pedagogy as an intellectual concept that transcends the normative boundaries of practice; manifesting itself into a *'trans-disciplinary'* profession. Consequentially, this transcending nature has led to many definitions and interpretations for the terms *'pedagogy'* and *'pedagogues'* (Cameron and Moss, 2011). It is, therefore, necessary to define the parameters within which the terms *'social pedagogy'* and its associated *'social pedagogues'* are referred to throughout the course of this discussion. The practice of social pedagogy will be defined within the professional constructs of *"a teaching relationship within which an adult (the social pedagogue) takes on a role, similar to that of a parent, in addressing the upbringing, care and socialisation needs of children and young adults"* (Kyriacou and Uhlemann, 2011, p.26).

Social pedagogy, however, has not been widely recognised nor appreciated in the field of working with children and young people in Wales and the UK (Lorenz, 2008). Yet, many social care thinkers would argue that opportunities exist for the conceptual framework and professional field of social pedagogy to be imported as *"a holistic, personal approach to working with children and young people"* (Petrie et al, 2009, p.1), particularly within the context of working with children and young people cared for by the state (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2012). It is important, however, that prior to making observations on its relevance and the potential importation opportunities of social pedagogy that we understand and reflect upon the ontological and epistemological positions of, both, youth work in the UK and Social Pedagogy in Europe; in terms of their professional heritages, their outlook on the *'social'*, their

professional values, and the development of their social policies, as distinct professions, in practice (Balthazar, 2012).

This is kind of examination and scrutiny is necessary to determine the future direction and discourse of working with children and young people in Wales. The meaningful adoption, adaptation and development of new professions within the field of working with children and young people in Wales, does not involve simply shifting practices and methodologies "*from one context to another"* (Lorenz, 2008, p.627); it requires a careful and considered reflection upon its relevance to the historical context it seeks to assume, the messages of the existing social policies it will be surrounded by and to the practical applications of how it can support to the professional arena of working with children and young people to meet the political and societal expectations required of it (Lorenz, 2008).

Throughout the course of history, the social construction and representation of different social categories has held significant positions of influence over how governments have responded to meeting social needs and how they have, subsequently, developed their social policies (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008). This is clearly demonstrable throughout the history of European Youth Policy (Cousee, 2012). With no single definition of youth work in Europe, its history illustrates that its development has derived from three *"branches of knowledge…developmental psychology, youth sociology and social pedagogy"* (Hamalainen, 2012, p.93); each connected to the social constructions of *'youth'*.

For the most, the concept of *'youth'* has been considered as an incredibly difficult time for young people across Europe; representing it as an *"unstable period of life between childhood and adulthood"* (Spence, 2005, p.47). The industrialisation of Europe brought significant attitudinal shifts in how society and its people viewed one another (France, 2009). As the process of modernisation gathered pace, it significantly altered the stratification of agrarian social structures and replaced it with the social class orders of industry and market-driven economies (Hamalainen, 2003). In its wake was left the prominent emergence of poverty, social exclusion and marginalisation. It resulted in swathes of children, young people, and families from the emerging working class communities becoming victims to the social injustices that surrounded and engulfed their lives (Hamalainen, 2003). Greater means of social control were required, and so modern social policies were developed (Rogers, 2004).

Since the beginning of modern social policy, the social construction of *'youth'* has carried with it vast amounts of negative connotations and has problematized young people as lacking in desirable '*adult'* qualities (Spence, 2005). It is evident that throughout Britain and the wider European continent that investing in education was seen to be one of the ways within which states sought to regain social control and social order during the developing industrialisation (Rogers, 2004). There were significant differences, however, in the underpinning *'humanistic'* and *'humaneering'* values that shaped and developed the continental and British social policies relating to children and young people (Rogers, 2004). Although both perspectives were intended for the *"betterment of humankind"* (Rogers, 2004, p.1), they were fundamentally

located at opposing ends of the power spectrum (Thompson, 2007). The first perspective is concerned with promoting the liberties and releasing the potential of being human and the former is concerned with promoting and maintaining social control (Rogers, 2004).

During this embryonic period of modern social policy development in Europe, many of the continental countries, such as Germany, embraced the humanistic ideologies of influential educational thinkers, such as Paul Natorp, Adolph Diesterweg and Karl Mager, and considered *"education in different forms"* (Hamalainen, 2003, p.71) as a means of supporting people to emancipate themselves from the social injustices and inequalities they were affected by. The origins of social pedagogy can be traced back to 19th Century Germany (Smith, 2009) and whilst it was never intended to become a standalone profession; the conceptual framework of social pedagogy, as an academic social science, offered a way of thinking that was centred upon the predisposition of thought and action. It intended to challenge the existing educative paradigms and provide an *"alternative to an individualistic theory of education focusing on the educational dynamics of individualistic development"* (Hamalainen, 2012, p.96).

The pioneers of the socio-pedagogic approach argued that the individualistic paradigms of education were too narrow and did not consider acknowledging education and learning within the context of developing the whole; the wider social context (Lorenz, 2008). They argued that with the re-ordering and re-configuration of social structures, societies needed an educative discipline which was *"constituted by its theoretical base"* (Storo, 2012, p.19) and

simultaneously possessed by a *'living'* social consciousness that paid intricate attention to the *"living conditions and social needs of the younger generation"* (Hamalainen, 2012, p.96) They argued that *"theoretical discourses and models of [educative] practice develop in mutual reference, without one simply being derived from the other"* (Grunwald and Thiersch, 2009, p.131) Thus, in challenging the existing educative paradigms and their lack of social reflexivity, the birth of social pedagogy as an educative practice was realised; it was a social development that was inextricably "*linked to the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation"* (Hamalainen, 2003, p.71) of 19th Century Germany.

The founding humanistic values and educational principles (in the context of the social) has become the framework of youth education social policies for Germany and much of the wider European continent (Hamalainen, 2012). There are, however, varying approaches as to how social pedagogy has been adopted within each of the different European welfare systems, yet:

> *"Regardless of how social pedagogy is approached, it is always defined within a context. It is founded on different historical conditions and is situated in particular societal conditions, existing social problems and particular social policies"* (Bryderup and Frorup, 2011, p.86).

Consequentially, social pedagogues have found themselves to be operating in an extremely diverse amount of practice settings across Europe; from classrooms to youth centres, from university support provisions to substance misuse provisions, from housing provisions to disabled provisions, and so on (Cameron and Moss, 2011). Although each of the practice settings may hold significant differences in attitudinal values and reasons for being, the social pedagogue and their value-base is the single constant across the differing

facets of the welfare system. In the *'broad'* tradition of social pedagogy, the art and practice seeks to address the socialization and orientation of all individuals in all facets of society (Bryderup and Frorup, 2011). And although, this founding approach of social pedagogy was first championed in Germany, it provides the core and transnational perspective for socio-pedagogic practices throughout the European continent (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011). In contrast to this, and within the *narrow* tradition of social pedagogy, however, the art and practice seeks to address the socialisation needs of targeted and marginalised groups of people, not unlike case based social work in the UK (Lorenz, 2008), holding a particular prevalence within the Danish social care system – an interpretation and approach that will be further explored later in the discussion.

Despite the distinct differences and interpretations of social pedagogy across Europe, generally the art and practice of social pedagogy is concerned with addressing the socialisation needs of children and young people, and within each of these approaches a core set of fundamental values can be found (Cameron and Moss, 2011). Throughout the continent, social pedagogues epitomise the fundamental requirement of a successful welfare system; the relationship. Social pedagogues across Europe consider themselves to be in a relationship with children and young people; one that is centred upon care, education and upbringing. It is a relationship of unique quality and the notions of *'Haltung'* and *'Lebensweltorientierung'* enable social pedagogues to express genuine care for children and young people (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011).

Centred upon the predisposition of positive educative relationships, the art and practice of social pedagogy holds significant relevance to how societies support, care for and nurture children and young people. In co-inhabiting and co-locating themselves in the *"life space"* (Coussee et al, 2010, p.790) of children and young people, social pedagogues act as an educational buffer *"between individual autonomy and social expectations"* (Hamalainen, 2012, p.96). They seek to be located at the points where children and young people as *"individuals interact with their social environments"* (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011, p.37). The art and practice of being a social pedagogue is embedded with the notions of *'haltung'*; the most fundamental of social pedagogic principles. The notion of *'haltung'* recognises that children and young people possess pre-existing strengths as already *"competent and active agents"* (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011, p.37) within society. It recognises children and young people as already human and not as *'adults-in-waiting'*. The notion of *'haltung'* is fuelled by the infinite amount of potential and possibilities of children and young people and the distinctly innate learning relationships they possess with their environments; engaging in a constant state of reciprocal interactivity and curiosity – directing their own learning with or without adult intervention (Mitra, 2010).

Social pedagogues understand that children and young people's experiential learning is a continuous process and will happen even without the presence of adults (Kolb, 1984). It is within this recognition that social pedagogues seek out and create opportunities to add value to children and young people's environmental learning; being present at the points of where children and young people's potential and curiosity can be maximised (Hamalainen, 2012).

Eichsteller and Holthoff make use of the analogy, *"a thriving garden for children"* (2011, p.33) to intepret this notion of '*haltung'*. They describe children and young people, as flowers and plants within the garden, which will grow in appropriate natural conditions. Social pedagogues, however, seek to enrich children and young people's growth in the garden by creating and adding opportunities that nurtures, fosters and enhances the process; intervening at the points when children and young people, themselves, require and ask for it. Essentially, the conceptual construct of *'haltung'* requires social pedagogues to embrace an *"unconditional positive regard"* (Batsleer, 2008, p.126) and genuinely care for children and young people on the basis of respect and human dignity in their everyday lives.

The notions of *'haltung'* have an intrinsic conceptual linkage to the *'social'* or the '*Lebensweltorientierung'* (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011), and the art and practice of social pedagogy "*is inextricably bound with the invention and management of the social sphere"* (Cousee, 2012, p. 10). It is *"part of the social infrastructure of society"* (Cousee, 2010, p.11). It is in the meeting with children and young people in the everyday contexts of their lives that enables social pedagogues to realise the social constructs within which children and young people's learning takes place. Contained within these social constructs, there exists a relationship of distinct interconnectedness and learning between children and young people and their environments; harbouring significant mutual benefits for both (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011). In contrast to the notions of '*transition'* and the separatist constructs of *'childhood'* and *'adulthood'* in the Anglophone worlds, European educational social policies relating to children and young people, consider the life orientation process as

a navigational activity and takes into consideration children and young people's *"direct experiences, their living contexts, their life skills and the strength of their self-responsibility"* (Grunwald and Thiersch, 2009, p.132). It is through children and young people's navigation of the *'life space'* where the successes of social pedagogy can be seen; the more harmonious children and young people's navigation through the environmental and everyday *'life space'* is, the greater the benefits it has on children and young people's wellbeing and, thus, that of their environments (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011).

As an educative practice, derived from and reflexive of the conceptualised framework of thought and action, social pedagogy cannot exist without its methodologies, and throughout Europe, social pedagogy is considered to be a dialogical profession. Without conversation and dialogue meaningful educative relationships with children and young people cannot be created (Bryderup and Frorup, 2011).In this educative context, conversation is a social relationship which seeks to bring people together and work in partnership with another; it must be entered into voluntarily and within it is held a reciprocal a focus of deepening understandings (Jeffs and Smith, 2005). If such relational dialogic work was absent from the socio-pedagogic practice, social pedagogues would be unable to make use of the *'common third'* and identify ways in which to connect with children and young people (Bryderup and Frorup, 2011).

The *'Common Third'* is a concept that is integral to Danish social pedagogy and it enables social pedagogues to offer children and young people ways in

which they can voluntarily enter into a relationship based upon common shared experiences (Smith, 2012). These common shared experiences are activities that are of interest to the individual child or young person and offer a mutually safe space for both parties to reinforce their relationship, enter into dialogue, take transformational risks and broaden horizons (Batsleer, 2008). The creation of this space between social pedagogues and children and young people provides opportunities to engage in conversations relating to their environmental interactions. Conversation that takes into consideration the constructs of the social; it provides children and young people with safe spaces to further their life-orientation experiences (Bryderup and Frorup, 2011).

The art and practice of social pedagogy makes use of this dialogical process to further children and young people's understandings of the social realities within which they are enveloped in (Petrie et al, 2009). Utilising conversation and dialogue as an emancipating practice, social pedagogues seek to feed children and young people's curiosity, drive their enquiry and deepen their understandings of their life space (Batsleer, 2008). Conversation consolidates the socio-pedagogic relationship into a single solid entity; binding, both, the social pedagogue and the individual child/young person to one another with the sole purpose of embracing care and fellowship, respect and human dignity, learning and development, democracy and positive social change (Freire, 1993; Cameron and Moss, 2011).

A CLOUDED PROFESSIONAL HERTIAGE, A PROFESSIONAL CRISIS OF IDENTITY AND THE BASTARDISED LEGACY OF YOUTH WORK IN WALES?

Similarly to the art and practice of social pedagogy in Europe, the roots of youth work in the UK can be traced back to the developments of the Industrial Revolution. In mirroring the effects of modernization in Europe, Hill (2003) argues that as the societal appetite for industrialisation and fiscal market-driven economies grew in Britain, so did the divide that separated the rich from the poor. The resulting structural changes of society increased the impacts of poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion of the newly emergent working class. Fears of civil disturbance and social unrest obligated the state to provide for those in need. It placed a duty upon parishes to organize basic support and, indeed, the earliest developments of youth work, paid for by local parish taxies, can be traced back to the Church and their associated Sunday Schools (Smith, 2002).

The emergence of youth work, as a practice of social care, was also derived from philanthropic missions of concern for the wellbeing of children and young people during the industrialisation (Smith, 2002). The living and social conditions for the majority of children and young people during the Victorian era were abhorrent, disorganised and extremely neglectful; intent upon maximising the economic productivity of children and young people as a workforce (Davies, 2009). From these notions of concern, many philanthropists embarked upon charitable missions to support children and young people and improve their wellbeing; establishing orphanages and schools of popular education (Smith, 2002).

Another key defining moment enshrining the development of youth work in the UK was the growing recognition and interest in the social construction of *'youth'* during the industrialisation (Spence, 2005). In contrast to their European counterparts, however, the British pioneers of modern social policy took on the ideologies of a *"social regime of 'humaneering'"* (Rogers, 2004, p.1) to underpin the social perspectives of children and young people. During this time, the invention of '*youth'* was described as a period of life between the separated constructions of childhood and adulthood (Spence, 2005). Heavily influenced by the political, social and macroeconomic expectations of young people, the social construction of *'youth'*, as mentioned in chapter afore, has (for the most) problematized young people; representing and attributing them to notions of delinquency, deviance and dependency (France, 2009). It was considered a period of life where the whole social strata of young people, by default, became the *"prisoner of its own nature"* (Hendrick, 1990, p.103). It is within this reasoning that the social construction of *'youth'* was attributed to the problematic development of social maturity and the need to achieve successful transitions to adulthood (Spence, 2005). Viewing young people from a deficit-driven perspective, concerns over young people's economic inactivity, physical development and lack of independence forced British social policy makers and the welfare state to establish provisions that dealt with the problematic nature of young people (Griffin, 2004); a cultural attitude that is still prevalent in the UK today (Coussee, 2012).

The development of social policies relating to children and young people in Britain, such as *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005b) and *Extending Entitlements*

(NAfW, 2000), has consistently focused on the process of their normalisation. Inherent throughout its development, youth social policy in Britain assumed the perspectives that children and young people are passive and dependant entities within society (Hine, 2009). *"Valued for their 'becomings'"* (Hine, 2009, p.33), the underpinning values of social policies and their subsequent initiatives views the construction of *'youth'* as a preparatory stage to responsible and productive adulthood. For those children and young people who do not (or cannot) make successful transitions to adulthood, awaits further problematisation and the need to become recipients of state intervention (Spence, 2005). Increasingly youth work practitioners in the UK are assessed on their ability to demonstrate their social worth and professional efficiency on the basis of targeted and individual outcomes in relation to these social problems (Smith, 2011).

Contained within these social policies, initiatives and expectations is also a fundamental disconnect between the problems of youth and the problems of the social (Coussee, 2010). As a social construction in itself, youth work, in practice, has become a tool *"to integrate young people in the prevailing adult society"* (Coussee, 2010, p.10) and there is very little recognition that the problems of young people are intrinsically and inextricably interconnected to the management and problems of the social. This has resulted in significant imbalances of power between the state and young people. In contrast to European youth policies, this failure to recognise children and young people as already productive agents within society has resulted in youth work in the UK becoming an agent of surveillance and youth control; shifting the

responsibility and existence of social problems onto young people – they are the social problem of society (Jeffs and Smith, 1999).

Although it is recognised that youth work has an intrinsic and critical role to play in supporting young people, many influential thinkers within the field have expressed their concerns in the expectations placed on youth work in the UK to overcome the *"social problems rooted in economic inequalities and social injustices"* (Coussee, 2012, p.7). The notions and representations of children and young people as the societal problem has brought significant challenges and difficulties as to how youth work has responded to meeting the needs of young people. Coussee (2012) argues that this process has removed to the social consciousness from the practices of youth work. In doing so, it has focused youth work's attention onto solving the social youth problem whilst paradoxically removing the focus on young people from the social solutions.

Similarly to the art and practice of social pedagogy and from the perspectives of purist youth work, however, many theorists and practitioners in the UK, consider the practice of youth work as a complex process that places a centrality of focus upon the creation of *"trusting and credible relationships"* (Williamson, 2007, p.38) with young people. And despite the social construction of young people as the social problem, it is within these relationships that youth work practitioners hold an *"unconditional positive regard"* (Batsleer, 2008, p.126) for young people in their development. The intentions of the youth work relationship are to engage young people in a learning process that seeks to enhance their personal, social, emotional and cognitive developments and requires youth work practitioners to possess the

abilities to engage young people in a variety of different settings (Jeffs and Smith, 2005).

Locating and connecting themselves to the *"lifeworld of young people"* (Coussee et al, 2012, p.257), youth work practitioners enter into a dialogical relationships with young people and facilitate environments that foster and nurture their understandings of the world (Youth Work Wales, 2013). The purpose of youth work, however, does not require youth work practitioners to only understand young people and the nature of unlocking of their potential; it also requires them to understand the social contexts of their work and the impacts youth work, as an educative practice, can have upon wider society. In locating themselves in the lifeworlds of young people, youth work practitioners are able to offer a vehicle of socially educative transformation for young people and encourage them to question and challenge their social environments (Jeffs and Smith, 2005). It is because of this reasoning that youth work practitioners must assume the mantle of being aware of the societal expectations that have been placed upon the arena of youth work by the communities, organisations and governments it seeks to serve (Tyler et al, 2009). And indeed contained in the 1960 Albermarle Report was the emphasis that:

> *"There can be no lasting answers to the dilemmas of youth work without a radical rethinking of the position of young people in society, and of adult attitudes to the young. Those who work with young adults should no longer see themselves as providers placing young people in the position of receivers who are sometimes to be given shadow responsibilities. It is no part of our aim to achieve a comfortable integration of the youth and adult populations, nor to attempt to socialise the young so that they are reconciled with the status quo, and capitulate to its values. The aim should be to establish a dialogue*

> *between the young people and the rest of society; a dialectical and not necessarily amicable process… There can no longer be an underlying consensus about all the issues which face our society."* (Cited in Davies, 1999, p.126)

The history of youth work in the UK, however, illustrates that its professional and conceptual development has been organic in nature. In contrast to the development of European Social Pedagogy, youth work has evolved from its own manifestation of practice and has developed its theoretical foundations from the intellectual constructs of other social professions (Davies, 2009). This transient, and almost nomadic, acquisition of a conceptual framework has resulted in the practice and profession of youth work in UK possessing a clouded *"historical consciousness"* (Coussee, 2012, p.7) and blurred sense of purpose (Coussee, 2012). Since the publication and ratification of the Albermarle Report in 1960, the position of youth work in the UK has struggled to define itself and has been severely contested (Davies, 2009). Found to be under constant and significant pressures of scrutiny by policy makers and governments, youth work, as a social profession in the UK, has been in a constant state of flux; responding to the socioeconomic, political and problematized expectations placed on it and on young people (Smith, 2002).

Although there has been a drive towards a professionalization of the field of contemporary youth work over recent years, even with the presence of national commitments such as *Transforming Youth Work* (DfES, 2005c), devolution of governmental responsibilities and a *Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales* (Youth Work Wales, 2013); the social construction of youth work in Wales has *"remained a vulnerable dimension of youth policy"*

(Williamson, 2009, p.87) leaving its professional identity, purpose and geographies of practice still in question.

In an attempt of overcome the challenges of ambiguity and encouraged by the devolved state, the professional landscape of youth work in Wales has undertaken significant steps towards achieving the recognition of professionalization (Devlin, 2012). And indeed, this process has led to the establishment of undergraduate and postgraduate training programmes, full-time positions and long-term career pathways (Devlin, 2012). Yet despite this, significant questions and tensions still remain as to what the professionalism of youth work in Wales actually looks like? (Williamson, 2009) Theoretically, the practice of youth work locates itself between the emancipation and assimilation of young people (Lorenz, 2008). This oxymoronic position has resulted in tensions existing between the *"occupational and organisational"* (Devlin, 2012, p.185) discourses of the practice – does youth work in Wales seek to support the transit of young people into the pre-existing constructs of adulthood or does it seek to challenge the ideologies and social constructions of childhood, youth and adulthood (Coussee et al, 2012)? How does it meaningfully "*establish a dialogue between the young people and the rest of society … [and challenge the] underlying consensus about all the issues which face our society"* (cited in Davies, 1999, p.126), when young people have been socially constructed as the problem?

One of the ways in which, the field of professional youth work has sought to address this, is in the continuation of supporting young people within the constructs of their lifeworlds. "*Youth work is a very diverse field of practice"*

(Coussee et al, 2012, p.260) and over the past two decades, the arena of working with children and young people has been witness to the vast expansion and presence of youth work in almost all facets of the welfare state, much like the trans-disciplinary nature of social pedagogy in Europe (Wood and Hine, 2009). From schools to youth centres, from criminal youth justice provisions to disabled provisions, from hospitals to refugee provisions, and so on, the delivery of youth work practice can now be seen to be implemented across a vast range of multi-disciplinary and multi-agency environments. This shift to a partnership-based landscape within the youth work field in Wales was symptomatic of the publication of *Children and Young People: Rights to Action* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004) and the pursuit of professionalization.

Although this shift was well-intended by welsh policy makers, such partnership working strained the professional identity of youth work and youth services across the country. It resulted in a blurring of professional boundaries, values and ethics between organisations and professionals (Wood and Hine, 2009). It exacerbated the ambiguity of youth work in Wales and warranted the significant questioning of what was considered as the *"legitimate territory of youth work"* (Williamson, 2009, p.91) in Wales. Increasingly, youth work practitioners were seen to be intervening at the points of where young people were "*interact[ing] with their environments"* (IFSW, 2001, [.html]) but not from the youth work perspective. Instead, youth workers were intervening from the problematized positions; paradoxically they were expected to solve the problem of young people and forget the constructs of the social (Coussee, 2010). It consequentially led to significant

philosophical debate and professional conflicts within the field which left it vulnerable to the *"hostile political and administrative arrangements, that [had] very little grasp of the complexity of these issues, to divide and rule"* (Williamson, 2009, p.91); in contrast to the intentions of the partnership policy rhetoric, it resulted in the further weakening of the workforce, a lack of clarity and focus for the field, and the bastardised delivery and legacy of youth work in Wales (Williamson, 2009).

THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORKFORCE STRATEGY, INTERPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND THE RELEVANCE FOR YOUTH WORK

Over recent years, the professional landscape of the welfare state has significantly evolved in England and Wales (Wood and Hine, 2009). Governmental pressures to join up working to increase communication, improve effectiveness and alleviate the financial pressures placed upon public funds have all led a drive towards this ideal (Furness et al, 2011). There have been, however, significant criticisms pointing to the lack of evidence-base regarding the positive impacts of partnership working; elements of cynicism involving duplication of services, the continued existence of professional silos and the lack of shared responsibility has led to a rethink and reconceptualization as how we achieve a shared professional landscape (Atkinson et al, 2007, Welsh Government, 2012). Thus, the notions of partnership working are quickly being replaced by the terminologies of *'interprofessional practice', 'interprofessionalism'* and *'integration of services'* (Trodd and Chivers, 2011).

Responding to these socioeconomic and political needs and expectations, however, can be a difficult task for the children and young people's workforce. Within the development of a new interprofessional landscape, it is imperative that the questions regarding the geographies of youth work do not remain unanswered as interprofessional development progresses (Williamson, 2009). There is still significant progress to be made in bridging the chasm between the rhetoric of well-intended policies and actual practice (Wood and Hine, 2009). There have been many attempts by policy makers and researchers to devise and seek out new models of practice to aid the children and young people's workforce to embark upon the transition towards interprofessionalism. Within this transition, there is a significant need to seek out opportunities to locate and redefine the boundaries of youth work as an effective interprofessional practice that holds true to its founding principles of social justice, equality and the pursuit of human potential (Coussee et al, 2012).

The 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) is the manifestation of such modelling efforts and is steeped in the notions and ideals of working towards an integration of services and increasing the levels of meaningful interprofessional practice. The Strategy holds aspirations for all professionals, organisations and sectors working with children and young people to become more interconnected with one another, so that each of the professionals, organisations and sectors can benefit from the collective contributions of working together (Atkinson et al, 2007). It seeks to ensure that all professionals, organisations and sectors working with children and young people can benefit from the shared coordination of service provision and

maximise interprofessional praxis to support one another to meet the wider social and political expectations required of them (Tyler et al, 2009). The Strategy has sought to build upon existing aspirations to create a '*Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce'* (DfES, 2005) in order to establish a shared sense of responsibility amongst the existing workforce to provide the best possible services for children and young people whilst making the best use of finite resources (Trodd and Chivers, 2011). Its aim is to, ultimately, transform the landscape of working with children and young people to one that is cultivated from the roots of shared and collective knowledge; enabling professionals to make the transition towards interprofessionalism and collaboratively align service delivery closer to the needs of improving children and young people's wellbeing.

In the drive towards integrating services, however, the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) does not advocate for the creation of a single over-generalised integrated workforce. The Strategy recognises that the diversity of practices, specialisms and knowledge belonging to each of the existing professions, involved in *"early years; social, family and community support; youth support; health; crime and justice; sport and culture"* (DCSF, 2008, p.13) and management and leadership, is its strength. It simply seeks to support each of these professions to work more closely with one another and holistically wrap services around the needs of the children, young people, families and communities they work with (Bridges et al, 2011).

Realising the ambitions outlined in the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008), however, extends beyond many of the challenges contained within its rhetoric. Further efforts are needed to overcome the challenges of establishing interprofessionalism as an embedded practice across the sectors. Garner (2006) discusses the on-going conflicts between policy-makers, practitioners and service-users in relation to ideologies, beliefs and what is achievable at the frontline. The realisation of the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy and its interprofessional notions can only be achieved if it is owned, shared and developed interprofessionally – it is not something that can be forced into place from the 'top-down'. It needs to, in itself, epitomize the *"active mindset"* (Trodd and Chivers, 2011, p.1) of collaboratively creating the interprofessional realities that it requires in the relationships between the policy-makers, practitioners and service-users.

The sustainable and successful embedding of interprofessional practice is intrinsically linked to its leadership (McCray, 2003). The 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy requires leadership to facilitate environments within which all stakeholders, including the service-users, can contribute and participate in the development of its long-term realisation. Within this realisation, there is now a significant need for the leaders of youth work to reflect upon the positions of youth work and avoid a repeat of the professional tensions and infightings of partnership era (Williamson, 2009). The field of youth work will need to recognise and embrace its oxymoronic nature in order to capitalise upon these interprofessional development opportunities and strategically place themselves next to and with young

people (Devlin, 2012). Longley and Sharma (2011) move to suggest the children's and young people's workforce, particularly youth work, in comparison to other fields is uniquely positioned for this and possesses a pre-existing core of skills and a cross-professional underpinning of values that views children, young people and families, as 'experts' in their own their lives (Young, 2006).

The field of youth work will need to uniquely locate itself within the leadership and implementation of the 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) and harness the skills and values of its own workforce to meaningfully realise the interprofessional notions and realities the Strategy requires. Supporting such a dialogical and participatory process between policy-makers, strategists, practitioners, children, young people and their families would only strengthen the case for youth work within the landscape for interprofessionalism. It would present opportunities to create supportive environments to enable all stakeholders to navigate their way through the new constructs and realities of interprofessionalism (Trodd and Chivers, 2011). It would ensure that each were able to express their problems and concerns with one another (Longley and Sharma, 2011). Each would be able to embark upon a life-long learning journey about interprofessionalism and together identify solutions to the complexities of managing professional territorialism and tensions, behaviours and identities, and owning shared outcomes whilst ensuring the most the meaningful impact on our service-users; learning together to work together (Rawlings and Paliokosta, 2011).

As alluded to by Williamson (2009) earlier in the text, one of the more significant challenges worth exploring is the management of tensions and conflict that can arise within and between different professional identities, cultural practices and languages (Rawlings and Paliokosta, 2011). Driving services towards integration and interprofessionalism is often perceived to be a cost-cutting and streamlining exercise; adding additional strain and pressure on practitioners and service areas to demonstrate the worth of existence and professional identity (Atkinson et al, 2007). In amongst the predicated need for survival, practitioners, organisations and sectors are now expected to work towards an inter-connected ideal of a '*Shared Purpose – Shared Delivery'* in Wales (Welsh Government, 2012). According to Rawlings and Paliokosta (2011), ideologies often inform the development of the identities and how people perceive the realities around them. From an interprofessional perspective, Rawlings and Paliokosta (2011) make reference to the works of Rose (2009), who moves to explain that tensions can arise between the different professional specialisms when they are brought together. Often each of these professions perceive their role in the sphere of working with children, young people and their families as the primary focus for service delivery and fail to recognise the wider role that they and each of the other professions can play in meeting service-users' needs.

During the interprofessional planning and delivery of services, each of these professions, including youth work, contributes to a series of different underpinning professional values and identities, territories and perceptions of status, along with a vast array of different cultural behaviours, practices, languages and protocols governing them (Rawlings and Paliokosta, 2011).

The 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) brings all of these elements together, along with the expectation to work interprofessionally, and has given rise to a plethora of complexities involving power dynamics (Frost and Robinson, 2007). And it is within these complexities and tensions that there is significant potential for the practice for youth work to be completely removed from the landscapes of working within children and young people (Smith, 2011). In the wrapping of other services around the needs of children, young people and families, the purposes and practices of youth work can be quickly brought under scrutiny; why do we need youth work if we already have services working interprofessionally to solve the problems of vulnerable children, young people and families? And indeed, the removal of professional youth services has been apparent across England in recent years (In Defence of Youth, 2013).

Those leading the facilitation of such multi-agency/disciplinary interprofessional work must strive to facilitate an environment where different professional heritages are respected, valued and where a single common language of understanding is developed (Leadbetter, 2006). It is *"through [the] linguistic repertoire"* (Trodd and Chivers, 2011, p.57) of practitioners' that power and status is often demonstrable; and the failure to create a commonly understood language can lead to the isolation, disengagement and removal of professions and practitioners from the interprofessional landscape. The field of youth work will need to be conscious of alignment and rapidly seek out the linguistic answers that demonstrate the need of their social construction, professional identity and social worth. In answer to these complexities, Rawlings and Paliokosta (2011) suggest that there may be a need to learn

from other models of practice and/or consider the introduction of a new profession such as that of the European Social Pedagogue into the interprofessional landscape.

A RECONCEPTUALISED OR RECONNECTED HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR YOUTH WORK IN WALES – WHAT ARE THE SOCIO-PEDAGOGIC LESSONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WORK WITHIN THE INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE?

Over the past two years, the landscape of social care and youth policy in Wales has dramatically shifted from one that supports the notions of partnership working towards one that seeks integration (Welsh Government, 2012). Across the country the landscape can bear testament to the dissolution of topical partnership structures and a move towards consortia-based working, an integration of services and the creation of single plans for local authority areas (Welsh Government, 2012). This drive towards integration has reconfigured the social care landscape to extend beyond meeting the needs of children and young people. It has placed a centrality of focus upon the prevention of social injustices in the wider dimensions of the family and of the social (Welsh Government, 2011). This new integrated landscape of service provision has brought with it new models of working in order to realise the interprofessional ideologies of common assessments, *"Integrated Family Support"* and the wrapping of an integrated *"Team Around the Child"* (Welsh Government, 2011, p.26).

Throughout the commissioning and development of the new funding stream, *Families First* (Welsh Government, 2011), many organisations were invited to

develop consortia-based packages of service delivery against thematic outcomes of eradicating child poverty, relating to (although not exhaustively); improving opportunities to increase children and young people's social mobility, the improvement of children and young people's health, and developing resilient and nurturing environments within vulnerable marginalised families (Welsh Government, 2011). The tendering of such contracts was not exclusive to local authority service areas and the consortia-based applications for tender were strongly encouraged to contain significant and packaged interprofessional involvement from private and voluntary sector organisations (Welsh Government, 2011). Yet many local authority Youth Services, Cardiff for example, made applications to become significant stakeholders in the strategic delivery of these consortia-based packages (Cardiff Partnership, 2013).

Whilst the *Families First* (Welsh Government, 2011) and the *Shared Purpose – Shared Delivery* (Welsh Government, 2012) documents contain much rhetoric around the interprofessional prevention and eradication of the marginalisation, social exclusion and inequalities faced by children and young people within the contexts of the wider social, there is still much uncertainty as to where the territories of youth work should lay within the interprofessional landscape (Williamson, 2009). The rhetoric of the thematic outcomes and consortia-based packages of service delivery continues to subscribe to the notions of transition (Spence, 2005) and the social problematization of children and young people (Rogers, 2004). Also contained within these notions is the removed emphasis on children and young people's participation and active involvement to develop and challenge the wider constructs of their

social environments (Coussee et al, 2010); a previous practice that the preceding funding stream, *Cymorth*, sought to embed (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008).

With this problematized assumption, the historical political hijacking of youth work and its current positioning as a significant stakeholder of these consortia-based thematic packages of service delivery, there is a need to reflect upon the current context of youth work and provoke a national investigation into the nature and state of youth work in Wales. Has the Welsh field of youth work, yet again, missed an opportunity to redefine its boundaries and reconnect itself with the social (Coussee et al, 2012)? Has it consciously chosen to locate itself within the assimilation ideologies of the state (Jeffs and Smith, 1999)? If so, where should it instead seek to locate itself and what can the Welsh arena of youth work learn from its European socio-pedagogic counterparts to rediscover and reconnect itself to the social '*lifeworlds'* of young people (Coussee et al, 2012) whilst ensuring it becomes *"[re]anchored in some core values"* (Williamson, 2009, p.92)?

Founded upon the principles of equality and social justice, the art and practice of social pedagogy in Denmark, like many other socio-pedagogic models across the European continent, seeks to support children and young people in meeting their individualisation and socialisation needs. It is an *"educational act by which one aims to help the poor in society"* (Smith and Whyte, 2008, p.19). In contrast to the principles of universality seen across the majority of the continent, however, the Danish implementation and model of social pedagogy embraces this targeted approach and focuses its efforts and

resources to those children and young people who are already, and those at risk of becoming, marginalised and socially excluded (Jensen, 2011).

Taking on the more generic term of '*pedagogy,'* the art and practice of social pedagogy, within Denmark, seeks to situate itself within the '*lifespace'* of the most vulnerable children and young people and pay intricate attention to the individual and social needs of children and young people during their upbringing (Hamalainen, 2003). In recognising children and young people's strengths and innate learning nature, the Danish pedagogue seeks to provide opportunities to nurture children and young people's social consciousness and enable them to develop the skills, tools and understandings to meaningful navigate their way through their social' *lifespace'* as they grow. The trans-disciplinary nature of social pedagogy enables its principles and practices to be applied to a vast array of settings (Petrie et al, 2006) and be extended *"across the life-course"* (Smith, 2012, p.46), and, as explored earlier in the discussion, has been evidenced across the socio-pedagogic landscape of Europe. So what relevance does this hold for the practices and territories for youth work in Wales? Do the notions of social pedagogy already exist in Wales and the UK but under the guise of the youth work?

It is only within very recent times that interest in the importation opportunities of the conceptual framework and practices of social pedagogy has emerged in the UK (Smith, 2012) and, indeed, very little investigation, if any, has been carried out in exploring social pedagogy's applicability to the landscape of working with children and young people in Wales (Thempra, 2013). It is, therefore, necessary to draw upon literature and theoretical discourses that

are on-going in England and Scotland. Nevertheless, it is worth questioning what benefits and implications could social pedagogy's introduction present to the children and young people's workforce, and particularly to the position of youth work, in Wales?

Both, the socio-pedagogical and youth work practices are considered to be generalist professions (Smith, 2012; Ingram and Harris, 2001) and it is evident that many similarities exist between them (Regional Unit for Youth Work North East, 2010). Yet, many social care thinkers argue that there are distinct characteristics that distinguish social pedagogy from the practices of youth work, describing it as a natural blend of reflexive interconnectedness between *"policy and practice, theory and research, and the training and education of the workforce, with each component feeding into, and drawing on, the others"* (Petrie et al, 2006, p.2). With this interconnected reflexive nature and the conceptual frameworks of '*haltung'* and '*lebensweltorientierung'* it does pose significant challenges as to how the Welsh society and youth work practice in Wales overcomes its culture of fear (Piper et al, 2006) and its problematized constructs of youth (Smith, 2012).

In their study into the understandings of social pedagogy and its implications for youth work practice, however, the Regional Youth Work Unit North East (2010) found that the conceptual framework and practices of social pedagogy does already exist within the principles and practices of youth work, outlining that:

> *"Any good youth…is consistent with a social pedagogical approach…youth workers promote the personal, educational and social development of young people…They aim to engage young people,*

> *redress inequalities, value opinions and empower individuals to take action"* (Participant in research conducted by Regional Youth Work Unit North East, 2010, p.61)

Young people hold significant value in the development of positive relationships with the professionals and services they engage with (Batsleer, 2008). It is evident that in comparing youth work in the UK to its socio-pedagogic counterparts in Europe that there are high levels of commonality; and, indeed, one of the elements that bind the conceptual framework and practices of social pedagogy and youth work in the UK is a shared centrality of focus upon the development of positive and social educative relationships with young people (Petrie et al, 2009; Jeffs and Smith, 2005). There are also significant commonalities between the informal activities that both professions embrace to facilitate this process of relationship development and expand young people's learning social opportunities; underpinning them with the core values of children's rights, social justice and equality (Smith, 2012; Young, 2006)

Yet, the Regional Youth Work Unit North East (2010) also highlighted in their analysis significant inconsistencies in the quality of youth work practices across the region. It has resulted in the profession of youth work being perceived by young people and other professionals as in a sporadic and disparate state across the north east region of England. This situation is significantly being mirrored across Wales and the rest of the UK (Williamson, 2009; DfES, 2005b). Consequentially, this has resulted in the profession of youth work, particularly within the maintained sectors, across the country facing criticisms of failing to meaningfully meet the needs of young people and

include them in decision-making, as being unable to working effectively in partnership with other organisations and sectors, and as being ineffectual to reduce the impacts of poverty and social exclusion to increase young people's social mobility (DfES, 2005b).

It is clear that the position of youth work across the UK is in a professionally vulnerable state across the country (Williamson, 2009) and understandably, the majority of the youth work arena would consider challenging the expectations of how just one social care practice can fully meet the needs of young people and solve the complexities of social injustice and inequalities of an ever-increasingly dynamic and convoluted society (Wood and Hine, 2009; DCSF, 2008; Petrie et al, 2009). With this notion in mind, it is worth exploring how the presence of social pedagogy could affect the interprofessional landscape of working with children and young people; focusing on aspects of training, professional development and communication and information-sharing.

Introducing social pedagogy into the interprofessional landscape within the Wales and the UK could harbour significant benefits for all sectors and professions involved in working with children and young people (Petrie et al, 2009). At present, there is much disparity between qualification and professionalization status between different children's and young people workforce professions; with some requiring little or no qualifications, others require vocational level qualifications and a few achieving professional status at degree levels (DCSF, 2008). The 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy (DCSF, 2008) makes a commitment to the creation of a

single integrated degree-qualified training pathway for the children and young people's workforce and create a cross-boundary platform of a '*Common Core of Skills and Knowledge'* (DfES, 2005) amongst the workforce. In exploring the integrated training and degree pathway for education as pedagogues (Jensen, 2011), it is evident that the adoption of this Danish practice could offer the interprofessional realisation of the ideals contained with the Strategy (Petrie et al, 2009). All of the pedagogic professionals working within the vast variety of settings explored in previous chapters have all been trained and up-skilled in a common core of values, practices and methodologies fit for almost every facet of the Danish welfare system, and this has contributed to greater interprofessional working, communication and information-sharing whilst ensuring that the service-users remain at the heart of the service-delivery (Jensen, 2011).

In their research, the Regional Youth Work Unit North East (2010), found positive responses to this ideal and highlighted that most participants, including young people, from the different social care professions in the region were enthused by this proposal. There were, however, reservations made by some of the respondents from the youth work profession in the region. And whilst they predominantly embraced the ideals of using social pedagogy to develop a common core of understanding, they did express:

> *"The common core skills are useful, but…there's a danger that the common core is to focused on care and assessment"* (Participant in research conducted by Regional Youth Work Unit North East, 2010, p.51)

Further concerns were raised about the *"danger that social pedagogy could lead to every professional simply becoming generalists"* (Regional Youth Work Unit North East, 2010, p.55). Lorenz (2008) supports these claims and argues the introduction of social pedagogy could result in the deletion of different specialisms and professional identities, including youth work, from the children and young people's workforce from the UK. He argues that the importation of social pedagogy into the UK could place it in a position of rivalry with of the existing professions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the art and practices of both youth work in the UK and social pedagogy across Europe share a distinct centrality of focus in developing socially educative relationships with children and young people to support their wellbeing and development (Coussee et al, 2012). The professions' different histories, however, have demonstrated that the social constructions of childhood, youth and adulthood has conceptualised children and young people at polarised ends of the social power spectrums (Thompson, 2007); significantly influencing how their respective social policies and initiatives have responded to meeting the needs of society (Hine, 2009). The art and practice of social pedagogy embraces the distinct learning potential found in children and young people; whereas, the policies and practices of youth work in locate themselves in solving the problems of youth (Storo, 2012; Jeffs and Smith, 1999). Yet, throughout the purist school of thought for youth work, many practitioners and academic thinkers would argue that the values of youth work in the Wales and the UK share the conceptual framework of European social pedagogy. Whilst it must be acknowledged that further

empirical research around the understandings of social pedagogy and the opportunities/implications its introduction could present to Wales; it is through the delivery of high quality youth work that the existence of social pedagogy can be paralleled to be already present within the workforce (Regional Youth Work Unit North East, 2010).

The professional state of youth work in Wales and the UK, however, is under significant duress to demonstrate its worth as a credible *"social practice"* (Coussee et al, 2012, p.259). Throughout the course of history, it is evident that the problematized notions of young people have resulted in the mission of youth work in Wales and the UK becoming victim to political hijacking and professional ambiguity. Consequentially, this has resulted in a significant disconnect from the social lifeworlds of young people and the further exacerbation of its own clouded professional heritage (Williamson, 2009). In order to re-establish itself as a credible and professional educative practice, the position of youth work in Wales should seek to consciously embrace the conceptual framework of social pedagogy. It should be embedded within training pathways, professional development programmes and throughout practice in order to conduct a considered, conscious and continuous process of reflection upon the *"legitimate territory of youth work"* in Wales (Williamson, 2009, p.91), the questions of youth and inseparably, yet, *"(forgotten) 'social questions'"* (Coussee, 2010, p.11). In doing so, the profession of youth work in Wales would be enabled to relocate away from the problematized consortia-based programmes of service delivery and reconnect itself to the position of *"be[ing] with"* (Young, 2006, p.62) young people at the points of environmental interactions with their lifespaces; taking into considerations the expectations

of the family and of the social. Taking this position would enable the field of youth work in Wales to epitomise the socio-pedagogic notions of educative relationships, care, upbringing and recognition of young people's agency to support them to navigate their way through their social lifeworlds, whilst taking the lead coordination in the wrapping around of Integrated Family Support Services and integrated Teams Around the Child, next to and with young people.

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