Influences on Teachers' Professional Identity in Schools in Challenging Circumstances: An Empirical Study of Chilean Primary Teachers' Perceptions

By Maria F Lozano Labra

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I dedicate this thesis to

My parents for their unconditional love and support…

Jack-Luciano, Sebastian and all other young learners…

James who patiently were beside me all the time…

Y a mis colegas profesoras y profesores que inspiraron y colaboraron en este trabajo…

Abstract

There are so far few attempts to understand the teaching occupation and the meaning of being a good teacher as understood by teachers, a central issue in the improvement of schools. This study explores Chilean teachers' perceptions of their professional identities, since conflict and stress around questions of identity affect teachers' emotional well-being, impacting their capacity to engage emotionally with students and the wider school community, and thus their capacity to provide significant learning experiences which are key elements of successful learning. On the contrary, positive leadership and sufficient intellectual and material resources for reflection and discussion on the situation of conflicts on teachers' professional identities can trigger processes of personal and professional growth, enhancing professional identity meanings, and thus effectiveness in providing significant learning experiences.

To look at teachers through the lens of identity allows us to explore the combination of personal and contextual factors that affect their identities, bringing an understanding of teachers' perceptions about their identities and the contribution of other social actors to them in Chilean primary public schools.

In this vein, it is important to acknowledge that most teachers have strong motivations in choosing the occupation. These motivations are often related to their sense of vocation as well as their personal beliefs and values. In this context, teachers' professional identity meanings are explored in underperforming schools by means of semi-structured interviews of twenty

primary teachers. By a careful qualitative analysis, this study found different groups of influences that define these identities, shaping and re-shaping at least three professional identity profiles with consequences for teachers' autonomy in professional judgements, agency and collegial relationships, and impacting their capacity to provide significant learning experiences.

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List of Abbreviations

ACM Chilean Association of Municipalities

AEP Programme for the Accreditation of Pedagogical Excellence

AVDI Programme for the Variable Individual Performance Allowance

CBR Country Background Report

CNED National Education Council

CONACEP Private Schools of Chile

CPEIP Centre for Pedagogical Training, Experimentation and Research

CUT Central Workers' Union

FNDR National Fund for Regional Development

GTF Good Teaching Framework

INICIA Programme for the Promotion of Quality in Initial Teacher Education

JUNAEB National Board of School Assistance and Scholarships

LGE General Education Law

LOCE Education Constitutional Organic Law

MBD Good School Leadership Framework

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PADEM Annual Development Plan of Municipal Education

PSP Professional Development Plans

PSU University Selection Test

RBMN National Minimum Basic Salary

SEP Preferential School Subsidy

SIMCE System to Measure the Quality of Education

SNED National System for Performance Evaluation

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Chapter One: Introduction

The main challenges for slow improvements in Chilean schools have been found to be related to a range of factors: the incapacity to solve the differences in skills of students an entry to the school and their family backgrounds, teachers and their training, policy and its accuracy, administrators and their organisations, among others. However, school improvement also has a close relationship to teachers, their skills and competencies, their capacity to work with limited/scarce resources, teachers' emotional wellbeing, their capacity to provide and engage in significant learning experiences and their resilience capacities. Thus, we could benefit from knowing more about Chilean primary teachers' perceptions of their professional identities and the impact of socio-cultural, organisational and personal influences on these. As evidence from this thesis will show, the interactions between influences affect, positively or negatively, the dynamic development of professional identities that with attentive companionship and mentoring may promote personal and professional growth.

Specifically, the main research question is: to what extent do personal and contextual dimensions interact in the construction and reconstruction of professional identity in Chilean primary teachers from state schools?, this main question is extended by five sub questions: i) How do socio-cultural influences and policies impact teachers' professional identities?, ii) How do socially located/organisational influences affect teachers' professional identities?, iii) How do biographies, ethics and values affect teachers' professional identities?, iv) What is the nature of the interaction between the different influences

affecting teachers' professional identities?, and v) To what extent do teachers' professional identities influence their commitment/effectiveness/ability to teach to their best?

1. Inspiration for my Research

The rationale for my current research topics is grounded in two stages of my professional life: firstly, my teaching experience in several schools; and secondly, my experience in training teachers in educational projects.

My experiences as a volunteer in different social projects as a child made me aware of the challenges of working with disadvantaged people. I realized that the lack of resources is not the only obstacle to improving their quality of life. I noticed the relevance of socio-cultural background to the capacity to imagine and desire a different life, society and world. This was the motivation to choose my career. I was determined to provide tools to people to make the right choices for themselves, while also respecting others and the environment.

Of course, many of these tools are not part of the formal curriculum. Often, extracurricular experiences provided better opportunities for discussion and reflection about respect, for example. That is why, since I started to work as a teacher, I faced a myriad of situations, which have challenged my commitment to the profession, my beliefs about the meaning of schooling, and the relevance of schooling for individuals. However, the fruitful relationship with students always nourished my determination to work hard and enthusiastically.

Nevertheless, the organisational contexts in which I worked constrained my practice through the work conditions and my salary. For example, the availability of resources to develop my job triggered awareness about the possibilities of my lesson planning and so on. This situation also gave hints about the values and expectations of my position. As a consequence, I started to delimit my practice and my commitment. This situation created an ongoing contradiction between my beliefs and feelings on the one side, and my actual performance on the other, generating fatigue and stress. I fulfilled myself when promoting real significant experiences to pupils according to the resources available. After two years, I found a new job in my former primary school.

The experience in my primary school was rewarding. I had significant learning experiences. I worked collaboratively. I received mentoring and support for training. However, I started to inquire into the relevance of the school as an institution and the significance of keeping children indoors, with a whole world out there to explore, as well as the relevance of the curriculum and its contents. After two years I left the job.

Later, I came back to the school to teach a new subject in the curriculum. There was a lack of teachers in the subject and few guidelines about contents and methodologies. This was the beginning of a new journey as a teacher, with a lot of freedom and less accountability about pupils' behaviour and achievements. I could generate a horizontal environment in the classroom where students and I were allowed to create and recreate our imagination and skills. In order to overcome my on-going contradictions with the institution of the school I found satisfaction taking my students to a carefully designed extracurricular activity. The 'Urban Saturdays' was a civic experience visiting historic places and

curious and significant ‘corners’ in the city. This experience fulfilled my vocation. During these trips, we could discuss real life events and experiences such as organizing and coordinating the trips, budgeting, mapping, security and safety on the street among others themes. We also discussed about shopping habits, immigration issues, environmental themes, history and culture, providing meaning to many of the school experiences.

After two years, the school as institution challenged my values and ethics, stressing the importance of school uniforms and discipline among students, to again push me out of the classroom to search for new perspectives. I was searching for a place where I could be myself, teaching what I believe is meaningful and significant for individuals. I was searching for a place where I need not betray my ethics and values, and thus my personal and professional identity.

In this context I started to work as a teacher’s consultant and teacher trainer. Later, I had the opportunity to work with teachers, as part of a team, which implemented new educational initiatives and projects that sought to improve the quality of education delivered by Chilean schools. Through this particular experience I realised that it is common for many teachers to express strong resistance towards most new laws or changes. For example, this was typically experienced in the staff room, where teachers deliberate whether these policies are suitable or pertinent to their environment. Nevertheless, even considering this strong resistance to external intervention, I also observed that when teachers really engage in new initiatives, they tend to play an important role as key collaborators through their experiences and knowledge, embracing high degrees of agency even in contexts with little involvement of principals.

One of the most relevant projects that I worked on was a pilot initiative on new methodologies in science across the country. The project provided teachers with a set of activities and materials in order to implement a science workshop for students. They were trained for two days on the general structure of the initiative. Teachers had an important role as promoters and developers of this pilot project, as well as collaborators in the evaluation and improvement of the initiative. Additionally, they also had an active role in aspects such as: management of the facilities for the implementation of the workshop; linking of the project with the general science curriculum; and communication with the school, parents and other members of the community.

The level of involvement demonstrated by teachers contributed to the general improvement of the project. For example, teachers gave valuable feedback and ideas in relation to more efficient ways to administer the project and implement it successfully in the school. In addition to this, they also collaborated in improving aspects initially proposed for the project (e.g. the quality of the project website and the methodology). Furthermore, teachers suggested more accurate training needs for the implementation of the project. Finally, teachers also had an active role in reporting the advantages and drawbacks of the pilot project to the national project team.

Teachers' contribution and active involvement in the pilot project had positive results for the final definition of the programme. As a consequence, since 2007 this initiative became a regular national programme, present at all school levels, from pre-school level to secondary school, training an average of 600 teachers every year.

It is important to mention that in the process of implementation of the pilot project, I could observe some of the different issues that teachers faced in this process. For example, even when the project was a voluntary initiative, most of the teachers expected an economic incentive for their professional effort and time invested. Unfortunately, many of them did not get such support from the local authorities, which frustrated them and affected their motivation to take part in the project. In addition to this, some teachers had problems with getting support from their schools in terms of internal facilities for the implementation of the project, for example, access to a room or computer lab, time allocation or even access to students. As a consequence of this, workshops were delayed, affecting teachers' motivation and sense of professional recognition.

Some other issues experienced by teachers in the implementation of the workshops were related to the quality of external guidance, which they perceived in relation to content and methodology and the opportunity to share their experiences with other colleagues and work collaboratively. Regarding the first point, in many cases, teachers experienced anxiety or worry when they could not get enough guidelines and orientation from experts. Therefore, the delivery of workshops was not always a satisfactory experience for them. On the contrary, those teachers who felt confident in these aspects implemented adaptations to the initiative in terms of content and methodologies.

Concerning the second point, an aspect that caught my attention was the relevance of work collaboration between colleagues. Most of the teachers who implemented their workshop individually appreciated very much the opportunity to meet with other teachers, to share experiences and difficulties. Teachers who implemented the project in collaboration with other colleagues generated a

space of reflection and discussion, stimulating and supporting each other during this period.

These two stages of my professional life developed my interest in the issue of *'professional identity':* my anxiety in the beginning of my career, and the negotiation of my ethics and values, along with the apprehensions and worries of the teachers with whom I worked. These two experiences encouraged me to inquire into teachers' experiences of stress and fatigue, as well as sources of stability in the profession that could enhance commitment and vocation, such as positive self-esteem and self-image; and the role of other influences such as school leadership and culture and school contexts as distinctive elements for support and recognition in the profession as occupation and identity.

Through this specific project, as well as others, I have been inspired to embark on further educational research in order to explore the way in which teachers' professional identities are developed and supported, for example, how teachers reach consensus between their personal values and beliefs and external demands within the school, how teachers understand their professional identities, to what extent school leadership and culture support teachers facing challenges, and to what extent there are opportunities to reflect on and discuss teachers' practices, enhancing their professional identity through loyalty to personal beliefs and emotional engagement in implementing significant learning experiences.

I believe that in the Chilean context we need more evidence about the nature and meaning of teachers' professional identities, and how different influences affect teachers' identities and educational practices. In the research reported in

the thesis, I expand on this area with an emphasis on Chilean primary teachers' professional identities and the role of the school context, leadership and culture as influences, which interact in the process of development and definition of these identities.

Through the results of my research, I hoped to generate illuminating findings that contribute to the development of educational research looking at elements of the school context and school culture as inhibitors or facilitators of teachers' professional identities in a progressive scope respecting all forms of knowledge.

2. Research focus, relevance and significance

This study is informed by previous research on teachers' lives; studies about teachers and educational policy; and studies of teachers' professional identities (Goodson and Hargreaves 1996; Sachs 2003, 2011; Evetts 2008, 2011; Hargreaves 2000; Talbert and McLaughlin 1996; Goodwing 2012; Day and Smethem 2009). The underlying message of this stream of research is that the nature of teaching requires deep personal and emotional involvement in order to provide significant learning experiences to pupils (Gibson 1998; Nieto 2007; Hansen 1995; Day and Gu 2010; Day and Gu 2014). In this context, teachers' emotional wellbeing is a key aspect in their practice. Researchers have found that continuous challenges to individual identities trigger stress, impacting on physical and emotional wellbeing (Stryker and Burke 2000; Nias 1989; Thoits 1983; Pyhalto, Pietarinen and Soini 2015; Pillen, Den Brok and Beijaard 2013). Teachers' professional identities are found to be exposed to several influences (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington and Gu 2007; Day and Gu 2010, 2014), which partly shape and define professional identities. This study is seeking to

understand the role of these influences and their interactions in identity formation and development through a qualitative analysis of primary school teachers' self-perceptions.

The concept of identity has been largely explored by different disciplines. Anthropology and sociology raise social and contextual elements involved in defining and shaping identities, while psychology has been focus in the mental processes of it. Identity is an abstract and theoretical concept (Nias 1989; Britzman 1992; MacLure 1993; Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004), which attempts to explain attitudes, actions and behaviours of individuals.

Identity Theory (Burke and Stets 2009) provides an interesting conceptualization of identity where contextual and personal elements interact dynamically and dialectically. But what does identity mean? Identity is composed of sets of meanings in individuals' minds associated with the different roles that individuals perform in their lives (Burke & Reitzes 1981; Stryker & Burke 2000) constructed by individuals by themselves (Giddens 1984) in interaction with meanings defined by others. These meanings are dynamic according to interactions in different social contexts, since personal identity meanings are in continuous interchanges with individuals as 'significant others' who provide feedback that contribute to re-shaping and re-defining identity meanings.

However, there are elements of continuity in any identity anchored to personal identity meanings that Jenkins (2008) defines as *Primary Identity* and Stets and Serpe (2013) call *Self-Meanings*. Other authors call it *Substantial Self* (Nias 1989) or just *Self* (Turner 1978), similar to the *'I'* defined by Mead (1934) and

James (1968). Personal Identity is important since involves personal values (Turner 1978), that contribute to define expectations and aspirations as beliefs guiding individual attitudes and behaviours and justifying them (MacLure 1993).

Personal identity meanings interact to contexts within the culture. Context and culture are relevant because both concepts provide a frame where several interactions (social, cultural, historical and economic) define social expectations and aspirations of identities and contribute to the definition of identity. Nias (1989) calls this 'situational self', referring to the social expectations about the profession often addressed by policies and tradition. Different aspects of culture and context define the 'situational-self' by policy, tradition, initial training, professional learning and development, school leadership and culture among others.

In this vein, the definition of teachers' professional identity has been built by elements of identity as it has been defined by identity theory in terms of the conflation of individual and social interactions in identity construction. The traditional definitions of professionalism in other disciplines such as law and medicine have been supplemented by a sociological tradition rooted in work by Freidson (1988) regarding the autonomy to exercise professional judgements, and Evetts (2008 and 2011) on professionalism, referring to social trust and expert knowledge. At the same time, the discussion will consider the efforts in education to define teachers' professional identity by Hoyle and John (1995), Goodson and Hargreaves (1996), Gale and Densmore (2003) and Goodwing (2012) adjusted to the Chilean context.

Thus, teachers' professional identity in this research will be understood as teachers' self-concept to themselves and to society defined by key aspects such as professional ethics, autonomy, agency and sense of self-efficacy as well as content and pedagogical knowledge and social skills, by the interactions of the organisational and socio-cultural definitions and influences of these key aspects.

An important additional aspect, however, is the definition of being professional in particular contexts such as Chile. By means of different policies, neoliberal reforms have attempted to define the teaching profession establishing standards and measurements of effectiveness (Avalos 2007, 2011), often shaping the key elements of being professional (Cerda, Nuñez and Silva 1991) such as agency, autonomy, expert knowledge, collegiality and ethics, and in some cases defining conditions of entry to the occupation as in Chile at the beginning of the last century.

In Chile, a number of different studies have revealed difficulties that teachers have had with new requirements in terms of their self-confidence and emotional well-being. Additionally, others studies reveal aspects of teachers' identities such as their motivations and commitments, as well as teachers' professionalism in terms of accountability of the profession, and conflicts between the summative and formative aspects within the teacher's assessment system (Avalos and Assael 2006; Taut, Santelices, Araya, Manzi 2010). Although these studies raise issues about teachers' self- esteem and self-image, they do not explore in particular school contexts how Chilean primary teachers' professional identity is defined and developed or how the interaction of these influences affect their emotional wellbeing.

This study considers some of the key elements of teacher professionalism in Chilean primary schools. Primary identities and social context interact in a process of negotiation. Different aspects of the school culture and context interrelate; for instance, geographical conditions, community backgrounds (teachers, parents, students, other staff members and administrators), social interactions, political interests, attitudes, values and beliefs. Culture and context provide an institutional and non-institutional frame for values and beliefs, and attitudes and practices, similar to the idea of 'structure' developed by Giddens (1984). Attitudes and practices are influenced by the school culture and context frame. The interaction between these constrains or enhance teachers' sense of professional identity and depending on the strength of their agency, their degrees of power to make decisions and behave in order to obtain achievements.

At the same time, teachers' personal identity, at its core as 'substantial self' (ibid), referring to self-image and self-esteem, is rooted, though not determined, in first social experiences with family and relatives. The substantial-self plays a relevant role because it will translate these policies into practice by negotiating (or not) with values and beliefs with consequences for teachers' performance. This process of negotiation is an internal conversation as dialogues where individuals confirm (or not) their self- image against the external requirements (in this study policy). The tensions between self-image and external requirements may end in negative or positive emotions with consequences for teachers' behaviour.

In this study, Chilean primary teachers' professional identities have strong influences from the individual her or himself by way of vocational and ethical

values. These influences interacting with contextual factors such as the socio-economic characteristics of the children and parents and school leadership and culture contribute to drive professional ethics, autonomy and agency with a little influence of policy and tradition. Definitions from national policy and the perceptions of the school intake drive the goals in terms of content, pedagogical knowledge and social skills for the occupation. However, in spite of these common grounds, teachers' professional identities have differences, drawing at least three profiles with specific particularities.

This research seeks, therefore, to identify the common and particular aspects of Chilean primary teachers' professional identities, since these contribute to their commitment, their professional judgements and their agency.

In order to provide a frame for this study, a literature review on different topics was undertaken which consisted of works on the Chilean educational context (chapter two), the definitions of and influences on identity and professional identity, and the dimensions of influences on identity: socio-cultural/policy, organisational and personal (chapter three). These are followed by a discussion of the methodologies and methods used in the study (chapter four). Chapters five and six will present the research findings related to contextual and individual influences on teachers' professional identity meanings in four schools. Chapter seven will explore the professional identity profiles predominant among participants in this study. The final chapter will discuss the contribution of the research to knowledge about Chilean teachers' professional identities in primary schools which serve disadvantaged communities, relationships between these and teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness, and possible implications for

teachers’ initial training and the role of the school in building and sustaining teachers' commitment.

Chapter Two: Chilean context

Introduction

This chapter will review the general characteristics of the Chilean educational contexts and the specific regulations and policies that have affected the professional identity of Chilean teachers.

1. Chilean education contexts

The case of Chile is similar to the other countries in Latin America. Top-down educational policies are most common on this continent, which are frequently related to decentralisation of the educational system, as well as the diffusion of tasks from the central government to other players. In the Chilean educational system, the implementation of educational policies has paid little attention to teachers' implementation of policy. Overall, educational policy has had meagre outcomes in terms of academic improvement of students according to Chilean standardised tests, and this has led to some degree of discontent among teachers in public schools (Assael 2009; Caiceo 2016).

The educational policy in Chile has gone through different periods characterised by political and social changes that the country has gone through (Cox 2003). In the last 20 years, policy has mostly promoted changes targeting the improvement of the results of standardised tests and students' access to higher education. When the Chilean state was formed in 1810, the challenge was to increase the number of schools in the country as well as recruit more practitioners who were mainly volunteers linked to the Catholic Church (Labarca

1939). In the following decades, policy moved forward to a process of decentralisation and the improvement of system interactions and quality (Cox 1997, 2003).

From 1980 to 2000, like elsewhere in the world, Chilean reforms were free-market-oriented (Avalos 2007, 2011). Neoliberal ideas dominated educational policies, changing the culture and context of schools and creating new pressures on teacher professional identity. Under these reforms, funding for public and private-subsidised schools is modulated through a student subsidy system according to the school roll and attendance. This aims to stimulate competition among schools by improving their performance in order to attract more students (Elacqua 2009, 2012), but causes stress to teachers, head-teachers and school leaders since it encourages rivalry among schools and colleagues rather than partnership and collaboration (Mizala & Torche 2012).

The participation of the private sector in the system has increased the diversity of the work conditions of teachers because private owners who set their own regulations run 46% of schools (Behrman, Tincani, Todd & Wolpin 2016). Additionally, the private voucher school sector tends to select and enrol fewer vulnerable students (Cox 2003, pp. 49-50; Elacqua 2009, p. 26), increasing the segregation of disadvantaged students, and promoting biased school cultures and contexts with nuanced effects on teacher professional identity.

The educational benefits of the more affluent groups of the society triggered massive industrial actions first in 2006 and then in 2011. Students, teachers and other social actors demanded a better quality of education (Bernasconi 2014). The Chilean educational system was debated by a large Advisory Presidential Commission, which proposed several changes in the law and the whole educational system improving and increasing mechanisms of monitoring and control of educational institutions. As a consequence, the system was re-organized according to the following structure:

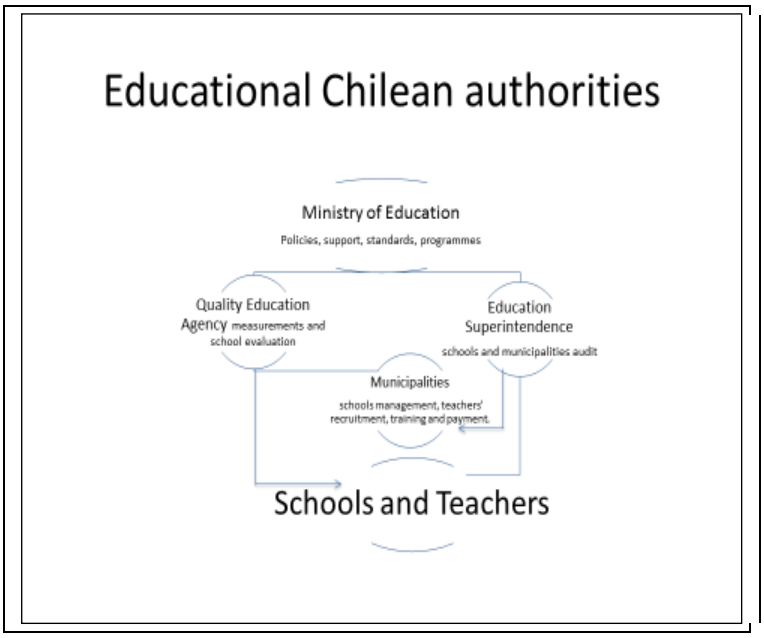


Figure 2.1 – Chilean Educational System (adapted from OEDC 2013)

The Ministry of Education is in charge of the design of policies and programmes, the definition of standards, and support for the whole system. It has a Centre for Pedagogical Training, Experimentation and Research (CPEIP), which promotes training and accredits institutions for this purpose. The Quality

Agency of Education is responsible for all the measurements and schools' evaluation. The Education Superintendence audit municipalities and schools. Municipalities are in charge of school management, teacher recruitment, training and payment. Schools and teachers must report to and accomplish the requirements of these three bodies.

2. Chilean teacher contexts

Teachers' professional identity in Chile was influenced by missionary commitment in the beginnings and the State definitions later. The first '*professionalization*' attempt was made by the Catholic Church. The second was the creation of the "Escuela Normal" (Normal School) in 1842, promoting systematic training and moral standards among primary teachers. The initiatives to professionalization contributed to shaping teacher's professional identities providing intellectual and material resources for teachers, thus creating common languages and structures, teachers were volunteers driven by a strong vocation to serve the church as well as their surrounding communities (Labraca 1939), with vocation serving as one of the key aspects boosting teachers' professional identities. Later, students at the 'Normal School' were the best students of their generation; therefore, their identity was based on their high social valuation as well as self-esteem (Cox and Gysling 1990).

From 1960, due to the growth of the educational system, the demand for teachers grew. At the same time, the assessment system was decentralized, promoting local agencies where teachers defined and designed standards and assessment tools (Gysling 2016), increasing teacher autonomy as in many

other Latin American countries. At the end of this decade, educational sociology identified a profile of the Chilean teacher where 57% of teachers defined the job as a 'humanistic endeavour', and 21% as a professional activity (Gyarmati, Ortuzar & Cereceda 1970). Some teachers also identified their role as instructors, bureaucrats, intellectuals and scientists. However, during this period teachers achieved several benefits in terms of work conditions and social status, increasingly leading to an identity linked to commitment to social change and social justice (Nuñez 2007).

In 1973, the military dictatorship took control of the country, diminishing participatory initiatives in education as well as in the whole society (Lomnitz and Melnick 1991). As a consequence, teachers were forced to re-shape their role; they were compelled to create a new teacher organisation and members of the armed forces replaced existing authorities in educational bodies (Avalos 2007). Years later, by means of free market policies, the state allowed any private institution to deliver teacher training. The system placed fewer requirements and the quality of training was eroded (Ibid.). In this context, teachers' professional identity was blurred, and they felt less confident of their knowledge (Nunez 2004b). Their training had fewer links with schools and practice, and more emphasis on educational theory (Cox and Gysling 1990, p. 294).

In 1980, the management decentralisation process in the education system transferred the administration and management of public schools to municipalities. Municipalities became responsible for recruitment, training and payments of teachers (Latorre, Nuñez, Gonzalez and Hevia 1991). Teachers

lost a significant amount of rights and benefits such as professional association, seniority, deterioration of salaries, increasing students in each grade and increasing class hours (Lomnitz and Melnick 1991; Nuñez 2004b, 2007), eroding the spiritual satisfaction of being a teacher, corroding teachers' self-esteem, and disrupting teacher identity.

However, teachers in public schools have faced dissimilar situations because municipalities manage different budgets; the government allocates subsidies to every school based on the number of students enrolled and based on attendance. Additionally, these schools tend to enrol a large number of disadvantaged students (Assael 2009; Elacqua 2009, p. 28; MUNITEL 2011, p. 6) because the private voucher school sector tends to select students and charge tuition fees, increasing segregation within the Chilean educational system. As a consequence, teachers in public schools work in more challenging circumstances.

With the reforms of the last 20 years, teachers have been recovering some of the benefits lost during the dictatorship in terms of material conditions and participation in school decisions and the educational debate, thus their professional identities have changed. From 1990 onwards, the reforms meant the recuperation of their status as well as the strengthening of their professionalism (Avalos and Assael 2006, p. 256) and changed working conditions (Taut et al 2010, p. 478). These reforms also involved developing school team incentives based on performance, and most recently, it has been implemented through individual performance measurement (Romaguera 2008,

p. 10). In this period, the Teachers' Union recovered its role by collaborating with the educational body and proposing themes on the agenda.

The Teachers' Union has held a relevant role in strengthening teachers' professional identities by participation in the process of professionalism of the occupation. In spite of the poor representation of the Teachers' Union (just 50%) among teachers, during the four-year period (1999 to 2003) it has played an active role in professional development at the grassroots level, enhancing the intellectual and civic aspects of the occupation. Through this action, the Teachers' Union contributed teachers' views to the discussion about different aspects of their role and professionalism such as: teachers and their tasks at school; teacher training and theory application; teachers' participation; and recognition of others as a learning experience (Assael and Guzmán 2002, p. 266; Quilaqueo 2003, pp. 64-65), which also contributed to the professionalization of in-service teachers later.

This organisation raised topics for discussion among teachers developing a sense of collaborative work rather than isolation as well as re-enchantment with their role as social actors who contribute to the society (Assael and Guzmán 2002, p. 268) among teachers in the union. It seems that this experience contributed to building up teachers' professional identities beyond teachers' economic demands (salary, working conditions, etc.) within the Union, adding the 'citizen' aspect of it.

Additionally, the government and the Teachers' Union boosted teachers' professionalism by means of standard-setting. Performance standards are defined by two elements: the "Sistema Nacional de Evaluacion del Desempeno (SNED)" (Teacher Assessment Performance) and the 'Marco Para la Buena Ensenanza' (Good Teaching Framework). This process took long periods of discussion and negotiation of work conditions as well as standards for the occupation, with input from experts and the participation of teachers across the country.

These two tools provide teachers with guidelines for teachers' practices and professional development. The emphasis of the standards is on a combination of developmental and regulatory aspects of the profession (Taut, et al. 2010, p. 478). Although these two tools were developed as standards for the teacher profession, they are sometimes combined with in-service education (Avalos 2004), and less often combined with pre-service education. In the last two years, the government has imposed severe regulations on teacher training institutions, contributing to closing the gap between teaching standards and teacher training.

Even though the Teacher Performance Assessment has different elements of support for teachers, it has faced strong resistance by them (Raczynski and Muñoz 2007). Teachers, through the union, judge the whole assessment system as inefficient and characterised by a lack of transparency (Assaél and Pavez 2008). Nevertheless, this initiative contributed to defining some aspects of teachers' identities and reinforced their professionalism in terms of

expectations on them in their classroom practices. At the same time, the initiative has established a basis for the new system in current discussion. Some of these policies are:

Teachers' Statute

This is a document created in 1991 by the Teachers' Union and the authorities of that time. It ensures teachers' work conditions, professional development and professional status. Teachers lost their status as civil servants during the dictatorship, then, as soon as the new elected government started, they negotiated and defined new working conditions. The document contains definitions of **professional duties** in the classroom and in the context of schooling in extracurricular activities such as diagnosis, planning and assessment of the learning process.

The document defines the **participation of teachers in decisions and access to training** including scholarships available as well as the levels of participation in school decisions as advisors as well as their capacity of solve issues related to **pedagogical matters** (Teacher Statute 1991); the degrees of **autonomy** in classroom practices, assessment characteristics tuned to the national regulation and the school, textbook definition and relationships to parents.

The Teacher Statute also frames the working relationship between the municipality and teachers according to the annual development plan of each municipality and the general characteristics of the teacher assessment system,

which forces teachers with unsatisfactory results to engage in activities of professional development.

Teacher Performance Assessment

The Teacher Performance Assessment is an instrument for improving the quality of Chilean teachers. It is compulsory for all teachers working in state schools. The system has four elements, which collect information about teacher practice in a self-assessment schedule and a portfolio: directly from the teacher in an interview by other teacher, and from reports by colleagues and superiors.

Assessment Tool	**Weighing**
Self-assessment Schedule	10%
Portfolio	60%
Colleague interview	20%
Colleagues and superiors report	10%

Table 2.1: Description of tools of teacher assessment and weighing percentages (adapted from Docentesmas 2015)

The evaluation is based on the Good Teaching Framework (see more details in next section). Additionally, the Ministry of Education provides material for guidelines and supports teachers in the process. Teachers must be assessed every four years in relation to these standards. If they do not meet the standards, they must repeat the process the following year.

Performance levels defined in the Regulation on Teacher Performance Assessment correspond to the following:

Outstanding:
It indicates a professional performance that stands out clearly and consistently about what is expected in the evaluated indicator. Usually it manifested by a wide range of aspects and the richness of pedagogical features even beyond the indicator.
Competent:
Indicates an adequate professional performance. Meets required to practice professionally the role of teachers. While not exceptional, this is a good performance.
Basic:
It indicates a professional performance that meets expectations in the evaluated indicator, but with some irregularity (occasionally).
Unsatisfactory:
It indicates a performance that has clear weaknesses in the assessed indicator and these significantly affect the teaching work.

Table 2. 2: Description of teacher performance assessment (adapted from Docentesmas 2015)

These levels of competence are assigned to teachers once they have been assessed. Outstanding means that teachers have all the competencies and skills to performance the job. Competent means that teachers can perform the job but they can improve. Basic and Incompetent means that teachers need to undergo a program of training and professional development in order to improve performance and assess themselves again the following year.

Good Teaching Framework

In 2005 the Ministry of Education created a document call the Good Teaching Framework (Marco para la Buena Ensenanza), which has been updated recently (2015). The first version of this document, which defines the work-frame for teachers in this study, provides guidelines about the standards of the teaching profession as well as the orientations of teachers in the process of performance assessment. It has four dimensions that frame the practice and each dimension has at least four criteria for performance, providing detailed indications for the job performance. The dimensions are: preparation for teaching, creating the appropriate learning environment, teaching for learning for all students and professional responsibilities.

A. Preparation for teaching	**B. Creating the appropriate learning environment**
• To know contents and the National Curriculum • To know the students' characteristics, knowledge and experiences • Proficient in methods and didactic of the subject • To organize objectives and contents of the National Curriculum according to pupils' capacity • The evaluations are consistent to the objectives and contents of the lessons	• To develop a climate with trust, equity, respect and solidarity among students • To have high expectations of students • To establish and promote consistent school life norms • To organize a structured environment using all the resources available

D. Professional responsibilities	C. Teaching for learning for all students
• To reflect systematically about the practice • To build professional networks and teamwork among colleagues • To embrace tutoring responsibilities upon students • To promote collaboration and respect among parents and careers • It is up to date about the profession, the educational system and current policies	• To communicate clearly the learning objectives • The lessons strategies are challenging, structured and significant for students • The contents are rigorous and understandable for all students • To manage efficiently lesson time • To promote thinking development • To assess and monitor the students' learning processes

Table 2. 3: Description of dimensions of the Good Teaching Framework (adapted from Good Teaching Framework Handbook 2008)

Preparation for teaching is related to the **knowledge** that the teacher should manage in order to achieve effective teaching. It is related to definitions of the National Curriculum, the contents of the subject and didactic knowledge as well as students' knowledge and educational policy awareness.

The creation of a suitable learning environment highlights elements of **group management**, high student expectation and the promotion of a healthy **school life**. The third dimension is about **student diversity** and seeks to ensure that teachers implement a variety of learning strategies in order to promote and evaluate thinking development.

Finally, the last dimension is about the **self-obligations of being a teacher**/of one's own teaching activities such as reflection on one's own practice, collaboration among colleagues, tutoring and promotion and management of parents bonds for learning. Just as an example, this dimension has five criteria and 15 descriptors of some of these are:

> "Identify needs of professional development and training attempting to satisfy them"
>
> "Teachers promote debate of didactical and pedagogical aspects of their practice"
>
> "They participate actively with other teachers of the school collaborating with them in projects and with the Educational Project of the school."
>
> "It helps engage families in learning and recreational activities as well as in the development of healthy school life" (p.15)

The document provides a wide range of desirable criteria and descriptors; however, teachers have little time to work outside the classroom and this time is mainly allocated to planning lessons and dealing with students' issues.

The Preferential Subsidy Law (20.248 Law)

This law is important because it links financial resources to achievements in the school. Although these achievements are measured in part by standardised tests, the school community has the power to define its own goals according to the needs and requirements of the staff and community (MINEDUC 2008). It is important also because first, it is attempting to diminish the gap between

affluent and disadvantaged schools, providing special resources to school that enrol vulnerable individuals, and second, because it explicitly promotes participation among the school staff and community as a bottom-up approach.

At the same time, the law demands high levels of involvement of all actors in diagnosis and goal definition by the discussion of Improvement Plan (IP) providing different degrees of autonomy to schools according to their capacity to achieve the goals defined in the IP every four years.

However, there are rules to follow, for instance there are four areas of improvement previously defined and the IP should be assessed every four years. In spite of that, most Chilean schools serving disadvantaged communities have applied for funding.

The effect of this law among teachers is that they have been willing to respond to this ‘inner accountability’ by motivating teachers to reflect together and disseminating good practice among colleagues (Raczynski, Munoz, Weinstein and Pascual 2013). At the same time, according to the study of 4.564 schools in 2009, the amount of data created by schools in relation to teaching and learning processes and its results have overwhelmed school staff, who with just a little amount of non-teaching hours are not able to process and work with all the information that the requirements of this law generates (CEPPE 2010).

Current Policy Changes

During the development of this piece of research, teacher career development has been designed, it has been debated how much time to allocate to teachers for their duties outside the classroom. It seems that different social actors (teachers, other educators, students and policy makers) are agreed that teachers should spend 65% of their time in the classroom and 35% of the time for other teacher duties (modification Act Nº 19.070-1997, Bill 2015). However, this is in discussion in the Parliament at the moment.

The successive public policy evaluations (MINEDUC 2000; CIDE 2002; MINEDUC-DIPRES 2002; García Huidobro and Concha 2009; CEPPE 2010) have contributed to the identification of relevant aspects of day-to-day work at the school and the effects of new policies, revealing some relevant issues about teachers and their identities. For instance, it has identified the lack of self-confidence to implement new programs at school (Garcia-Huidobro and Concha 2009, p. 10; CEPPE 2010, p. 192); the lack of autonomy for reflection about practice (MINEDUC 2000, p. 28) and the need for appropriate in-service training (Garcia-Huidobro and Concha 2009, p. 7-13). In other words, teachers are demanding professional development to deal with new requirements as well as the need for instances for discussion and careful thinking about their job, which may be a collaborative endeavour.

Alongside the data identified by public policy evaluations, the teachers' longitudinal survey[1] (Urrutia, Peirano et al. 2006) reveals some of the features of teacher identity. For instance, 90% of teachers are from the first generation in their families who accessed higher education. This implies that the career provides an important opportunity for social mobility to individuals. Additionally, 76% of teachers say that, if they could make their choices again, they would choose the same career. Therefore, in spite of the work overload and stressful requirements of the occupation, teachers are still committed to it. Finally, 92% of them think that education is the most important thing in life as an element of improvement in terms of intellectual and material resources. This is consistent with the idea of social mobility, where education is the gateway to better quality of life.

Likewise, a recent study about teacher identity reports that Chilean teacher identity has at least three distinctive elements: 1) the relevance of education to the social context where they perform their job; 2) their social commitment to disadvantaged students; and 3) the gap between their self-perception and the perspectives of the educational authorities and the media (Avalos 2012, p. 79).

The present study has been carried out during a controversial period. In 2015 the country witnessed huge teacher protests and industrial actions. Teachers, students and other members of society are strongly demanding better education

[1] The survey was carried out by University of Chile, about teachers' characteristics. It surveyed the same 6000 teachers in 2005 and 2009.

quality. Alongside demands for change in the National Constitution, teachers are demanding a strong role of the state in their careers. At the same time, teachers' career path is in the public debate. According to the Teachers' Union (Colegio de Profesores 2016), there are different aspects of the career that should be improved. For example, the state should give guarantees of the selection for the initial training, the initial training itself, and professional development of the career; the career path must have an emphasis on classroom practice, with a progressive formation and assessment of the practitioners; the state should assure conditions for teaching in terms of time for planning and collaborative work; as well as a salary (according to the market) for each stage of the career path including pensions. This is an ongoing process; teachers have been on strike for more than 60 days, discussing their proposals across the country, adding changes and new emphasis.

This union proposal for state guarantees for teachers brings to the fore the role of teachers in society. Likewise, the proposal provides evidence of teachers' self-perceived identities. For instance, the inclination to work collaboratively suggests that teachers see themselves as a collegial body supporting each other in the teaching process as a team. The emphasis on classroom practice indicates that teachers see their professional development and career path as a journey of improvements in their interactions with pupils and their development.

3. Conclusions

From the dictatorship, the Chilean education system has been shaped by successive market-oriented reforms and decentralisation, affecting teachers' work. It has three different institutions dealing with schools and teachers. Each institution affects the work of teachers in different aspects, setting standards, programmes and policies, monitoring the quality of the learning process, as well as establishing the work conditions and defining terms and conditions for the exercise of the profession.

However, Chilean teachers have a long history of participation in policy discussion that has contributed to the different agendas set by these institutions, specifically, the Teachers Statute, the Teachers Performance Assessment System and the Good Teaching Framework. Lately, teachers have had an active role in the discussion and definition of the teaching career path, which sets different stages in the exercise of the profession by assuring conditions for professional development. At the same time, changes in the mechanism for the assignation of resources have provided a strong emphasis on internal accountability in schools which has been improving the conditions of teachers' jobs and provided more autonomy to school organisations.

This policy context, by defining aspects of teachers' professionalism, contributes to shaping Chilean teachers' professional identity as a contextual influence, providing a social meaning of their identity. In order to understand the relevance of contextual influences on identity, the next chapter will discuss concepts of

identity, professional identity and agency providing the basis for the conceptual framework used in this study, followed by a review of factors affecting professional identities of Chilean primary teachers in terms of socio-cultural/policy influences, workplace and personal influences.

Chapter Three: Conceptual notes

Introduction

The following chapter introduces the concepts that underpin this research, focusing on teachers' professional identity as a key aspect of teachers' professionalism by unfolding the dimension of influences on it. The identity lens contributes to understandings of the individual dimension of influences as well as the social dimensions of influences interacting and affecting teachers' work and lives in the Chilean context.

The chapter is organized in four parts. The first part provides a general view of concepts of identity and the self, defining the concepts of professional identities, based primarily on Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory. This is followed by a discussion of being professional and professionalism. The second part of the chapter will cover the definitions of teachers' professional identity. In the third part, three dimensions of influences on teachers' professional identities are reviewed, as well as the concept of agency and vocation. In the final part, the main concepts discussed are related to one another, providing a clearer depiction of the conceptual bases of this study, finalizing with the conclusions of the chapter.

1. Identity, to be professional and professionalism

This section will first review the discussion of the concept of identity as dynamic rather than stable, a dialectical process between individual and social interactions. Next, it will explore the significance of being professional in general

terms, with reference to teacher professionalism, followed by the discussion of key aspects of teachers' professional identity.

Identity

The concept of identity has been explored by different disciplines in the social sciences. From the sociological and psychological perspective, the current study recognizes the relevance of Social Identity Theory (e.g., Turner 1978 and Cooley 1922) and the contribution of Identity Theory (e.g., Mead 1934, James 1969, Stryker 1968, Burke and Stets 2009) because these theories work in complementary ways. On the one hand, the psychological perspective brings the relevance of the individual and their inner processes. On the other hand, the sociological perspective focuses on the social aspects of identity construction, social interactions and social contexts.

Identities are sets of meanings in individuals' minds associated with the different roles that individuals perform in their lives (Nias 1989, Britzman 1992, MacLure 1993, Beijaard, Meijer et al. 2004). They are constructed as a means of explaining the values, behaviours, attitudes, actions and decisions of individuals. Individuals can hold different identities according to the social interactions that they have and the contexts in which they live. Identities are associated with the different roles that individuals embrace in society and in these cases, are structured as a *role identity*, for example, the identity of being a teacher. At the same time, identities can be understood as attached to social groups as *group identity*, for example, as a teachers' union (Burke and Stets

2009). However, individuals have a unique and single identity based in the idea of the *Self or personal identity.* It is important to distinguish between the self and identity because they are often used interchangeably (Burke and Reitzes 1981; McAdams 1993; Zembylas 2003); the link between these concepts has not been clearly defined (Beijaard, et al. 2004), and authors also appear to have slightly different definitions of them.

The Self is a complex concept; it is a set of responses of an organism to itself (Stryker 1968); it is a mental experience that appears in social conduct. Identity theory suggests that the self is a part of identity. The Self is defined as the 'sameness' or the stable aspects of identities; the common aspect of identities can also be family, class or nation and occupation. In other words, the Self is defined in terms of unchangeable aspects among the several identities that individuals can have. This is similar to the idea of the '*substantial self'* of a teacher's self-consciousness described by Nias (1989) in her study about teacher identity or primary identity (Jenkins 2008). As a mental experience, the self is reflexive, philosophical and poetical in nature (Rosenberg 1979).

Social Identity Theory states that the Self emerges in a process of interaction with other individuals by means of gestures, actions and behaviour (Turner 1978) highlighting the role of society in the definition of the Self and the relevance of contexts for the Self. However, both theories share the view that the Self has biographical inheritance, which is social; for example, mothers expect their child to be part of their society. The Self has cultural, social, personal and historical boundaries.

The Self is embodied through attitudes and behaviours, revealing self-confidence and self-esteem. The Self, self-confidence and self-esteem are cognitive categories defined in early childhood by interactions with significant others which evolve as interactions with particular others. A teacher's capacity to respond to interactions is closely related to these concepts because all three concepts underlie attitudes and behaviours as outcomes that reinforce the self-concept and are consistent with positive self-esteem (Rosenberg 1979; Burke and Reitzes 1981).

For the purpose of the current study, the idea of the Self is associated with continuity across the identities that individuals perform. It is associated with the biography, values and ethics of the *personal identity* because this identity contributes to defining the personal aspects influencing teachers' professional identities since it embraces aspects of individuals which are less susceptible to change than any other identity (Jenkins 2008).

Personal identity is the private part of identity whereas role and group identities represent the social parts of identity contributing to the reflexive (Burke and Reitzes 1981), dynamic (MacLure 1993; Beijaard, Meijer et al. 2004; Flores and Day 2006) and social (Burke and Stets 2009) aspects of the concept. Identities appear as internal conversations in individuals' minds (Ibid) and, therefore are reflexive in nature. Personal identity is a self- explanation about "who they are, their self-image, the meaning that they attach to themselves and their work and

the meaning that are attributed to them by others" (Day and Gu 2010, p.34). Identities have been created and re-created by continuous interactions during life and are more dynamic rather than static as Kelchtermans (2005) suggests. The process of building up identities is based on a reflexive awareness of the Self, triggered by social interactions in an ongoing process.

To understand the process of identity development, theorists suggest that identity is based on interactions with significant and general others that influence standards for identities (Burke and Stets 2009) or 'self-meanings' (Stets and Serpe 2013). Standards of identity are perceptions about the assumptions and expectations of an identity. Through exchanges with others, individuals verify (or not) their identity-standard-modelling behaviours. In other words, through social interactions individuals obtain feedback about their identities; feedback can validate and confirm (Srtyker and Burke 2000; Burke and Stets 2009) their identities in a dialectical process (Jenkins 2008). If the context and the interactions provide an identity-meaning different from the identity-meaning stored in the individual mind, it is possible that the individual develops negative emotions or distress with consequences for his/her behaviour (Stryker and Burke 2000; Nias 1999, Thoits 1983).

There is disagreement about the boundaries between the influence of social and organisational contexts on identities and the personal influences on them. Some authors consider that historic factors, tradition (Britzman 1992), cultural values and power distribution frame and drive the concepts of identities.

From a feminist/Queer perspective (Butler 1999, p. 185), there is also the idea of ‘performativity’. Butler argues that identity (in this case gender) is shaped by the social, cultural and political discourses motivating performance. Therefore, educational agencies, municipalities, schools and school communities may define prototypes of teachers’ professional identities by means of expectation and assumptions about the meaning of what it is to be a teacher as well as positive reinforcement and recognition (Turner 1978; Cohen 2008) of them.

This *verification* cycle (see figure 2 below) is an automatic process that attempts to ensure consistency among identities, contributing to self-authenticity, self-competence and self-worth. There are five elements in this dynamic process:

i) the identity standards or self-meanings; ii) perceptual input of the meaning; iii) the process of comparison between perceptual input with the feedback from the social situation, which is called comparator; iv) positive or negative emotions (as consequences of feedback); and v) the output to the environment as behaviour (Stets and Serpe 2013). Inconsistencies in the cycle trigger natural adjustment, stressing the process. In other words, self-meanings motivate actions; these actions generate feedback from the environment; if the feedback provides inconsistencies with the self-meaning, emotions emerge and the behaviour may be adjusted.

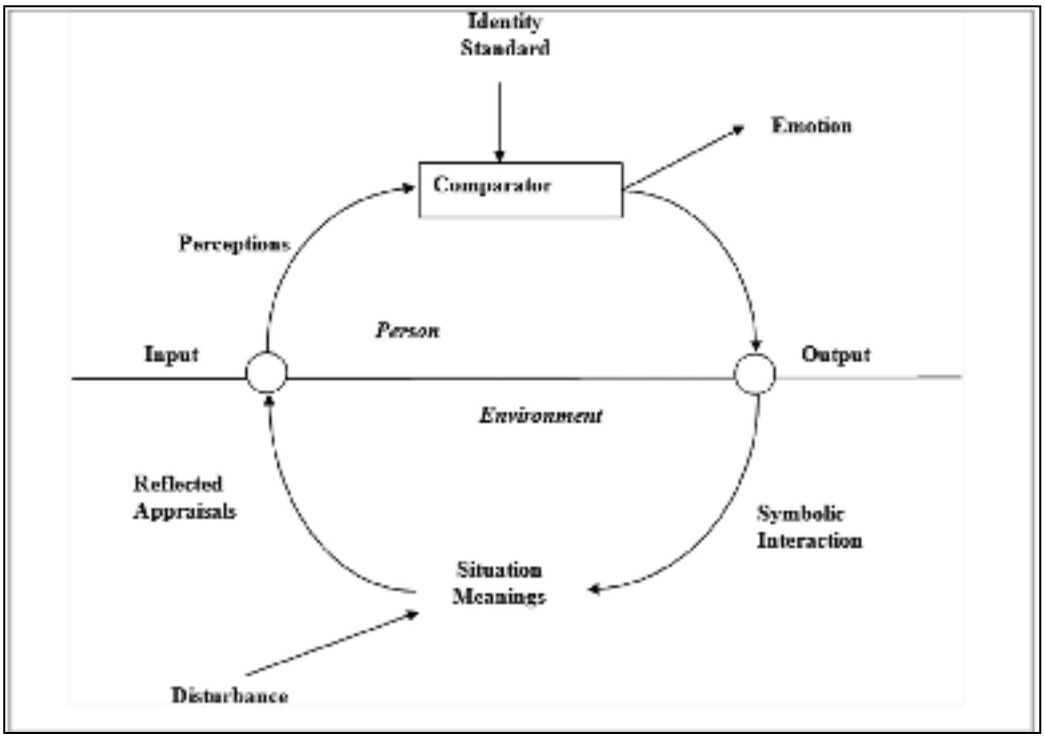


Figure 3.1 - Verification Cycle (Burke and Stets 2009)

So far, this chapter has discussed the concept of identity and it components. Since this study is about teachers' professional identities, it is necessary to examine the meaning of being professional and professionalism in order to frame some of the contextual and socio-cultural elements interacting in the process of construction of teachers' professional identities.

To be professional

It has been argued that teaching is a semi-profession and that, therefore, attempts to introduce the status of teaching as a profession involve risks, whereby teachers could be 'exploited' or 'empowered', depending on dominant ideologies (Goodson and Hargreaves 1996; Sachs 2003) because professional norms may define the boundaries for autonomy of teachers' practice. The last

30 years of reforms in western countries have been strongly influenced by market-oriented beliefs and policies (Darling-Hammond 1989; Day and Sachs 2004; Day 2007; Tangs and Choi 2009) helping define forms and contents of professional development and initial training, addressing professionalism and professional identities.

Historically in the west, it is known that professionals serve the public through public services for public wellbeing (Yinger 2005, p. 285-286) since professionals acquire knowledge in public universities with public money and, thus, they should be committed to public goods and wellbeing (May 1992). Likewise, professions are communities which share technical culture and specific knowledge; feel committed to their clients' needs; engage in continuous training, hold a monopoly in the service and high degrees of autonomy (Hargreaves 2000, p.152). Goodwing (2012) defines key attributes of professions such as knowledge and study, control over entry, and commitment to clients (p.45). In this vein, professionals seek to regulate themselves, developing accreditation and licensing systems to ensure the transmission of that knowledge and skills (Wise 2005, p.318), providing autonomy from other social actors, as well as autonomy in professional judgement, which seem to be a key aspect of being professionals (Freidson 1988).

In education, Talbert and McLaughlin (1996) defined four variables of the teaching profession: technical culture; ethics; professional commitment; and teacher communities (p. 135). These are similar to the meaning of professionalism, raised by different researchers and disciplines based on:

technical knowledge, collegial control, ethics, and autonomy (Friedson 1988; Hoyle and John 1995; Gale and Densmore 2003; Marginson 2007). However, workplaces often contribute to defining certain characteristics of this professionalism by their workplace ethos.

At the same time, any attempt to compare teaching with other professions is unlikely to be accurate, because in professions like law or medicine knowledge is the individual's asset as part of the services provided that give value to the practice, while in teaching, knowledge is shared and given away by practitioners, in a carefully knitted reciprocal relationship (Goodlad, Soder and Sironik 1990). This example provides a clear portrait of the complexity of teaching, in relation to other professions (Hargreaves and Goodson 1996). The nature of teaching requires understanding of a large amount of non-routine events in the everyday life of the school that compel teachers to deal with different variables in a short amount of time, discerning what is best for individuals as well as for the group. This is perhaps the most difficult aspect to define when it comes to teaching and its definition of standards for the occupation (Sachs 2016), thus as a contextual influence on teachers' professional identities this appears as a salient aspect.

Professionalism

Historically professionalism has been related to trust, expert knowledge, professional identity and cooperation as Evetts (2008, 2011) suggests, but it has been argued that professionalism is used to define common grounds in the

practice of an occupation, and to promote and facilitate changes in it (Ibid; Sachs 2000).

In this vein, attempts at shaping and defining professionalism contribute to the depiction of social expectation of teachers' professional identities (Sachs 2016), prescribing key aspects of the profession through standards and accountability, while defining the scope of the occupation by stating contents and allocating resources for professional development, as Lawn (1996) states a 'double-edged sword'. At the same time, professionalism in teaching is related to key social discussions about the role of history and the purpose of schools and teachers, as well as the shared values and goals that they serve with communities where teachers could be proactive, helping develop civic values (Yinger 2005, pp. 288-289).

Authors have described different types of professionalism, some associated with the characteristics of the organisation in which teachers work as organisational and occupational professionalism (Evetts 2013). The former is related to external norms and regulation for the job, promoting 'managerial professionalism' (Sachs 2000), and the latter focuses on trust as well as collegial relationships in the practice, similar to 'democratic professionalism' (ibid). Other types of professionalism are addressed by the emphasis on professional development strategies, involving subtypes such as "controlled", "activist", "compliant" and "collaborative" (Sachs 2011, 2016). These promote and shape expectations within the occupation.

The types of professionalism that are related to the demands of society (Goodson and Hargreaves 1996) are: classical professionalism echoing in traditional professions such as law and medicine; flexible professionalism drawing upon the need to break isolation and increase collaboration among colleagues; practical professionalism, where experience and reflection appear as key characteristics, and extended or complex professionalism shaped by the globalized and interconnected world. In the same vein, Hargreaves (2000) identifies ‘ages’ of professionalism, establishing connections between different stages of the school system. For instance, Hargreaves refers to the beginning of the schooling system ’pre-professional age’; the increment of higher education institutions that provide qualification and support to practitioners for the job although in isolation, the ‘autonomous professional age’; and the flourishing of collaboration as a response to diverse demands of classrooms and communities. Finally, there is the professional that the postmodern society requires: a professional who is proactive, who seeks collaboration, while proposing changes and keeping socially active as a citizen.

However, perhaps the most important aspect of professionalism happens when s/he is ‘manipulated’ to address or narrow down the scope of being professional in a specific discipline, often limiting the scope of the practice providing a social professional identity that is ‘dissonant’ from the meaning of being professional that the individuals hold about themselves.

The interactions of being a professional and of professionalism depict the individual and social dynamic in the construction of professional identities. To enquire about teachers' professional identity to Chilean primary teachers may unveil some missing components in the discussion of professionalism, such as the role of emotions that is fundamental for effective teaching (Gibson 1998; Nieto 2007; Hansen 1995; Day and Gu 2010; Day and Gu 2014), which links to vocation, ethical values and individual beliefs. At the same time, it is notable that teachers' perceptions embrace the idea of self-regulation in the profession, along with its social responsibility regarding the communities the teachers serve, perhaps as cultural workers (Freire 1998) who are also professionals.

2.Teachers' professional Identity

The meaning of teachers' professional identity is connected to how teachers understand themselves and their relationship to others. It can be shaped by schools, reforms and political contexts as influencing factors, which also contribute to these perceptions of teachers about themselves in continuous interactions involving comparisons, verifications and negotiations. At the same time, Identity helps to explain and justify actions and behaviours, and also to make sense of one's own actions (MacLure 1993). However, research on teachers' professional identity has described the concept in different ways, yet it is not clearly defined (Beijaard et al. 2004) by the several studies reviewed.

Empirical research on secondary teachers (e.g. Beijaard, Verloop and Vermunt 2000) found that teachers see themselves as subject/topic experts, didactic experts and pedagogical experts. In the USA, teachers' identities were

clustered as gatekeepers, mentors/experts, collaborators, outsiders and learners (Cohen 2008). Likewise, Lasky (2005) defines professional identity as the personal commitment to continue learning, and this includes individual beliefs, identity, values, subject area and pedagogical knowledge, emotional wellbeing and professional vulnerability.

In this vein, teachers' professional identity will be understood as the interactions of individual conceptions of competencies, autonomy, ethics, collegial relationship and agency in the occupation, and the organisational and socio-cultural definitions of these themes by exploring teachers' perceptions of the contextual and the personal influences on their professional identity.

For the purpose of this study the concept of the professional will be unpacked in terms of five elements: competencies, collegiality, autonomy, ethics and agency.

Competencies are the abilities to perform a job successfully. In other words, competencies are skills required for the exercise of the profession, the body of skills held by primary teachers, for instance, interpersonal and pedagogical skills (Nias 1989). Previous studies about the teaching profession point out the relevance of technical knowledge such as psychology, philosophy, and educational psychology (Ibid.), subject matter, pedagogical knowledge, didactical knowledge (Beijaard et al 2000), and the content of disciplines,

institutional materials of the educational process, research about schooling, and practical wisdom (Shulman, 1987, p. 8).

Autonomy is related to the capacity to exercise discretional judgement in the uncertain situations of the teaching and learning processes within the context of the school, attuned (or not) with school aims. Autonomy has been conceived as control over the goals and objectives of teachers' work, and control over skills contents and rhythm of their work (Robertson 1996) including curriculum and pedagogy (Nias 1989, p. 16). Previous studies have found that freedom and creativity in the classroom are some of the motivations for individuals who want to become teachers (Goodson 2003, pp. 82-83). However, excessive levels of autonomy may lead to a perception of a lack of supervision and guidelines about the work (Nias 1989a, p. 99).

Teacher autonomy seems to be confined by standardised tests and accountability measures, which restrict autonomy. In the recent decades, the teaching profession has been driven by standards (Elmore 2007a; Goodson and Hargreaves 1996; Hargreaves 1994). In spite of the standards being created for the improvement of the quality of teaching, standards have been subject to different interpretations associated with developmental or regulatory aspects of teaching practices (Sachs 2003). Standards seem to be associated with regulation of the professional definition on the basis of the teaching practices, and therefore, teachers' autonomy.

Collegiality is the capacity to develop work collaboratively among professionals in the same school or community, sharing practices and knowledge (Hargreaves and Dawe 1990). It is based on a professional reflection on experiences and an exchange of practical wisdom in order to improve practices and innovate.

Collegiality can be a voluntary endeavour or an imposed practice. However, in order to promote productive debate about teaching and learning in a school, teachers need to be willing to work collaboratively and they need material conditions to do it. Teachers need to share common goals and ethical values, leading to collaborative work and collegiality in the long-term as part of the school culture. Otherwise, there is risk of developing *contrived collegiality* (Hargreaves 1994), limiting the scope of teachers' initiative, and wasting management resources. However, teachers collaborate between themselves in different ways that do not necessarily amount to collegiality. They can tell tales about classroom experiences and contribute ideas to other teachers. They can also offer and request assistance within cliques of friends. Other expression of collaboration can involve sharing ideas, activities, methodologies or problems. But collegiality means systematic joint work, sharing responsibilities and explicit goals.

Ethics are the set of moral principles that guide individuals in their actions and behaviour. The Oxford Dictionary defines 'ethic' as "a set of moral principles, especially ones relating to or affirming a specified group, field, or form of conduct" (Oxford University Press 2015). For teachers, part of the ethos is

related to their vocation to engage in the world in some substantial way, as a genuine impulse to contribute to the world (Hansen 1995, p.5). Nias (1999) has found that the personal nature of teacher-student relationships triggers the moral nature of the occupation eliciting the caring aspect of the profession.

Teachers' behaviours are usually driven by the ethical value of children's wellbeing, and therefore, in the aim to provide them relevant contents and through didactics and teaching (Nias 1999; Day and Gu 2014), because their personal fulfilment lies in the social value of their actions (Hansen 1995, p. 9).

Agency. In social science the concept of agency is rooted at least in two different strands. The sociological and anthropological strands focus on social elements, which contribute to framing, shaping or even constraining individual agency. The psychological strand places an emphasis on individual characteristics as key aspects defining the capacity to practice agency. From the sociological point of view, the culture and context of the school represent signs and symbols of the structure, providing norms and resources where teachers exercise their agency (Giddens 1984; Burke and Stets 2009). From the psychological standpoint, agency will be determined by the sense of self-efficacy based on self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura 1989, 1990) along with values and beliefs.

With these considerations in mind, agency is understood as the combination of individual values, beliefs and self-perceptions entwined with the socio-cultural

and material conditions to make decisions, choices and action or reaction in different situations in life.

The purpose of this research is to understand the elements affecting teachers' agency where perhaps a combination of social (sociology and anthropology) and psychological strands could provide a better explanation of how teachers perform agency and the factors influencing it as a key element of teachers' professional identity. In this context, it is important to understand the environment in which teachers perform their job, as well as the aspects of the leadership and school culture that inform the practices and actions of teachers, leading to nuances in their agency (Biesta, Priestley and Robinson 2015, Stillman & Anderson 2015) involved in their professional identities: in other words, the organisational and often socio-cultural influences, since workplaces play an important role in providing the landscape for practices through which individuals become agents. Thus, the school as organisation and its influences may play a central role in teachers' agency.

Although there are social constraints on teacher agency, there are authors (e.g. Billet 2006; Eteläpelto et al. 2013; Quinn and Carl 2015) who place the individual at the centre of agency. They believe in an individual capacity to interfere and act in social contexts, providing to the person some degree of discretion to decide and influence the social context (Eteläpelto et al. 2013), where personal beliefs and capacity (Biesta et al. 2015, Bandura 1989; 1990) along with past experiences shape and define the individuals' agentic capacity.

Expanding this point, agency is associated with the reflectiveness of a human being, his/her assessments, desires and the responsibility of these evaluations/verifications/discriminations, recognizing the role of individuals dealing with requirements from social contexts (Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, Eteläpelto, Rasku-Puttonen & Littleton 2008) at bodily and practical levels linked to the individual's history, thus his/her identity. This concept of agency emphasises individual criteria to engage in a 'chosen' situation where individual subjectivity through emotions, beliefs, purpose and actions emerge as expressions of personal identity (Eteläpelto et al 2013). In other words, the agentic capacity is related to the self-conception of an individual because individuals will perform actions that are consistent with their identities over time. Thus, agency is defined, enacted and performed in order to sustain identity.

However, the interest of this study is in the agentic capacity in the workplace that has been described as 'professional agency' related to occupations which require creativity such as teaching (Eteläpelto et al. 2013). The importance of professional agency is the emphasis on the longitudinal impact of certain decisions and actions that are meaningful and important in life such as enrolling in further learning or being coherent with feelings and desires where these decisions and actions are usually consistent with identity meanings (ibid). Likewise, the concept of professional agency emphasises contextual factors influencing agency, related to social, cultural and material resources and constraints, in this case related to schools, community, locality and municipality and the capacity of individuals to deal with contexts.

Agency can be individual or collective (Archer 2000). It is the power to direct and decide attitudes, actions and behaviour. In the context of schools, teachers practice their agency in their classroom, and in staff and parent meetings outlining their work and the conditions of it. Often, their agency goes beyond school activities by being an activist in the union or other associations but always framed in terms of institutional constraints on professional agency (Eteläpelto et al 2013) where official expressions of professionalism in regulations may interfere with teachers' definitions.

In terms of professionalism, a school that has several mechanisms for supervising and monitoring teachers' jobs means organisational professionalism, whereas a school which is driven by values, knowledge and collective work mean occupational professionalism (Evetts 2003) suggesting different types of agency in teachers. These are just examples of how organisations may affect professionalism, shaping agency. However, there are several expressions of professionalism circumscribing teachers' agency in Chile such as the Good Teaching Framework and the Teachers' Assessment. They are related to socio-cultural influences affecting the organisational influences that contribute to the definition of individuals' agency as well as shaping teachers' professional identities.

In this context, the definition of agency is informed by the social and individual dimensions as a combination of personal and structural/social features (e.g.

signs, symbols, norms, regulations and sources) that provide individuals the power to enact certain decisions and actions which are consistent with personal beliefs, and social as well as structured boundaries.

In this context, Teachers' professional identity will be understood as the interactions of individual conception of competences, professional ethics, autonomy for professional judgements, collegial relationships and agency in the occupation, and the organisational and socio-cultural definitions of these themes by looking at the contextual and personal influences on teachers' professional identity.

3. Influences on teachers' professional identities

Teachers' professional identities are affected by personal influences, organisational influences related to internal dynamics of the school, and socio-cultural and policy influences (Day at al. 2007; Day 2011; Day and Gu 2010, 2014). Socio-cultural and policy influences are related to external influences embedded in the society surrounding and affecting the school, such as history, tradition and policy. Locally situated influences relate to a workplace such as a specific school or municipality, which can also be called organisational influences. Finally, personal influences are the factors derived from the personal life of individuals such as biography, ethics and values.

Socio-cultural/policy influences

Socio-cultural influences are situational influences related to the broad contextual influences affecting the school organisation (Day and Gu 2010,

2014) as idiosyncratic aspects embedded in the school culture and promoted by the school leadership in response to policy externally initiated at local and national level and other macrosocial factors such as the media tone. At the same time, these influences are related to the history and tradition of teaching.

These influences impact on the social expectation of the profession associated with tradition, and the policies and regulation of the profession. It is by the latter means that society defines role and responsibilities associated with teaching as well as defining how teachers are accountable and for what. In the Chilean context, the tradition of teaching is connected to the pastoral/missionary discourse that involves interactions of caring and authority, where teachers have the capacity to provide tools to pupils that are not available in the environment where they come from (Lopez 1988, p. 106). In this sense the media tone plays a distinctive role, highlighting specific discourses in relation to the meaning of being a teacher and the assumptions of the role.

Tradition

History and tradition have distinctive influence in organisations (Handy and Aitken 1986; Chi - Kin Lee and Yin 2011). The Oxford dictionary (2004) defines tradition as “A long-established custom or belief that has been passed on from one generation to another”. This definition contributes at least three elements: time, beliefs and the nature of having been passed on. On the one hand, to transmit beliefs between generations means necessarily the value of the beliefs underpinning these actions, which often are certain rituals and ceremonies, which are related to a specific setting. On the other hand, the meaning of ‘long-

established' implies continuity as well as inertia in certain actions and behaviours in terms of 'habits' and the familiar forms, which things to do as inherited traditions (Nias, Southworth & Yeomans 1989).

Thus, traditions are rooted in custom and beliefs that are anchored to paradigms or worldviews. An example is in China, where there is respect for authority and hierarchy (Chi-Kin Lee and Yin 2011, p 101). In the case of Chile, authority and hierarchy are also values, which are distinctively present in Chilean schools (Labarca 1939; Egana, Nunez and Salinas 2003; Nunez, Weinstein and Munoz 2012), in spite of the impact of more 'progressive' views on teachers in the union especially during the sixties (Nunez 2007), for example.

Policy

Previous research has found that policy has a critical effect on teachers' lives (Day & Gu 2010, p. 33). Its mandates often come from outside of teachers' spaces. Goodson (2003) points out that "teachers' work is socially and politically constructed by others" (p.19). Therefore, an analysis of the definition of policy and its levels of influence (economic, political and ideological) may contribute to a reconstruction of teachers' perspectives on policy and its implementation. This is important because it may clarify aspects of policy enactment or compliance at the school, revealing the impact of the school culture and contexts on teachers' professional identities.

This section will address the idea of policy in the context of governance by reviewing policy instruments, texts, discourse and process. In addition, it will analyse policy and its levels of influence: economic, political and ideological. The concepts of policy implementation and policy enactment will be also discussed.

Policy is a strategy of governance or the translation of the process of governance into a set of actions by which a government seeks to obtain particular outcomes (Ozga 2000, p. 2). It is a way to solve problems in praxis. Policy is mostly expressed “in a pattern of goal-directed actions” (Colebatch 2002, p. 85) by governments in order to steer actions and practices of actors in a specific theme or sector. Governments through their agencies also define policy and prioritize themes. Nevertheless, the relationship between a policy and the outcomes expected is not always straightforward. Often, the path to solving governance problems has many more complications than a simple means-ends relationship suggests.

Policy is a government’s set of plans. In order to accomplish these plans there are several instruments (Elmore and Sykes 1992). These include mandates that solve specific problems of individuals and organisations, and inducements, which promote certain institutional or individual actions by means of money allocation, such as rewards or grants. Through this mechanism governments seek to encourage or shape behaviours, practices or even deeds. The third instrument is capacity-building across sectors or agencies, often associated

with long-term goals. In this case, policy can provide resources and structures to develop individual skills and mechanisms to support these skills (courses, certifications, institutions, bodies and/or agencies). Often, the combination of existing and new policies brings unexpected effects for teachers, and thus, unexpected outcomes. Some policy instruments are regulations or laws, and others are texts based on interpretations of the situation in which policy will be established. They are meaningful texts developed with particular language and intentions as a form of discourse. This analysis contributes to two elements to the discussion. The first element is about the role of the language of policy, because laws and regulations have their own vocabulary. Often, this language is pragmatic, reflecting the needs of governments. Such language is closer to the field of law and policymakers rather than 'policy users' and their contexts (Grimmett, Fleming and Trotter 2009). Therefore, these texts often require understanding through interpretation of policymakers' intentions. Likewise, policy texts are not always available at convenient times to the actors who will implement them.

The second element is referred to as 'intentions' of the policies. Policy intentions are usually explicit orders but they always have underlying assumptions. These underlying assumptions are related to the fabric of ideas known as 'discourse' (Ball 2006, Ball, Maguire et al. 2012, Grimaldi 2012). Discourse is comprised of the 'things' that have been said, and there are also others that have been neglected or omitted (Foucault 1972, p. 25). The concept of discourse has at least two implications. First, discourse sets the policy agenda. Through this mechanism, 'discourse' selects themes that will be part of

the discussion and the public domain. Second, discourse sketches reality. As a consequence, it is likely that relevant topics are ignored by policymakers, teachers, head teachers and other social actors because they are outside the educational policy discourse and hence outside of the perceived reality.

For policymakers, policy is considered to be a process involving successive stages, such as the identification of needs or goals, and the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policy (Colebatch 2002). Although it is possible to review policy in terms of these 'specific' stages, the process of policy creation is rarely linear and smooth. When governments face new problems, very often they try to solve these problems quickly, missing stages in the process or changing the order of stages. Frequently, policy aims are re-designed after they have been passed. Likewise, policymakers are able to identify some needs but in the case of schools, it seems to be hard to identify the needs of all actors (students, teachers, parents, administrators and so on), as well as to make policy for all of them.

Another way to analyse policy is through the contexts defined by Ball (1990): context of influence, context of policy, text production and context(s) of practice. Context of influence is how individuals and organisations in power contribute to defining policy priorities and needs. The context of influence is also shaped by social demands and media claims contributing to the political climate as another factor of influence.

The context of policy text production is the process of discursive creation of policy itself and its coherence with previous texts. Individuals and previous regulations circumscribe this context (Ball 1990). Finally, the context(s) of practice is/are related to places and their history, individuals and organisational cultures and resources. The context of practice is where policies play a part in the day-to-day lives of individuals and organisations, shaping behaviours, actions, attitudes and decisions. Every context contributes with elements of analysis of policy implementation at the school and the impact on teachers' identities (micro level). However, the context of influence and text production are mainly present at the macro level of policy. Additionally, the context of influence may show the underlying assumptions of policy, allowing further discussion in the context of practice (in Ball's terms) or in the process of implementation according to Colebatch (2002).

Policy mechanisms, policy texts, discourse and policy process are entwined across the levels of influence of policy. There are at least three levels of influence (Elmore and Sykes 1992). Firstly, there are influences at the economic level, including the mechanisms which support education, educational investments, productivity and growth that define policies mainly through mandates and structural changes. Secondly, there are factors at the political level is about encompasses social actors that influence decisions and the ways in which they are made. Policy creation involves making decisions about priorities in the educational scene and can also involve changes in the government structures and their authority.

In education, policies affecting teachers can be described in four broad groups: school system reforms, teaching profession definition, curriculum and pedagogy and measures to tackle inequality (Lupton and Thomson 2015). In the sphere of teaching profession Quartz, Olsen, Anderson, and Barraza Lyons (2009) found that low levels of autonomy affect new teachers pushing them towards other occupations in the educational field. In the same vein, research on Chilean teachers (e.g. Reyes, Cornejo, Arevalo and Sanchez 2010) in "The Workshop of Educators Writers" (Taller de Educadores Autores) pointed out that teachers in this study feel mainly overburdened by curriculum reform demands, losing their professional judgement and increasing the technical aspect of their role rather the creative one.

Policy Implementation and policy enactment

Policy implementation is a set of instructions designed in general terms to put a plan in operation (Cohen, Moffitt et al. 2007). Mandates, inducements, capacity building and structure changes, operationalized in a set of instructions, become texts through which policy is meant to be expressed in practice. The plan may have different tools and prescriptions about how to do things. Often, policy implementation neglects the effects of policy on the economic, political and ideological levels of policy influence; for example, at the economic level it may influence the mechanism of funding schools with constraints on teachers and the community; at the political level, established interest groups within the school or locality (experienced teachers, parents groups or administrators) may be affected; and at the ideological level, it might impact on the values and beliefs of policy actors and schools (values and educational ends).

As a consequence, the operationalization of new policy ignores the mediation of the context and culture, individuals, and other policies in operation where these new policies will be practised. This situation may end in a process of policy implementation that is not genuine, with a lack of commitment, generating minimal compliance among teachers with high risks that the plan in operation may impact negatively on schools and on teachers (Ball et al. 2012). Likewise, the school context may change the expected outcomes of policies. In order to attend to the impacts and influences of contexts, culture and actors in policy implementation, the concept of policy enactment is considered. Stillman and Anderson (2015) describe carefully different degrees of policy embracement by teachers from accommodation to appropriation according to the levels of ownership of policy within the context of practice, shedding light on nuances in policy implementation.

Policy enactment is the process by which actors shape policy texts into their own language, sometimes as a ‘second translation’ into their context (Braun, Marguire & Ball 2010). It is a process in which policy instruments are embedded into the context of practice. At the school, mandates, inducements, capacity building or structure change become actions, decisions, activities and measures set by principals, head-teachers, teachers, students, and/or parents on a daily basis in order to accomplish (or not) the policy requirements. During the process of policy enactment, some actors in the school assume different roles depending on the policy instruments in place and their values and beliefs.

First, the ‘translation’ of policy means to coordinate new policy with policy that is already there. Additionally, translation also requires that actors make policy meaningful to their practices within their contexts. As Ball et al (2012, p.3) point out, it “involves the creative processes of interpretation and re-contextualization […] the translation of text into actions and the abstractions of policy ideas into contextualised practices”.

The action of translating policies into practices is a dialogical exercise. On the one hand, policy is interpreted, conferring meanings according to the interpretations of individuals and their needs. On the other hand, the context will provide conditions for new practices to take place. There is a process of negotiation at the ideological level, where individuals’ values and beliefs interact with underlying ideas in the discourse. At the same time, there is a negotiation at the political level because several aspects of the context may change, modifying the power of existing groups or opening opportunities for new groups to emerge.

There are numerous individuals who take part in policy implementation. These actors could enact policy, comply with it, or covertly ignore or resist it. Although all of them are important, the focus of this research is on the effect of policy on teachers and their work in terms of their identities and the role of school leadership, school culture and context in this process. The next section will review the relevant aspects of school culture and context for policy enactment.

Workplace influences

Organisational influences are defined by characteristics of the workplace, such as the workplace ethos. These influences are also related to the context of the school. Therefore, they include school leadership and culture as well as the school community, school socio-economic contexts and the municipalities associated with each school through geographical proximity.

School Context

Context is the group of elements and characteristics, which surround a phenomenon of interest. In other words, context is based on connections relevant to the 'object' of discussion. By collecting different definitions of 'context' from anthropology and sociology, Gilbert (1992) provides a definition of 'context' as the "intervening conditions, including time, space, culture, economy, technology, career, history and individual biography" (p. 39) that affect the object of investigation. These two definitions are considerably broad, but they contribute partially to an understanding of the relevance of the school context, by introducing the idea of context as the connection between internal (cultural) and external elements that affect schools.

Different aspects of context have a significant impact on teachers in the school. Riseborough (1993) has found that teachers are fairly vulnerable to the contexts where they work, for example, students, teachers and school community (Elmore 2007), pupils and school characteristics or the material and external

context emphasised by Ball and his colleagues (2012) in the area of policy research.

Contexts are relevant because they provide the conditions in which professional identities are developed. For example, pupil and area characteristics may influence the professional and school culture in terms of the educational expectations of the community. For instance, ethnicity could define the aspirations of families and students in terms of the aims of the school and the relationship of the whole schooling process to their values, beliefs, and hence their behaviour.

The concept of professional culture raised by Ball and colleagues (2012) suggests that the context is entwined with human interactions where social and institutional structures negotiate values and beliefs, shaping a space of ‘unspoken’ elements, which mediate between the context and the professional culture, informing teachers' practices that may form part of the school culture as well.

In Chilean schools, the context is highly delimited by socio-economic aspects of the locality as well as the socio-anthropological characteristics of the community, such as the occupation of the parents, family income and ethnicity (Mizala & Romaguera 2002). In addition, the structure of school finance determines the characteristics of the students and their families. For example, urban public schools tend to enrol students from disadvantaged socio-economic

groups, while, in rural areas, only public schools are available (c.f. above, Ch 2, section 1). Like elsewhere, socio-economically advantaged groups send their children to private schools.

Expanding this point, the school participants in this study are all schools in challenging circumstances. They share similar problems that have been described before (e.g. Harris and Chapman 2004, Muijs, Harris, Chapman, Stoll and Russ 2004) such as attendance problems, parents with low levels of educational achievement, low literacy on entry to school, lack of resources, ethnic diversity and marginalisation (Bolivar and Gabriela schools in this study), and geographical marginalisation from core urban sites of educational resources (Del Valle and Laguna Negra school).

As part of this research, it is necessary to consider the school context in the analysis in order to contribute to understanding the impact of its influence on the development of teachers' professional identities. Nevertheless, this study also needs to draw significant attention to those silent and implicit aspects of context, which will be considered as School Leadership and School Culture.

School leadership

Research in developed countries (Canada, U.S and U.K) has found that school leadership influences, shapes and reshapes school culture. School leadership refers to the group of mechanisms by means of which the leadership team look after the teaching and learning process and link the school with the surrounding

community. School leadership in successful schools may involve setting directions, developing people, developing teaching and learning, refining and aligning organisation, the use of data (Day 2011, p. 51), and the establishment of links with the community.

School leadership promotes conditions for interactions among students, teachers, the principal and the community. In spite of trans-contextual similarities in effective school leadership, there are distinctive aspects of school leadership based on school contexts, support and leadership competencies in each school. For example, managerial approaches have been characterised in terms such as charismatic, traditional, authoritarian and bureaucratic (Sikes, Measor and Woods 1985), referring to characteristics of the individual within the post, which may foster particular attitudes and behaviours in teachers, moulding teachers' professional identity. A more detailed research into leadership has portrayed six leadership approaches: instructional and transformative; moral and participative; and managerial and contingent, promoting different influences on teachers and their identities.

Alongside an managerial and leadership approaches, principals exert influences on organisation, promoting ‘tightly structured’ or ‘loosely structured’ (Roberts 1992, p. 92) organisations. These terms refer to the dynamics of social interactions within the school. Tightly structured means that values and beliefs are shared and communication is fluid in the organisation, therefore teachers’ professional identities tend to be aligned with the school mission and vision. Contrarily, the concept of loosely structured depicts scarcity of bonds among

teachers and the community, where the principal promotes little attachment to common values and beliefs, and therefore, members of the community seem to be misaligned with the school mission and vision.

Along with external factors such as urban setting, low socio-economic status of students and families and lack of readiness for school on the part of students, weak leadership is one of the internal factors affecting schools with poor outcomes. This could mean lack of clear focus, a poor communication system, and inadequate attention to teaching and learning process as well as lack of trust, collaboration and innovation. All these elements contribute to creating the culture of an organisation.

In Chilean schools, the leadership team is composed of at least three individuals: the principal, the head of curriculum and evaluation, who supports teachers in daily tasks, and the general inspector, who assures that school regulations are respected (Weinstein & Muñoz 2012). This structure may vary according to the size as well as the needs of the school. The law prescribes five years for the principal position. In contrast, heads of evaluation and curriculum and teachers frequently stay longer than that, therefore they often lead and shape school cultures, affecting teachers' professional identities. Often teachers seem to be more committed to students and the school community than principals, except in cases where teachers have joined the school with them because principals can change 5% of school staff as soon as they start in the post; and cases where the principal lasts for more than one period in the post.

In the Chilean context, school leadership is associated with providing guidelines for the achievement of the aims and goals of the institutional educational project of the school (Ibid.). Likewise, school leadership should ensure conditions for the effective delivery of the National Curriculum content considering the management of human resources and finance. Finally, the leadership team should guarantee a positive school life, and lasting bonds with the community (Good Teaching Framework 2005).

The leadership has a tradition of supervision and control of the school staff (Labarca 1939; Egana, Nunez and Salinas 2003; Nunez, Weinstein and Munoz 2012) and a top-down approach is a legacy in school leadership reinforced by years of centralization of school management in a paternalistic model (Lopez 1998, Escobar 2016). However, leaders have limited capacity to replace teaching staff and incorporate new members.

These leadership characteristics contribute as one of the factors influencing teacher professional identity as an element of the context. Through this study teachers appreciate their leadership teams in terms of informal mentoring or even no systematic instances of mentoring. Likewise, teachers value the delegation of responsibilities and tasks within the school since these attitudes are understood as respect for their skills as well as professional recognition. All together, these elements also affect the characteristics of school culture.

School Culture

School culture is a term for the social life, human interactions and interpersonal dynamics of the individuals within a school organisation. According to Prosser (1999), it is an “unseen and unobservable force behind the school activity, a unifying theme that provides meaning, direction, and mobilisation for school members” (p. 14). In other words, it is an aspect of the school which is usually a tacit consideration, the hidden ‘glue’ of the institution. School cultures are embraced (or not) by actors in the school community.

However, school culture is not just an unseen, unobservable force or ‘underlying assumptions’ (Schein 2004, p. 26). Culture is also a set of common ‘artefacts’, and ‘beliefs and values’ (Ibid.) that are shared by the same community. Schein defines the concept of organisational culture where ‘artefacts’ are namely structures and processes that may include all written texts that guide school management, administration and schooling processes. In terms of policy implementation, these aspects of school culture amount to the translation and interpretation of policy into a language meaningful to the culture. While beliefs and values are immaterial expressions of culture, strategies, goals and philosophies (p. 26), very often are materially stated in the missions and vision of an organisation often addressed by the principal. These elements together shape the school culture.

“Culture is a shared understanding of the symbolic meaning of particular behaviours of people in school” (Roberts 1992, p. 87) including “non-

discussable" issues (Barth 2001, p. 36), such as underperforming teachers, leadership approach, hidden loyalties, race and so on. The knowledge of these issues is widespread, but nevertheless, it is not very often that people talk about them. These definitions highlight the role of the members of the school as main advocacy actors of 'unobservable forces', 'symbolic meaning', 'non-discussable' and 'unwritten texts' that shape the culture of the school, implicit in the dynamic of it, and often made explicit by practice and institutional school projects.

The members of the school, or actors, are those individuals who "have choices and freedom, […] plural values, conflicts and emotional conflicts in schools, all of which contribute to climate" (Stoll 1999, p. 7) – climate being the perception of school members' behaviour (Hoy 1990). There are constant interactions among actors within the school. They exercise their freedom according to their values, practising different levels of agency as a characteristic of the school culture that may promote (or impede) struggle. This diversity between personal characteristics of the individuals, their identities and different levels of agency provide different types of school culture which can be appreciated as how people work together, the management/ leadership approach, and the emphasis on learning among the community (Stoll 1999).

The nature of the interactions within schools manifests in different types of school culture, such as 'toxic' or 'hospitable' (Barth 2001). Likewise, school culture has been defined in terms of school effectiveness and in terms of social cohesion and control. More social cohesion may lead to less social control and vice versa (Hargreaves 1999). School culture has brought to the fore the

importance of interactions among individuals within the school and leadership characteristics, both relevant aspects in the development of teachers' professional identities (Hargreaves 1999, Elmore 2007a). For example, a hospitable culture may reflect high levels of collegiality as a result of similar professional identities among actors who share ethics, values and educational goals. Contrarily, a toxic culture may reflect irregular instances of collaboration among colleagues and professional identities with different values and ethics.

To think of culture in terms of duality does not contribute to revealing the nuances of school culture and there is a risk of underestimating the role of culture in the process of identity definition. However, the duality introduces elements which highlight the influences that leaders and culture may play in shaping professional identities within schools.

One useful binary is the binary between social cohesion (in terms of sharing educational aims and ends) and institutional control. This means if there is much social cohesion there could be less institutional control as a culture is ‘welfarist’, while, if there is much institutional control, there could be less social cohesion as a formal school culture. Likewise, much social cohesion and institutional control result in a hothouse school culture, while when social cohesion and institutional control are low, the school culture emerging is called ‘survivalist’ (Hargreaves 1999, pp. 50-51). The analysis of school culture based on these terms contributes to an understanding that high levels of institutional control mean low levels of trust among the school community with consequences for teachers’ professional identities. Welfarist and survivalist

school cultures can easily be associated with the school structures defined by Robert (1992) as ‘loosely’ or tightly’ structured according to the role of principals.

In the context of ‘loosely structured’ schools with low levels of social cohesion, it is likely that a researcher will find sub-cultures. Sub-cultures within the school may be defined based on relationships to “cultural patterns, organisation structures and sub-systems that include communication, resource allocation, reproduction and ideology, cultural artefacts, the built environment, the nature of time and space” (Prosser 1999, p. 12). This means that teachers tend to assume roles according to alliance, affinity in terms of their personal identity and sympathy with individuals within the organisation sharing their ethics and values.

In terms of effectiveness, five types of schools have been defined: moving schools, cruising schools, strolling schools, struggling schools and sinking schools (Stoll and Fink 1995). Although these types of culture represent stereotyped cultures, they sketch some schools’ environments where the types described above could be found in combination. These authors (Stoll and Fink 1995) move forward by defining sub-cultures according to assigned roles, sets of beliefs and attitudes, and management approaches (p.88) promoting different professional cultures which are very likely to be found in the schools participating in the current study.

In his study of schools in Canada, Hargreaves has found different professional cultures. Examples include Individualism, where teachers work mainly by themselves with high levels of autonomy associated with loosely structured leadership; Collaboration, where teachers naturally work together with lower levels of control and supervision, and which could be understood as a school culture with high levels of cohesion and low levels of control where trust is a ubiquitous value; Contrived Collegiality, where working collaboratively is an imposition by the principal or an external authority, and may be associated with a tightly structured type of leadership; and Balkanization, where sub-groups work in isolation, often with little commitment to the whole institution, which might also involve a loosely structured type of leadership (Hargreaves 1994).

According to the above, professional culture could be part of the whole school, associated with a specific department, section, or even a building within the school. Additionally, each professional culture may embrace different personal and professional identities.

School cultures steer the professional culture of teachers, and thus teachers' professional identities. They shape the expectation of the teacher in the school. For example, 'moving or cruising cultures', which may be tightly structured, usually have teachers who are able to work collaboratively, with a clear purpose of improving student achievement and awareness of their professional identities and their need for professional development. Such teachers driven by their leader may be able to implement policy involving new actions and practices, and thus reflect policy influence; or they may be able to dismiss a policy which

is perceived as threatening the ethics and values of their culture (Ball et al 2012). On the contrary, ‘struggling’ or ‘sinking cultures’, which are likely to be loosely structured schools, may contain teachers who work in an isolated manner, frequently with low expectations about their students’ achievements, and may have different professional identities and limited knowledge of their training needs. It is also possible that the role of the leader and leadership team in these cultures are blurred, therefore teachers from these school cultures may comply with external influences (e.g. policy), having little ownership in the process of defining new practices.

In the Chilean context, a policy emphasis has been placed on the effectiveness of schools based on standardised test achievements rather than on other aspects of schooling (Weinstein and Muñoz 2012). Likewise, schools’ cultures are highly influenced by the public results of these tests. Thus, the definitions of school culture by Stoll and Fink (1995) related to schools’ effectiveness and improvement might sketch quite clearly the types of schools cultures in Chile. However, school cultures are unique (Hargreaves 1999, p.64) and complex, therefore it is likely to find more than one school culture in a single school.

For the purpose of this study, school culture is relevant because culture is tacitly related to workplace and personal influences on teachers' professional identities at the space where teachers’ interactions take place. Also, school culture is likely to be important in the process of mediation with external influences. There is evidence that strong, cohesive cultures mediate better with policy than

cultures where the organisation is ‘loosely structured’ (Braun, Maguire et al. 2010).

Personal influences

Personal influences on teachers' professional identities are related to individuals in teaching and in their life beyond the school (Day and Gu 2014). They are also related to aspects of personal identity or primary identity, and these characteristics provide uniqueness to individuals (Burke and Stets 2009), their biography and personal history, ethics and values (Hitlin 2003; Elmore 2007; Stets and Serpe 2013). These influences are affected by significant experiences provided by the family and teachers, contributing to shaping personal identities and affecting professional identity meanings. These experiences also contribute to the development of patterns of affection and interaction; both are important aspects in providing significant learning experiences to the students as teachers’ ‘internal assets’ (Gu and Day 2007, p.1314) and in shaping the sense of vocation.

Biography

There is a series of events in individual life that together shape the biography. Among teachers, personal life histories trigger motivations to enter the occupation since they contribute to shaping beliefs about teachers themselves (Flores and Day 2006). It is related to former education experiences or consequences of personal life (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt 2000).

In teaching, individuals seem to choose their career because they want to engage in a meaningful activity as well as “to propagate or live consistently with these beliefs and values associated with them” (Nias1985, p.110). This means that the person who becomes a teacher is committed to ethical and moral ends in education (Hansen 1995, Nieto 2003, Day, et al 2007); they are loyal to these ends and willing to work hard to pursue them (Nias 1999).

In other words, teachers have professional identities with distinctive personal influences, where their personal beliefs and values are committed to teaching, entwining aspects of their personal and professional identities because the relationship with students is personal as well as professional, and involves moral commitment as individuals, which they are accountable for and to other human beings (students and families) since teaching is a public obligation.

Teachers have beliefs about the world and society, which they embrace in their practice, promoting values according their understanding of a ‘good society’ (Nias 1989, p. 155; Ball and Goodson 1985).

Values

Values are abstract principles highly placed in the individual hierarchy, such as beliefs. They tend to guide individual behaviours and actions beyond specific situations (Hitlin 2003), providing consistency among people’s comportments. The importance of values is in understanding the individual and his/her

relationship to society. Values and beliefs are categories of critical influence on teachers' professional lives (Day and Gu 2010, p. 52).

Some of the values present among teachers are high social values such as respect and honesty that Carr (2011) defines as ‘virtues’ since individuals become sincerely committed. As well as caring and social justice, they may involve specific preferences or inclinations for particular skills to develop among students, for instance, ‘social awareness’ or ‘self-confidence’. Social justice can be understood as a virtue, it is associated with fair play, democracy and equality (Nieto 2003, p 91). Likewise, social justice is understood as the fair distribution of goods as well as more abstract concepts such as justice or education, or relationships based in respect and recognition. The latter is especially relevant to issues of race, gender and class.

Values support beliefs building the moral and ethical stand of the subject, which together constitute the foundation of ‘moral agency’ as the meaningful values for students as well as the performance of these values as attitudes and behaviours. This is similar to the idea of values as a set of networks of skills articulated in discerning in a moral situation, where moral will and moral skill interact generating decisions, actions, attitudes and behaviours. Moral will is related to the intention to engage in a meaningful activity, for instance to create awareness about higher values among students. Moral skill is the capacity to enact these values in everyday life-events (Ibid).

Practical wisdom in moral terms is similar to the idea of 'ethical knowledge' (Campbell 2000, 2003) as the awareness and understanding of the ethical and moral implication of the daily actions and behaviours of teachers in the school, with pupils, parents and colleagues.

It is worth noting the role of 'trust' as a value. Studies have found that trust within school organisation is key for change and improvement (e.g. Louise 2007). In the context of the school, trust as a value is absolutely relevant since learning requires confidence in or reliance among individuals in order to promote and boost fruitful interactions as learning experiences. Trust should be understood not only as an abstract concept, but also as trust among all actors involved in the learning process: pupils, teachers, parents and administrators.

But what does trust mean? According to Goddard, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) and Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000), trust means "reliance on other's competence and their willingness to look after rather than harm what is entrusted to their care" (Goddard, Taschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001 p. 548). It can be relational trust or institutional trust (Louise 2007) as well as individual trust (Day and Gu 2010).

Expanding the point, these are the layers of trust in organisations, from the organisation to individuals and from the individual to the wider organisation. Likewise, relational trust appears in relationships between people, for instance head-teachers; teachers-teachers; teachers-parents; and teachers-pupils (Day

and Gu 2010, p.152); and trust upon people as institutional trust, where individuals in the same organisation should behave according to expectations, avoiding devious attitudes and behaviours.

It is expected that school staff trust each other in order to cooperate towards accomplishing common goal (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy 2000; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001). Thus**,** trust boosts professional self-efficacy and confidence among teachers, facilitating achievements. On the contrary, low levels of teachers' participation in decisions can be interpreted as lack of trust. Therefore, teachers with a strong sense of commitment may react by diminishing or just withdrawing their trust (Louise 2007, p.18). Overall, lack of trust may undermine the moral will within an organisation, eroding trust among individuals and the capacity to exercise practical wisdom.

Moral and ethics

Commitment among teachers has also been understood as the joy to work with and for people motivated by belonging to specific social organisations, altruism and personal challenge and development (Dinham and Scott 2000) as part of the moral role of teachers (Goodlad, Soder, and Sirotnik 1990) constituting part of teachers' professional identities.

Teachers who have a social welfare commitment may face difficult situations in schools in challenging circumstances where social problems are evident and escape from teachers' control. The main principles leading teachers in this

study are anchored to aspects of caring and social justice, both as an expression of social welfare commitment and political activist commitment.

Social welfare commitment

Social welfare commitment is related to the desire to improve the life-conditions of the families and communities within the school, similar to previous findings by Day et al (2007). For example, the desire to share knowledge influences young people and compensates for perceived educational defects (Huberman 1989, p. 114). Part of teachers' commitment is motivated by a genuine desire to contribute to others' well-being as 'intrinsic reward' (Lortie 1975, p. 101) or social welfare commitment associated with the desire to 'make a difference' (Day et al 2007, p. 219, Schussler and Murrell 2016) to pupils and their communities entwined with the 'caring' aspect of teaching (e.g. Nias 1989, Nodding 1992, 2013) boosted by the ethic to care for students' well-being (Day and Gu 2014, p. 61) which may end up as a lack of criticism about the role of teachers and their duties.

These teachers could jeopardize their attentiveness and listening (Nodding 2013), in the understanding that pupils need receptiveness about concerns that sometimes are not related to the curriculum or even schooling, hindering teachers' actions. Likewise, the lack of attentiveness and listening can be caused by teachers feeling superior in a 'paternalistic role' (Carr 1993, pp. 195-197), on the basis of knowledge or wisdom, for instance, as an authority able to

decide on the benefits or harms of specific situation for others (pupils, parents) neglecting their real motivations, needs and concerns.

Political activist commitment

Political activist commitment is related to the public discussion and negotiation of values, principles and ends of education with all actors shaping educational practice and generating a broad consensus about the purpose of the school since many of the values involve political or humanitarian ideals (Nias 1989). Often, this ethic involves strong beliefs in social justice related to principles of democracy, equality and fair play (Nieto 2003, p. 91) motivated by inequities perceived by teachers.

Both ethics lead to one of the main influences of teacher professional identity meaning, 'vocation'. Although vocation is a professional dimension that could be related to a workplace influence, in the case of this piece of research it is also closely entwined with personal identities and their characteristics, as will be explored in the next section.

Vocation, between the person and the professional

Vocation or call is an element in which personal ethics and values are entwined in a combination of self-rewards and meaningful life. Emmet (1958) distinguishes a category of vocational ethics, related to the power driving individuals to find creative ways of working motivated by internal inspirations

towards social relationships. By means of their vocation, individuals tend to find a profession that provides them with opportunities to follow their values and beliefs consistent with their self-concept, empowering them to face challenges and problems successfully.

The concept of vocation is perceived slightly differently among authors, closely related to concept of ‘call’. Dik and Duffy (2009) define ‘vocation’ as a way to live a role in life where empathy and caring about others provide motivation, purpose and meaning. The word ‘call’ has a connotation of a ‘transcendent summons’, often originating from an external source. Both authors point out that vocation and call are on going processes boosted by the searching of meaningfulness and the contribution to other individuals in society.

However, other authors focused on just the concept of ‘calling’ distinguish the neoclassical and modern emphasis of the concept, where the latter has an emphasis on individual perception and meaning of purpose in life, whereas the neoclassical concept has an emphasis on a divine/external summons where talents and work should be in service to others (Steger, Pickering, Shin and Dik 2010). Hall and Chandler refer to the divine and secular inspiration of the ‘call’ (p. 160).

The secular inspiration or modern concept of the ‘call’ highlights the inner inspiration of individuals to contribute to a better society committing a personal ‘gift’ to a public obligation or endeavour such as teaching (Hansen 1995).

Empirical research on the effect of ‘calling’ at work carried out in four successive stages found that person-environment fit, sense and meaning, value-driven behaviour, and transcendent guiding force are common and not exclusive elements of calling among both German and English speakers. Other studies have similar outcomes (e.g. Duffy, Allan, Bott and Dik in press) but the field still has significant gaps.

The relevance of a sense of calling and vocation resides in its effect on work outcomes and sense of well being in individuals. Hall and Chandler (2005) report that people with a sense of calling tend to have less absenteeism, more energy and more joy at work. Individuals motivated by a sense of calling held characteristics such as passion, sense of meaning and high self esteem as well as consciousness and identity (p.161).

These characteristics contribute to perceptions about achievements at work, providing additional elements to judge success. For instance, often individuals judge their achievements according to their own perceptions of success that sometimes are not the same as the ‘external’ judgements of it. Likewise, passion, sense of meaning and high self-esteem contribute to defining identity and self-awareness, setting a bedrock for facing challenges, providing ways of dealing with situational and contextual factors and enhancing individuals’ agency and resilience (Hall and Chandler 2005, p. 166; Rosso, Dekas and Wrzesniewski 2010).

Most teachers find meaning in their work, ascribing meaningfulness to their career choice. Theoretically, individuals choose an occupation according to personal values (Rosso et al 2010) reinforced by their work where coherence and cohesion among duties and self-concept (values, beliefs and attitudes) provide distinctive experience of satisfaction, enhancing authenticity at work, which often affirm or activates personal identities, enacting self-concept. In the context of an organisation, shared values, beliefs and interests can boost personal identities and meaningfulness.

Teachers' commitment is also related to vocation or call, since 'the inner world of vocation' strengthens commitment (Gu and Day 2013). Thus, commitment is associated with being able to work longer hours and being willing to invest personal energy in making a difference to pupils and the school, even beyond one's academic duties (Day et al. 2007; Fransson and Frelin 2016). Teacher commitment is also associated with stable values based upon personal beliefs, and thus, identity.

4.Conceptual notes on the conceptual framework

The combination of elements of the Chilean context, the main aspects of Identity and Social Identity Theory, and the groups of influences discussed above provided the fundamental set of concepts explored in this study. Taken together, these concepts lay the basis for this research, guiding the process of enquiry. Firstly, identity theory sheds light on the ways in which the internal (individual) and external (environmental) aspects interact in the processes of

identity (re)construction, and through this, highlights the importance of understanding identities as dynamic and continuous processes of development represented by the *verification cycle* (Figure 3.1).

This follows from the discussion of the concept of professionalism developed by different traditions in terms of autonomy in professional judgements, regulation and entry to professions. Likewise, the concept of professionalism is reviewed as a depiction of official prescriptions for occupations and social expectations about professional identities of teachers. These elements, along with previous attempts to define teachers' professional identity, provided the researcher with the main elements to define the key features of teacher professional identity that lead the enquiry process in this study.

Additionally, although identity theory defines 'internal and external' aspects of identity, previous research on teachers' lives and careers (Day and Gu 2010 and 2014) provides a more precise definition of influences on teachers' professional identity, defining the 'internal aspects' as personal influences, and the 'external aspects' as two different groups of influences on teachers: socio-cultural/policy influences and workplace/organisational influences. The precision of these definitions by these authors (Day and Gu 2014) contributes new elements for a more accurate study and analysis of the influences (and their interactions) on Chilean primary teachers working in challenging circumstances as well as effects on their professional identities.

Finally, elements of the Chilean educational context provide an insight into the socio/cultural-policy influences on Chilean teachers' professional identities as elements defining and shaping expectations of professionalism among teachers, such as regulations regarding teacher status, tasks, duties, responsibilities, work conditions and salaries. It is based on the current regulations which directly affect Chilean teachers working in public schools such as the Teachers' Statute, the Good Teaching Framework, the Teacher Performance Assessment, and the recently discussed and introduced Teacher Career Path Law.

At the same time, the Chilean context also requires us to identify the scope and possible influences from the specific nature of workplace (primary public schools) as an organisational influence. This information guides the adaptation of the concepts developed in the international literature on teacher professional identity to the specific local context in which Chilean primary teachers work and the characteristics of their professional development. Participants, by their interviews and statements, provided insight into the degree of interaction between influences and the relevance of these to their teacher professional identity, contributing to a more detailed adaptation of the theories. This study considers the challenging local circumstances affecting primary teachers' work and the sustained low performance of their schools in standardised tests. Likewise, the Chilean context provides a better understanding of the interactions of these influences affecting primary teachers' professional identities and the adaptation of key aspects such as autonomy, agency,

collegiality, and the sense of self-efficacy and competence, knowledge and skills.

Altogether these concepts provide the frame of this study, leading to the exploration of each group of influences (white bubbles in figure 3.2) in teachers' professional identities (bigger orange bubble in the centre), as the follow figure shows (Figure 3.2).

In the figure (3.2), identity theory, indicated by the green arrows, shows a diagram of the dynamic between comparison/verification/negotiation and social situation in the top and the bottom of the figure. At the same time, on the right and left side of the figure it is possible to see the individual’s attitudes and feedback from the environment as responses to social contexts. The arrows show various interactions representing social and individual aspects on identity development and its continuity.

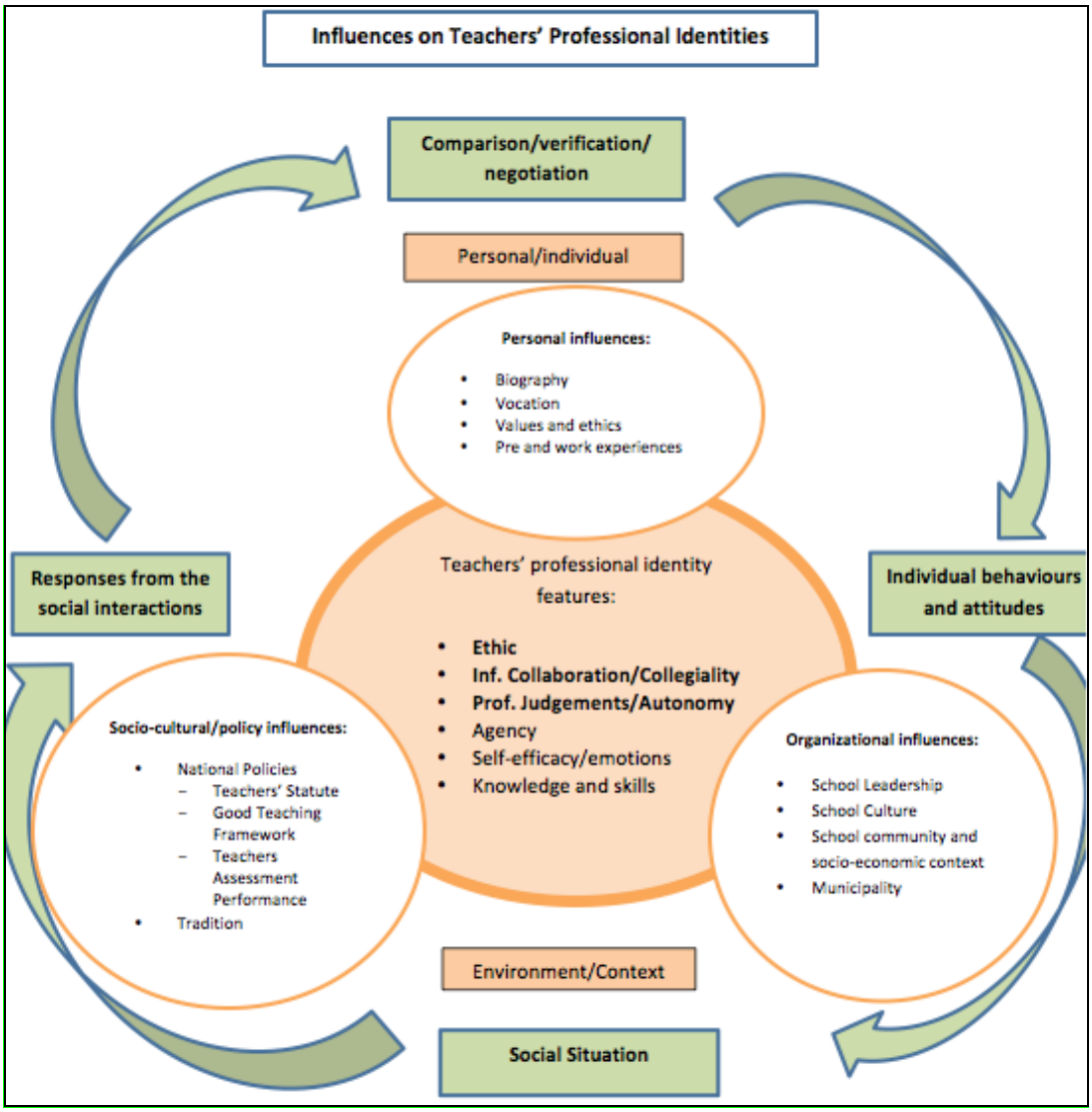


Figure 3.2 – Conceptual framework (Adaptation/combination from Burke and Stets 2009 and Day and Gu 2010, 2014)

As was explained above, this conceptual framework has been adapted to the Chilean context, providing the elements located inside each bubble.

5.Conclusion

This chapter focused on the main concepts underpinning the study, which are concepts of identity based on Social identity Theory and Identity Theory. These

theories illuminate the importance of the interactions of individual and contextual factors in identity construction. In this vein, the concepts of professional and professionalism are discussed since they are social constructions of the meaning of being a teacher.

However, the chapter also covers specific influences on teachers' professional identity in terms of socio-cultural/policy influences as well as workplace and individual influences, considering the concept of vocation. Although these influences are identified through studies in developed countries, the researcher adapted and complemented them with elements from the Chilean socio-cultural context.

In line with these conceptual notes, the next chapter will provide a detailed account of the research methodology and the research method that contributed to the collection of evidence in this study.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the main concepts related to teacher professional identity and its influences. This chapter will present the research questions and research methods used for the exploration of Chilean teachers' professional identity construction working in challenging circumstances in primary schools. The first section recalls the aims and research questions. Next, the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning this study are presented. Finally, it will describe the research sample, the data analysis procedures and the ethical issues faced throughout the research process.

1. Aims and Research Questions

The aim of this study is:

> To understand the main aspects involved in primary teachers' professional identity-creation;

The Main Research question is:

To what extent do personal and contextual dimensions interact in the construction of professional identity in Chilean teachers from state primary schools?

This is elaborated in five sub-questions:

> i) How do socio-cultural influences and policies impact teachers' professional identities?

ii) How do socially located/organisational influences affect teachers' professional identities?

iii) How do biographies, ethics and values affect teachers' professional identities?

iv) What is the nature of the interaction between the different influences affecting teachers' professional identities?

v) To what extent do teachers' professional identities influence their commitment/effectiveness/ability to teach to their best?

2. Ontology

The process of inquiry about the world and its problems necessarily involves individuals' beliefs and assumptions about it. Beliefs and assumptions are constructed through cultural and historical aspects of the individuals' milieu. For example, people from western and eastern cultures may have different sets of beliefs and assumptions. Indigenous South American ethnic groups did not share the same set of beliefs as those of their colonisers. Ontological assumptions represent individuals' beliefs about the world and orient their actions with tacit assumptions that are not easily explainable.

Ontological assumptions frame paradigms and worldviews. Ideas, beliefs and assumptions about the world and how the world is organised are called 'theoretical perspectives', 'paradigms' or 'worldviews'. In research, paradigms are shared (or not) by scientists about a problem of enquiry. According to Lincoln & Guba (1985) a paradigm is "a systematic a set of beliefs […] that accompanies methods" (p. 15).

Ontological assumptions are related to someone's understanding and perceptions of the world. In terms of ontology, there are two common positions: Objectivism and Subjectivism. Objectivism is a position which takes the stance that “social phenomena and their meaning have an existence independent of social actors”, or the truth is in the objects not in the individuals who perceive them. In other words, reality exists in spite of perceptions. In contrast, subjectivism is an “invitation […] to consider the ways in which social reality is an on-going accomplishment of social actors rather than something external to them and that totally constrains them” (Bryman 2012, p. 34). According to Crotty (1998), reality is an amalgam of social interactions and social context.

During the research process, ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions. These assumptions have methodological implications in the choices of techniques of data collection. They guide the formulation of the research questions, the selection of research techniques, data collection, analysis and how research questions are answered.

The ontological assumptions that underpin this study are those aligned with social constructionism. According to social constructionism, the ‘truth’ is constructed by individuals interacting with the physical and natural world (Berger and Luckmann 1966). Individuals by means of their milieu provide meaning to phenomena. Social constructionism requires one to take a critical stance towards people's understanding and knowledge of the world; to

understand that meanings or ‘truths’ are married to specific historical and cultural periods; to recognise that knowledge is part of social agreements built through everyday interactions; and to consider that knowledge is a product of ‘negotiations’ of meanings between individuals, expressed in patterns of social actions.

> “Truth […] emerges not as an objective view but rather as the composite picture about how people think [comprising perspectives…Therefore,] social reality is a construction based on the actor’s frame” (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p.80).

A social constructionist stance holds that individuals understand the world by means of their life-experiences, and depend on culture for their patterns of behaviour, traditions, and habits (Crotty, 1998; Creswell, 2009). Although social constructionism is more closely aligned to subjectivism, it does acknowledge the existence of an objective reality that exists regardless of individuals’ perceptions.

Social constructionism is the paradigm that underpins this study because it contributes to capturing the richness of the picture provided by the interactions of new policies, school contexts and cultures which influence teachers' identities in the process of policy implementation or enactment. First, it requires us to look at policy as an aspect of social life, which addresses school contexts and culture as well as teachers' identities. Second, it pushes us to examine the relevance of policy in strengthening (or not) teachers’ identities at the school. Third, it allows us to analyse the school context and culture as elements of mediation among teachers and policies for enactment or compliance. Through a social constructionist understanding, it is possible to achieve a better

understanding of interactions between individuals, common patterns of behaviours and social and institutional structures in the process of the construction of teachers' identities at school in the context of the new curriculum reform in Chile.

3. Epistemology

Epistemological assumptions are related to knowledge and how knowledge is constructed and developed. For example, social and natural scientists often have different epistemological stances. We can thus argue that there are different 'truths' that might vary depending on an individual's social, cultural and historical backgrounds. Therefore, the ideas about how knowledge is created and developed are different from different points of view.

In terms of epistemology, the duality between positivist and **i**nterpretivist epistemological assumptions has been widely reported. Positivism claims that "the truth is out there as and needs to be discovered" (Newby 2009, p. 34). It is associated with quantitative research methods and analysis. It is the basis of the scientific method or empirical science where phenomena or knowledge are confirmed by the senses (Bryman 2012). In contrast, interpretivism considers that reality could have different interpretations, varying among different social actors, their historical circumstances and cultural context. It is usually associated with the human or social sciences that seek an understanding of phenomena.

Through history, there has been considerable deliberation in terms of what is knowledge, how knowledge is communicated, what is the shape of knowledge and who is able to generate knowledge. Epistemological assumptions have changed according to the social and cultural requirements of society.

According to social constructionism, knowledge is constructed by individuals through their interdependence with the world. Individuals make sense of the world by means of their 'intentionality' towards it. In other words, individuals construct their understanding of the world 'out there', attributing their own meanings. As a consequence, knowledge about the world developed by each individual is unique as an individual 'truth' of the world. Hence, positivism and interpretivism both inform the dialogue on social constructionism.

Perceptions of the world 'out there' are influenced by cultural and historical context. In terms of culture, a set of 'significant symbols' is shared by a group of individuals, in a specific location and time. For example, there is an ethnic group in South America called the Mapuche. They believe that 'the land' is a God that belongs to everyone. After the 'Colonisation', Spanish people brought the idea of land estate/property. They divided the land and provided to Mapuche people 'property rights' in land. This example shows how 'land' has different meanings for individuals from the two different cultures mentioned. Nowadays, Mapuche people accept and deal with 'land', adapting their original meaning of 'land' to the cultural and historical context in which they have become immersed. Therefore, the cultural and historical context of a period can affect the meaning

of the ‘object’ (in this case ‘land’), and it may also be ideologically influenced or manipulated.

Social constructionism means that researchers must consider two aspects during the research process. The first one is related to the researcher's own cultural bias about the meaning of the phenomenon of research, in other words, their own interpretation of the phenomenon. The second one is related to the cultural and historical context of the research phenomenon and the background of the participants, in order to understand the participants’ interpretations of the phenomenon.

The social constructionist paradigm will inform this study because it considers policy in terms of the context of the schools, the culture of the schools and the multiple views and professional identities of teachers. Likewise, the study considers the social interactions (formal and informal) that provide a mosaic of teachers' identities when policies reach the school. For this purpose, multiple research techniques are selected which will be explained in the following sections.

4. Sampling and description of the schools and subjects

The main units of analysis for this research are **primary teachers from Chilean public schools**. For this study, a purposive sampling strategy was developed. Following Berg (2001), the researcher selected the research subjects taking into account her own knowledge and expertise about the target group. This previous knowledge (see Chapter Three for individual and

contextual influences on identity) enabled the definition of two sets of criteria considered relevant for the construction of teachers' professional identities. Accordingly, twenty teachers, including six middle leaders in different career phases, were chosen using a two-layer sample selection. Whilst the first layer focused on a school's features, the second one referred to teachers' individual characteristics. In what follows, a detailed account of the sampling criteria is presented.

First layer sampling criteria: Schools

1. Type of School:

This research seeks to contribute to the understanding of professional identities of teachers working in primary public schools, because public schools are serving the most deprived Chilean students. Likewise, primary teachers spend a large amount of time with the same class/students and are often isolated from influences from colleagues and other professionals.

2. Academic Performance in Standardised Tests:

Another sampling criterion refers to the academic performance of the schools in national standardised tests, looking particularly at schools with systematic average or lower than average performance. The rationale behind this is to understand other influences and their interactions on teachers' professional identities in the majority of teachers in public schools, since most public Chilean schools are underperforming.

3. Vulnerability index:

The vulnerability index is related to the characteristics of the communities that schools serve in terms of families' and parents' socio-economic background and free school meals associated with the school, since distinctive local conditions influence teachers' work and their relationship with the community (MacLure 1993), and thus how the contextual influences are affecting teachers' professional identity meanings.

Their characteristics are summarized in the table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Summary of sampling criteria and schools

	Sampling criteria/schools	Bolivar	Gabriela	Del Valle	Laguna Negra
1	Type of school	Public	Public	Public	Public
2	Standardised test results	Lower than average	Similar to average	Lower than average	Lower than average
3	Vulnerability index	70%	47%	80%	75.63%

Description of the schools

In spite of the fact that all schools in the study are serving disadvantaged communities, their contexts manifest significant differences, which may affect how the school is led and its culture given by the rural/urban condition and the characteristics of the communities that these schools serve. For instance, Laguna Negra is a small school in a rural locality with a small number of teachers. Del Valle is the biggest school in an isolated locality with more than 40 teachers (more teachers than any school in the study). Both are in the same

borough, the Andean foothills and the Laguna Negra River surrounding this natural setting. Bolivar School is an urban primary school with about 20 teachers. Finally, Gabriela School has the most students among the schools in the study; it is a female urban school with more than 30 teachers. Both schools are located in one of the most populated urban boroughs.

Likewise, the socio-economic characteristics of the context where Laguna Negra and Del Valle are located tend to lead to the enrolment of students from rural villages with a higher level of vulnerability than Bolivar and Gabriela schools, which are located in a central neighbourhood in the main city of the country, with a more affluent demographic. Although Gabriela School has a legacy of good academic results in standardised tests, none of the included schools has any result significantly above the national average for public schools. See the detailed description below.

Table 4.2: Academic result compared with national and regional

2015 results						
School/subject	**L. Negra**	**Del Valle**	**Bolivar**	**Gabriela**	**R. Mean**	**Nat. Mean**
Language 8º	209	223	203	261	240	240
Math 8º	231	226	218	260	265	261
Language 4º	247	245	243	275	265	264
Math 4º	240	239	225	258	260	256

Table 4.3: Summary standardised test results of the four schools in 4th Grade

School/year		2009	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	r. mean	n. mean
Del Valle	Language 4º	251	244	248	245	233	245	265	264
	Math 4º	228	225	237	234	222	239	260	256
Laguna Negra	Language 4º	256	244	242	227	243	247	265	264
	Math 4º	254	261	229	246	240	240	260	256
Bolivar	Language 4º	270	246	233	237	217	243	265	264
	Math 4º	223	218	222	205	220	225	260	256
Gabriela	Language 4º	276	291	279	294	283	275	265	264
	Math 4º	254	279	270	270	260	258	260	256

School 1: Bolivar

Bolivar School is about 59 years old. It is a primary mixed school. It has 365 students on the school roll. The pupils range from ages 4 to 14 years. It has 21 teachers consisting of 8 males and 13 females.

The mission of the school is '[e]ducating tolerant, honest, respectful children and incorporating families to develop their capabilities to meet future challenges' (IEP 2011, p. 5). In order to overcome a decrease in the number of pupils on the school roll, the principal, with the support of teachers, promoted the school among immigrants. Now, the school has a significant number (50%) of foreign students (Donoso, Mardones, Contreras 2009, p. 57). Every week they sing more than one national anthem in their rituals (Educarchile 2011).

The community that the school serves has 70% of individuals living in vulnerability. The families are mainly South American immigrants, although the families do not live in extreme poverty. However, more than two-thirds of the students live in socio-economic deprivation. Parents used to find work providing services in remote boroughs. Most of the families live in rented, overcrowded rooms. As a consequence, the school's teachers face diverse challenges in terms of the adaptation of students and parents to the Chilean culture and civic system (IEP 2011, p. 5). In 2013 the Educational Superintendence gave the school a 'warning' because it had not fulfilled all the official requirements.

Table 4.4: Summary portrait Bolivar School

School name	Bolivar
School type	Primary School
Total pupils	365
Age range of pupils	4 to 14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Vulnerability Index	70%
Number of Teachers	21
Municipality	Valle Central
Rural/Urban	Urban

School 2: Gabriela

Gabriela school is 117 years old. It was designed exclusively for girls and has always promoted processes of reform and curricular innovations. It is a primary school with 533 students on the school roll. The pupils range from ages 4 to 14 years. It has 36 teachers consisting of 3 males and 33 females. Its official mission is 'to provide humanistic education to the students, enhancing their full

potential. The school seeks a harmonious and personal development. It is constructing a framework of respect for students themselves and others. The school aims to develop a global view of the world. It is helping the students to face the challenges of the present and the future and the role that they play in it' (IEP 2013).

The community that the school serves has a vulnerability index of 47% (PADEM 2013, p. 26). This index means that almost half of the students live in social and economic deprivation and more than half do not, therefore, the school is significantly different from other schools in the study. The families of the students are comprised mainly of workers in the service sector inside and outside the borough. The parents work more than 40 hours a week with very little time to support their children with homework, as is explained in the Institutional Educative Project 2013. The school runs a project to support the families. The initiative seeks to provide a secure place for the young students after the school day, so the school is open until early evening.

Table 4.5: Summary portrait Gabriela School

School name	Gabriela
School type	Primary School
Total pupils	533
Age range of pupils	4 to 14
Gender of pupils	Girls
Vulnerability Index	47% (Padem 2013, p. 26)
Num. Teachers	36
Municipality	Valle Central
Rural/Urban	Urban

School 3: Del Valle

Del Valle School is 95 years old. It is one of the oldest in the borough. Its name is an honour to a former principal. It is a primary mixed school. It has 449 students on the school roll. The pupils range from ages 4 to 14 years. It has 41 teachers consisting of 14 males and 27 females.

The mission is "To achieve quality, relevant and significant learning in all students. The emphasis is the development of skills and attitudes that will help them to become competent, supportive and creative people. The school is taking account of the variety of needs, aptitudes and interests of pupils".

The population of the community and the villages around is 5,281 (Census 2002) and the school has 80% of individuals living in vulnerability. The town is a tourist destination; it provides mainly services for tourists and the local community. Additionally, the local authority provides employment for significant numbers of people in the town.

Table 4.6: Summary portrait Del Valle School

School name	Del Valle
School type	Primary School
Total pupils	449
Age range of pupils	4 to 14
Gender of pupils	Mixed

Vulnerability Index	80%
Number of Teachers	41
Municipality	Los Andes
Rural/Urban	Semi-rural

School 4: Laguna Negra

Laguna Negra School is 45 years old. It has 158 students on the school roll. It is a primary school. The pupils range from age 4 to 14 years. It is mixed in gender. It has 15 teachers consisting of 3 males and 12 females. The mission of the school is 'to promote a cohesive and participative school community, where students are the centre of our job. In that way, the school contributes to develop and form happy students, responsible and respectful of the environment, inspired by high values and ideals. We promote the integral formation of pupils, developing competencies and skills to face life in a globalized world in continuous change'.

The community that the school serves has 75.63% of individuals living in vulnerability. The village population is 1,348 (INE 2002). The families work mostly in small farming, land-keeping and domestic services in holiday homes for people from the city (PLADECO 2010-2014, p.101). Most parents are educated to primary level only (IEP School 2013).

The school land and buildings were bought two years ago because of several problems in the school's management. This situation has been an obstacle to

the improvement of the buildings and the implementation of a full-day school mandate because the municipality is not able to invest significant resources in a rented property, therefore little refurbishment is possible.

None of the schools in the study have major issues with the Quality Agency; however, Laguna Negra had cancelled its Special Subvention in 2013 because of a failure in the official report's system processes.

Table 4.7: Summary portrait Laguna Negra School

School name	Laguna Negra
School type	Primary school
Total pupils	158
Age range of pupils	4 to 14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Vulnerability Index	75.63% (IEP 2011)
Number of Teachers	15
Municipality	Los Andes
Rural/Urban	Rural

The second layer sampling criteria: Teachers

The second layer sampling criteria was related to individual teachers. In each school chosen, teachers were selected considering:

1. Years of experience

Years of experience have distinctive influence in teacher sense of self-efficacy and commitment to the profession. Thus, the selection of teachers considered professional life career phases according to the phases defined in previous

work on teachers' lives by Day et al. (2007) and Day and Gu (2010). However, these phases were adapted as early career (0-8 years); middle career (9-23 years): and late career (24-39 years). Variation in the career phase can affect the interaction of influences in identity construction.

2. Job role and responsibilities

I use the term 'middle leaders' to refer to teachers assigned tasks additional to teaching such as general inspector, head of curriculum and evaluation or/and health/wellbeing responsible as well as other duties related to the schooling coordinators of non-teaching activities generally assigned to middle leaders. These teachers may (or may not) have access to additional information from the school and the authorities that may affect their perceptions of the socio-cultural and workplace influence on teachers' professional identities.

Table 4.8: Summary of teachers and schools

School: Gabriela/ Urban			
Nº Students	Vulnerability Index	Nº Teachers	Municipality
533	47%	36	Valle Central
Teachers	Years of experience	Time in this school	Time in the municipality
1. Marco	30	24	24
2. Jose	34	14	14
3. Diego*	25	2	5
4. Cindy	1	1	1
5. Clara	3	0.2	0.2

School: Bolivar/ Urban			
Nº Students	Vulnerability Index	Nº Teachers	Municipality
365	70%	21	Valle Central
Teachers	Years of experience	Time in this school	Time in the municipality
1. Melisa*	22	3	3
2. Carol	30	2	2
3. Lili	7	3	3
4. Ada*	26	3	3
5. Belgica	6	4	4
School: De Valle/ semi-rural			
Nº Students	Vulnerability Index	Nº Teachers	Municipality
449	80%	41	Los Andes
Teachers	Years of experience	Time in this school	Time in the municipality
1.Pamela	5	1	1
2. Violeta*	30	1	8
3. Mariana*	13	5	7
4. Mateo*	24	24	24
5. Felipe	40	38	38
School: Laguna Negra/ Rural			
Nº Students	Vulnerability Index	Nº Teachers	Municipality
158	75.63%	15	Los Andes
Teachers	Years of experience	Time in this school	Time in the municipality
1.Juan*	9	1	4
2. Monica	2	2	2
3. Victoria	6	2	6

4. Amelia*	30	20	20
5. Felix*	38	38	38

*: Additional duties in the school/middle leaders

Profiles of teacher participants

The description of the teachers' section seeks to portray briefly the profile of the interviewees. The texts in italics are quotes that provide a glimpse of the participants in the study. In order to protect the respondents, pseudonyms are used.

Five teachers from Bolivar School

Marco became a teacher because it was the only career that his '*family could afford'.* He thinks that he can make changes to the lives of his students: '*my commitment is to disadvantaged children, like my own experience. I think my experience could help*'. After so many years, he still likes his job and working with children. He has been teaching for 30 years. He has been working for 24 years in the same school. He is a physical education teacher. He has social recognition for his work because his students have participated in several sports competitions, obtaining satisfactory results in the region as a sport team.

Additionally, the team obtained significant results in terms of their social skills: '*at the beginning of the sport tournament the girls were very shy, afterwards they became very confident. Now three of them are in the best public school of the borough'*. His experience in the municipality contributes to his sense of agency in the school and in his relationship with the municipality.

Jose likes his chosen career as well as his work with disadvantaged students. He sees education as a tool for change: '*I think that education is an instrument of change and participation'.* He has been a teacher for 34 years. He has been working for 14 years in the school. He teaches history. He is involved in the teachers' union. During the dictatorship he was sacked from the public schools. He likes to learn from others. He promoted a new subject in the school curriculum called 'Latin American History'. He is concerned about the multicultural curriculum as an important factor of the school challenge: '*we need a multicultural curriculum for multicultural students'.* He was elected as leader of the retired teachers' union and he is very proud of his achievement. He is planning to develop activities for retired teachers such as leisure activities, pension improvement and curriculum and evaluation discussions.

Diego started to teach as a volunteer before gaining his qualification. He always likes to communicate and to give other teachers an opportunity to communicate to others, '*to communicate and get the feedback of the students in terms of change in her/his eyes, the spark in the eyes'*. He spent several years working in a rural community near the Chilean border. He has been a primary teacher for 25 years. He has been working for 2 years in the school as a general inspector. He is finishing a second career in psychology. He is writing his dissertation and preparing for a placement in the same school.

Cindy wants to be remembered for teaching values to her students. She recognises that the discussion about values is very helpful in the teaching and learning process. '*Values are relevant in your life, even in your job. […] My commitment to values contributes to building links of trust and love with the students, developing their willingness to learn*'. She has been a teacher for a

year. This is her first job. She sent many applications, but she only got a job from this school because it was highly appreciative of her initial training in a 'traditional' university. She loves teaching, and used to be a tutor for her classmates. She observes: '*I like to teach, to think about strategies for learning*'. She is a maths teacher, although this year the principal asked her to teach several subjects. She is disappointed because she does not feel as effective as she was. She recognises that spending more time with the same class contributes to better acknowledgement of her students, but she also feels overwhelmed by preparing lessons in other subjects.

Clara thought that she could contribute to educational change with her experience as a multicultural teacher in New York City. Her motivations are related to developing critical thinking in teenagers because she thinks that education can make social changes: '*I want to question the system for educational change'*. She has been a teacher for 3 years. She has worked for 2 months in the school as a primary English teacher. She studied in the United States and she came to Chile after the student protests in 2011. Her challenge now is to teach in a primary school because she has no experience of teaching young children. She is having difficulties in managing the class. After the second interview she left the school. She is still a volunteer in a 'free school' run by an NGO, where she helps young people and adults to finish school.

Table 4.9: Summary of Teachers at Bolivar School

	Teacher name	Years of experience	Time in this school	Time in the municipality
1	Marco	30	24	24
2	Jose	34	14	14
3	Diego*	25	2	5
4	Cindy	1	1	1
5	Clara	3	0.2	0.2

*: Additional duties in the school/middle leaders

Five teachers from Gabriela School

Belgica is very committed with disadvantaged communities but she likes this school because most of the students have family support. She is an active union leader. She has a strong political commitment. She has been teaching for 6 years. She has been working in this school for 4 years as a Spanish teacher and tutor in grade 6. She believes that teachers should be part of the policy and curriculum discussion as part of their teaching duties. She thinks that teaching is an intellectual profession: '*I believe that teachers should be part of the policy discussion. This profession is more intellectual than people used to think'*. She also claims that the government blames teachers for social issues that any government has: '*it is easier for governments to blame teachers when the real problems are not in the school'*. She is doing a master's degree to address one of her weaknesses, and she also wants to work in higher education.

Melisa loves classroom interactions. She sees some of the laws as a big problem because it has empowered parents against teachers, bringing significant vulnerability to the professionals in education: '*everyday there is more discrediting directed against teachers. It seems that the government incites parents again teachers, avoiding its responsibilities'*. She has been teaching for 22 years. She has been working in the school for 3 years. She teaches religious studies. She worked for a long time in a private school where she was sacked because the owner wanted to renew the staff. She got the job because the principal used to be a consultant of her former employer. She has extra responsibilities at the school organising all events and performances. She feels that these laws inhibit her from expressing her love and friendship towards her students. She doesn't have any ambition to advance her career, and she wants to retire from the classroom having enjoyed teaching.

Carol considers respect as the most important value and she is always willing to stop her class to talk about it: '*as a person I can give more than just my subject'*. She became a teacher because this was the only career provided by the university when she was a student. She has been teaching for more than 30 years. She has been working in the school for 2 years as a maths teacher. She has struggled to find a job because of her age. Her previous experience in a public school made her scared of some social contexts (she was hit by a student). She is very pleased to work in a girls' school because she feels she has respect and she can deliver her lessons easily. She thinks that families have neglected some of their responsibilities for children and the school has more requirements and paperwork than years ago. Additionally, she is willing to

discuss the maths curriculum because at the moment it is unrealistic: '*we need proper content drives by classroom experience'*.

Lili chose the teaching profession because she has a strong commitment to students' learning: '*I like to see the surprise in their faces when they learn something'*. To develop social skills and an opinion is a priority in her teaching. She has been teaching for 7 years. She has been working for 3 years in this school. She was a student at the school, therefore she knew the principal and some of the teachers before she started teaching. She just received her certification to teach science. She considers that it is nice to work in a female school because she can develop tight links with her students. She likes to teach in a friendly way, where a climate of trust is the basis for delivering a good lesson. She neglects the formality of traditional teaching in order to generate a good climate in the classroom. According to her, paperwork is the weakness of the profession and the school management contributes to this: '*sometimes the leadership team seems to tarnish my job with paperwork'*.

Ada loves to teach: '*I believe that I have the gift of teaching*. *I can teach anything, I am very good doing this and I feel very happy about it'.* She has been teaching for 26 years. She has been working for 3 years in this school. After working several years in a private school where she was sacked, she is happy because the public system recognised her years of experience. This means that she gets a bonus for every two years of experience. She feels that the work conditions for teachers are not very good, because her contract is renewed every year, and she has no stability in her job. In spite of that, she enjoys it when her students have good memories about her lessons and advice:

'*I am glad the content of my lessons that you have taught are still there [in her students]*'.

Table 4.10: Summary of Teachers at Gabriela School

	Teacher name	Years of experience	Time in this school	Time in the municipality
1	Melisa*	22	3	3
2	Carol	30	2	2
3	Lili	7	3	3
4	Ada*	26	3	3
5	Belgica	6	4	4

*: Additional duties in the school/middle leaders

Five teachers from Del Valle School

Mateo likes teaching because he enjoys having the power to teach reading and writing skills. He has kept working at the same school because he is well known in the community and the municipality. He has been teaching for 24 years at the same school. He has two elder sisters who are teachers; they influenced him to choose this profession. His main achievement was when he was a teacher. He spent eight years with one class, they got very good academic results and had commitment to their learning. After that, he was invited to be part of the leadership team of the school as head of curriculum and evaluation, and the last two years he has been substitute inspector. He would leave the profession but he is scared to start something new: '*when you are getting old, it is risky to*

change your activity or job'. He believes that any achievement with students is almost impossible because of the social problems in the community, which do not allow them to learn: '*when you know the students' reality, our academic goals lose value, they can't learn with ill souls'*. His dreams are of happy students with responsible families.

Violeta believes that her self-management capacity allows her to get social recognition, and therefore she considers that it is an important characteristic of teachers that '*you should find your support. That is why I got my award because of my own management'*. She has been teaching for 22 years, including 8 years in the municipality. She has been working in the school for a year as head of curriculum and evaluation. Her goal is to improve curriculum management in the school. She comes from a family of teachers and they encouraged her to become a teacher. She is a writer, and she also paints and plays musical instruments. She has received several posts in the leadership teams at different schools and has taught at the university as well. Her colleagues are happy to work with her because she is very supportive with them. She lives in the borough and she also writes myths and tales in local and international magazines.

Mariana has special feelings for working with difficult students. She was born in the borough and she always wanted to work in her hometown. She enjoys working with people from her community. She has been teaching for 12 years. She is working 5 years at this school and 8 years in the municipality. She has been working in a school as a teaching assistant when she realised that she

really likes classroom interactions. She decided to be a teacher and started her studies. Her achievements are related to students' development as human beings: '*I am more interested in values and the positive attitudes of my students'*. She loves to write poems and this year is her first time at running a writing workshop at the school.

Pamela likes to work in her hometown because she wants to contribute to the disadvantaged children of her community. She has been teaching for 5 years. She has been working for 1 year at this school. She was born in the borough, working at a school as a designer when she realised that she really likes working with children. She is a very young teacher working with grade 1 students. Her challenge is to teach reading and writing skills to her class. She was very disappointed working in the school last year because of the poor work conditions. She says: '*I was very upset last year because of the lack of resources to do a good job*'. This year she bought her own equipment to avoid this problem. She has placed her own projector, printer and Internet connection in her classroom. She is also willing to learn from experienced teachers: '*teachers with more experience have a lot to share with young teachers, and they can also learn from us'.*

Felipe wanted to be a teacher because his mother was illiterate. He studied at night in order to get his degree. He has been working for 38 years at the school and the municipality. He started to teach after he finished school. Teachers encouraged him to become a teacher while still at school. He studied and works at the same school, he was born in the same community and he likes to work

there. He states: '*I can communicate with parents and families easier because I know them. Many of them were my students*'. Felipe feels support from the head of curriculum and evaluation rather than from other people at the school.

Table 4.11: Summary of Teachers at Del Valle School

	Teacher name	Years of experience	Time in this school	Time in the municipality
1	Pamela	5	1	1
2	Violeta*	30	1	8
3	Mariana*	13	5	7
4	Mateo*	24	24	24
5	Felipe	40	38	38

*: Additional duties in the school/middle leaders

Five teachers from Laguna Negra School

Juan feels disheartened because parents seem not to care about their children. He sees the lack of quality of public education as the main problem because there are many generations of people without access to good schools. He has been working for 9 years. He has been working for 5 years in the municipality and 1 year at the school. He became a teacher because he was working in a school and was encouraged to study. After 4 years working as a teacher he was promoted to inspector. He finds school life is a challenge, and is

disappointed with the routine without achievements. He calls it '*the useless routine where I don't see any change in favour of students'*. He states that '*public education teachers should be an elite'.* The principal suggested him as the first interviewee. The interviews were in his office and we had several interruptions. He would prefer to teach adults.

Monica's commitment is to '*open kids' minds because here we are in a box surround by mountains*'. The school is in her hometown. She was appointed to improve the reading and writing process in grade 1, building links between infant school and primary school. She has worked for 18 years as an infant teacher and the last 2 years she has been teaching as a primary teacher in the school. She is very pleased to work there because she has significant support from the principal and other teachers. She states that she is single, and therefore, she has plenty of time to dedicate to her students: '*I live with my parents and that is why I can spend my time. This profession requires duties of motherhood; you must give a lot'.* Her best friend is also a teacher at the school.

Felix has a religious commitment and a strong social commitment to disadvantaged students. However, he does not have high expectations of the students in this community: '*many students do not have enough skills to move further in education*'. He has been teaching for 28 years. He comes from a family of teachers who encouraged him to be a teacher. For the last 18 years, he has been working as head of curriculum and assessment in the municipality. He likes this post because it is stable and long term: '*As head of curriculum and assessment you have certainties'*. He is married to a maths teacher and they

moved to this borough because of health problems. She also works at the school.

Victoria has motivations related to changing the society: '*I can see that if you have poor parents you study in a public school and you will get poor knowledge and skills. In summary you also will be poor*'. She belongs to the community. She has been teaching for 6 years. She has been working for 2 years at the school. The ministry of education has supported her in many courses. She feels that to work in public education is not rewarding: '*I don't get recognition for my training, there are debts from my pension and I do not have time to plan good lessons'*.

Amelia is motivated by work with disadvantaged people and the social aspect of the profession. She has religious faith. She has been teaching for 30 years. She has been working in the municipality for 20 years. She became a teacher because there are many teachers in her family. She has low expectations of her students because she sees low expectations in their parents. Her main concern is about the families and the ways that they support their children. She states: '*kids seem to have a lot of material goods but do not get any other support from their parents, therefore the school is having more responsibilities and teachers are blamed for issues that used to be provided by their families'*. She is married to the head of curriculum and evaluation (Felix) and they share perceptions about students and families.

Table 4.12: Summary of Teachers at Laguna Negra School

	Teacher names	Years of experience	Time in this school	Time in the municipality
1	Juan*	9	1	4
2	Monica	2	2	2
3	Victoria	6	2	6
4	Amelia*	30	20	20
5	Felix*	38	38	38

*: Additional duties in the school/middle leaders

5. Research Methods and Data Collection

Research methods are the set of techniques, strategies, and procedures used to collect and analyse data as well as the definition of the sample. They are the set of strategies that will contribute better to the generation of evidence that will answer the research questions of the study. According to the methodological approach, as qualitative research the techniques and strategies selected are those that will provide a deep understanding of individual processes along with aspects of the context affecting the construction of professional identities.

Consequently, the main method selected is semi-structured interviews, complemented by document analysis and informal observations. The following table (4.13) shows the research methods associated to each sub-research questions.

Table 4. 13: Summary of techniques of data collection and research questions associated with them

Research Question	
To what extent do personal and contextual dimensions interact in the construction of professional identity in Chilean teachers from state schools?	
Sub-Research Question	**Methods**
How do socio-cultural influences and policies impact teachers' professional identities?	Documentary analysis, semi- structured interviews, observations and field notes.
How do socially located/organisational influences affect teachers' professional identities?	Documentary analysis, semi- structured interviews.
How do biographies, ethics and values affect teachers' professional identities?	Semi-structured interviews and field notes.
What is the nature of the interaction between the different influences affecting teachers' professional identities?	Semi-structured interviews and field notes.
To what extent do teachers' professional identities influence their commitment/effectiveness/ability to teach to their best?	Semi-structured interviews and field notes.

Semi-structured interview

Interviews are useful for obtaining ‘in-situ’ “constructions of persons, activities, organisations, feelings, motivations, claims, concerns and other entities” (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p. 268), often defined as a ‘conversation with purpose’, the purpose being to gather information (Berg 2001, p. 66). The nature of an interview is the interaction between two or more individuals who together will create knowledge. Likewise, the characteristics of the interactions and their dynamics are likely to shape the evidence generated (Fontana and Frey 2005).

Informed by previous research on teacher perceptions and identity (e.g. Nias 1989; Olsen 2008), semi-structured interviewing was the main method selected for this study. This type of interview with open-ended questions allows teachers to reflect and explain themselves without limitations on their answers, providing in-depth discussion of the factors that influence teachers’ professional identities (Lasky 2005).

In an interview, the researcher asks participants a set of questions that could be individual or collective; that could be face-to face or by phone or video call; or structured, semi-structured or in-depth (Newby 2009). Within the semi-structured interview, in particular, the interviewer has guidelines about the topics to be covered. These guidelines of the semi-structured interview broadly reflect the research questions (Creswell 2009).

The advantage of this technique is that it offers the opportunity to clarify ideas and explore emergent issues; hence, it provides a very rich set of data. The disadvantages are that interactions within the interview are unlikely to be neutral or symmetrical, since the researcher will report evidence and findings (Fontana and Frey 2005). Additionally, it may be time-consuming and involve high cost.

Also, the ways of approaching interviews could affect the nature of the evidence generated. In this context, it is important to be aware of the situation in which the researcher has obtained access to the setting, in this case the schools, and how present the researcher and the research aims are. The familiarity of the language and cultural characteristics of the respondent needs to be considered. For example, teachers tend to use informal words to refer to a specific policy or educational body that is seen mainly in terms of their immediate setting. Thus, to have previous knowledge about language particularities may facilitate the process of gaining trust between interviewer and interviewee.

For the purposes of this study, one-to-one semi-structured interviews were conducted, focusing on the factors of influence on teachers' professional identities. In other words, the interviews are centred on the interactions of socio-culture/policies, workplace and personal influences in the development of the key aspects of teachers' professional identities.

Semi-structured interviews in the fieldwork

The researcher used semi-structured interviews as the main research method. The structure of the interview was based on the nature of the research questions with specific attention to the key concepts of teachers' professional identity: collegial relationships, autonomy in professional judgements and agency along with the socio-cultural/policy influences, workplace and personal influences on the elaboration of questions/themes (see appendix 1 and 2).

The interview schedule consists of four sections: biography, professional influences, situational influences and organisational influences. The preliminary questions were general in scope and open-ended about the present job and contingencies, inviting the respondents to relax and elaborate their own responses. The purpose of the second interview was to explore in more depth some emergent themes from the first interview (vocation, commitment and values) and clarify some concepts mentioned by the teachers related to autonomy and agency.

However, aspects of the socio-cultural/policy and workplace influences were identified by the collection of official documents from each school and the educational bodies supplementing teachers' interview data.

The interview pilot

The objective of the pilot was to identify themes and misunderstandings of topics, and to test the length of the interview and the flow of the themes. The pilot was carried out with three teachers from different schools and in different career phases. They were contacted by snowball technique by using the researcher's professional network.

According to the interviewees, some of the questions tended to overlap, as some questions referred to the same topic. For example, they found similarities in the question regarding support in professional development and the one about strategies to update knowledge and techniques. The answers tended to be similar. At the same time, it was hard for the interviewees to differentiate performing their jobs successfully from other criteria.

Based on this feedback, the researcher was able to adjust the interview, reformulating the questions perceived as problematic or repetitive by the teachers interviewed.

Additionally, the researcher realized that more experienced teachers gave longer interviews, which allowed her to assign more time to these interviews. The interviewees agreed that face-to-face interviews facilitate the process and made it more enjoyable.

The flow of the themes was fine. Nevertheless, the question about critical moments in teachers' careers tended to implicate other themes such as school organisation and community issues early in the interview. This pattern observed during the pilot allowed the researcher to work with an interview protocol flexible enough so that the researcher could add explanatory questions and address new topics as they emerged from the conversation.

Teachers Interviews

Over a period of two months, the researcher conducted interviews with 20 teachers from four schools. The interviewees were interviewed twice. The first interview was about an hour and the second interview was about 40 minutes. Ten of these teachers were also contacted by email and phone calls in order to clarify aspects of the previous interviews.

The purposes of the first interview were to provide relevant information about the scope of the study by delivering the informed consent document and emphasising the confidentiality of the data and the possible consequences of the study. Additionally, the first interview aimed: 1) to uncover the teachers' perceptions about the key influences in their professional identities within the schools; 2) to grasp the perceptions of teachers about the relevant factors of influence (policy, leadership, school culture, school context) in Chilean teachers' identities.

Additionally, the researcher engaged in informal interviews with different members of staff (eight, two in each school), who provided contextual data for each case, all registered in the fieldwork notebook. This data was used to supplement the information shared through teachers' interviews.

Complementary methods of data collection

Informal observations

Observation is a technique of collecting data in structured or opportunistic situations, in a specific place in real time where the research is developed (Newby 2009; Creswell 2009). For the purpose of this study, the researcher kept a diary as a tool that allowed the recording of actions, attitudes, thoughts and perceptions related to the environment of research that could complement teachers' perceptions of the influences on their professional identities.

The environment provides different visual information about implicit aspects of the context (Newby 2009). Therefore, the researcher considers texts and artefacts (Schein 2004) from the context and the culture where professionals work such as staff rooms' notice boards, layouts and other places used by the staff. In order to capture this information, the researcher took pictures as a complement to the written field notes. The informal observations provide data used to strengthen evidence derived from the interviews.

Collecting data by Informal observation

The researcher visited each school an average of eleven times in a period of two months. The first visit was a face-to-face contact with the principals and head teachers. The second visit was an introduction to the study and the role of the participants within it. The following visits were for conducting the interviews. Additionally, the researcher took part in a few official ceremonies and staff meetings. The purpose of that was to provide complementary information to interpret the interview data (Nias 1989).

Table 4.14: Summary of schools visits

Summary schools visits						
	Principal meetings	Staff meetings	Official ceremonies	Other visits	Interview visits	Total
LN	2	2	1	2	5	12
Del Valle	1	1	1	2	5	10
Bolivar	2	2	1	2	6	13
Gabriela	1	0	2	2	5	10
Total	6	5	5	8	21	45

Document collection

Document collection and analysis is a complementary technique considered in this research. It refers to the collection of data from the school in official written texts, corporate data and data deposited in archives. The documentary analysis considers several aspects of the texts: i) when documents were written; ii) who has been involved in the process of writing; and iii) how the process of writing was organized (Prior 2004). Texts may provide conceptualizations and expectations about professional identities as well as evidence about priorities

and emphases in teaching. The risk involved in accessing secondary data is relying on the quality of the documents, on the one hand, and the level of relevance of the data in order to establish importance and consistency in the findings, on the other hand.

Collection of school documents

The researcher collected documents from the school's institutional educational projects, school flyers, standardised test reports and school web pages. Additional information was collected from the municipalities, the Borough Development Plan (PLADECO) and the Annual Development Plan of Municipal Education (PADEM). Finally, more documentation was collected from the Ministry of Education's web pages (Quality Agency, Teachers Professional Development CEPEIPE, Docentes Mas) and the Educational Superintendence.

Table 4.15: Summary of documentation analysis and the data provided by each document

Institution/document character	Data provided
Schools	
EIP	Conceptualization of the school community, aspects of the mission and vision of schools
School life manual	Definitions of the role and responsibility of teachers
MINEDUC	
Docentesmas	Performance Standards
MIME	General information of schools
SIMCE reports	Results in standardised tests and indicators of personal and social development
MUNICIPALITY	
PLADECO	Priorities in the municipality plans for schools and

	teachers, teachers' training, budget for education
PADEM	Priorities of the school and details of the community profile

The documentary analysis within this study involves the identification of elements related to the standards of the profession and public expectations of teachers in the national and the local context as well as the direct school context, and teachers' professional identities as specified within the reforms impacting teachers for the purpose of triangulation with teachers' perceptions and practices. Additionally, the impact of school context on policy is gleaned from a school's development plan and its Institutional Project document (both documents written by the school community), and the municipality development plan written by leadership municipality clerks.

6. Methodological Issues and Ethical Considerations

The sample

Although there was a proposed sample, it was challenging to match it to the original design. The proposed sample of schools considered academic results as an important factor in school leadership and culture and teachers' professional identities. However, no school with outstanding performance showed an interest in taking part in the study. Therefore, the study was not able to make findings in this regard. Nevertheless, the fact that the schools have similar performances and are in the same socioeconomic group, may inform the study in terms of the nuances in the development of teachers' professional identities in average public primary schools.

Additionally, the criterion of socioeconomic income is linked to the rural and urban school locations, since rural communities are usually exposed to higher levels of poverty. The implication of this is that the isolation of the rural community may influence teachers' perceptions about identities. Therefore, the factors that influence teachers' professional identities in rural schools may be different from those of schools located in urban areas.

In terms of the interviewees, the original sample considered 6 teachers in each school. The small number of teachers in the middle of their career phase in each school and their lack of willingness to participate in the study were practical challenges to the fieldwork, constraining the number of respondents to 5 in each case.

This situation entails two consequences. First, the research has just five teachers as informants about their situational identity in each case. However, the data is complemented with informal interviews carried out by the researcher. Second, the findings for teachers' identities in the mid-career phase are limited, narrowing the scope of the study. At the same time, this shortcoming provides avenues for further research.

Four teachers were not available at the time of the second interview visit. However, they were interviewed via Skype upon my return to England. The implication of this is that the data collected missed the quality of face-to-face

interaction. Nevertheless, the first interview provides the researcher with insight into contextual and situational evidence as well as the demeanour of the respondents at the time of the interview.

Additionally, all school principals and head-teachers had an active role in the selection of the teachers. As a consequence, the role played by the principals might influence the characteristics of the teachers who accepted ‘voluntarily’ to participate in the study.

The initial scope of the study was on a new curriculum policy. However, teachers and head teachers did not mention this new policy as important. They instead mentioned policies relating to work conditions, policies that threaten their credibility in the media in terms of expert knowledge and skills and policies defining standards of the profession. In this context, the researcher asks to what extent policies mentioned by teachers affected their professional identity meanings.

Gaining access to the schools

The researcher tried several times to contact boroughs and schools that strictly match the proposed sample by official telephone numbers and emails. However, there were no answers. In Los Andes borough, the access to the schools was achieved due to personal contacts. In the case of Valle Central, the

access was gained through the Teachers' Union organisation. Its main leader introduced the researcher to principals of the three schools.

In two schools, the principal introduced the researcher to the teachers in the regular staff meeting. In these two schools, access to the teachers was more informed and they got a better understanding of the study and the theme. Consequently, the coordination of the interviews was easier. In the other two schools, the principals introduced the researcher to a middle leader who managed the planning of the interviews. The difference in the route of access to the schools provides an initial insight about the school culture and the leadership style of the schools, for example, in terms of the degree of teachers' participation in school decisions.

Negotiating access

In one borough (Los Andes), access to the schools was negotiated by a personal contact of the researcher who was working as a consultant about the School Life project[2] in the department of education of the municipality. As a consequence, the schools may have a more developed sense of teamwork and collegiality, influencing identity perceptions.

The access to other schools was negotiated with the leader of the Teachers' Union, and therefore, it is highly possible that the principals and staff have some

[2] The School Life program encourages teamwork within the school with the support of different professionals from outside the school (Mineduc 2012).

active political commitment which influences the characteristics of teachers' identities.

Language issues

To gain conceptual equivalence, two translators contributed to this process: a Doctor in Literature from Washington University, Missouri and a Doctor in Education from Nottingham University, both bilingual people from Chile.

Interviewees put a significant emphasis on the word ‘entrega’ in the profession. Teachers attempted to define vocation as ‘entrega’. The textual translation is ‘giving’ but this word does not mean the same as in English. The translator #1 suggested the word ‘dedication’; while the translator #2 suggested the word ‘professional commitment’ or ‘personal commitment’ (see more details on the section Trustworthiness).

To make respondents’ words and sentences more accessible and understandable, the researcher adds in square brackets some contextual words in the quotes. Likewise, the square brackets are also used when the quotes are edited.

The interviews

In spite of the fact that most of the interviews were luckily arranged in little offices near the staff room, other members of staff and phone calls often

interrupted the interviews. However, teachers appreciated having some degree of privacy during the interview. Although teachers voluntarily agreed to get involved in the study, in the smallest schools the principals made the decision to participate, inviting teachers to take part in the study during the staff meeting. It is possible, therefore, that teachers were tacitly compelled to participate in the interviews by the personal invitations of principals, although the researcher did not enquire about it during the interviews.

The conversation about themes related to situational identity usually generated uncomfortable feelings among the interviewees. They were slightly reticent to expound their views about it because it may impact on their careers or relationships within the hierarchy of the school or municipality in spite of the contract of confidentiality discussed at the beginning of each interview. In order to avoid this situation, teachers were invited to talk about their expectations and concerns about the organisations and institutions within the school, motivating the researcher to search beyond literal meanings. Likewise, this situation impels the researcher to find supportive evidence using other data collection techniques.

The power asymmetries of the interview interaction have been discussed elsewhere extensively (Mason 1996, Brinkman and Kvale 2015, Gubrium and Holstein 2001). In order to address this ethical issue, the researcher considered several actions: a) to promote a relaxed environment by introducing herself and the research topic, b) to state clearly the contract of confidentiality, c) to encourage the freedom to withdraw at any time during the interview, d) to

emphasise the importance of the last interview as an instance of validation of the findings by the participants in the study after data analysis.

Trustworthiness

Any process of naturalistic or subjectivist inquiry needs to assure its own fidelity to contexts and participants. Lincoln and Guba (1986) suggest a unique criterion: Authenticity (p. 78). They define authenticity as a criterion explored by the naturalistic paradigm more than positivist/rationalist approaches, in order to assure rigour in any study. In this vein, they develop a set of criteria of trustworthiness that are an attempt to create parallel criteria to the conventional/positivist approach to rigour. These criteria are **credibility, transferability, dependability** and **confirmability** (Guba 1981).

Table 4. 16: Summary of parallel criteria to assess quantitative and qualitative research (adaptation from Guba 1981)

Traditional Criteria to Judge Quantitative Research	**Alternative Criteria to Judge Qualitative Research**
Internal Validity	Credibility
External Validity	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability

In order to ensure fairness and accuracy in the understanding and interpretation of primary Chilean teachers' perceptions of their work in challenging

circumstances, the researcher undertook several steps following from these four criteria.

For **Credibility**, the researcher continually checked the participants' feedback regarding the meaning of their statements in terms of the influences of key features of their professional identities. This process embraced the search for connotations of participants' statements and honest interpretations of them; in terms of naturalistic inquiry this is defined as **'member-checks'**. Doing 'member-checking' was particularly important in the process of translation of the interviews from Spanish to English.

There was a continuous process of verification of meanings with participants in subsequent interviews via email and phone for **precision in language**. This process was enriched by professional support (see section above on 'language issues'). The professional support for language clarification arises from a need for fairness regarding participants' statements and accuracy in translating their vocabulary. Specifically, this was an issue related to how teachers understand the word 'entrega'. They referred to 'entrega' as doing the job with heart and head together, allocating personal time and resources to students even outside the classroom.

However, there is still a further step to take. This is to present and discuss the findings with the participants in the four schools in Chile. This will assure

reliability of these findings, and enrich further dissemination and publication of this piece of research in Chile and elsewhere.

During the process, the researcher compared and contrasted the statements between teachers, middle leaders and official documentation, as **triangulation**. Triangulation is a means to bring different kinds of evidence into a relationship in order to compare, contrast or verify the meaning of them (Elliott 1991) as well as an exercise for cross-data analysis and interpretation (Guba 1981). Triangulation improves the legitimacy of the account of teachers' perceptions and complements the researcher's understanding from different angles and perspectives. Nevertheless, when the researcher found disagreement between the parties involved, further enquires were done with participants by email and phone.

At the same time, the researcher had **prolonged engagement** with participants during the interviews and the fieldwork visits during two months along with continuous contact with participants during the following three years. This provided robust data about the different influences on teacher professional identities in each school and the interactions/connections of them.

During the study, the researcher visited the schools on a regular basis, doing 'informal observations' around the schools, a process which contributed extensively to understanding the influences of school contexts on teachers' professional identities. However, in further studies persistent observation might

contribute considerably more. This could involve observations in the classrooms, ceremonies, staff room and meetings as well as meal and break times. Persistent observation may unveil robustly hidden issues identify during the interviews, and strengthen the understanding of the influences on professional identities and their interactions.

Additionally, the researcher kept a **diary** as a journal or fieldwork notebook. The journal is a personal document where the researcher registers thoughts, feelings and emotions during the process as well as a detailed account of observations, anecdotes and experiences, reflections and hypotheses (Elliott 1991) properly dated. This journal supported the process of inquiry by providing awareness of personal thoughts and deliberations, monitoring researcher biases during the progression of the study.

For **transferability**, the researcher designed a purposive sample as an attempt to maximize the range of information collected during the study, and to develop a broader understanding of the influences on professional identities. Thus, teachers at different career stages were invited to participate, as well as teachers with additional responsibilities within schools such as middle leaders. All were interviewed within the school setting. Additionally, the researcher collected a wide range of documents from the schools, municipalities and government in order to achieve a thick description of the contexts in which teachers work.

For **dependability** and **confirmability**, the researcher was in permanent contact with the supervisors of the research project who acted as an ‘audit trail’ in the process of collection, analysis and interpretation of the data. Additionally, the whole research project involved a detailed engagement with previous similar studies and their findings. These studies were particularly important in the process of conceptualisation of the study as well as for decisions around the structuration and report of the findings.

Nevertheless, if we consider the ‘social intervention’ (Wagner 1997) that naturally occurs in any research project, much more could be done in future educational research projects. This means taking into account individuals' place within an organisation.

In this sense Wagner (1997) proposes three types of research cooperation between individuals involved in any study. These are data-extraction agreements, clinical partnerships and co-learning agreements. These forms of direct cooperation define the nature of the relationship between researchers and participants, where a data extraction agreement would be a mild involvement of practitioners and a co-learning agreement requires the greatest involvement of both researchers and practitioners as a joint learning journey with lessons to learn even for their organisations.

Wagner also suggests (1997) that, in combination, these types of research cooperation could diminish the problematic power relations involved in any research project where often the researcher leads the inquiry process. The

combination could also improve the understanding of education and schooling. At the same time, the awareness of the nature of relationships of cooperation in educational research contributes to a consideration of the social nature of any research project in terms of social intervention and the consequences for the individuals concerned.

7. Data analysis

During the fieldwork, in order to design the second interview, a preliminary analysis was conducted of the main themes addressed by teachers. It was clear to see the types of commitment that were driven by teachers based on the 'normalista'[3] tradition.

The second analysis was focused on three teachers in different career phases and provides illuminating evidence for further enquiry in terms of vocation, values and beliefs driving teachers' practices. However, the relevance of the school leadership, culture and context pushed the researcher towards a deep analysis of each school. The underlying assumption is that school leadership, school culture and context affect positively or negatively teachers' professional identities.

The researcher kept a methodological memo in order to register relevant methodological issues during the analysis.

[3] The 'Normalista' tradition is the institution that used to train teachers during 130 years (the same name was used in America in 1839). They started training at secondary school. They were selected and trained in a foster school for teachers.

Data Analysis Stages

Previous research on identity and the meaning of being professional inform the first stage of the data analysis by defining ‘core codes’ (Strauss 1987), which drive the preliminary phase of the research. These codes contribute to developing a matrix (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 1984). This process allows us to identify relevant pieces of information at three levels: literal, interpretive and reflexive (Mason 1996, p. 54) as well as factual, descriptive or interpretive (Newby 2009, p. 466) through repetitive reviewing of the data to fill the matrixes. During this stage, sub-codes emerge, creating new layers of data which provide depth and richness to the analysis.

The second stage consisted in the review and analysis of field notes and official documents written by schools such as the Institutional Educational Project and the Improvement Plan. At the same time, documents from the ministry of education, the quality agency and superintendence of education were analysed, contributing to an exploration of the socio-cultural and institutional context in which schools work.

The third stage of the analysis involved repeated review of the data for sub-coding and re-coding, leading to the definition of common elements and patterns in the data, which contribute to drawing their main dimensions of influence on Chilean teachers' professional identity and the profiles defined in the study.

During all the stages, the researcher kept contact by email and telephone with participants in order to assure consistency between interpretations and teachers' perceptions as well as fairness in the analysis.

Table 4. 17: Summary of the stages in the process of data analysis

Stage I
1. To define the codes according to previous defined dimensions 2. To transcribe and translate the interviews 3. To tag the data according the codes, considering emerging themes and dimensions of teachers' identities 4. To build matrices to expose the data collected by interviewees and its dimensions. 5. To identify relevant plots/piece of information at three levels: literal, interpretive and reflexive (Mason 1996, p. 54) and factual, descriptive or interpretive (Newby 2010, p. 466) through repetitive reviewing of the data to fill the matrices. 6. To draw common elements and patterns from the data
Stage II

1. To review and transcribe field notes and documents 2. To identify relevant pieces of information 3. To tag the pieces of information in the field notes and documents 4. To fill the matrix (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 1984, 2013) according to codes defined in the conceptual notes. At the same time, I kept an open code in order to identify nuances among participants. 5. To find common elements and patterns in the data
Stage III
1. To find (or not) common elements and patterns among the stages and consider emerging sub-themes 2. To organize the cases in terms of the context, leadership characteristics and culture by linking the pieces of information in the interviews with the field notes and document analysis.

Summary

The research methodology is underpinned by social constructivism, thus the study used qualitative research methods since the study seeks to obtain a deep and robust understanding of individual processes of professional identity construction. The main research method was semi-structured interviewing of twenty primary teachers, complemented by document collection and analysis of the four schools and educational authorities along with informal observations.

The analysis was led by core codes in repetitive reviewing of the data to fill the matrices. During this stage, sub-codes emerge, creating new layers of data, which provide depth and richness to the analysis. This is followed by the review and analysis of documentation. The third stage of the analysis involved repeated reviewing of the data for sub-coding and re-coding, leading to the definition of common elements which contribute to drawing out the main dimensions of influence on teachers' professional identity and the profiles defined in the study.

There were several ethical considerations related to the sample and participants, the negotiation of access, the language and translation of the interviews as well as the interviews, the location and some uncomfortable topics for the participants. However, the researcher considered several steps in order to ensure the trustworthiness of representations of the perceptions of Chilean primary teachers, who work in challenging circumstances.

Chapter Five: Workplace influences on teachers' professional identities

Introduction

Chapter Five will review the research findings related to the contexts in which Chilean primary teachers construct their professional identities. The following sections explore similarities and differences in the teachers' perceptions, working in challenging circumstances in the four schools participating in the study. These perceptions relate to the effects of school leadership on the school culture, and more specifically, the different aspects of teachers' professional identities such as collegial relationships, autonomy in professional judgements and agency.

The chapter concludes that the influence of school leadership on teachers' professional identities in sustained underperforming schools are strongly defined by the tradition of emphasis on control and monitoring in Chilean school leadership.

Thus, collegial relationships are mainly informal with the exception of Laguna Negra School where teachers have regular meetings with colleagues. The scope of professional judgements and aspects of the agentic capacity of teachers are narrowed by the emphasis on control and monitoring of school leadership with the exception of Bolivar school that shows higher levels of organisational autonomy. As a consequence, Chilean primary teachers'

professional identities are built mainly from personal beliefs and values interacting with the perceptions of students and parents' needs.

However, school leadership and culture positively influence the sense of self-efficacy through a distribution of responsibilities that teachers interpret as a valuation of skills and professional recognition contributing to keeping their commitment.

1. Relevance of contexts

Contexts provide the environment in which social interactions occur as well as providing a myriad of situations that contribute to define and shape identities by social structures and social interactions. Thus, the study of identity requires us to understand the environments in which identities are immersed, since environments and contexts provide elements and interactions which influence individuals as verification and/or validation of their existing identities or as feedback about actions, attitudes and behaviours (see c.f. above, Ch 3, section 1, 'Identity'). In this study, Chilean teachers were found to have been affected by influences related to the workplace, the characteristics of the school setting, the organisation of the school itself, and the individuals within it. Part of this study explores these influences, which are situated in the same geographical territory as the school setting.

Policy and tradition appear as continuous sociocultural influences on the definition of Chilean primary teachers' identities. At the same time, there are

organisational/workplace influences that can be called social influences such as school leadership and culture, which directly affect teachers' collaboration as an expression of collegiality, and the scope of their professional judgement. However, the teachers' professional judgements are also influenced by policies such as the good teaching framework, teachers' assessments and teachers' status. It is important to make a distinction between any two schools since in these, professional identity meanings seem to be distinctively influenced by the school intake and its socio-economic condition, that according to participants' statements, impact on their ethics and their professional identity meanings.

Participants work in four different public schools located in two different boroughs in the main city of Chile, Santiago. Although all schools enrol students from disadvantaged communities, one school has only 47% students from vulnerable populations whereas others have much higher percentages, contributing to several differences in terms of size, context, and nuances in school leadership and culture.

This data showed that the heterogeneous school cultures weakened the meaning of professional identity, relegating and limiting the construction of professional identity-meanings (PIMs) to the social interactions within the contexts where individually teachers define their meanings through by personal values and beliefs. Collegiality was built around cliques of friendship and teachers' goodwill. Likewise, autonomy and agency were boosted by personal values, beliefs and ethics.

The table below shows the influences of the school leadership and culture upon the key aspects of teachers' professional identity according to participants in the study where +++ is strong influence, ++ means moderate influence, and + represents weak influence. These values were assigned according to the intensity and repetition of these themes in teachers' interviews along with the document analysis and informal observation of each school.

Table 5.1: Summary of school leadership and culture influences on teachers' professional identities

School characteristics	Teacher name	Years of experience	Time in this school	S. Leadership and culture		
				Collegial relationship	Autonomy on prof. Judgements	Agency
Bolivar School/365 students, urban, under performed	**Marco**	30	24	++	++	+++
	Jose	34	14	++	++	+++
	Diego	25	2	+	+	+
	Cindy	1	1	++	+	+
	Clara	3	0.2	++	++	+++
Gabriela School/533 students, urban, under performed	**Melisa**	22	3	++	+	+
	Carol	30	2	+	++	+
	Lili	7	3	+	++	+
	Ada	26	3	++	+	+
	Belgica	6	4	++	+++	++
Laguna Negra School/158 students, rural, under performed	**Juan**	9	1	+++	+	+
	Monica	2	2	+++	++	++
	Victoria	6	2	+++	+	++
	Amelia	30	20	+++	++	+
	Felix	38	28	+++	++	+

Del Valle School/449 students, rural, under performed	**Pamela**	5	1	+	+	++
	Violeta	30	1	++	++	+++
	Mariana	13	5	++	+++	+++
	Mateo	24	24	++	++	+
	Felipe	40	38	++	+	+

2. Professional influences: School Leadership

The international literature on school leadership defines it as the group of mechanisms by means of which the leadership team supervises the teaching and learning process and links the school with the surrounding community. Leadership in successful schools may involve setting directions, developing people, developing teaching and learning, refining and aligning organisation, the use of data (Day 2011, p. 51), and establishing links with the community.

However, as elsewhere in Chile until 2015, school leadership emphasises effective delivery of the National Curriculum supported closely by the head of curriculum and evaluation, who is responsible for the teaching and learning and its emphasis on school planning and management. At the same time, school leaders are in charge of the partial management of human resources (they can remove only 5% of the staff at the beginning of their administration), the distribution of tasks and responsibilities, and finance by efficient administration of material resources available along with the continuous search for new resources through new projects and proposals.

Additionally, the leadership team should guarantee a positive school life and lasting bonds with the community (MINEDUC 2005; c.f. above, Ch 3, section 2, 'School Leadership'). Thus, the findings of leadership in successful schools are not echoed in Chile yet, since developing people, and teaching and learning are tasks defined by Chilean official regulation just in 2015.

The main findings about Chilean school leadership reveal that the four schools participating in the study face significant challenges as schools working with underprivileged communities. Likewise, leadership teams struggled with limited and uncoordinated resources, a significant amount of paperwork and a kind of restricted autonomy, limited in their capacity to replace teaching staff and incorporate new members, this is consistent with the findings related to the duties and scope of Chilean school leaders (Weinstein and Muñoz 2012). However, in each school, principals attempt to make a difference for students there. Teachers seemingly do not expect any support from principals since the prescriptions for the role do not specify pedagogical involvement and the head of curriculum and evaluation has responsibility for this task (MINEDUC 2005).

In Gabriela, Del Valle and Laguna Negra schools the pedagogical leadership is vested mainly in the Head of Curriculum and Evaluation, as Amelia explains:

> "The head of curriculum and evaluation discusses pedagogical issues with teachers. Sometimes, we make decisions based on the internal evaluations as guidelines for improvement and the HCE supports us in this process. Lately, data has been used as a reference to make changes, just small changes."

In Del Valle, teachers seem to be fairly autonomous and happy, and supported by the head of curriculum and evaluation. Mariana, who is a teacher, explains her perception of her work with the head of curriculum and evaluation:

> "The support for us is mainly from the head of curriculum and evaluation, she observes lessons and provides feedback, and supports us with materials and didactic resources. These last two years have been a bit different" Mariana

The heads of curriculum and evaluation are the individuals responsible for teachers, providing mentoring, support and coordination resources for lessons. However, in Bolivar school there are two individuals in the post and the principal often contributes, as we shall see in the next section.

In spite of the similarities among schools, there are subtle differences, which give a distinctive character to each school such as the formation of the leadership team; levels of control and monitoring; participation in definition of managerial tools; and the focus of professional development. These features may influence the school culture, and the nature and meaning of professional identities.

Dynamics monitoring and mentoring

In Chile there is a leadership tradition of supervision and control over the school staff (Labarca 1939; Egana, Nunez and Salinas 2003; Nunez,

Weinstein and Munoz 2012). In this context, a top-down approach is the most common approach, although there are different levels of control and monitoring by the leadership team among schools in this study.

Higher levels of monitoring and mentoring

In different ways, principals in these schools exude a sense of authority expressed in manners, attitudes and even clothing, often driving their leadership with personal characteristics. For example, in Bolivar school the leader appears as model and referent for teachers' practice and the school community, often inspiring teachers. He drives school leadership, setting the direction for the teachers in this study.

> "[T]he principal provides guidelines for our job; along with the leadership team, they drive pedagogical aspects of the schooling. As well, he facilitates the administrative and financial aspects of the school". Jose, Bolivar.

The principal walks around the school in a white smock, making sure that everything is in order, creating a sense of his authority among students and teachers, perhaps with a slightly vertical approach to the researcher's eyes. He is a referent for teachers, students and the community. This teacher is clear about this in her quote:

> "The principal makes rules in the school, the students have some respect and fear of him. Also he has this role among teachers. He is a sort of 'father' for everyone around here. When we are late or relaxed about some task, he calls our attention [to the teachers] in the same way that he speaks with children here." Cindy

Cindy describes the attitude of the principal in the school and the perceptions of the school community about the role, she does not seem disappointed or

surprised by the principal's role and behaviour. It is worth noting that in Bolivar School the principal's attitudes seem not to affect the bonds with teachers.

Similar to Bolivar school, in Laguna Negra School the principal is present in the school most of the time and is involved in the running of the school. Although the school is small, the principal makes an effort to supervise school activities closely, as shown in the following quotes:

> "The principal defines the policies of the school, the project, the goals. The principal watches so that everything runs normally and provides quietness for student learning." Juan

This is consistent with Monica's statement:

> "At the start of each year [the principal] defines the goals of the year. She is very much present in school activities; the principal is in our breaks, in mornings and afternoons. She is always around the school talking to children; and in the parents' meetings. She is making an effort to improve attendance".

These quotes suggest a slightly top-down leadership approach that appears to inhibit any attempt at teamwork since the principal seems to keep tight control over school activities. However, principals are also visibly present and available to provide pedagogical guides and suggestions, as well as mentoring to teachers if they need it.

In Gabriela school, the principal lays many responsibilities on the leadership team, keeping her office closed to previous arranged appointments and external visitors.

> “The principal is rarely available to talk to us, she is absent from the pedagogical discussion supporting teachers' practices and professional development, the principal office is mainly closed to us since it is always busy in other matters. However, the HCE is very supportive, instead.” Ada, Gabriela

Although in Gabriela school the principal and the leadership team have been in the school for more than ten years, the following quote depicts weak connections between the leadership team and the staff, hindering the possibility of providing mentoring and guidelines to teachers, since Melisa alleges difficulties in the communication between the principal and teachers.

> “The principal should say things politely; to be someone approachable; someone good, helping and advising you. We all are adults who like to do our job and deserve good manners” Melisa

It is worth noting that in Gabriela school there is a phenomenon that may generate conflict in teachers’ professional identities in this school: the form of communication promoted by the principal at the school. Although Melisa is cautious, when she says “*She should say things politely; to be someone approachable”*, she in part implies that the principal shows little regard for individuals within the school, falling short of Melisa's expectations of the relationship between principal and teachers. This claim depicts low levels of camaraderie between teachers and the principal, preventing teamwork, suggesting that there is tension between the expectation of professional identity promoted by the principal and the personal expectations among teachers, and depicting a divergence in the concept of teacher professional identity in this school.

To some extent in Bolivar, Laguna Negra and Gabriela schools leadership teams provide mentoring to teachers as well as recognition of achievements, enhancing their self-confidence and sense of self-efficacy. However, these attitudes and actions are also perceived as slightly intrusive practice sometimes defining the boundaries of professional judgements among teachers. This is likely to affect the school culture, as we will see in the next section (2).

Lower levels of monitoring and mentoring

In Del Valle School, the leadership team seems not to practise the same levels of attention to the school activities. Likewise, teachers seem not to feel the same degree of involvement in the school decisions, and the strands connecting the leadership team to the teachers seem to be weak. As Felipe attests:

> "The leadership team asks for strategies for improvement but we don't see any sign of change, no training opportunities; no teamwork; no new material, nothing really! I have the feeling that our suggestions are not considered, I hardly see any support for improvement". Felipe, Del Valle

Felipe's experience could be an isolated example. However, when other teachers describe their perception of the principal's role, for example, they described it as an administrative post.

> "The principal is really a manager, who keeps links to the community and institutions outside the school rather than discussing aspects the teaching and learning process with teachers", Mariana, Del Valle.

The size of Del Valle School may affect the perception of leadership team impact in the school since the school has the largest staff in the study in spite of its having fewer pupils than Gabriela school.

High and low levels of monitoring and mentoring among schools seem to leave in their midst the focus of teaching and learning that is stressed by the limited support for professional development in almost all schools as we will see in the next section.

Professional development support

Professional development is found to be an important aspect of school leadership, influencing how teachers perceive their professional identities. However, the leadership team does not always establish the focus of professional development. For example, in both schools situated in rural localities, professional development depends on the municipality. It is this institution which allocates resources and often selects the professional development programmes and providers.

Thirteen of 20 teachers state the need to have a good, up-to-date understanding of subject knowledge. However, when they describe the mechanisms they use to update their knowledge, their statements reveal a scarcity of formal input. At the time of the fieldwork six of 20 teachers were engaged in formal training, and just one teacher (out of the six) was partially

supported by the school, only in terms of time allocation and not resources. Three of these teachers belonged to Gabriela School, two teachers to Bolivar School and one teacher to Del Valle School. No teachers from Laguna Negra School were involved in training activities this year. Teachers complain of a lack of support:

> "We had very little support for training. You need to be very proactive to get support for training. It seems that this is not an institutional priority. When we have training activities, they are not very pertinent to our context or subject, so it is very difficult to apply what we have learnt." Felipe, Del Valle School.

Felipe claims that there is a scarcity of support for training, which requires an individual capacity to obtain funding and time for this purpose. At the same time, he portrays the opportunities for training as 'not very pertinent to the context or subject and […] difficult to apply', suggesting perhaps an isolation of training opportunities from classroom practice along with a lack of companionship and/or monitoring of training. Teachers reported that their personal capacity and networks are their only support mechanisms if they wish to complete training activities.

In Laguna Negra School the availability of professional development opportunities depends also on the municipality and the 'microcentros'. Staff meetings are held every fifteen days and there is also a monthly meeting with other rural schools in the locality. The municipality is promoting a professional culture focused on the improvement of academic achievements.

Positive disposition towards professional development

In Bolivar school, there have been efforts to implement professional development initiatives, for example on group management and school discipline. At the same time, the leadership team is flexible for teachers, who are enrolled in any professional development activity, as Diego states:

> "I have a lot of flexibility to study, my timetable is flexible and the principal is very understanding about my needs in this process", Diego, Bolivar school.

> "There are training opportunities but they are very general or focus on the 'main' subjects. This is the only concern of the authorities, the measurements and the results. Subjects like mine are always missed out". Marco, Bolivar

In spite of the positive disposition towards professional development of the school leadership team, the quotation above depicts the scarcity in terms of training for teachers of other subjects, revealing how external policies and standardised tests reduce and even jeopardize teachers' professional learning and development.

Less disposition to professional development

The situation is different in Gabriela School, where teachers are individually and voluntarily enrolled in professional development programmes, but feel that there is lack of institutional support for them.

> "I have no support for my professional development. I am doing a master's degree in assessment, I am the only one from a public school, all my classmates come from private schools, they have a bonus for study and support from the school, since leaders allocate resources and time for homework and essays. I do not have anything like that. On the contrary, I haven't even got facilities in terms of time or schedule".

Belgica

The year after the interviews took place the number of teachers in formal training increased from six to eight teachers. In Bolivar School, training activities were implemented for all teachers to enhance discipline among pupils. Likewise, the municipality in the rural locality supported two teachers, who are middle leaders in Laguna Negra and Del Valle School, in their formal training.

The perceived reality that teachers are responsible for their training adds a distinctive level of uncertainty to teachers' emphasis on pupils' learning, opening the concept up to personal understandings and diversifying the focus of professional knowledge among teachers (see more details in Ch 6, section 1, 'Pupils' Learning').

Professional knowledge is an important aspect of professional identity, contributing to self-confidence and self-worth. Therefore the lack of cohesion in terms of understandings of professional knowledge provides messages inconsistent with the context in terms of the meaning and relevance of professional knowledge in teachers' professional identities. As a consequence, teachers who are able to access training opportunities appear to be exercising their personal capacity or agency and their personal judgement about the need to stay updated, shaping their personal conceptions of professional identity in this respect. Teachers who do not have these capacities may miss out on this aspect of professional identity. Likewise, all teachers seem to ignore options for professional development and learning as opportunities to acquire additional

features needed in the occupation. At least, interview participants express concerns of this type.

Note about Internet use

This grievance is aggravated when teachers are asked about their updating mechanisms. Sixteen of 20 participants mentioned the Internet as the main source of knowledge, highlighting the official web pages of the Ministry of Education. All teachers at Gabriela School, three from Bolivar School, four from Laguna Negra and four from Del Valle School mentioned the Internet.

> "I am always reading and researching. The Internet is a very good tool and the Ministry webpages are very helpful." Mariana, Del Valle

> "I read a lot. I read webpages and books, I like to be up to date, I am a self-taught person." Carol, Gabriela

> "Training is very expensive so I keep up to date with the Internet and with my kids who help me. They taught me about computers and the Internet. They show me how to do it." Felix, Laguna Negra

Although teachers are proactive in researching and learning, it seems that only their personal interest and motivation guide their actions. At the same time, the Internet appears repeatedly in their statements, evidencing perhaps a vague sense of search parameters or the lack of specific resources for teachers.

In a brief review of the main official webpage for professional development implemented by the Ministry of Education in 2015, it was found that only twenty online courses were available for primary teachers (cpeipevirtual 2016). The use of the Internet for teachers' research and professional development might

be an area for further exploration in order to understand how teachers select resources on the Internet and the reliability of the virtual sources available. However, teachers appear to exercise their personal assets in order to satisfy the need to update their knowledge. Although three teachers have institutional support, many of them do not.

The scarcity of mechanisms for renewing and renovating teachers' professional learning and development suggests the limited importance (from the perspective of the school leadership) of these processes for professional identities, compelling a few of the teachers (Belgica, Pamela, Diego, Cindy, Lili and Melisa) to appeal to their personal sense of professional identity to explain such orientations.

> “In our school the principal could ask you to teach anything, even if you don't have qualifications for that, so because I want to be a good teacher, I decided to get a diploma in science and obtain all the knowledge and skills to teach, it is a personal motivation”, Lili, Gabriela.

Therefore, their capacity to access professional learning and development opportunities appears to be associated primarily with personal empowerment and agency, motivated by individual orientations rather than encouragement and support by the school leadership.

In this vein, the perceptions of students' and parents' needs lead to the acquisition of knowledge and skills because school leaderships were almost silent about this aspect at the time of this study. As a consequence, some teachers are compelled to manage their own personal resources and criteria in

the search for professional development since the school leadership provides little intellectual and material resources to do it, excluding this aspect in the construction of Chilean primary teachers' professional identities when working in challenging circumstances.

Another aspect of school leadership affecting teachers' professional identity construction and definition is the teachers' participation and involvement in processes of decision-making in schools as we explore in the next section.

Levels of participation in managerial school tools discussion (EIP &ISP)

By law every Chilean school should develop an Institutional Education Project (IEP) and a four-year Improvement School Plan (ISP). These processes should involve teachers as well as the larger school community. The degree of knowledge and participation in these may contribute to portraying teachers' involvement in processes of decision-making in each school and the connections between the leadership team with the staff.

Participation and acknowledgement

For example, Bolivar and Laguna Negra developed these instruments in a process of participation and consultation among teachers, in the Bolivar case even as a concerted endeavour among the school community. Thus, teachers are aware of the vision, mission and aims of these documents.

"We created the IEP, in a public discussion with the staff and the

> community, so it is easier to be tuned into any new project or activity. The aims and goals are in our forehead." Victoria, Laguna Negra

Likewise, in Bolivar school the IEP is discussed and adjusted every year, keeping the document and the school staff and community updated.

Little participation and acknowledgement

In Gabriela and Del Valle School, teachers were not able to recall any of the mentioned elements, even claiming individual aims in their practice.

> "I don't know the aims of the educational project. I manage to have my own goals for my students within my lessons." Pamela, Del Valle.

> "The Institutional Educational Project just changed, I don't remember the aims, and however it is my fault. The leadership team provided us all the documents but I haven't read it yet." Melissa, Gabriela

It is worth noting that three teachers were unable to evoke the school mission and vision as well as the aims declared in the IEP of the school, claiming unfamiliarity since the IEP was changed recently or claiming 'private' aims in their practice as Pamela states above. Although this could be blamed on individuals, it seems that the processes of design and definition of the IEP and ISP in these schools involve little participation of teachers and perhaps also of the wider school community.

According to the definition, successful leadership in the schools in the current study show absence (A)/presence (P) of these aspects (see table 5.2 below).

For instance, leaders in these schools do set directions. They have a focus on teaching and learning, and they work actively, enhancing links to the community. However, leaders have not been able to use data to make decisions and practice management, and the emphasis on developing people is more or less absent in their practice. However, in different degrees and with different emphases, teachers recognize mentoring and professional recognition.

Table 5.2: Summary of school leadership shaping school culture and teachers' professional identities

	Setting directions	DP	Teaching and learning focus	Use data	Mentoring	Distribution of responsibilities	Link to community
Bolivar	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Gabriela	P	A	P	A	A	P	P
Laguna Negra	P	A	P	A	P	P	P
Del Valle	P	A	P	A	A	A	P

3. Professional Influences: School Culture

School culture is defined in this research as the social life, human interaction and interpersonal dynamics of individuals within a school organisation, and also the beliefs underpinning regulations and decisions at school, whether tacit or explicit (c.f. above, Ch 3, section 3, 'Workplace Influences'). Such

beliefs impact on the quality of teaching and learning as well as student achievements where school leadership has a distinctive effect (Day and Gu 2014; Day, Gu and Sammons 2016).

For the purposes of this study, the key aspects of the Chilean school culture are analysed, followed by the effects of the school culture on the main features of teachers' professional identities: collegiality, autonomy and agency. Ethics is not included in this section because, in practice, it appears more related to each individual's perceptions rather than being an aspect of a unitary school culture.

In schools participating in this study, there are several indicators that contribute to a depiction of the characteristics and nature of the school cultures. These are the values within the school culture, the connections within the school culture, the communication and general school organisation, and the group cohesion in the school culture.

Values within school culture

Explicitly or unintentionally, the leadership teams enact certain values in their actions and decisions, which promote and define the nature of the interactions within the school. Often the explicit values are shared among the school community as the espoused values of the Institutional Educational Project (IEP). However, there are unintentional actions and attitudes

embraced by the leadership team that also affect the school culture, as was explained in the section above (Values promoted by the leadership teams).

Consistency with espoused values

In Bolivar school the document is clear about the role of values in the school culture as well as the role of the school community; however, the main emphasis is not on academic achievement. Although the mission of the school states the importance of developing capabilities for the future, learning is not mentioned in the Institutional Educational Project aims, suggesting that the development of values and ties within the community are prioritised in the espoused values driving school culture.

The way that participants in the study describe the role played by the community and the relevance of it within the school suggests a variation or sub-culture of 'welfarism' (Handy and Aitken 1986) with a focus not only on care for and about the school community but also on learning. Teachers explain their commitment to students' wellbeing, as well as their commitment to the improvement of students' learning evidencing the dual role of teaching. As Jose states:

> "The main role of my job is the students' learning and the improvement of academic achievement for the students' wellbeing in spite of the difficulties in our community which often distract us from the learning process."

Evidence provided by respondents in Bolivar School (see Ch 6, below) implies that the culture promoted by the leadership team embraces similar ethics and values to those of teachers, so that the leadership approach is comfortable for them. This seems to have a positive influence on their professional identities, enhancing some dimensions of it as will be reviewed in the next section.

Little consistency with espoused values

In spite of Gabriela school's legacy of 'good' academic achievements, the espoused values declared in the mission of the school do not mention learning, knowledge or skills. However, 'helping the students to face the challenges of the present and the future' may represent a commitment to academic results. A recent report by the Quality Agency has found that academic self-esteem and school life are lower than other schools in the same socio-economic group. Teachers were not able to discuss the aims of the IEP suggesting low levels of familiarity with it. However, teachers seem to be happy working there:

> "I have the freedom to decide about content, methodologies, and type of lessons. I feel that I can decide everything about my practice; that is why I am still working here." Belgica

In spite of the sense of freedom described by Belgica where teachers feel free working in the classroom contributing to a 'hospitable culture' (Barth 2001), there are several instances where teachers report mechanisms of control over their job. This is closer to a 'tightly structured' (Robert 1992) organisation where not only ethics and values are shared, but also teachers' planning, tests and

didactic materials are closely monitored, undermining organisational trust as well as defining teachers' autonomy (for more details see section on autonomy).

According to evidence provided by participants in this study, some of the influences of school culture on teachers' professional identities are based on four elements: student academic achievements and wellbeing; to provide parents with a quality service; and to invest personal time in any extracurricular activity in the school as part of dedication and commitment to the workplace.

> "The school expects teachers to have a role as a carer for the pupils in terms of their wellbeing as well as their academic achievement. The leadership team expects good academic results in order to provide better opportunities to the students; but at the same time, there is a tacit task of looking after the students, attending to their needs by means of connecting them to social services available if they need them. Nobody wants parents complaining about the service that we provide as teachers and as a school, because we are competing with other schools in the borough in order to increase student enrolment." Lili

None of the participants attest personal concern for parent complaints (more details in next chapter) but they do state the need for more support in their activity, especially facing parents.

In Laguna Negra School the principal is committed to students' learning as well as to teachers. The mission of the school is seeking to provide values for a happy life, and there is no mention of learning or skills in the document. Thus, values seem to be central to the school culture although the principal and recently enrolled teachers are suggesting some changes.

In Del Valle school the Institutional Educational Project states the importance of developing skills for learning. However, the IEP seems not to be part of the practice among participants in this study, as Mateo describes:

> "We have other goals in the school, they have been changed, we have non-academic goals. When you are getting to know the reality of the students, the academic goals lose value. We have students who have a lot of difficulties, some of them are ill in their soul, they have a suffering heart. They can't learn like that. We give thanks that they come to the school, and achieve the attendance target to move to the next grade." Mateo, Del Valle.

The shift in school aims described by the general inspector (school discipline in charged) of the school and former Head of Curriculum and Evaluation may seem to undermine academic achievement. However, the changes in the school aims seem not to affect the whole school since they are not an official statement. Additionally, Mariana and others do not echo the school mission in the expectations of the job as described:

> "In this school we have to accomplish very basic things: to be at the school on time; to submit the lesson planning; and work according your schedule; and of course we should help students move to the next level."

The expectations of the job are subtly different from the school mission statement, revealing issues of communication in the school. Perhaps due to this situation, the recent report of the Quality Agency (year 2015) ranked this school lower on the four indicators than other schools in the same socio-economic group.

If we consider the Institutional Educational Project as a referent for professional identity of Chilean primary teachers meanings there are two things to note. On the one hand, consistency with the espoused values provides a clear message to teachers about the values that are important in the organisation, therefore for the whole school. On the other hand, when there is little consistency with the espoused values there are significant spaces for teachers to interpret and enact values that they believe in, leaving more room for the exercise of professional judgement and agency based on individual criteria in any school interaction. As a consequence, the professional identity meanings might show more differences within the same school.

Strands within the school culture

Bolivar, Gabriela and Laguna Negra schools seem to have a thread that creates a sense of belonging among teachers. For example, in Bolivar there is a strong identification with teaching foreign students addressed by the principal and the leadership team. It seems that the principal represents an authority-figure among teachers, students and possibly parents.

> "The principal has a significant role inside the school and toward the community. He has been leading the inclusion of all students." Clara, Bolivar.

This observation must be enhanced by the fact that the principal actively enrols students even if they do not have official documentation (Suarez 2010; Donoso, Mardones and Contreras 2009). In interviews previous to this study, the principal is explicit on this point: "*In spite of their nationality, they are children. It*

is our duty to provide them education" (Suarez 2010, p. 14). Additionally, the principal is valued within the school community. As Clara explains,

> "There are kids from several Latin American countries and he encourages and supports everyone, even those who have no official documentation to be registered. He promotes a school with open doors for children and the community". Clara, Bolivar.

The Gabriela school embraces concerns about students' wellbeing as well as a commitment to the academic achievements of the students. The principal at Gabriela school has been able to keep these commitments as glue among the staff and the school community. This is clearly expressed by the Head of Curriculum and Evaluation when she states:

> "I am interested in improving learning. I like teachers working with effect for the students, and a good manner with them because I am interested in promoting the emotional aspect of teaching. If we have a happy child, she will learn better". HCE, Gabriela.

It is possible to suppose that time in the school post contributes to defining more solidly certain aspects of culture within the school.

Although Laguna Negra School has had a principal for the last four years who is fairly committed to pupils' improvement, the school staff has a strong link to the community since the staff belong to it, contributing to strong ties among the members beyond the principal since this person does not live in the locality.

> "the school is quite little, and the school life is very cosy, everyone is committed with our students and the community, I was born here!!!!" Victoria, Laguna Negra School.

Similarly, in Del Valle School, the principal and any other member of the leadership team do not live in the locality and, so, many of the links to the community are not shared with the school staff, who keep a strong sense of commitment to their community. This is accentuated by the principal's involvement in the daily school challenges.

Communication and general organisation of the school

This section discusses the established mechanism of communication and procedure to develop any activity and task within the school. Schools from urban localities seem to have better defined these aspects, while schools in the rural locality face more complex mechanisms since the municipality has a more direct role in the school management.

Well-defined managerial support mechanisms

In Bolivar and Gabriela school the culture is marked by the clearly defined procedures and mechanisms within the school organisation which facilitate teachers' jobs, as Clara states:

> “it is easy to work in this school, the communication is very efficient, the administrative mechanisms work well, and there is agreement about the goals of the school, it is easy for us”.

In both schools, this suggests that the school culture has elements of a ‘tightly structured’ culture (Robert 1992) or ‘role culture’ (Hargreaves 1999) where the different bodies of the school work efficiently in bureaucratic terms; where

communication channels are defined, as well as the mechanisms of management at the school, allowing teachers to work with confidence, secure about the organisation of management and its results.

Municipality interfering in administrative mechanisms

In Del Valle and Laguna Negra the municipality has an important role in the management of the schools, therefore there are several procedures that lie with the municipality administration which do not always contribute to the school management. Often teachers deal with the municipality directly.

For example, in Del Valle School, the researcher felt overwhelmed by a climate of disorganisation in the school, similar to this statement by the head of curriculum when she describes a usual workday:

> "For example, today in the morning we had eight teachers absent, they let us know early this morning. So instead of attending to my 'planning' tasks, I spent the first part of the morning trying to organize the school, allocating teachers in every classroom to be sure that everyone will have lessons today and no class will be running about in the school."

Even if the absence of eight teachers in a school of forty staff (about 20% of the teachers) is an isolated situation, it has an impact on the running of the whole school. If we consider that the role of the head of curriculum and evaluation is to support teachers in the teaching and learning process, it is possible to infer that, at least on this morning, this person neglected the focus of the job on teaching and learning.

It is worth noting that the educational authority is across the road from the school, so often teachers and parents solve their problems by going straight to the authorities rather than within the school, increasing disorganisation in the school.

Group cohesion in the school culture

As in many schools in challenging circumstances in Chile and elsewhere, parents seem to be absent from the teaching and learning process, and sometimes in opposition to teachers. This suggests a lack of cohesion among the school community increased by the fact that the leadership team does not always provide assistance and satisfactory work conditions to teachers affecting the school culture.

Less cohesion in school culture

In Gabriela school, teachers describe levels of anxiety about the absence of support to face parents' demands.

> “Sometimes it is demotivating when students treat you as a maid. I feel odd. I want to teach and parents are always against you. You feel like you are swimming again the flow, instead of getting help from parents you are getting lack of support and credibility and the school leadership does not help.” Ada.

The quote above suggests a lack of support for teachers, depicting loneliness of teachers in their decisions and actions, where the leadership team seems to provide little assistance and companion.

Additionally, all participants in the study report an overwhelming demand of paperwork accented by the demands from the municipalities, which goes straight to teachers. As Melisa attests,

> "There are daily paperwork demands from the municipality: forms to fill, tests to do and mark. Often, I have to give tasks to kids in order to achieve the paperwork demand and meet deadlines. I know that everyone has the same pressure, the principal, head teachers and so on…it is a sort of parallel job. We have to do all the paperwork sometimes, dismissing pupils and the learning process"

However, during the period of interviews in Gabriela school, several interviews were suspended because teachers were absent. Additionally, two of the second group of interviews were conducted by phone because teachers were reported ill at the time of the second interview. This is consistent with the EIP (2013) which identifies 'medical permits' as a main weakness. These situations maybe are not related but at least suggest the need for further inquiry in order to explore possible connections between the school culture and teachers' health and wellbeing in Chilean schools.

While in Del Valle school teachers' absence is a systematic problem (every day there are teachers absent), support seems to be a slippery asset.

> "I don't know the expectation about our work in the school, sometimes there is some support, but it is very hard to get it if you are not familiar to key people in the school or municipality", Pamela, Del Valle School.

Although in Laguna Negra School there are no problems about teachers' absence, teachers report that they receive little support affecting the cohesion of the school culture.

> "As teachers we do need support in our action and decisions because if we are aligned as a team, we will have respect and trust from the school community. In our daily work this is really important because it is about our credibility among parents and students so if we have support, our work is more effective, if we do not, then our work becomes weak". Victoria. Laguna Negra School.

This teacher is clear about the relevance of respect and trust to her practice. She is claiming the necessity of cohesion and support among staff as a basic condition for effective learning. She demands help and approval of ideas and actions facing the school community, and likely the lack of those undermines her interaction within the school. Probably Victoria is experiencing dissonance between her professional identity meaning (PIM) and the PIM promoted by the school culture.

More cohesion in school cultures

In Bolivar school, teachers seem to experience a supportive culture where the leadership team and the staff work according to internal rules and regulations, as Diego explains:

> "We have regular meetings to share experiences and problems about our students and the learning process. We discuss problems and try to find solutions according to school rules and procedures. We try to answer parents' questions. We try to provide a good service to our students in order to get good academic results. We want successful students!", Diego Bolivar School.

Ubiquitous principles, rules and regulations contribute to create cohesion among the staff and school community in favour of cohesion in the school culture facilitating social relationships and interactions since individuals acknowledge the grounds, which are supporting actions and decisions.

Co-existence of school sub-cultures

In this study, schools have several sub-cultures, this means that there are groups of cliques of friendship that share certain values and beliefs, or even share a similar work experience in the school. Perhaps the most homogenous culture exists in Laguna Negra School where both the size of the school along with the routines (breaks and microcentros) contribute to creating a great sense of teamwork. However, in Laguna Negra School dissonance seems to be compounded by the existence of at least two subcultures shaped by the years of experience in the locality: a group of teachers in an early career phase introduced by the principal in the last three years, and a group of teachers with more than 25 years working in the school. As Amelia attests,

> "[N]ow there are too many new teachers and they are very young, they have other interests. Years ago, we used to have tea together or even go on holidays".

The gap among the staff described by Amelia may affect the possibility of teamwork since teachers seem not to share common interests. Therefore, in spite of the size of Laguna Negra School, the existence of subcultures may jeopardise school success such as better academic achievements, since the PIM seems to be diverse.

In Bolivar school, although all participants in the study feel that the principal and the leadership team support their behaviour and decisions, as well as their ethics, the school seems to have also some sub-cultures of teachers who challenge the leadership team, as Cindy states:

> "The oldest teachers think that we cannot do anything to improve learning because the families' problems are impossible to overcome. They are more passive in their role. However, there is another group of teachers that is very proactive, they want to make changes, make a difference for pupils. They have higher expectations of the students as well as hope."

Previous research on teachers' lives (Day et al 2007) points out that, in some teachers, years of experience affect their sense of efficacy and commitment, which could be the case of the older teachers described by Cindy in her quote. The coexistence of more than one school culture seems to be consistent with recent evidence collected by the Quality Agency (2015) among the school community, where the indicator of school life is the second-lowest, hinting at some of the complexities of school culture.

Although years of experience may affect sub-cultures in other schools in the study, the evidence shows that in Gabriela school the glue keeping the sub-cultures together is the commitment to the institution and the impact of social stereotypes of women. However, teachers see each other only in breaks and mealtime and years of experience working in the same school contribute to creating cliques of friendship.

Similarly, Del Valle School seems to have a diverse school culture although there are similarities among the values and ethics of the respondents in the study (perhaps that is why they took part in this research), teachers seem to work in isolation, suggesting a kind of 'fragmented individualist' culture or 'Balkanized culture' (Hargreaves 1994).

Sub-cultures in an organisation should not be a problem when goals and aims are clear. However, inconsistencies within the school culture seem to reduce any sense of cohesion. Teachers work independently with few opportunities to coordinate work, driven mainly by personal aims and goals affecting professional identity meanings.

Informal Collaboration as Collegiality

In these schools, collegiality seems to be a matter of goodwill and friendship rather than systematic teamwork and collaboration among teachers, where lack of time and resources seem to be the hallmark of the practice. However, some schools appear to have less supportive environments for even informal collaboration, as is the case in Gabriela and Del Valle schools. Other schools have better conditions, which seem to be more supportive of a culture of collaboration, as is the case of Laguna Negra and Bolivar school.

A slightly supportive school culture for collegiality

Laguna Negra is a small school, thus it is easy to coordinate among colleagues for any 'joint venture'. Likewise, most teachers have been around the locality and community for long time, thus, they tend to have strong connections with pupils and the community, motivating collaboration in facing any challenge.

> "We always collaborate with each other, sharing materials and documents to improve lessons or solve classroom problems because we have lunch together and chat about school issues, but it is really informal." Amelia

The size of Laguna Negra School allows informal collaboration among colleagues at lunchtime and in breaks, contributing to cohesion in the school culture, facilitating teamwork in order to solve problems and achieve goals since the commitment to the community provides an environment of collaboration among colleagues.

Since the school is located in a rural area, teachers have regular meetings to share teaching practices and concerns. The authorities provide this opportunity, bringing material and topics for discussion according to teachers' needs. Teachers describe these meetings as an important opportunity for work with colleagues:

> "I learn from my colleagues in the 'microcentros', it is very interesting meeting to share knowledge, practices and experiences. For me, it is very important because it is the only chance I have to meet other teachers and talk about my subject and its methodologies. However, at the school we collaborate informally because we don't have time. Often lunchtime is the best time to talk about problems or issues of teaching", Monica

The isolation of the school in a rural locality and the isolation of its teachers are clearly depicted in this quote. Teachers appreciate these instances for improving the impact of their job since it can be the only opportunity to reflect with other teachers in a supportive environment with allocation of resources. Although this could be seen as an example of 'contrived collegiality' (Hargreaves 1994), teachers seem to value these instances. This is an example of how collegiality could be enhanced by official inducements, providing time and finance for teachers to work with colleagues.

Similarly, teachers at Bolivar school, tend to share the motivations of working in a multicultural environment, trying to overcome pupil problems. This is a fact that contributes to enhancing their willingness to work collaboratively although it is informal and not on a systematic basis.

As Marcos explains,

> "I work with my colleagues very often informally as a tutor, not in my subject but we always try to solve problems together, we are a team and we work together".

However, these instances of collaboration are created by the good social relationships and the goodwill of teachers more than by a specific internal policy of the school. In fact, the leadership team could even neglect these collaborative endeavours, as Cindy states:

> "[T]hey (colleagues) are very helpful and willing to help. I used to work with the other maths teacher in our own time, sharing problems and practices, but this year the conditions changed and we are teaching different subjects, thus we cannot support each other."

It is worth noting when Cindy states that "*this year the conditions changed and we are teaching different subjects*". She is referring to the new measure

introduced by the leadership team where teachers should teach all subjects in just one grade. In other words, the characteristics of her tasks have changed, and the collaboration of these teachers was ignored, supporting the assertion about the 'vertical' leadership approach as well as the informal and non-systematic practice of collegiality in the school. However, teachers seem to accept this, because they also recognize benefits from the change as well as the leadership's efforts for improvement, as Cindy expresses:

> "Now, I have to teach all subjects. I am not good at Music or Spanish, so I have to work harder to get a good lesson and I don't feel confident to teach these subjects. It is very stressful! Although, it is good because I know my students better, I feel less competent about the contents that I am teaching."

The change introduced by the leadership team is consistent with the mission of the school where pupils' values and families appear more important that the learning process itself, shaping a school culture where teachers in this study feel supported. However, if we consider that identities are in part defined and shaped in interaction with social contexts, it will be interesting to unfold a few messages or layers in this change for the identity attribute of collegiality. The first message from the leadership team to teachers' professional identities is related to the levels and spheres of participation of teachers in decision-making within the school, suggesting low levels of collaboration. Then, the leadership team also emphasises the importance of relationships with pupils and the strands of the school community and families as priorities in teachers' jobs, suggesting the relevance of these relationships for teachers' professional identity meanings.

And the third part of the message is about the mechanisms for acquiring new skills and knowledge. The little support attested by teachers suggests low levels of collegiality and fairly high levels of professional autonomy. On the one hand, that can be harmful for professional development, and the whole school culture, since teachers may feel lonely in the absence of support and guidelines (Nias 1989). On the other hand, the decision may enhance trust among teachers since it is consistent with the ethos of the school and it reflects the leadership team's confidence in the ability and autonomy of teachers to gain new skills and knowledge according to the school's and pupils' needs.

Less supportive school culture for collegiality

Contrarily to the teachers in the schools described above (Laguna Negra and Bolivar), Gabriela and Del Valle schools have general conditions which only support occasional instances of teamwork and collaboration often associated with specific dates and celebrations. Therefore, teachers' willingness to collaborate is essential to coordinate actions. As Belgica from Gabriela School explains,

> "In my job as a tutor, I do work with colleagues; when I make decisions about my class or a specific student I like to ask for advice from other teachers, but we don't have a specific time to do that. The collaboration that we do is totally informal and it is like that because everyone is committed to the girls." Belgica

In spite of the disposition of teachers to work together, in a conversation about collegiality, two teachers affirm their preference to work alone:

> "I like to work alone; I like to make my own decisions about what I will do and how I will do it. I don't like to work with someone else; to try to make

> agreements. It is very difficult to join teaching approaches; I rather prefer to work by myself." Lili, Gabriela

This statement suggests that some leadership approaches are more appealing to some teachers, where they tend to feel more comfortable and pleasant to work with. Perhaps the leadership approach verifies the professional identity held by these teachers in terms of professional judgements. However, the exercise of autonomy can be also a natural response to poor leadership, promoting a culture of collaboration.

Although teachers in Del Valle school do not express their preference to work alone, the expressions of collegiality seem to be ephemeral among colleagues; and teachers tend to work together around specific circumstances or events with little support and regularity.

> "I work with some people. We work in a very informal way, just with friends really. We don't have time. We should organise our time of collaboration and this time is always out of the school. I am always willing to help if someone asks me for help, but overall, we don't do a lot of collaboration." Mariana, Del Valle

Mariana clearly describes the conditions for collaboration among teachers. It is worth noting her impression about the obstacles to collaboration when she states, "I think that teachers are jealous about their job" because it suggests a lack of camaraderie that possibly affects the whole school culture. In spite of that, for the last two years the head of curriculum and evaluation has been increasing teachers' opportunities to work in teams. As she explains:

> "In my role as HCE (two years now) I encourage regular meeting among colleagues as much as I can, this is one of the activities that could make

> the difference to curriculum management. We don't have 'microcentros' here, I think that this is a disadvantage for our teachers because we are quite isolated from the city and teachers haven't got opportunities to work together without sacrificing time from their personal lives." Violeta

However, teachers have few non-teaching hours, and it is not easy to coordinate them without asking for personal time. The lack of time and resources to coordinate teachers is further evident in this quote from Del Valle School:

> "[T]he coordination with peers is very difficult because we don't have time to work with other professionals in the school. I do exchange ideas with my colleagues by email and phone late in the evening, but we hardly see each other in the school, we are too busy. Anyway, I do like to talk with colleagues, teachers with more experience have a lot of knowledge to share with us [young teachers]. They also can learn from us." Pamela

Collaborative work depends on each teacher's willingness rather than any determination of the leadership team for systematic teamwork, or a culture of collaboration among teachers.

As the evidence suggests, collegiality is only a recent impulse by the leadership team with few resources devoted to it. Therefore, personal influences of teachers appear to be the main element triggered by the willingness of individuals to offer and request assistance within cliques of friends since it seems that camaraderie is not ubiquitous among teachers in Del Valle School.

In Laguna Negra School there is a regular process of collaboration among teachers. In Bolivar, Gabriela and Del Valle schools any expression of

collegiality seems to be determined by teachers' willingness to work together. Thus, it is possible to infer that individual motivations play a central role in any attempt at collegiality. Likewise, in terms of PIMs, although there has been a recent effort to increase collaboration among teachers from the leadership team, it is also true that the material conditions are not provided to expand collegiality beyond small-scale endeavours, blurring the emphasis on formal and systematic collaboration in the understanding of primary teachers' professional identity within the school culture.

Professional Judgement in the Classroom as Autonomy

Autonomy is related to the exercise of professional judgement in the uncertain situations of teaching (see Ch 3, section 2, 'Autonomy'). However, autonomy in Chilean schools seems to be bounded not only by national standardised tests and the curriculum but also by schools as institutions with internal rules and regulations. In spite of the documents mentioned above, in Bolivar School, the increased number of immigrants has compelled teachers to exercise their professional judgements slightly further.

> "I think that teachers' autonomy is restricted by the system in which we work and the opportunities that the system provides for us and for our students. That is why, in our school, we have designed a new lecture 'Latin American History' and the Ministry of Education has approved it. Now, we have the challenge of the implementation of this new lecture, because pupils will have additional time at the school. The lecture is after 4 pm, so the students are very tired at this time of the day and it has been difficult to motivate them." Jose, Bolivar

This is an example of teachers' autonomy in the school. Teachers (who were interviewed) in this school are proud and aware of the demanding situation of work in a multicultural setting. Likewise, they are determined to contribute to the wellbeing of pupils and the school community even with little support from the educational bodies, when their professional judgement or ‘practical wisdom’ (Schussler and Murrel 2016) is required to deal within the teaching and learning process and the moral challenges of the situation.

The Chilean central government has provided few responses to the multicultural phenomenon (MINEDUC 2016, Humanos 2016). As a consequence, teachers are compelled to solve the challenges of multicultural education as well as the problems of the school community, using their capacity to exercise discretion, thus influencing the school culture, which is not necessarily the case in the other schools in the study.

Additionally, difficulties in the implementation of the already-approved new lecture described by Jose in the quote above, bring to the fore the flexibility of the national curriculum and the autonomy of the school to deal with it, because although the lecture has been approved, it seems difficult to fit into the school day. Further enquiry needs to be done to find out if the leadership team is entitled to make the change, or if they feel restricted by the requirements of national standardised tests (better results increase schools autonomy), in order to understand the degree of autonomy ascribed to leadership teams and schools by official bodies, and thus to Chilean teachers as professionals as well.

Restricted autonomy due to the national curriculum

In spite of the autonomy exercised by teachers in Bolivar School, most teachers seem agreed that autonomy is circumscribed by classroom activities since fourteen out of 20 teachers describe autonomy in these terms, and twelve of them claim to have autonomy in defining methodologies for their lessons. In Laguna Negra the national curriculum is recognized as a frame for teachers' practice, shaping and limiting some aspects of teachers' autonomy:

> "[W]e are very free in the school, I can make decisions about learning strategies and methodologies because the contents have been defined by the Ministry of Education. Anyway, I report myself every fifteen days to the head of curriculum and evaluation and often I get feedback for improvement." Amelia.

Similar to other schools in the study, teachers report that autonomy is circumscribed by decisions related to the learning process and pedagogical aspects of their subjects, affecting mainly classroom activities and methodologies in the context of the national curriculum. However, they still feel autonomous and independent.

> "I am very free to decide about where and how I want to do my lessons. Anyway, I like to discuss innovations with the head of curriculum and evaluation because we get good suggestions." Victoria

Autonomy for teachers in these two schools is limited to their classrooms. All activities and planning should be reported to the head of curriculum and evaluation who often reviews and supervises teachers' work within the frame

provided by the national curriculum and the requirements from the municipalities.

Restricted autonomy due to school authorities

In Gabriela school, it has been found that autonomy is distinctively limited in classroom activities and lesson planning. The leadership team often closely monitors these, as participants in the study state:

> "We are quite free to decide about methodologies and strategies in our lessons. Nevertheless, I have to submit my lesson planning every fifteen days. Additionally, all tests and work sheets are reviewed by the heads of curriculum and evaluation before I make copies for students, but overall I feel free working here, that is why I like it" Lili, Gabriela.

In spite of the sense of occupational freedom described by Lili, there are several elements of 'controlled' autonomy depicted in the quote, since the organisation through its professionals supervises teachers more closely than in other schools, by means of several procedures such as inspections of worksheets and didactic material. Ada's more critical appraisal of the degree of autonomy is different, and it might reflect a distinct view of the situation:

> "In addition to submission of lesson planning every two weeks, I have to report myself for any change or decision. In spite of that I have a lot of freedom in my classroom, but I always report about my activities. I always ask for advice to the inspector or the head of curriculum and evaluation, I always ask for support. I don't want to make any misstep". Melisa, Gabriela.

These quotes unveil two different aspects of autonomy, which seem to be a bit contradictory. On the one hand, these quotes suggest that teachers feel free to decide about lessons without constraints in their job. On the other hand, their

freedom seems to be restricted by the internal procedures of the school. The quotes suggest at least a duality in the perception of autonomy in this school because Ada states the need for constant advice and support in her practice, requesting approval in her actions and decisions. This implies leadership attentiveness over the exercise of autonomy, and even a lack of professional self-confidence in the staff. This could be a personal characteristic of Ada. However, in terms of teachers' professional identity, it seems that individual differences among teachers affect the ways in which they enact their autonomy within the school.

Findings about autonomy in Del Valle School contribute with additional 'shaping' elements to the concept: years of experience and personal characteristics. Experience in teaching seems to affect the sense of autonomy among teachers, but it is not the only factor. The following quotes suggest that autonomy is bounded by teaching experience and duties because Pamela, as new teacher, seems to have less autonomy than Mariana and Felipe.

> "I don't feel free to decide about my methodology and contents. I proposed a methodology to teach reading and writing and the principal disagreed. He said that my method was too structured but we are using an official program, which is very structured too; I don't understand. We have a double discourse here because I have autonomy to manage my own resources; for example, I got my own stuff for my classroom (projector, pc and internet connection) because the school has a lack of resources and it is very difficult to do my job well but I haven't got autonomy to decide about my lessons". Pamela (5 years of experience)

Pamela is portraying a fairly restricted autonomy. She is describing constraints from the leadership team even in respect of the methodologies in her practice. On the other hand, she seems to have enough autonomy to manage new

equipment for her lessons, giving a contradictory message in terms of the meaning of autonomy in her PIM.

Contrarily, Felipe explains his autonomy in terms of his lessons but not the contents, expressing his concern about the structure of the latter.

> "I am able to decide about methodologies; but contents come from the ministry of education by means of the national curriculum. We don't have freedom to change that. I would like to modify the way that some contents are structured". Felipe (40 years of experience)

In spite of the limits to Felipe's autonomy, he seems to be able to create a different structure and propose changes to the curriculum, suggesting his desire to enact higher levels of autonomy in the profession, acknowledging perhaps the needs of his students in facing his subject. However, Mariana seems to have more autonomy than Felipe, describing her autonomy in different terms:

> "[T]he contents of the national curriculum are guidelines from the Ministry of Education, but I can do whatever I want, I can choose contents and themes that are relevant to my students." Mariana (13 years of experience)

The diversity in teachers' perceptions of autonomy (not necessarily linked to their years of experience) suggests that this dimension of teachers' professional identity manifests uneven understanding of professional identities, meaning that each teacher forms an idiosyncratic interpretation of the concept of autonomy.

Overall, autonomy seems to be limited by structural and institutional frames, through several mechanisms. However, in the midst of school leadership in challenging circumstances and low academic achievements, autonomy appears

to be constructed through personal characteristics, values and beliefs interacting with official regulations. If these aspects were aligned with the school leadership and culture, it is likely that autonomy would overtake other aspects of teaching such as the curriculum, as is the case in Bolivar school with the incorporation of the new lecture into the curriculum, or even professional learning and development if schools had sufficient resources. Overall, It seems that personality characteristics shape professional autonomy as well, similar to the concept of ‘agency’ in the next section.

Personal Attributes and Personalities as Professional Agency

Agency is a combination of personal and structural/social features that provide individuals with the power to enact certain decisions and actions consistent with personal beliefs; and social and structured signs, symbols, norms, regulations and sources (c.f. Ch 3, section 2, ‘Agency’). With the purpose of unpacking this concept, participants were invited to talk about their perceptions of being accountable, mechanisms for improving their practice and indicators of satisfactory performance.

Being accountable

Teachers in this study appear to feel accountable for training rounded or upright students, and for students’ skills and learning, both reported by ten out of twenty respondents. However, one teacher from Laguna Negra School and three teachers from Gabriela School claim to feel accountable for both aspects.

Being accountable for upright human beings

Participants in this study from Bolivar school seem to develop a rather distinctive type of agency focused on the challenges provided by the environment, with an orientation in which the contribution to 'whole' human beings seems to be key.

Marco explains his agency in terms of the subject that he teaches, and how this subject contributes to the moral and intellectual development of pupils:

> "Nobody has ever looked at the other achievements that we have, the values that we hold in the school, this is the core of my job and I am sure I am doing well. For example, I feel very confident about my job and my decisions. I used to take my students to sport tournaments, they developed important social skills through their participation. These experiences bring a lot of opportunities to them, they learn about the city where they live because they visit stadiums and other boroughs, therefore they can compare and learn about different realities. They become less shy, and a few of my students have been able to access some of the best schools in the borough. I am sure that I am doing very well even though I haven't got any achievements in the national tests. However, I am very good at my job, my students and their parents respect me and I have the support of the principal in my job". Marco

There are several aspects of this quote that contribute to a depiction of Marco's sense of agency. He points out 'values' as 'the core of my job'. Therefore, his decisions and actions are directed towards the values and the learning experiences he considers relevant to his pupils. In this case, his agency is not directed towards standardised test achievements. It seems defined by his priorities regarding the moral purpose of the job, where teaching goes beyond learning for tests, and circumscribed to the individuals for whom he feels accountable, i.e. students and families. Thus, it is possible to infer that Marco's

sense of agency escapes from the structural definition of being a teacher, enacting his agency hand in hand with the moral purpose of his job. This is likely to be consistent with his personal/professional identity.

In Bolivar School, agency goes even beyond structures, when for example Jose explains how a problem with a student pushed the staff meeting to make decisions regardless of the current regulations.

> "Very often we have to make decisions about our students' wellbeing without considering the official regulations. For example, if a student fails a grade more than two times, we should cancel his/her place at the school. Very often, this means that the student will drop out of the school, with high probabilities that he/she starts to deal drugs or some illegal activity. As teachers we look after our students, therefore often we alter some features in order to protect kids from the adversities that they will face being out of school." Jose. Bolivar

Jose's explanation depicts agency beyond the institutional structures where teachers validate transgressive procedures in order to protect students from the adversities 'out there'. In this case, agency is supported by the belief that the education system and society have no responses or even opportunities for young people who live in vulnerable conditions, and schools do not meet their needs. This kind of collective agency is perhaps only present in Bolivar school. In the other three schools, agency can be seen as a combination of personal and social features, providing constrained power for individuals to act, often bound by lesson activities and planning as well as classroom interactions.

However, through this example, it is possible to visualize how teachers in contact with the context develop a special collective sense of agency, validating their own actions and decisions.

Similarly, but in a different school culture, Mariana explains the elements that she feels accountable for:

> "I encourage my class to be different, to be good people. I know I am contributing to my students becoming better human beings, brave and self-confident. They have my stamp; they are a bit like me; they see themselves as different individuals because I encourage them to be like that. Parents and students expect this from me. They are happy with my activity". Mariana, Del Valle.

Apparently, Mariana is feeling more responsible for her contribution to individuals' attitudes rather than academic achievements. However, she has a strong sense of belonging to the community, which perhaps explains why she mainly feels accountable to it.

Being accountable for learning

It seems that teachers in early career phase are more aware of the role of learning in being accountable, as in the case of Monica:

> "This year my focus is to teach my students reading and writing. I was invited to work in this school because of my skills as an infant teacher; to deal with the transition of the students to a more structured environment; and to introduce them into the reading and writing process. Last year I had very good results!" Monica (two years of experience)

As she states, she got the job because she has a recognized experience as an infant school teacher so she should contribute to the development of new skills among young students who are entering the school. This work with new school

pupils brings to the fore the importance of teaching reading and writing skills since these skills are the bases for further learning and are clearly stated in the national curriculum, thus she will be accountable for these to the school community. If the school leadership does not provide clear guidelines about the meaning of accountability, it is likely that teachers will connect this concept with their sense of vocation, which is explored in the next chapter.

Mechanisms for improving

In the conversation about mechanisms for improvement, teachers recognize at least two strategies: research and training, and colleagues' support. Out of 20, fourteen teachers recognize as a mechanism of improvement their research and their formal and informal training, while five of 20 teachers state that colleagues' support is the main source of improvement.

Research and training

Although the Internet is a frequently used resource for research among teachers, the mechanisms of research and training are slightly different. There are nuances in the intentions and the focus in their use of these resources when they mention research or training:

> “In my practice, test results are indicators of success in my lessons. If I have problems with any subject with the pupils or if I have any weak results from them, I try different methodologies and strategies. I use the Internet a lot for research and to be up to date as much as I can.” Melisa

Melisa describes how she is able to overcome challenges in her subject, and tests seem to provide data for reflection about her practice. She reports using her personal time doing research. Although it seems not to be a systematic research practice for academic purposes, it seems to be an expression of a reflective practice in that it involves searching for improvement, as in Mariana's account:

> “I have recorded my lessons to try to improve. At the same time, I have a notebook. I keep everything in this notebook; every lesson is registered there for the next day with detailed information on my students' progress and aspects that need further investigation or research. Even though we submit lesson planning, I register in my notebook the daily bases because your planning sometimes must be changed and because some contents take longer that you expect, demanding extra time and a search for new resources.” Mariana, Del Valle.

Mariana is describing a personal tool for reflection, research and improvement, hinting at aspects that empower her practice as well as elements of personal agency.

Jose describes other sources of knowledge, attesting to his personal interest and attitude towards self-improvement:

> “I read, I see plays and art exhibitions, I go to the cinema and music concerts. Because of my role in the teachers' union, we discuss different educational topics such as curriculum, policies, theories, didactics, and so on. I always study and train myself. At the same time, I keep a lot of materials and registers for my future lessons.” Jose. Bolivar

Jose portrays his individual attitude and his commitment to the Teachers' Union as the mechanisms he uses to enhance his practice. Although they seem not to

be regular, it is perhaps this attitude that shapes his sense of agency, defining in part his professional identity.

Colleagues' support

When teachers explain that they improve their practice with colleagues' support, they seem to refer to informal knowledge-sharing in staffrooms or any other non-systematic setting, as Diego and Amelia explain:

> “to share experiences with colleagues is very helpful for improving your practices although it is not easy because we are always running against the clock and you don't always have someone teaching the same subject as you near by”, Diego, Bolivar

The ability to join with others in the staff room to share material, practice and concerns seems to be a useful resource for teachers, but the fact that there is not official time allocated to these meetings may reduce the impact of the practice. Although this could be an example of informal learning, it is not clear how teachers collectively can introduce new elements into the discussion in order for it to be updated, since apparently there is not one individual in charge or responsible for doing it.

> “When I have doubts about something I always ask my colleagues. In the staffroom we have this friendly atmosphere where you can make consultations and ask for help if you need it.” Amelia, Laguna Negra.

Additionally, as Amelia attests, the staff room seems to provide a comfortable environment where teachers do not feel intimidated to express doubts and

uncertainties regarding the job, portraying perhaps the kind of ‘atmosphere’ where teachers feel content to expose their limitations and concerns. Variations in the mechanism of improvement suggest that improvement lies in teachers’ personal empowerment to self-improve, where schools and institutions seem not to contribute, directly at least.

The Indicators of Satisfactory Performance of Students

When teachers explain their sense of what counts as an indicator of satisfactory performance, it is interesting to note that just two out of 20 teachers, from different schools, mention academic achievements. Teachers mainly mention student feedback, and thirteen of twenty teachers mention motivation and attendance of pupils, while seven teachers mention results over time, such as access to a job or higher education.

Motivation and attendance

Motivation and attendance are described as pupils’ behaviours and attitudes in the classroom in specific lessons, along with the levels of presence of students in a school day. In Chilean schools, attendance is linked to the allocation of resources from the government to schools, therefore it is considered an element of ‘success’. However, motivation in the lessons seems to be more than just attendance, and teachers have different mechanisms to identify motivation. It can be related to the collaboration and support of the student's family, or to the interest of students in a lesson expressed by an active involvement and/or body language, as Monica explains:

> “When at the end of the lesson you feel that they got something. It is their motivation, when the students are involved in the lessons, participating, questioning and so on and overall it is the student attendance.” Monica, Laguna Negra

Monica mentions her personal feelings after a ‘good’ lesson, suggesting a subtle element in teaching related to the connection between teacher and students which has been described by Nodding (2012) as ‘attending receptively to the other’, since Monica is listening to pupils as well as to her feelings in her practice as an indicator of success in the job. This aspect of motivation seems to be clearer when Lili explains her strategies to identify interest and motivation among students:

> “My students are key for improvement. If something has not been understood, their body language changes. It is a hidden message. I always try to do things in different ways to reach every student. For example, to do activities hands-on… Once I know the pupils, then I innovate because you need to know your kids, knowing that this class is ready for something new. I apply my criteria in relation to the pupils of the class, then I decide”. Lili, Gabriela

Lili is suggesting the importance of knowing one's students well and developing a relationship with them, since she is able to ‘decipher’ the body-language message from pupils as an indicator of her performance, which would not be evident if teachers were unaware of individuals in the class. Similarly, Pamela states:

> “In this grade attendance is a very good predictor for improvement. When we had a good lesson, the next day they are motivated, waiting for the next class and often they bring stuff from home about the topic, so the family has also been touched. The whole class attendance improves, perhaps not in the same week but in the next. I am observing my students and according to that I innovate”. Pamela, Del Valle

Students' feedback in terms of the interest of pupils in the lessons and the involvement of the family seems to be an important measure of performance for these teachers. However, the question that naturally arises is why this achievement has not been echoed in standardised tests results. Nevertheless, the importance of the teacher-student relationship described in part in the quotes above appears consistent with previous research in which this relationship is found to be important for student outcomes in communities from minority ethnic backgrounds (e.g. Pantic and Wubbels 2012) and presumably for any student from a disadvantaged community since it will be an example of achievement and social mobility.

Results beyond school and further

Some teachers understand success in terms of students' occupations once they are active in society after being in the school, in other words, when students have moved on from schooling into the workforce or ongoing education. For example, Carol observes:

> "I know that I am doing well because many of my students are in the best schools of the borough. They did a test and were accepted in these schools. This means that my teaching is good, I am providing the knowledge and skills that they need to go further". Carol

For Carol, access to better schools in the borough provides evidence of good performance, reassuring her about the quality of her teaching. However, teachers also believe that there are long-term results that are also signs of satisfactory performance:

> "When students come back to the school and they are professionals or have a good job, this means to me that we are doing well. First they

> come back because they are grateful about what we have done, and second they come back because they want to share their achievements with us, which is very rewarding". Felipe, Del Valle.

> "The other day a student came in his truck, to say hello. He looked happy and he said he is making good money. I thought that this happened because in this school we are doing the right things, I remember we did everything to assist this boy". Jose, Bolivar.

Long-term achievements of students seem to be rewarding, if we consider that educational aims are related to developing the skill to live in society. However, it triggers curiosity to find out how often teachers obtain these rewards in order to understand the impact of teachers' practice and the degrees of satisfaction in the occupation among these teachers. Likewise, it could be interesting to understand how, in spite of sustained low performances in standardised tests, students still manage to obtain jobs or access to better schools. Perhaps these are isolated cases of effort and perseverance; or perhaps standardised test results do not necessarily determine 'success' in life for everyone bringing to the fore the purposes and core beliefs of Chilean teachers shaping their professional identities.

In an attempt to summarize the concept of agency among participants in this study, we could say that agency seems to be related closely to the relationship to pupils and their families, along with the interactions with colleagues. This sense of agency, grounded in qualitative measures of success, works as a mechanism of survival/coping when any improvement in standardised tests seem to be 'out of their hands', and the needs/requirements of the context demand immediate and assertive responses in favour of individuals' lives.

These differing personal conceptions of the power to enact certain decisions and actions are consistent with personal beliefs, more than with socially structured symbols, regulations and sources, as they seem to be quite diverse among teachers in schools. This nourishes an impression of heterogeneous school cultures compounded by subcultures in part because of the lack of opportunities to coordinate efforts and attune intentions among staff, because of the large number of teachers working in the schools in the cases of Gabriela and Del Valle schools.

In this context, 'agency' seems to be defined in terms of mastery and achievement (McAdams 1993), of teachers' self-awareness, and their sense of self-efficacy based on their beliefs (Bandura 1989, 1990), but this definition is rather individual. As is suggested by Biesta et al. (2015), personal beliefs and capacities shape and define individual agency as well as past experiences (Quinn et al. 2015), if the concept is not developed collectively within schools, municipalities or other educational bodies. Thus, it is the subjectivity of the individual rooted in personal beliefs, emotions and purpose that shape agency (Hökkä, Eteläpelto, and Rasku-Puttonen 2012), consistent with their personal identities.

It is worth noting that there are some definitions of 'agency' that include anticipated outcomes (McAdams 1993) and the reflection and assessment of responsibilities (Taylor 1985) in achievements measured by standardised tests.

In this study, Chilean primary teachers addressed neither of these two aspects; on the contrary, they seemed reticent to assess their work given evasive responses on the topic. A possible explanation is that they do not feel responsible for the 'official' expected outcomes of their job since there is a large amount of external factors (from the environment) upon teaching that escape from teachers' hands. Thus, the capacity of responses is unclear, limiting the sense of agency to domains where teachers feel able to provide responses, affecting their sense of efficiency. Or perhaps there is an incapacity to reflect on their practice, since the staff meetings tend to be informative rather than a safe instance of collaboration and reflection, with little support and few guidelines to promote such an aspect of agency. Further questions arise as to how the concept of 'reflection' is addressed by initial training or during professional development and learning events in schools.

Conclusions

The four schools discussed in this chapter show some similarities since all of them are schools operating in challenging circumstances, facing attendance problems, a low level of qualification of the adult population and low levels of entry conditions among pupils, weak support from authorities, plus different socio-economic problems. However, each school exhibits a complex system of social interaction including poor school leadership and school sub-cultures, contributing to a diversity of teachers' professional identities. As a consequence, Chilean primary teachers seem to develop, shape and define individual conceptions of collegial relationships, autonomy in their

professional judgements and agency within the boundaries of structural definitions such as tradition and the national curriculum. Often, this happens outside the school, and is based on personal conceptualizations, since social contexts as referents for identity meanings provide confusing messages, which variously verify, confirm or negotiate those meanings. The influences of the context are insufficiently consistent to override individual influences.

The school leadership plays distinctive roles in each school since the school leadership in Chile has a strong emphasis on control and supervision of school activities, and the teaching and learning process is overseen by the head of curriculum and evaluation. Therefore, teachers seem to feel comfortable working with a relative absence of principals, and assuming the role of control imposed on them, as can be seen in Bolivar, Gabriela and Laguna Negra schools. This is a traditional approach to school leadership in Chile, since the educational system considered control as the main duty of the leadership team in a paternalistic model (c.f. above, Ch 3, 'School Leadership') that can be perceived slightly less clearly in Del Valle School.

Expanding the point, this traditional model promotes distance between the principal on the one hand, and classroom practice and teachers' activities on the other, contributing to the emergence of a gap among teachers, and complicating any opportunities to increase participation and raise levels of teachers' involvement in school decisions, affecting the school culture and the meanings of teachers' professional identities in their various dimensions. In spite of this, the challenging conditions present in all schools in this study

contribute to sharing personal values, beliefs and ethics, encouraging informal collaboration and commitment among teachers, and fostering incipient attempts at collaborative work, at least among cliques of friends.

The school leadership team's emphasis on control encourages a sense of autonomy limited mainly to classroom practices, and tightly limited by external requirements and mandates prescribed by national educational bodies. At the same time, since institutional support is not regular and not responsive to teachers' needs, teachers are led by their perceptions of their own immediate needs and capabilities, and are fairly autonomous in solving everyday problems by framing professional autonomy in an ambiguous, personal way that interacts with official, external requirements and regulations.

Similar to the concept of autonomy, the sense of agency described by Chilean teachers in each school is slightly different. In some definitions of teacher agency (e.g. Bandura 1989, 1990 and McAdams 1993), teachers espouse self-efficacy beliefs based on being responsible to their students not only in terms of learning (not necessarily the national curriculum) but also in terms of the moral duty of these teachers towards local communities. Although subject learning is important, these Chilean primary teachers recognize several other aspects involved in the school that also trigger learning. Mastery, self-efficacy and goal-setting seem to be inspired by holistic or humanistic conceptions of learning, or ‘progressive’ ideas of schooling rooted in Latin America in the sixties (Caiceo 2016; Avalos 2007; Nunez 1990, 2001; Salazar 1996; and Gysling 2015).

Personal beliefs and capacities contribute to a sense of agency where the support (or lack of it) of the school as organisation (Biesta et al. 2015) seems to be tuned to reproducing diversity in conceptions of professional identity, and where students' well-being as the moral purpose of teachers appears to dominate teachers' activities, sometimes distracting them from other goals such as academic achievement.

This seems to be anchored in early visions of teaching in Chile and elsewhere (Caiceo 2016). Since the beginning of the educational system, the definition of the teaching profession was related to the promotion of religious and moral values (Lopez 1988, Mansell 2013). This is similar to a vocational concept of occupation in which teachers are seen as 'cultural custodians' (Carr 2004), according to which they should play a cultural and/or moral missionary role. This view is enhanced by the fact that professional support for learning the curriculum seems to be irregular or uncoordinated, and teachers seem to question the validity of standardised tests as measurements of either academic achievements or moral development. This is the case with teachers in Del Valle and Bolivar schools.

The differences in conceptions of agency among these teachers are consistent with the idea of autonomy expressed by teachers and the idea of a coexistence of subcultures in these organisations. It seems that the lack of cohesion in conceptions of professional identity among teachers in these

schools implies that teachers' personal characteristics contribute distinctively to their professional identity, creating individual rather than collective PIMs. One possible explanation of this outcome is that teachers have their own, strong sense of professional identity and the school leadership has only a faint impact on them. Another explanation is that weak leadership compels individuals to develop their own personal resources in order to build a strong sense of PIM and its dimensions.

Although we do not know much about the personal identities of teachers in these schools, if it is the case that some teachers understand their professional identity as 'activists' (Sachs 2000, 2003, 2016), these teachers may feel adversely affected in their autonomy as well as the meaning of their professional identity because the decision-making process seems not to be inclusive among teachers. Therefore, it does not reflect collective actions, ignoring elements such as mutual respect, passion, and the expertise and skills of teachers, and it diminishes the possibility to have pleasure and enjoyment in doing the job.

On the contrary, if teachers understand their professional identities in the frame of 'managerial discourse' (Ibid), the moral aspect of teaching requested by schools in challenging circumstances appears to relegate their discussion and practice, ignoring, for instance, individual values, which are one of the main personal influences in Chilean primary teachers' professional identities in this study as we will see in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Personal influences on teachers' professional identities.

Introduction

As shown in the previous chapter, contextual influences appear to have a distinct effect on teachers' professional identities. However, the evidence suggests that, in different degrees and with different emphases, the leadership team's lack of focus in the four schools under discussion has led Chilean primary teachers to rely on their own personal sense of vocation and ethics and their personal values and beliefs in order to define their professional identities.

The processes of defining these identities involve continuous negotiation between personal and contextual influences such as school socio-economic characteristics, tradition and policy as described in the Chilean context section. Hence, it emerged that tradition and specific policies along with biographies, values, vocation and ethics shape teachers' professional identities in this study, along with other aspects of the school context. In other words, there is a combination of influences (Day et al. 2007; Day and Gu 2010, 2014), which contributes to defining and shaping Chilean primary teachers' professional identities.

Policy and tradition appear to be continual socio-cultural influences on the definition of teachers' professional identities. However, the influence of these factors seems stronger in relation to social skills and content-based knowledge of teachers' professional identities. Likewise, vocation appears to influence

professional ethics to a greater degree than other aspects of professional identities. At the same time, personal ethics and values influence the disposition to work collaboratively with colleagues, and the scope of professional judgements. Finally, pre-work and work experiences as part of biographies appear to impact on the ethics of professional identities since they are likely to contribute to the definition and change of personal values.

The first part of this chapter explores findings about the meanings of 'vocation' (c.f. above, Ch 3, section 3, 'Personal Influences') for teachers in this study and the different emphases in their view of their vocation. Teachers who express a sense of vocation focus on pupils' learning. However, there appear to be subtle differences in their priorities of learning. At the same time, there are teachers who have a vocation towards pupils' wellbeing, concerned not only with long-term or immediate wellbeing, but also with regard to the emotional and general wellbeing of students, portraying nuances in the concept as well. However, these teachers are often overwhelmed by the challenging circumstances in which they work, particularly in the case of teachers at schools in rural locations and those with high level of vulnerability among students and communities.

The second part of the Chapter will review findings relating to teachers' ethics. Ethics are boosted by individuals' values, since values are rules to which individuals commit wholeheartedly as 'virtue' (Carr 2011), as well as biographical experiences, which have contributed to the development of these values. The ethic present among the majority of primary teachers in this study is a 'social welfare commitment' although there are nuances in the concept. For

instance, as expressions of investment of teachers' personal time, concerns beyond the school focus on pupils' wellbeing and happiness, which are the main principles guiding decisions and actions by teachers who held this ethic position. The second most common type of ethic is a type of 'political activist commitment' in which teachers envisage themselves as agents of social change.

The third part of the chapter will present findings related to biographical influences on professional identity meanings, from school experiences and family memories, and discuss how biographies influence the values associated with these meanings before teachers began interacting with school contexts. Thus, it will examine pre-work and work experience as stated in the discussion of values present in teachers' practice today. These values can be explicit or tacit in teachers' practice as we could infer during the analysis of their narratives.

Among Chilean primary teachers in this study, personal values and beliefs appear prominently, influencing professional identities, and often driving their behaviour, decisions and practice. These personal values and beliefs have been developed during childhood in early experiences within the family or school as pre-work experiences, and in some cases changed and/or enhanced through post-work experiences by interactions with school contexts and communities, re-shaping professional identity meanings among them and changing or enhancing the sense of vocation, ethics and sometimes values.

Table 6.1: Summary of features of influences on participants' vocation and ethic

	Teacher name	Years of experience	Time in this school	Service vocation			Ethics	
				Pupils' wellbeing	Pupils' learning Nat. Curric.	Pupils' learning skills for life	Social commit.	Politic commit.
Laguna Negra School	**Juan**	9	1	+	++	+	++	
	Monica	2	2		+++	+	+++	
	Victoria	6	2		+++	+		+++
	Amelia	30	20	++	+	++	+++	
	Felix	38	28	++	+	++	++	+
Del Valle School	**Pamela**	5	1		+++	+		
	Violeta	30	1			+++		+++
	Mariana	13	5	++		+++	+++	
	Mateo	24	24	++		+++	+++	
	Felipe	40	38	+	++		+++	
Bolivar School	**Marco**	30	24	+++		+++	+++	
	Jose	34	14	+	++	+		+++
	Diego	25	2	+	+	++	+++	
	Cindy	1	1		+++		+++	
	Clara	3	0.2		++	++		+++
Gabriela School	**Melisa**	22	3	++		+++	+++	
	Carol	30	2		+++	++	+++	
	Lili	7	3	+	+++	++	+++	
	Ada	26	3	+		+++	+++	
	Belgica	6	4		++	++		+++

+++ Strong influence

++ Moderate influence

+ Weak influence

1. Vocation

In this study, the willingness to help others to learn for life and the satisfaction in doing so are features described as central aspects of the job. Irrespective of the schools and localities where Chilean primary teachers work and live, 17 of 20 teachers describe their motivations in the profession in these terms. Table 6.1 shows the broad differences between teachers in the emphasis that they attach to the concept of vocation along with the ethics that they hold (section 3). This section will focus on ‘vocation’, highlighting the prominence of pupils’ wellbeing, pupils’ learning the curriculum, and pupils’ learning skills for life in the expression of vocation in their everyday work.

However, there are subtle nuances in different teachers' understandings of the concept of vocation. The nuances in the concept of vocation include different views of the capacity to overcome difficulties triggered by the desire to contribute to pupils’ growth; degree of enjoyment of the job; and the role of love in the teaching process, along with the idea of ‘dedication’.

Overcoming difficulties

For example, Lili who works in the largest urban school (with 47% of students living in vulnerability), states:

> “Vocation is to want to do a job in spite of the difficulties of the school and its community. You do the job because it brings you satisfaction beyond the economic benefit. In my case it is about the gratification of just talking and sharing my knowledge, having fun. The most important thing to me is ‘vocation’; you only need vocation to teach. As a teacher you need the desire to transfer significant knowledge to pupils. You should want to be listened to and to have something to say. This is all you need. This leads you to prepare your lessons, to revisit your job and enquire about the effectiveness of it”. Lili, Gabriela

Lili’s understanding of ‘vocation’ contains several elements. For instance, she states that vocation overcomes difficulties of the job. Her sense of vocation appears to contribute to her success in dealing with challenges within the school. She also mentions vocation as her personal realization and how these actions bring her fun and satisfaction. This suggests a natural motivation from gratification by the job itself. Finally, her understanding of vocation includes the contribution to ‘others’ (pupils).

One can thus recognise in Lili's account of vocation various aspects found in the literature, such as the inner urge to contribute meaningfully to society (Dik and Duffy 2009) and work outcomes in terms of the amount of energy available for facing challenges and difficulties, as is shown when she explains that vocation contributes to overcoming difficulties, possibly as a form of resilience (Hall and Chandler 2005, p. 166; Rosso, Dekas and Wrzesniewski 2010) as it has been defined by Day and Gu (2013) in terms of the stability of her commitment to students and parents.

Enjoyment and fulfilment

Vocation understood as enjoyment and happiness doing the job is suggested in the following quote by Marco, who works in an urban and demographically multicultural school. He brings to the fore personal fulfilment in the professional sphere:

> "Vocation is related to the ways that you face your daily work. It is related to having joy working on it; to knowing the aspects that you enjoy and the satisfactions that you get doing it." Marco, Bolivar

Personal satisfaction in the job appears important to Marco when he speaks of vocation, highlighting perhaps his mood when facing everyday duties.

Similarly, to Marco, Felix (from a small rural school) reports the relevance of satisfaction in doing the job. He states:

> "Vocation is related to the things that you like to do. It is related to the positive feeling that you have about the practice of your job. It is something innate, and it is related to love and to doing things up to high standards". Felix. Laguna Negra

Marco and Felix explain how the concept of vocation is linked to the inner/psychological aspects of the individual, where love, mastery and satisfaction appear as personal feelings, distinctively shaping their understandings of vocation.

Love in the teaching process

Love is also present in Belgica's definition, in which she links efforts and commitment towards pupils with emotional involvement as a necessary step towards effective learning in the largest and least deprived school of the study:

> "Vocation is the capacity to dedicate to the students. It is related to the search for a wide range of opportunities to give them learning experiences. It is related to developing an emotional connection with them that allows learning. If I call on my own experience, all my favourite teachers were first of all emotionally significant. I have seen this in my practice. My students learn because they trust me, we develop a close relationship and after that the learning process can flow" Belgica, Gabriela.

Although love is mentioned in the section above, in Belgica's case, this statement portrays vocation as a greater attachment to doing the job, and affection for doing it. It stresses the efforts and commitment towards pupils as a condition for emotional involvement of students and teachers in a reciprocal relationship, and as a necessary step to effective learning in the largest and least deprived school of the study.

Giving the best

Perhaps related to love in doing the job, giving the best that you can is also a feature in the understanding of vocation. As Mateo explains here,

> "It is a call to give the best that you can attending all student needs in terms of education, emotional support, even providing further professional assistance". Mateo, Del Valle

In the context of the largest semi-rural school in the study, Mateo, who might otherwise be overwhelmed by students' demands and needs within the school, defines vocation as a ‘call’ to attend to students’ hassles even beyond the school.

Vocation for these teachers necessarily evokes feelings and emotional engagement for learning where love plays a distinctive role in the vocational exercise of the profession (Manuel and Brindley 2005; Pearce and Morrison 2011) addressing also dedication as a distinctive feature of the job. Thus, vocation appears as an influence on Chilean primary teachers' professional identity, since it provides different strengths for practice (to overcome difficulties, enjoyment and fulfilment, eliciting love and persuading teachers to give the best) to individuals.

Vocation and dedication

Vocation is also understood as ‘dedication’, in terms of time and effort put into teaching, and the rewards for doing it. Eight of 20 teachers use ‘dedication’ to explain the meaning of vocation. For example, Monica states:

> “I think that you need vocation. Dedication and vocation, these make the difference. Dedication means to spend time preparing your lessons. To be aware about what a good lesson is, so that at the end of the lesson you feel that they have grasped something. My vocation is nourished by seeing the motivation in the students; when they are involved in the lessons, participating, questioning and so on. My vocation is encouraged by pupils’ attitudes in the classroom; after a good lesson the feelings of fulfilment; even when you are tired at the end of the day, these feelings give me strength for the next day.” Monica. Laguna Negra

She describes the basis of her sense of dedication in terms of the variety of activities that are involved in her teaching, and the role of pupils in her practice. Monica nourishes her vocation towards her students who are a source of satisfaction and a sense of effectiveness in the job, suggesting perhaps that the relationship with students is an important resource for a sense of vocation since they clearly express their interest in the lessons, rewarding the time and effort invested in preparing and planning her activities.

Hansen (1995) explains personal fulfilment and social commitment as key aspects of 'the call to teach' as well as the 'inner' conviction about one's own capacity to contribute or about having a 'gift' to share. Teachers feel a c*all* to contribute to society by undertaking distinctive tasks (Lortie 1975, Nieto 2007). However, participants in this piece of research display nuances in teachers' sense of vocation as some of them see their commitment mainly to pupils' learning (not necessarily the curriculum) as their main contribution to students' wellbeing, and others see their commitment as first of all to pupils' wellbeing as a fundamental precondition to achieving learning. These features drove the definition of the sub-heading in the following section because teachers mention these themes repeatedly during the interviews.

Vocation in the daily experience of the job

The expression of vocation on a daily basis emphasises that Chilean primary teachers perform their conceptions of identity during the school day, such as their orientations towards pupils' learning the curriculum and pupils' wellbeing.

Pupils' learning

It might not be expected that learning would be such a significant value. The results in standardised tests in the four schools taking part in this study are lower than the national mean. However, irrespective of the schools and localities where teachers work, thirteen of 20 teachers are explicit about the relevance of students' learning to their work. They state that this is their main obligation as teachers. However, teachers have subtly different views about what should be learnt, which are not completely exclusive.

Learning the curriculum

Although the cultivation of self-confidence and social awareness appears as a value among teachers in the early career phase, many of them (seven of 20) tend to be more conscious of the skills and competencies prescribed for the grade that they teach in the national curriculum, especially in literacy, maths and science.

> "My job is to achieve the learning goals with my kids, my goals as a tutor and the curriculum's goal", Monica, Laguna Negra (two years of experience).

> "This year my goal is that my students learn how to read and write well. I can see a lot of problems there and I must concentrate on these goals and support the weakest pupils." Pamela, Del Valle, (five years of experience).

> "[M]y main responsibility is pupils' learning. It is important that they learn. I can explain something many times, I don't mind, but they must learn. I like it when my lessons go beyond the school walls and are felt as relevant in their lives." Lili, Gabriela, (seven years of experience).

> "I have been trained as a maths teacher. Last year, we just taught our subject, but this year we have to teach everything. This is very hard, there are some subjects that I don't like and I am not good at. I need to spend a lot of time for these lessons. I can't be a good teacher in these subjects. Sometimes, teachers are asked to do too much. This is not fair for the students or for the teachers." Cindy, Bolivar (one year of experience).

In spite of this focus on the curriculum, teachers in the early career phase have their own sets of values underlying their practice. These values do not appear to soften their commitment to the National Curriculum or to encourage neglect of their commitment to students' learning in this sense. On the contrary, it seems that these teachers perceive teaching the curriculum as part of their understanding of vocation more than teachers in other career phases perhaps because of the need to be recognized as effective professionals since they are just in the beginning of their careers. However, similarly to teachers in other career phases, they appear to overlap these values with their concept of pupils' learning and their own vocation.

Learning skills for life: increasing cultural capital as 'embodied state'

The concept of embodied state (Bourdieu 1986) refers to the appropriation of certain skills by the human body through the investment of time and dedication to long-term training.

Out of thirteen teachers who stressed student learning as part of their vocation, four teachers emphasized the need to teach learning skills. Three of these teachers work in more vulnerable schools in rural areas.

> “As teachers we always adapt the curriculum to our beliefs and values but always thinking about the role of the students in society and the skills that they need to be part of it.” Violeta. Del Valle

Violeta is the head of curriculum and education in her school. She sees the curriculum as a set of guidelines from the authorities since she ‘adapt[s] the curriculum’. However, her political activist commitment (see section 2, below, ‘Ethics’) seems to give her enough confidence to adjust the curriculum to the needs perceived in her students and the community, perhaps with the risk of de-emphasising some of the demands of national standardised tests.

> “Learning for life is one of my main commitments in the job. However, learning is not only about contents. It is also about other aspects of life because often I advise my students about several other matters and I think that this also provides them with learning.” Ada, Gabriela.

Vocation in Ada's account is clearly broader than just teaching the curriculum. She states openly her commitment to a kind of ‘humanistic’ education where the contents along with ‘advice’ constitute ‘learning for life’. It seems interesting to understand how Ada’s sense of vocation provides meaning in her professional identity is the result of a combination of aspects of the curriculum with advice for ‘several other matters’. This may suggest that her personal and professional identities are entwined in her PIMs.

Two out of thirteen teachers who expressed a vocational focus on pupils’ learning state the relevance of critical thinking skills as learning, overlapping their value of ‘social awareness’ with the goal of learning. The subtle variance in

the concepts of pupils' learning may define priorities in the exercise of the profession driving their actions and practices.

Pupils' wellbeing

While thirteen of 20 teachers in this study express their vocation in terms of pupils' learning, seven of 20 teachers mainly working in schools in rural areas or teaching 'less relevant' subjects (not measured by Standardised Tests) state their orientation to social improvement and students' wellbeing beyond their learning activities and their desire to contribute to society as key elements of their vocation. It seems that teachers working in small rural localities develop more sensitivity to pupils' and parents' needs, affecting professional identities (Troman 2008). Likewise, teachers teaching non-tested subjects seem able to focus on other aspects of learning.

Vocation as an aspect of professional identity, understood as social improvement and students' wellbeing have previously been reported in the literature (e.g. Dik and Duffy 2009). The meaning of pupils' wellbeing is understood differently among these teachers and the priorities articulated by them in relation to pupils' wellbeing seem to be driven by personal conceptions of welfare. Teachers variously explain issues related to wellbeing in the long term, such as a desire for social justice; wellbeing in emotional terms boosting learning; and changes in attitudes and behaviours.

Social justice and general wellbeing

A desire for social justice underpins Felix's idea of wellbeing since he is from the smallest rural school where 76% of students live in vulnerability:

> "I am a teacher because I want to contribute to a better life among vulnerable people and I think education is a way to do it." Felix

Vocation for Felix is inspired by his desire to improve people's lives. He feels education is a tool for this. However, this broad understanding of vocation could easily override the focus on teaching and learning, which along with weak support for professional development and isolation could influence the sense of vocation in Felix's PIM.

Emotional wellbeing for learning

Emotional wellbeing is recognized as bedrock for further learning. As Amelia (smallest rural school) and Melisa (largest urban school) explain,

> "My challenge is students' happiness; if they are happy, their predisposition to learning will be better therefore they will learn easily". Amelia, Laguna Negra

Since Amelia works in a school with 76% of students living in vulnerability, her definition of vocation focuses on emotional wellbeing in order to promote significant learning. This may risk the national curriculum learning goals and affect Amelia's sense of vocation, influencing her professional identity.

Melisa teaches religious studies and she thinks she is lucky because she can provide shelter and protect pupils' wellbeing without being judged by academic results:

> “My job is not just to give knowledge. I must be concerned about people. Fortunately, I do not have academic goals to achieve (because of my subject, religious studies) so I can deal with human issues without pressure. I don’t know how my colleagues deal with academic results and human/personal problems in the classroom”. Melisa

Melisa depicts her vocation with a strong component of a ‘carer’, claiming as a priority her job with ‘people’. She even asserts that there is a challenge to deal with standardised test results along with students’ wellbeing, and that this is faced by other colleagues, suggesting difficulties in juggling these two aspects of the profession since they both are parts of her understanding of professional identity.

Change attitudes and behaviour for wellbeing

In some teachers' senses of vocation, a desire for changes in attitudes and behaviour is understood as a benefit for health, happiness and comfort. In Felipe's words (from the largest, most deprived rural school of the study):

> “The most important aspects to me are changes in behaviour and attitudes among my students, this means that they have learned for life”. Felipe, Del Valle

Felipe feels the urgency to promote changes in conduct, manners and comportment among pupils, portraying his vocation as a teacher within a professional identity meaning perhaps rooted in a humanist understanding of education.

Felix, Amelia, Melisa and Felipe share a commitment towards people in their communities, to some extent. They describe their teaching priorities in terms of an ethic of social commitment, caring for and about their students in the first instance, which is often related to richer aims of education such as a full, moral and happy life (Nodding 2012, p. 778). There is a risk that teachers with strong social commitments perceive students' wellbeing as the central orientation of their role, leaving in second place students' learning the national curriculum.

This is more likely to happen with those who do not teach 'main' subjects as well as teachers who have a religious commitment. However, organisational influences may also address priorities in teaching practice, as was the case in Gabriela and Bolivar Schools where the organisational priorities were consistent among the teacher participants in this study. In the case of Gabriela School, the vulnerability index is lower than the other three schools (for more details see Ch 4, Section 4, 'First layer sampling criteria').

Teachers' sense of vocation is rooted in individual ethics, which are formed and developed through pre-work and work experiences (before and after the first distinctive job) as part of their personal biographies. Participants in this study mention two broadly different principles which drive their decisions and actions in their practice, the ethic of 'social welfare commitment' and the 'political activist commitment', which are developed in the next section.

2. Ethics

Despite these pressures of underfunding and managerial pressures, teachers articulated distinct ethical values. In this study, teachers' ethics are treated as a distinctive aspect of their values and occupation. There are two different ethical principles that stand out in teachers' statements, which are not exclusive: i. social welfare commitment and ii. political activist commitment. These ethics influence teachers' attitudes, actions and decisions. It is important to recognize these ethics as 'engines' enhancing teachers' daily work and often helping to overcome teaching challenges.

Social welfare commitment

Twelve of 20 teachers explain their social commitment as the desire to improve the life-conditions of the families and communities within the school, for example, the desire to share knowledge, or influence young people or to compensate for perceived educational defects (c.f. above, Ch 3, section 3, 'Personal Influences'). The social welfare commitment apparently influences these teachers' practices in different aspects of the job: the willingness of teachers to invest personal time in their pupils; feeling responsible beyond classroom practice, and emphasising pupils' wellbeing and happiness.

Investing personal time

When Ada describes her social welfare commitment, she talks about her willingness to invest personal time in her pupils and an attentive/empathetic attitude:

> "[Y]ou need to fulfil several other roles, mum, grandma, sister, aunt, because if a girl is sad and comes to you to talk, you can't say sorry, I've

> already finished my work day. You must talk to her and support her; learning happens when students have a healthy emotional life, this is a very important part when you teach; pupil wellbeing is the basis for learning". Ada, Gabriela.

Ada describes a situation in which she has embodied several roles in being a teacher, drawing on her personal time. She is willing to give since she believes that to emotionally support students contributes to the learning process because she thinks boosting emotional wellbeing is the beginning of the learning journey. She seems to accept this situation as part of her PIM. The willingness to invest personal time expresses an idea of commitment beyond the school.

Commitment beyond the classroom

Similarly, Monica describes her social welfare commitment as extending beyond her classroom practice. Monica states that she perceives that there are very low expectations about the future among her students and their families. She wants to increase their awareness of opportunities and choices for people outside her hometown. She feels the *call* to contribute to the children of her community:

> "I want to open the minds of my students. We are in a box between mountains in this community. […] The landscape here is gorgeous, but people are afraid to go to the city. Sometimes, they prefer to stay here forever. Many of them are married to locals at a very young age, without any projections or expectations about the future. My concern is to open student and family minds so that they can see outside this town and to find more opportunities beyond. This is the sort of contribution that I want to make; I feel that I want to leave something among people in my community." Monica, Laguna Negra.

Monica here expresses a commitment beyond the school. She seems to be sensitive to and concerned about the challenges of the community, even

pushing her duties slightly further. She describes her concern as an ‘extension’ of her duties as a teacher. Her vocation can be depicted as increasing the cultural capital of students and the broader community as part of a commitment to social welfare in her PIMs.

Emphasising pupils’ health and happiness

Another way that a social welfare commitment is expressed among teachers, influencing their practices, is the emphasis on pupils’ health and happiness rather than learning goals. This ethic is also likely to be found among teachers who understand their vocation in terms of pupils’ wellbeing:

> “Around here there are too many stories. In this community we have severe problems with teenage pregnancy. I feel a little bit like a teacher and a little bit like a mum. For example, I know girls who have been leaving the schools and I advised them and many of them are professionals now. This is the best payment, I feel responsible for their achievements.” Mariana, Del Valle.

Mariana is a Spanish teacher, and therefore, she is responsible for developing writing and reading skills in students who are assessed by standardised tests every two years. However, she explains her achievements in terms of her students’ wellbeing rather than students' learning. These teachers, and several others interviewed, care for students' wellbeing and this often goes beyond classroom practices. Caring appears as an important characteristic in the personal dimension of influences that drive teachers' practice and shape their professional identity.

A social welfare commitment appears to be an important aspect of teaching. Teachers elsewhere have stated that they care for and about children and their families (e.g. Lortie 1975, p. 101; Day et al 2007, p. 219; Nias 1989, Nodding 1992; Day and Gu 2014, p. 61; and Dinham and Scott 2000). However, the question of how teachers get involved in the processes of care for and about children seem to be influenced by personal priorities and their agentic capacity, associated with the contexts where they work.

Chilean primary teachers with a social welfare commitment are facing challenges in these four schools, which have similar characteristics to other schools in deprived communities: attendance problems, parents with low levels of educational achievement, low literacy on entry, lack of resources, ethnic diversity and marginalisation, and geographical marginalisation from core urban sites of educational resources (e.g. Harris and Chapman 2004, Muijs et al. 2004). Although a social welfare commitment provides a motivation to enter the profession for many teachers seeking to work with disadvantaged communities, these features enhance this ethic, since the continuous contact with the school context and the pupils' difficulties invigorate and strengthen the 'carer' aspect of their professional identities.

The findings here echo broader research on teachers' ethics and orientations. Nias terms teachers 'caring people' (Nias 1989, p.115). Although she explains how teachers get involved in the lives of others in terms of 'hazard' for the teacher's family life, she does not explain the role of teachers' ethics in the

situation: how ethics are present in ‘caring actions or attitudes’, or what happens when teachers’ ethics are challenged by external influences—for example, when teachers face a lack of resources for their lessons. It seems that society is dismissing pupils’ wellbeing and improvement, neglecting the social commitment of teachers as citizens and the relevance of their public obligation, thus eroding their personal identity, as we could see when they explain situations in conflict with personal values that affect their practices later in this document (see section 5 in this Chapter). Later work by Nias (1999) identifies that such conflicts affect teachers’ self-esteem.

At the same time, challenging circumstances in schools with a weak leadership team or a loosely structured school culture could easily distract teachers’ focus from the teaching and learning process, blurring their professional identities or compelling them to embrace an agentic capacity as ‘carers’ rather than teachers since they may feel overwhelmed by pupils’ and families' circumstances.

> “The social problems of our students or their dysfunctional families often put them off school. They come here with no motivation or willingness to learn. It's there when we are challenged to provide a cosy and warm environment more than anything”, Amelia, Laguna Negra.

> “Most of our students come from a very difficult family life, even one with a risk of violence, so at the school we need to provide a safe environment so they can feel peace at least when they are here. It is only after that they might be able to learn the curriculum”, Mateo, Del Valle

Amelia and Mateo state that pupils' social conditions/family circumstances demand their attention and concern as first priority. This can be reinforced when most of them enter in the occupation embracing moral values, and are sensitive and empathetic about social matters (Lortie 1975, p. 101; Day et al 2007, p. 219; Nias 1989, Nodding 1992; Day and Gu 2014, p. 61; and Dinham and Scott 2000).

Political activist commitment

An ethic inspired by equity and social justice is also present among teachers in this study. At least one teacher in each school has a political activist commitment. This means that teachers intend to be active agents of social change in the classroom. Nevertheless, political activist commitment has nuances among teachers in this study. Some of these emphases include a goal of promoting responsibility for continuous and pertinent professional development, appropriating the practice of teaching as a space to enhance/encourage social awareness in students and colleagues; and embracing civic responsibilities of the profession. Together, these nuances construct the meaning of political activist commitment for these teachers.

Responsibility for continuous professional development

Victoria is a teacher in an early career phase; she studied in a public school where a bad experience with a teacher marked her, and she feels it was not a fair experience. As a consequence, she decided to become a teacher. Her

personal experience in public education motivated her political commitment and the search for new opportunities for her students as bedrocks of her professional identity. She sees herself as an active player in public educational improvement.

> "I had bad experiences at school. I experienced a lack of self-confidence in my skills when I started higher education. That is why I decided to be a teacher. I realised that poor people get poor education; you don't get enough skills and knowledge on how to develop yourself in our society, today. Therefore, you only have access to some jobs and if you are lucky you will attain a higher education. I want to contribute to social change, because there are few opportunities for poor people; there is too much injustice and my lessons are part of that. That is why I must be up-to-date, I must be at the forefront in terms of skills and knowledge in order to provide my students with proper tools for life" Victoria, Laguna Negra.

Victoria roots her political activist commitment in her own experience as a student in school, therefore it is likely that she sees her students as a reflection of herself and her needs in her early years. Likewise, she understands her political activist commitment as a contribution to social change for a fairer society. Therefore, her emphasis in the classroom is on being sure she is providing the best learning opportunities to her students, increasing their 'resources' to face today's society. As a consequence, she embraces a strong commitment to her continued professional learning and development.

Practice encouraging social awareness

Albeit with a different emphasis, Jose shares a political activist commitment. He is a teacher who will retire very soon. He has kept his political commitment from the beginning of his career along with his role in the Teachers' Union. On the whole he sees his practice as a tool to increase social awareness as a condition for social change:

> “I started to work in popular education and enjoyed it; then I decided to become a teacher. However, I have always thought that education is a way to promote social mobility and a contribution to society, because you can develop social awareness about historical facts, in my case [the subject that he teaches]. At the same time, teachers, at the Union, have a political and social commitment; that is why we work in public schools in spite of the fact that sometime the work conditions are not very good; and there is little recognition for our job. I want to promote social change.” Jose, Bolivar

Jose’s experience in informal education contributed to his passion for teaching, revealing the richness of his social interactions. At the same time, he sees his subject (History) as a tool to develop critical thinking among students since History provides facts from which the individual can reflect about their role in social change and understand different forms of injustice throughout world history. Along with his role as a teacher in the classroom and in the school, he sees his political activist commitment in a broader sense as a contribution to public education as well as to the discussion within the Teachers' Union with colleagues, as an actor in social change.

Embracing civil responsibilities of the profession

Belgica is a teacher with more than six years of experience; she enjoys her freedom in the school where she works:

> “I think that teachers need to discuss about pedagogical issues, not only economic themes. We need to discuss about knowledge, and such discussions have been neglected because there is a belief that this job is not intellectual, but this is not true. The construction of pedagogical knowledge is built through praxis. Theories of the construction of pedagogical knowledge do not represent school contexts because teachers build pedagogical knowledge on a daily basis. Some of them are interested in being part of public policy discussions, maybe the youngest. Sometimes the lack of time and stress do not allow them to think about these topics, but I believe that teachers want to be part of the

> policy and curriculum discussion. We see this profession as more intellectual than people used to think. Teachers need to participate to make policies from the classroom. We should make the emphasis that we want in order to contribute to disadvantaged people and a better society". Belgica, Del Valle

She understands her political activist commitment in broader terms than classroom practice, emphasising the role of teachers as citizens who should contribute to the discussion of the curriculum as one of the duty of the profession. Likewise, she validates the knowledge gained through the practice of teaching since she believes it is the contribution of the profession to society and so is presumably underpinned by her desire to influence it.

Political activist commitments involve different meanings for teachers in this study. Some share the idea that education is an instrument that disseminates awareness of individual rights and social injustices. Other teachers also see their profession as an opportunity to promote social mobility, a view which provides strong motivations for professional development. Personal beliefs become part of their professional identity, constructing an 'activist' (Sachs 2000, 2003, 2016) teacher identity. This is similar to other studies, which highlight teachers' commitment to democracy or to a view that hope and possibility are based on education (Nieto 2003). Although they all want social and educational change, these motivations impact teachers' practice from different angles. However, all constitute political activist commitments in teachers' PIMs.

For Chilean primary teachers, to be activist partially fulfils the idea of the 'activist profession' described by Sachs where "trust, obligation and solidarity work together….[and] collaboration involves all teams writing the cases, resolving questions about the style of case writing and establishing relationships between colleagues from the schools, the university and the teachers' union" (Sachs 2000, pp. 81-82). First, Chilean teachers have few opportunities to work and reflect collaboratively in the school and beyond it; and second, if they have such opportunities, there are isolated opportunities to practise activism, often set by external demands rather than their own definition of grounds of action.

Thus, the activism described by teachers in this study is often confined to activities in the classroom and participation in the teachers' union. In urban settings, work conditions tend to dominate the discussion, although other themes are also part of the union agenda, while teachers from rural locations have the opportunity to meet colleagues and reflect (see Ch 5, section 3, 'Informal Collaboration'). This reflection is often marginalised in relation to a discourse of improvements according to standardised test results in spite of the relative autonomy of schools to set their own goals and ends (MINEDUC 2008). These teachers are committed to social and political change, seeing pupils as key agents in their role as citizens, but they also have few opportunities to work collaboratively since they tend to be alone in their schools and not part of a broad school culture (see Ch 5, section 3, 'informal Collaboration').

A side note: Willingness to discuss the curriculum

The vicarious knowledge of students, acquired in teachers' practice, allows teachers to situate learning in a social context, and produce pedagogical knowledge through which teaching is understood as an intellectual occupation. Like Belgica (above) at least five of 20 teachers from different schools talk about their willingness to discuss the curriculum. As Pamela states:

> "As teachers, we have knowledge of pupils and the community, so we could suggest an accurate structure for contents in the curriculum discussion, therefore we could improve results in our classroom". Pamela

Pamela explains her motivation to be part of the curriculum discussion based on her commitment to better results and her willingness to improve her practice. She seems aware of the importance of understand pupils' nature as well as their environment in order to strengthen bonds with students and make progress in her teaching and learning.

Chilean primary teachers working in challenging circumstances feel able to contribute their practical wisdom to the discussion, expressing a sense of agency and voice as part of their professional identities, even when they have an ethic of social welfare commitment.

Ethics are closely related to teachers' sense of vocation. In some cases, a social welfare commitment is tightly linked to a vocational focus on pupils'

wellbeing. All teachers who state a vocation of pupils' wellbeing have an ethic of social welfare commitment. However, there are teachers who also hold a social welfare commitment but their vocation is focused on pupils' learning as a priority, though the understanding of learning is often nonstandard. Additionally, the ethics held by participants in this study are likely to be found in most schools serving underprivileged communities, a situation which encourages an emphasis on pupils' learning and wellbeing in teachers' sense of vocation.

Likewise, ethics are often rooted in personal values that drive teachers' practices. Values set priorities for decisions, attitudes and behaviours, which contribute to the performance of professional identity. On the one hand, teachers embrace particular ethics on the basis of values inculcated by 'significant others' who have been referents of behaviours and attitudes contributing to personal values in work and non-work settings. On the other hand, these ethics are enhanced by perceptions of the contexts in which they live and work, shaping identities through experiences at work. Interactions with contexts reinforce some values and generate new ones, contributing to the shaping and reshaping of professional identities in a dynamic process of identity development or 'negotiation' (Wenger 1998).

The next section will explore explicit values supporting these ethics, seeking also to uncover the silent or unspoken values present in teachers' narratives.

3. Moral improvement and values in teaching

Teachers in this study tend to be explicit about the role of values in their approach to pupils. Irrespective of schools and localities where teachers work and live, 19 of 20 teachers were explicit about values in their practice. This result is similar to other studies (e.g. Campbell 2004). However, the teachers had slightly different emphases. Some teachers explained clearly the desire to enhance basic moral values as 'virtues' (Carr 2011), while other teachers valued the development of self-confidence, and encouraged social awareness, as 'principled commitment' (ibid), as we shall see in the next section. Any effort at classification should be seen as tentative, since teachers' values often appear overlapping.

Explicitness about development of moral values

Participants mention values such as respect, honesty, and the creation of good citizens and upright and respectable human beings, which we can cluster as 'moral values/virtues'. Out of 19, eight teachers state explicit moral values that are relevant to their practice:

> "I am interested in their values [students], values are relevant in your life, even in their jobs later on. I want students to be honest, respectful, upright, tolerant, with values that help them be good citizens and human beings. Most of my lessons are tinted by these values." Cindy, Bolivar.

Cindy is a teacher in early career professional phase, and she teaches all subjects in her class. She also practises a religious faith. Although she is committed to increasing knowledge and skills among pupils, she is also categorical about the role of moral values in her practice because she believes

that these values will continue to operate in pupils' lives. Thus, to transfer moral values seems to be a key element in her professional identity meaning.

Felix is even more committed to value-based teaching, including the capacity to discriminate as a central issue of his practice:

> “Children need to learn how to discriminate, we need to help them with this. I will introduce philosophy in the curriculum, so that they can learn values and make the right choices. We need reasoning among kids.” Felix, Laguna Negra.

For Felix part of moral development is related to the capacity to make the right choice. He seems to believe that discrimination contributes to reasoning, identifying ‘right’ from ‘wrong’ values, and providing a tool to make assertive choices in life. It is likely that contact with vulnerable communities contributes to Felix's convictions, strengthening the emphasis on moral values/virtues in his PIM.

These quotes show the orientation of teachers to bringing up wholesome individuals, so that moral values/virtues appear as a distinctive aspect of their PIMs, because they recognize the role of these values in pupils’ life beyond the school experience. They are empowered and committed to embracing these values across all their activities as teachers, portraying values/virtues as a distinctive aspect of their professional identities.

The interest of Chilean primary teachers in developing moral values/virtues in students suggests their understanding of the profession as a public obligation,

drawing on a PIM as ‘moral agents’ (Campbell 2003, 2004) where the expectations from pupils need to be consistent with teachers’ behaviours and attitudes in their interaction, in the exercise of ‘practical wisdom’ (Schussler and Murrle 2016) as a combination of moral will and moral skills. Values/virtues such as honesty, tolerance, respect and the capacity to discriminate tie teachers' professional identities with their personal judgements of social needs, linking professional identities to the moral purpose of teaching, in which social contribution appears as a key element.

Self-confidence as a value

Out of 19, four teachers valued the enhancement of self-confidence and the specific development of social skills among pupils in order to accomplish challenges in social situations and to broaden expectations for the future. Each school had at least one teacher concerned about the need to increase these aspects of their teaching as necessary elements enhancing self-confidence. For example, Lili states:

> I want my students to be able to have a conversation in any social situation without feeling shy or afraid of anything. I want them to be self-confident.” Lili, Gabriela

Lili is a former student of the school where she is working. Therefore, it is likely that she feels empathy for her students. At the same time, it seems that she perceives students as distrustful of their capacity to meet satisfactorily their challenges as well as their ability to face social interactions. Thus, she states the importance of increasing self-worth among students:

> “Many of the classroom activities are oriented to developing their capacity to give public speeches, to stand in front of a stage and be able to present their knowledge, emphasising their personal qualities and characteristics”, Victoria, Laguna Negra

From another angle, Victoria displays similar concerns to Lili. However, Victoria works in a rural school where students have fewer opportunities to face social interaction through which their self-confidence can be tested, therefore she feels that it is her responsibility to enhance self-worth and self-confidence.

> “I encourage my students to have the courage to make decisions being aware of opportunities beyond this town, beyond their families. Sometimes life is so flat for them here and they are afraid of life beyond this town”. Mariana, Del Valle.

Similar to Victoria, Mariana works in a semi-rural school where isolation seems to be a barrier to pupils' developing further aspirations with a real will to be successful. As a consequence, she embraces this challenge as part of her professional identity meaning, perhaps with more passion than the lessons that she teaches or using her lessons for this purpose.

These teachers perceive part of their duty as strengthening confidence, developing self-worth and increasing each pupil’s knowledge and understanding of their context. This value can be related to enhancing the embodied state of ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu 1986). In other words, this position involved a perception by teachers of the need of individuals to appropriate and internalize skills and competencies, converting them into internal characteristics in order to increase their sense of belonging to a certain group as well as to enlarge the

network of connections among individuals' environments and beyond, raising the whole student's self-worth.

Chilean Primary teachers feel an obligation to mould individuals to perform in society. However, it would require a further investigation to establish how these processes are carried out in the classroom, the school as organisation and in relation to the national curriculum to clarify how this develops in practice.

Social awareness as value

Four of 19 teachers are explicit about encouraging critical thinking among pupils when it comes to current issues and historical events, so that they can develop an understanding of the disadvantages that pupils face and the need for social change, and thus, social justice. These teachers appeared to hold an ethic of political activist commitment (see above) addressed to the need for social justice perceived by them due to their own childhood experiences and/or their interactions with their work environment.

> “One of the benefits of teaching my subject is that I can play with texts and reflections about values that I want to promote among students. This subject allows me to teach skills but also to work on other topics that I believe are relevant for their lives; to develop awareness of the relevance of diversity; and to develop empathy with unfair situations. I do believe they could be the ones for promoting changes in society in the direction that I consider best for everyone, for a fair society with opportunities for everyone”. Belgica, Gabriela

Belgica is a union activist who chose teaching as a way to contribute to social change and social justice as she perceived it during her childhood. At the same time, she recognizes the freedom of her subject for working with themes that she considers relevant for students' lives. As we saw in the chapter on contextual influence in professional identities, she sees freedom as an important element of her practice that allows her to embed her own values in her teaching practice, promoting social awareness and being an activist in her occupation as a relevant part of her PIMs.

4. Tacit values in teaching

Teachers' statements reveal values that underpin teachers' practice, which are not explicit but are present in their jobs as part of a moral dimension of their practice/commitment, inspired by and modelled on an implicit set of values embedded in Chilean society, of which teachers may not be entirely aware. They seem to encourage 'right' models and knowledge according to their own perceptions and beliefs. As Carol explains,

> "As a teacher you are a model. You need to look after your manners, vocabulary, your clothing as much as your own consistency, you should behave in the same way that you request from the girls, saying the truth, being honest and responsible, marking tests and worksheets on time, being on time in the classroom and so on". Carol, Gabriela.

Carol emphasises manners and appearance, without a clear intention of imposing her beliefs about what is 'good' on her students. Similarly, Diego refers to values about being responsible and self-care:

> "It is very important to teach values such as punctuality or hygiene

> among this community. This also helps when we want to improve results." Diego, Bolivar.

Mateo emphasises knowledge that is relevant to his students by referring to certain buildings visited during students' trips. To some extent he imposed and enforced certain values he considers important in an effort to increase social and cultural capital among students.

> "Students need to know everything that is important in our society. I took my students to museums, the sea, some ships at the port, the government buildings. I believe that these kids need more opportunities. With me they visited many places. I took my students to the Cathedral, the Government Palace, the Cousino Hall among other important buildings because they did not know anything in the city. I felt it was my responsibility to show them everything." Mateo, Del Valle.

This teacher seems to be happy to increase values associated with social and cultural capital envisaged in cultural assets related to the colonialist legacy, and although this is part of the history of the country it is still unclear how these aesthetic values and paradigms are believed to be relevant to pupils in his school.

Tacit values are difficult to unveil, but they have been revealed throughout the participants' narratives. Values seem to be attached to teachers' moralities as well as to traditions embedded in the nation. This is similar to the 'pastoral power' (Lopez 1988) described in a qualitative study carried out in Chile with teachers where *"teachers believe that children need to be pulled away from 'negative' cultural values and practices in which they live*" (p. 105). Although none of the teachers interviewed here refer categorically to 'negative' cultural values, they do believe that contexts where pupils live and grow make little

contribution to increasing social and cultural capital among them, referring often to a lack of parental support and commitment to learning.

In that sense, teachers in this study perceive their PIM as a moral agent, feeling committed to discerning ‘right’ from ‘wrong’ in their practice as an inherent task of the occupation, similar to other studies (e.g. Hansen 2001; Carr 1993; Campbell 2003; Schussler and Murrel 2016).

Values are closely associated with distinct life-experiences, and teachers stick to their personal values in their practice and judgements unless the school leadership teams and cultures promote an explicit emphasis on institutional values. Therefore, detachment of the individual from the occupation is not possible (Carr 2004). In these cases, conflict with these values in the workplace can create a strong sense of discomfort and stress among teachers, as in many occupations. The set of values present in teachers' personal identities normally influences various dimensions of professional life, driving their actions, interactions and approaches to pupils. In terms of identity, personal values may affect career choices. Therefore, it is likely that personal values also become part of teachers' professional values.

Overall, the Chilean primary teachers studied here can be seen as imposing their personal values or ‘ethical knowledge’ on students (Campbell 2004). They seem unaware of these values and their relevance for the students, perhaps with the risk of developing a ‘paternalistic’ (Carr 1993) approach to their social

commitment where the enthusiasm for caring could undermine attentive interaction (Nodding 2012). This situation necessarily invites us to examine to what extent teachers have the opportunity to discuss their values with students, colleagues and the wider school community and raise awareness about them in relation to their professional identities and the effects of such identities on pupils as Sachs (2000, 2003) proposes in 'Activist Professional'. It seems that personal values are often enacted un-reflexively, relying on professional autonomy and hierarchies within the school to construct their primacy.

5. Emotions: conflicts with personal values in teaching

While most respondents acted on personal values, they also experienced dissonance due to restrictions on such ethically-oriented action. Twelve of 20 teachers complained of the implications of poor working conditions in their jobs. Seven out of these twelve teachers work in rural locations, which had similar characteristics to those found elsewhere in the practice of teaching in challenging circumstances in isolated localities (Harris and Chapman 2004). When teachers complain about work conditions, they do not only care about their personal wellbeing, they are also advocating the recognition of their 'public obligation', and bemoaning the consequences of precarious environments for pupils' learning in contexts where scarcity contributes to increasing the difficulty of learning as well as the challenging circumstances of their job. For example, one teacher argues:

> "The public education system seems to be very bad for teachers. The society and the system are pushing you away by the lack of money and resources. I am talking about my salary as well as my actual teaching; it's very hard to provide significant learning experiences to pupils like in affluent schools, without Internet or buses to visit museums and exhibitions, for example. The municipality seems to have too much

> spending on other things. This is a message about the value of our job as teachers. Additionally, if I want to move forward to improve my quality of life I should go to private schools to avoid problems with my pension and health insurance. [...] This is not fair because I have a commitment to public education and I don't get any recognition or incentive to work here." Victoria, Laguna Negra

As a teacher in the early career professional phase, Victoria has pointed out several problems. Taken together, these seem to undermine her commitment to public-sector teaching. However, her most vociferous claim was an accusation of a lack of public recognition for the occupation in terms of how the society neglected the importance of education, children and the workers within the field, suggesting 'misrecognition' or emptiness about the meaning of being a teacher in society. This devaluation blurs her professional identity meaning to the point at which she considers leaving public education where apparently her commitment is ignored and her personal values misrepresented.

Victoria was emphatic about the lack of resources for teachers and their practice, while Mateo bemoaned the scarcity of elements to tackle the social problems in his school, describing loneliness on the job:

> "Our kids are very vulnerable. They have absent parents; they have lack of affection as well. There is a lack of sources and training for the staff. Our work is very difficult because we are alone in this. Although we have a team to support us, it is not enough. We can do nothing about their reality. It is frustrating really." Mateo, Del Valle

Mateo worked in the most deprived community in the study, and he seemed to feel alone in his attempts to embody his personal values and contribute to the

community. He suggested unsatisfied and unfulfilled commitment by the institutions in which he was working. As a consequence, we could say society is devaluing the values of the PIM stressed by Mateo in his practice.

The lack of resources is also a concern in Belgica's statement. She goes further in expounding the message regarding the lack of resources and its consequences for the learning process:

> “My vocation is weakened by the lack of recognition of the importance of our job. It is very stressful to deal with unfairness; it generates fatigue and erodes my sense of commitment. I feel very sad when, for example, I have to cover a window with cardboard because I know the window will remain without glass for ages. This denigrates the conditions of our job and the learning process in students. Evidently, the conditions for learning are undermined as well as our self-esteem as teachers. The adverse conditions also affect student perceptions of the importance of education for them because they know this does not happen in private schools.” Belgica, Gabriela

Belgica is referring to her ‘vocation’ as a core aspect of her practice. She explains things that erode her self-esteem as a teacher and the importance of education among students because the message from society seems to be that conditions (and by extension, outcomes) in public education do not matter. Since Belgica has a strong commitment to public education and wants to influence individuals (she has political activist commitment), society, through its institutions, appears to provide a professional identity meaning which is in conflict with her personal values. As she explains later:

> “I believe education is a very important asset. Therefore, when the leadership team prioritises paperwork and bureaucratic procedures over learning, I feel lonely in my duties/challenges and I hesitate in my commitment, questioning the purpose of the profession and my role at

> the school, wondering whether to move on from the classroom to higher education for example", Belgica, Gabriela.

It seems that conflicts with Belgica's values contribute to experiences of dissonance (Pearce and Morrison 2011) in her professional identity meaning, pushing Belgica to find a new work environment more consistent with her personal values and beliefs.

While Belgica seems to have given up on school as a workplace, Marco, who also has unpleasant feelings, explains the elements that keep his enthusiasm for the profession intact:

> "it is very demotivating to look at the results of the school in terms of numbers, but I think that the school is a lot more for students. To see results in terms of numbers diminishes the role of education as a tool that contributes to individual development into whole, rounded individuals. This affects the meaning of being a teacher. Luckily, love from pupils keeps me going", Marco, Bolivar.

Marco is clear about how standardised tests belittle the meanings of education, affecting the value that he gives to it. Nevertheless, he seems to have other personal resources, which enhance his professional identity meanings, ensuring his commitment to the occupation.

It seems that there is a thin line between personal and professional identity (Nias 1989; Nieto 2003, Day et al 2007, Day and Gu 2014; Campbell 2003, 2004; Carr 1993, 2003; Hansen 2001) which explains why challenges to teachers' personal values make individuals in the profession vulnerable, unstable and even alienated regarding their professional identities. It is possible

that dissonance with teachers' sense of vocation elicits negative emotions from teachers.

Clara is a new teacher who got her degree from a university in the United States. She chose the school she works in because she believes in making a contribution to multicultural education. However, at the time of the interviews she was very demotivated, feeling inefficient. Her post in the school does not allow her to enact the values that drive her practice:

> "At the moment I am working with a huge number of students in the classroom, I can't commit properly to each student. This is very stressful; I am not happy with my performance. I need to invest large amounts of personal time to provide a significant experience to the students. I know it is not lack of willingness of the leadership team but it is the way the school is organized, the classroom size, the number of hours allocated to my subject, the time allocated to prepare a good lesson. This is not the way that I understand my profession where I want to dedicate to each individual and their uniqueness. To work like that goes against my principles. That is why I am not sure if I will be here for a long time because I am not happy, I can't do my best and when I do it I feel very tired. I honestly think that I can do better somewhere else, out of schools as institutions". Clara, Bolivar.

Clara feels a disconnection between what she wants to do and the things that she is actually doing. She seems to be frustrated and ineffective, not because of her colleagues or the school community, but in relation to the school as an institution and the institutional structure which regulates schools, perhaps because the PIM promoted by the school as an institution represents values which are far from the values of her own PIM.

The fact that Clara was trained in a different country may affect her perception

of the meaning of the school and work conditions for teachers, along with her professional identity meaning. This may aggravate the conflict between her personal values and the values embraced by the school culture, pushing Clara away from the school chosen by her and likely from any other Chilean public school.

Poor work conditions, as elements of the school and policy context, diminish the value of education, undermining the meaning of the teaching profession and the public obligation associated with the profession. Similarly, when schools assess teachers' work and efficacy using standardised tests, their job is belittled and undermined in relation to teachers' motives and professional identities (e.g. Ch 5, section 3, 'being accountable', Marco's statement). Chilean primary teachers often attach significance to education, which goes beyond standardised test results and is related to the humanistic value of learning (see section 3 and 4, above). This is consistent with findings by Reyes et al. (2010) where teachers state that adaptation to curriculum demands, and doing what they are told without believing in it, cause teachers to lose their professional essence, becoming mere technicians.

As a consequence of the loss of autonomy and recognition, personal values are dismissed, self-esteem is damaged and Chilean primary teachers are placed in a vulnerable position. This erodes their professional identity and commitment, leaving them demoralised as Victoria, Mateo, Belgica, Marco and Clara explain above. This finding is similar to those of Hunter Quartz (2009) where it is suggested that the lack of autonomy in teaching in California drives young

teachers to new landscapes in the profession in order to keep the meaning of their occupation. This is just one example of what happens to teachers when their personal values are threatened.

In this study, Chilean primary teachers have stayed in their post, nourished by their connections to pupils and the school community, and the stability that the job provides them. Few teachers feel supported by the school as an organisation, or committed to their leadership teams. Instead, they often feel vulnerable as their moral integrity is questioned (Day 2016, p. 25).

6. Biographies influencing values: pre-work and work experience

Biographies are the facts and events related to someone's life. They make an important contribution to the process of building a set of values in individuals. Previous research about teachers' lives and careers has pointed out the importance of personal biographical aspects in relation to teachers' interest in the profession (Huberman 1989; Lortie 1975; Day et al 2007, Nieto 2003). Additionally, research into identity (e.g. Burke and Stets 2009; Stets and Carte 2012; and Stets and Serpe 2013) has also found that biographies are relevant to definitions of identity.

Teachers recognize a combination of influences in the process of setting values. For instance, early experiences in life or previous experience working have impacts on values, along with current work experiences, as we will see in the next section.

Although out of 20, **sixteen** teachers recognize the role of the family and school experiences as children, **ten of twenty** teachers also mention the importance of their working experiences in different school contexts as a resource for re-defining or enhancing values. In other words, contact with the school context itself is able to generate changes in values among teachers or even foster a new set of values.

Table 6.2: Summary of pre- and post-work experience influences on values

School	Teacher name	Years of experience	Time in this school	Biographies influencing values	
				Pre work experience (from family and school)	**Post work experience**
Laguna Negra School/158 students, rural, under performed	**Juan**	9	1	+	++
	Monica	2	2	+++	
	Victoria	6	2	+++	
	Amelia	30	20	+++	
	Felix	38	28	+++	
Del Valle School/449 students, rural, under performed	**Pamela**	5	1		++
	Violeta	30	1	++	+
	Mariana	13	5	+++	
	Mateo	24	24	+++	
	Felipe	40	38	+++	
Bolivar School/365 students, urban, under performed	**Marco**	30	24	+	++
	Jose	34	14	+++	
	Diego	25	2	++	+
	Cindy	1	1	+++	
	Clara	3	0.2	++/++	

Gabriela School/533 students, urban, under performed	**Melisa**	22	3	++	+
	Carol	30	2		+++
	Lili	7	3		++
	Ada	26	3		+++
	Belgica	6	4	+	++

+++ Strong influence

++ Moderate influence

+ Weak influence

Pre-work experience: from family memories

Six of 20 teachers affirm that having a teacher in the family was a significant influence on their understanding of the occupation today. Teachers' relatives appear as formative influences in how teachers embrace their tasks and duties, shaping the internalized identity meanings as teachers early in their life, and driving some aspects of their practice.

Amelia (from a rural school) not only remembers the strong influence of her grandfather's experiences in teaching. She also explains her relationship with pupils and parents as well as their importance to the personal life of teachers by sharing school experiences in family environment, making the school and the people within part of family life, thus contributing to the formation of her professional identity.

> "The main influence was my family because there are a lot of teachers in it, my mother's sisters, some uncles and so on. My grandfather was a "normalista" teacher. I think that his influence was very significant to me

> at home providing me the spirit of teaching. The time he used to spend preparing material and activities for the lessons. The concerns and worries about the individuals in his classes. The thinking and design of the personalized activities and didactics. Everyday, I am working hard to follow his instructions, of course according to my possibilities. He used to share at home his experiences at the school, problems and difficulties with his students. The way that he worked, his dedication and commitment with the students were exemplary to me and very encouraging". Amelia, Laguna Negra.

The 'Normalista' was the first teacher training institution. It was famous because only the best students in schools could apply for it. Therefore, everyone was proud to be there. Teachers were characterized by their dedication and commitment as well as the social and moral influence ascribed to the occupation. Mariana from a rural school also explains this source of influence, emphasising a specific practice, the normalista notebook, as a key practice for her today.

> "I was living with my family in law, they own a school. I worked there and discovered my vocation as a teacher. My mother-in-law was very dedicated, involving families and the community in the learning process. The staff meeting was often about how the families and the community could become closer to our work. I believe that parents' commitment is very important to improving attendance and academic achievement. I always promote parent and community participation in my lessons and among my class. Her 'normalista' style was very appealing to me and I identify myself with her style, very dedicated. I still use the notebook for keeping my teaching records." Mariana, Del Valle

The diversity of tasks performed by Mateo's sisters (Mateo is a semi-rural teacher) indicates elements of his internalized meaning of being a teacher shaping his professional identity. Likewise, he was inspired by the authority held by teachers in the social context of the school, among the school community.

> “I used to go with my sisters to their school. They worked in a small school in a semi-rural area. In there they were authorities. Parents used to come for advice. They used to look after all aspects of pupils: good manners, personal appearance, and even health issues. I learned about their duties and commitment there, this experience was inspiring to me. Today, I care about hygiene, behaviours and habits among students. I promote and expect reciprocal respect from pupils and parents.” Mateo, Del Valle.

Teachers in this study state how teachers as relatives contribute to the developing meanings of the occupation. From different angles, these three teachers provide details about how relatives have influenced their understanding of the occupation, contributing to their sense of the meaning of being teachers. Teachers, at the school and in the family, become models, shaping interactions among the school community and attitudes and behaviours enacted beyond the school, thus indicating the delicate line between personal and professional aspects of teachers' lives (Nias 1989; Nieto 2003, Day et al 2007, Day and Gu 2014). They also shape aspects of practice such as didactics, professional resources and the diversity of jobs and responsibilities ascribed to teachers, as well as aspects related to the status of the profession in the school community. This means that, from their early life, the environment encourages individual interest in the occupation as ‘continuity within the family’ (Lortie 1975, p. 44). The continuous contact with individuals who are teachers advertises the profession as an option, shedding light on issues specific to the occupation such as its authority and social status, its receptiveness to social matters and its emphasis on caring.

Pre-work experience: teachers setting values for teachers

Pre-work experiences are taken to include all incidents which happened in the teacher's early lifetime, which in this study are related to experiences at the school as students where their teachers stamp values on participants.

Four teachers recognize the role of a teacher in contributing to the definition of their values (or anti-values) in teaching. As Mariana explains:

> "In the school I learnt how boring a lesson could be. My teacher was awful, literacy was the most horrible experience and I like reading. That is why to be a literacy teacher today is a challenge and I want to reveal the wonders of reading and writing." Mariana, Del Valle

Mariana has 'traumatic' memories of her literacy schoolteacher, who could eventually demotivate her joy for reading. However, perhaps her personal characteristics pushed her into teaching with the idea of enchanting children with this subject, providing meaning in her professional identity.

Contrarily to Mariana, Monica has very good memories from her school (where she is actually working) and especially of her teachers.

> "[W]hen I was a kid my teacher left a significant positive mark on me when I was at school; this teacher valued and respected me as an individual. I have very good memories of my experiences with some of my teachers, and that is why I am a teacher now. […] I want to provide them with tools to go far, respecting their 'uniqueness'; this is the mark that I want to leave on them." Monica, Laguna Negra

She felt valued by her teachers as well as respected as a human being. These good experiences contributed to her development of a set of values and ethics for the profession, modelling the type of relationship that she is seeking to

establish with pupils in her practice, leading by *respect* as an important standard of self-meaning, a key aspect of her professional identity.

When teachers state that they keep ‘memories’ from their teachers in their current job/school, or that teachers are ‘sources of inspiration’, they imply that these memories are part of their aspired practice. All in all, these memories influence the ways that these teachers understand their occupation today, shaping their understanding of what it means to be a teacher, and therefore their identities as teachers.

Likewise, school experiences are often a process of ‘identification with classroom teachers' (Huberman 1989, p. 117). Evidence provided by participants contributes to the recognition of areas of influence in which biographies impact on teachers’ professional identities from both the school and family experience. However, participants in this study identify biographical influences in their concepts of dedication, commitment and connections with the school community within the profession.

The influences of school experiences appear more frequently in teachers from schools in rural areas (they are mentioned by just two out of 10 teachers who do not work in a rural area). This may suggest that the isolation of these schools contributes to the influence of schooling models from childhood as the main source of professional identity meanings. The situation can be similar when schools lack collaborative work and training activities.

Work experience: family values enhanced by school interactions

In this study, work experiences are taken to include all events which occurred after teachers started to work and which they describe as meaningful for their development and current practice.

Violeta from a semi-rural school depicts clearly the relationship between the biographical aspects of teacher life and its ethics and values.

> "My father was a communist; we lived in a disadvantaged neighbourhood. My father was very sensitive to people in need. Since when we were kids, my father would tell us (we are five siblings) about the rights of disadvantaged people. He always talked about that. This was a strong contribution to my priorities today, to my sensitivity to social issues. Additionally, I decided to be a teacher because I always liked to teach. I have always worked in disadvantaged communities. My working experience also contributes to increasing awareness of social justice as well as my political and social commitment. " Violeta, Del Valle

She is explicit about the role of her family in the development of her ethics and values. However, she also recognizes the importance of her experience as a teacher working in several contexts where she deepened and reaffirmed the moral purpose of her work.

Pre-work and work experiences: family values and new sets of values from interacting within the school

Pre-work and work experiences are regarded as the combination of incidents in early lifetime as well as during earlier experiences in the workplace which have contributed to re-shaping the set of values of participants in this research. Marco from the smallest urban school identifies his family as the main promoter of his values, forming the 'I' of his identity as internalized meanings, thus his personal identity meanings: '*my family encouraged me to be honest and supportive with my friends and relatives, I still think that is very important in life'.* At the same time, during his teaching experiences in a disadvantaged community, he has incorporated a new set of values motivated by the context of his work (developing the 'me' of his teacher identity and re-shaping his personal identity): "*working with very deprived individuals I realised that I could make a difference for them, providing significant lessons and life experiences*".

The influences described in this section could easily be understood as influences from the school context impacting values in professional identity meanings, perhaps as a direct influence from continuous contact with the school context.

The Influence of School Contexts

Biographies influence the set of values that individuals have. However, values can be changed, renewed or deepened by work experiences and contact with the social contexts of schools. Individuals' sets of values are embraced in different aspects of life, tinting personal and professional environments as teachers explain in the above quotes.

In terms of identity development, pre-work experiences usually affect the ‘I’ of the self or ‘primary identity’ (Jenkins 2008), providing elements which establish values and ethics associated with the profession, and which drive teachers’ attitudes and behaviours in their practices (Rosenberg 1979, Striker and Burke 2000). During this process, internalized meanings of identity are built, initially nourishing teachers' professional identities. ‘Significant others’ (from childhood) modelled identity meanings of teachers by their narratives, and these internalized identity meanings evolve hand in hand with the interactions with contexts and individuals, contributing to shaping the ‘me’ of the self or the social meanings of teachers' professional identity, as we have seen in teachers' statements.

It is worth noting that values in teaching are affected by a combination of biographical influences of pre-work and working experiences, defining, shaping and re-shaping or even changing sets of values. On the one hand, previous working experiences also pose a challenge of exploring better ways to support teachers at pre-service levels with tools to increase their awareness about their values and a critical view of the impact of those values on teachers' practice among pupils and in the school community. On the other hand, events during pre-work and working experiences still have a distinctive influence on teachers' values, showing the significance of elements within a school culture which impact on teachers' professional identity development, such as the role of leaders in the process of positively enhancing professional identity meanings.

So far, this section has reviewed the ways in which teachers' biographies influence current aspects of their professional identities. However, biographical experiences also influence the set of values that individuals have, although this is not the only area of influence.

Conclusions

It has been found that a sense of vocation has a distinctive influence on how teachers construct their teachers' professional identities. However, the meaning of vocation involves aspects such as the desire to contribute, job satisfaction, and love. Likewise, the focus of vocation varies among teachers in the classroom, since the priorities vary from learning to wellbeing.

Other influences on teachers' professional identities include teachers' ethics regarding social welfare and political activist commitment, the former with distinctive emphasis on physical and emotional wellbeing with a high level of enthusiasm for doing the 'right thing', while the latter emphasises the development of social awareness and the civic responsibilities of the profession, including the commitment to continuous professional development. Both ethics seem to be boosted by teachers' values.

Teachers' own upbringing has a distinctive influence on teachers' values in the first instance. Although it was possible to cluster teachers' values among participants, the clusters seem not to be representative of particular schools, since the four schools serve disadvantaged communities, and the leadership

teams appear distinctively weak in most of them. Rather, values seem to be attached primarily to teachers as individuals and their perceptions and understandings of students' needs and contexts, in spite of the fact that their work experiences over time enhance, strengthen or even change values too.

Vocation, ethical values and personal beliefs appear to have distinctive influences on teachers' perceptions of their professional identities, regarding their decisions, actions, attitudes and behaviours within the classroom and the school. Vocation, ethical values and personal beliefs are also resources to face challenges and dilemmas within the profession shaping aspects of their identities. In this vein, when vocation, ethics, values and personal beliefs have little consistency among individuals in the same organisation, teachers' efforts may be diluted. Likewise, tensions between institutional expectations and teachers' sense of vocation, ethics, values and personal beliefs trigger fatigue among teachers, eroding their self-esteem. This can affect the emotional well-being, their health and eventually their capacity to provide significant learning experiences by teaching at their best.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

Introduction

As we saw in earlier chapters, teachers perceive that contextual and personal influences shape and define their professional identity. Understanding the connections and interactions between these influences will, therefore, not only help us to understand how teachers construct their professional identities but it will also draw attention to the need for reflection and discussion regarding these influences in order to ensure that conflicts and instabilities in professional identities trigger and accomplish personal and professional growth. This reflection and discussion will contribute to developing collective meanings of teachers' professional identities within organisations. This will attune the aspects of professional identity, boosting emotional wellbeing among teachers, since collective meanings strengthen the impact of teachers' practice, and genuine emotional connections.

At the same time, the understanding of teachers' professional identities will create awareness about the importance of reflection and discussion within organisations and the timely provision of intellectual and material resources in order to develop collective meanings of the key features/aspects of professional identities, because these influences contribute to shaping and defining professional identity profiles. In turn, this may have implications for school leaders, teacher educators and perhaps policy makers.

1. Influences' interactions on teachers' professional identities

The following figure (7.1) provides a 'map' of the connections between the three dimensions of influences and the implications for the identification and definition of the three professional identity profiles.

Figure 7.1: Dimensions of influences and factors interacting on teachers' professional identity construction.

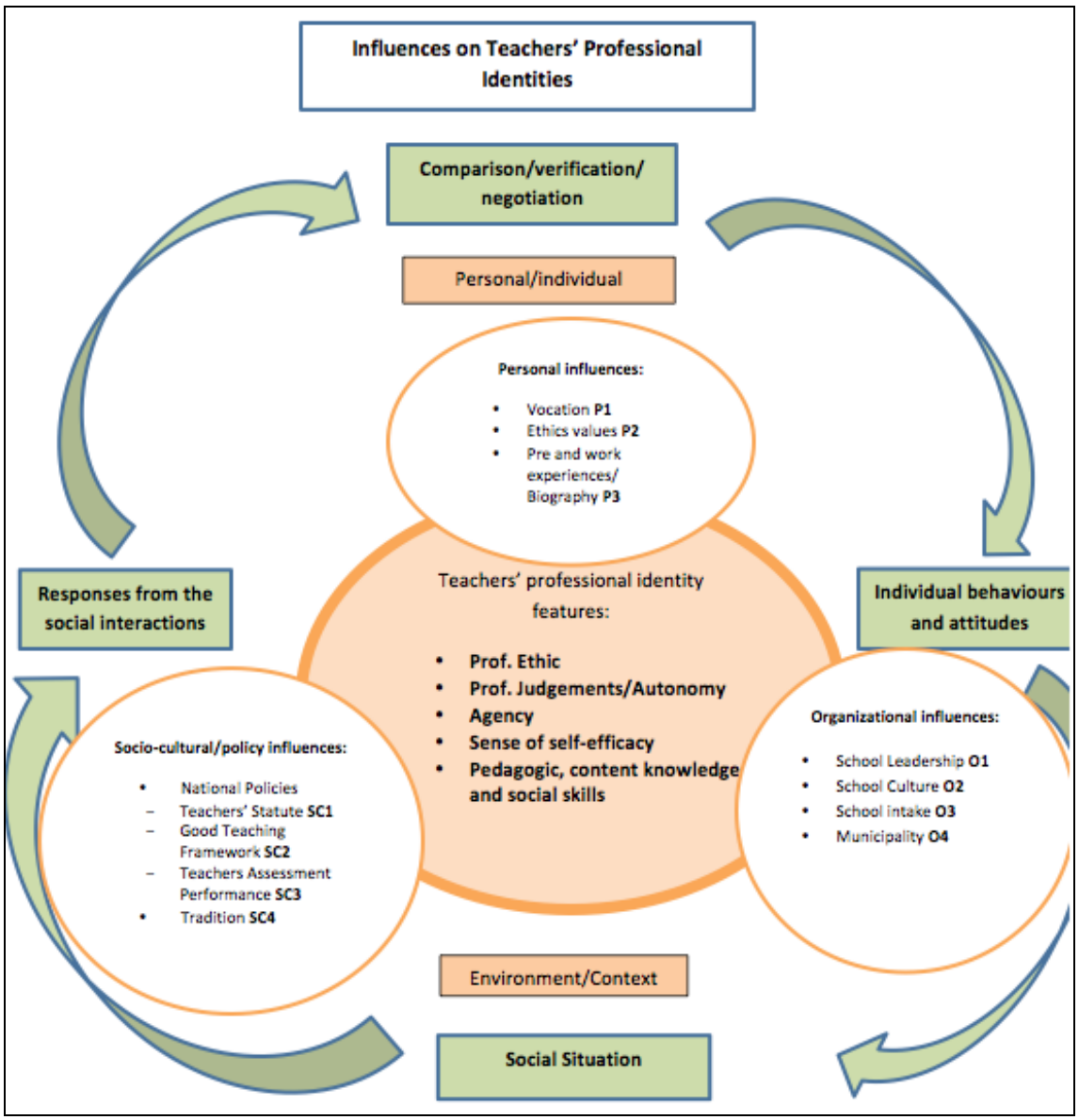


Figure 7.1 shows the dimension and factors of influences on teachers' professional identities, where personal influences are signalled as (P), socio-cultural influences as (SC), and organisational influences as (O). The degree of impact of these influences in each teacher's professional identity was assigned by a judgement based on previous chapters (Chapters 5 and 6) considering the intensity described by teachers and corresponding attributes of each factor.

These influences interact in different degrees, which are not exclusive, however, so here we will focus on the influences identified with a stronger impact. This means an emphasis on the more frequent responses among participants and the weight of their statements regarding each professional identity feature in performing the job (see more detailed tables in appendix 3, 4 and 5). The summary can be seen in the following table (7.1)

Table 7.1: Summary of influences on teachers' professional identity

Teachers' professional identity features:	**Personal influences**			**Workplace influences**				**Socio-cultural/policy infs.**			
	P1	P2	P3	O1	O2	O3	O4	SC 1	SC 2	SC 3	SC4
Prof. Ethic	+++	+++	+++		++	+++					+
Prof. Judgements/Autonomy		+++		++	++			+		++	
Agency	+++	+++	+	+		+++			+++		+
Sense of self-efficacy				++		+++				+++	
Content and pedagogical knowledge and social skills						++			+++		

The table 7.1 shows the key features of teachers' professional identity in this study in the left column, followed by the stronger Personal Influences (P) interacting in the definition of Chilean teachers' professional identities: vocation (P1), personal values (P2) and biography (P3). The third big column shows the Organisation Influences (O) on professional identities: school leadership (O1), school culture (O2), characteristics of school pupils and parents (O3) and municipality (O4). The last column presents the socio-cultural/policy influences (SC) on the features of the teachers' professional identity, policy (SC1, 2, 3) and tradition (SC4).

As it can be observed, a teacher's professional ethic and agency have a high degree of influence on vocation (P1) and personal values (P2) along with school culture (O2) and school intake (O3), although agency also has some degree of influence on policy (SC2) and tradition (SC4). Thus, teachers' professional ethics and agency are strongly defined by individuals' perceptions of students' and parents' needs, mediated by the emphasis of their vocation and personal values and according to this, their own priorities in relation to the characteristics of their class.

At the same time, the value of autonomy shows the influence of personal values (P2), school leadership (O1) and school culture (O2) as well as policy (SC1 and SC3). Personal values appear to drive the autonomy of professional judgements because the interactions with students' needs and personal sets of values lead teachers to make judgements considering the best for their students' wellbeing. However, school leadership and culture also contribute to

the circumscription of these judgements because they frame the judgements' limits. At the same time, official definitions of the occupation appear to have a lesser degree of influence, since they provide the general frame for teachers' practice, such as official deadlines, standards and forms to fill.

Teachers' sense of self-efficacy exhibits influences from the school leadership (O1), students and parents of the school (O3) and policy (SC3). The sense of self-efficacy is affected by the feedback from students and parents, such as expressions of respect and affection. However, teachers' sense of self-efficacy also appears to be influenced (often positively) by school leadership through the opportunities and levels of participation of teachers in decision-making processes, along with the distribution of additional responsibilities within the school. Teachers read them as appreciation of their skills and professional recognition, especially if they are associated with additional benefits, boosting teachers' motivation, which is a key element for teacher performance (Leithwood and Beatty 2008).

Emphases on content, pedagogical knowledge and social skills show influences from the students and parents of the school (O3) and policy (SC2). Teachers' perceptions of their students' needs and requirements lead to the acquisition of knowledge and skills, similar to other studies (e.g. Messiou and Ainscow 2015). However, teachers' assessment and standardised tests also influence this aspect of the occupation. At the same time, if the school has been awarded a Preferential Subsidy, it is likely that the commitments in the Improvement Plan of the school also address the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

In terms of contextual influences, Chilean primary teachers' professional identities are mainly built on a combination of personal factors developed by work experiences and a personal bond with children and parents whom they serve (PI), the school organisation (OI), and current policies (SCI).

Considering the three dimensions of influences explored in this study, it was possible to identify different groups of factors affecting the perception of teachers about their professional identity and the changes in this. These factors interact at different levels and to various degrees, creating and re-creating different professional identity profiles. In this study, in schools under challenging circumstances, **three** profiles of PIMs were identified from the data analysis.

However, these influences are not exclusive; for example, three of these professional identity meanings share an ethic of social welfare commitment. Echoing previous research about teachers' lives and work (Day et al. 2007, Day and Gu 2010), years of experience appear as a distinctive factor affecting the levels of commitment that are sustained by aspects such as vocation and purpose, in combination to school leadership support and companion.

Table 7.2: Summary of three identity profiles of teachers' professional identity

Activist	**Passionate**	**Carers**
Vocation focus on national curriculum and skills for life	Vocation focus on national curriculum, pupils wellbeing and learning skills for life	Vocation focus on pupils wellbeing and learning skills for life

Political activist commitment ethic values		Social welfare commitment ethic value		Social welfare commitment ethic value	
School intake		School intake		School intakes	
		School leadership influence social recognition increasing self-confidence		National policy awareness	
Gabriela	1	Gabriela	3	Gabriela	1
Bolivar	2	Bolivar	3	Bolivar	1
Del Valle	1	Del Valle	2	Del Valle	2
Laguna Negra	1	Laguna Negra	3	Laguna Negra	0
Total	**5**	Total	**11**	Total	**4**

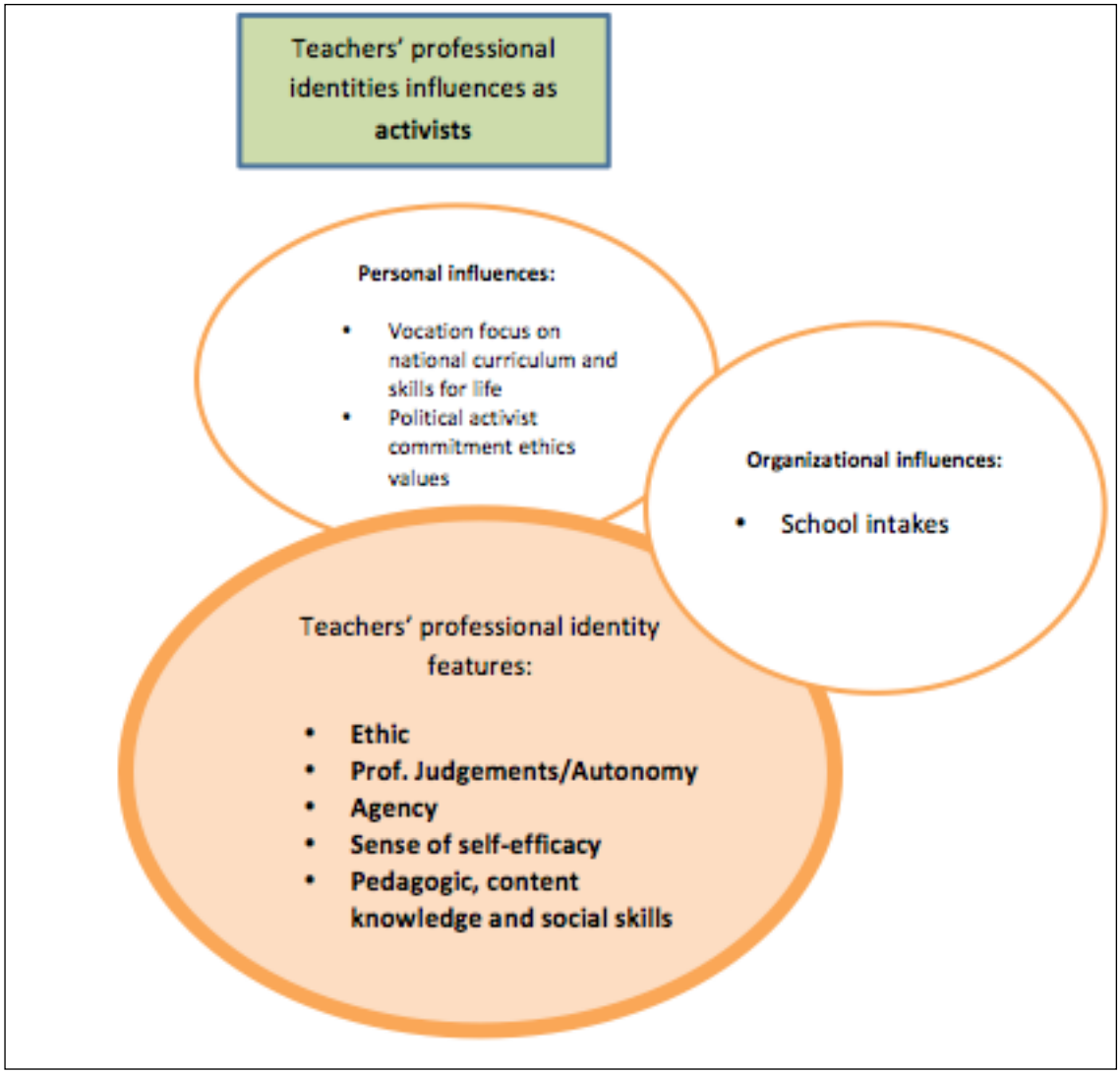
2. Description of professional identity profiles

Profile 1: Activist

In the *activist* teachers' professional identity, "social justice, sense of purpose and strong will" are key characteristics. The influences interacting in this case are vocation in developing skills for life along with a strong sense of purpose driven by political and ethical activism commitments. Although they are committed to the national curriculum, they emphasise the development of skills for life, as Violeta states (Ch 6, above, section 1, 'Pupils' Learning'). These teachers see the occupation as a means to promote and encourage social awareness and critical thinking not only among students, but also among staff and the wider school community as actions and attitudes towards social change (Ch 6, above, section 2, 'Political Activist Commitment'). Therefore, the classroom and lessons are regarded as spaces to discuss inequality and

injustice that also promote reflection. At the same time, political activism and ethical commitment mean that teachers in this group (at least 5) tend to make themselves available to embrace the civil responsibilities of teaching. This is related to the contribution to educational policy by discussion and creation of pedagogical knowledge and the curriculum, as Bélgica explains (Ch 6, above, section 2, 'Political Activist Commitment'). This is also consistent with their participation in the Teachers' Union and other organisations, since all of them have an affiliation to groups of teachers outside of their organisation where they discuss their political beliefs.

Figure 7. 2: Summary of influences on key aspects of 'Activist' professional identity



Profile 2: Passionate

In the *Passionate* teachers' professional identity, "social welfare commitment, sense of purpose and acceptance" are key features. The influences interacting here are the different emphases on vocation: i) students' learning the national curriculum; ii) students' learning skills for life, and iii) students' general wellbeing. They all share a social welfare commitment in their ethics, using the students' responses to lessons as the main indicator of success in terms of

motivation, attendance and test scores. Teachers with this professional identity profile have a strong sense of purpose. At the beginning of their careers they are engaged in a process of developing their professional selves, which often means embracing the national curriculum definitions in their job as they explain (Ch 6, above, section 1, 'Learning the Curriculum'). At the same time, teachers who teach non-tested subjects align their vocation with priorities such as helping students to develop skills for life and wellbeing, for they believe that to be a teacher means more than just teaching a subject or preparing students for tests and exams as Marco explains (Ch 5, above, section 3, 'Being accountable'). This provides higher levels of autonomy, similar to other research findings regarding autonomy among teachers in Scotland, in relation to the implementation of 'curriculum excellence' by Fitchett, Heafner & Lambert (2014). Likewise, further commitment to the profession as a social ethic is suggested (Sisto, Montecinos & Ahumada 2012) as well as the corroboration of the dual component of teachers' professional identities (Lasky 2005).

Teachers have an ethic of social welfare commitment that contributes to valuing their links to pupils and parents. They emphasise learning in their activity, since they see education as a key element for moving further in life as Mónica explains when she defines her commitment in terms of concerns beyond the classroom (Ch 6, above, section 2, 'Commitment beyond the classroom') or Lili, when she explains the value attached to pupils' self-confidence (Ch 6, above, section 3, 'Self-confidence as a value'). This commitment is also expressed on a daily basis by caring for pupils' emotional wellbeing and attempting to provide emotional support and confidence that seems to be scarce within students'

families, as Mariana suggests (Ch 6, above, section 3, ‘Self-confidence as a value’). Thus they tend to invest significant amount of personal time attending to students’ demands or improving their lessons, if needed, as Ada states (Ch 6, above, section 2, ‘Investing personal time’). Among these teachers, students’ feedback is the main element to address their job, as many of them assert (Ch 5, above, section 3, ‘The indicators of satisfactory performance of students’).

The current leadership teams in the four schools have enrolled eight of these teachers recently, and thus, they embrace the values of their leadership team, accepting guidelines and mentoring. They also follow the national curriculum and official definitions/prescriptions in their lessons. In some cases, the leadership team has provided recognition for their jobs and capacities, enhancing self-confidence; it has also bestowed rewards that have strengthened a sense of self-efficacy while boosting commitment.

As Melisa and Marco explain:

> “I am in charge of all the event scripts. I am always asked about it. I think the leadership team trust me and they like my contribution.” Melisa, Gabriela.

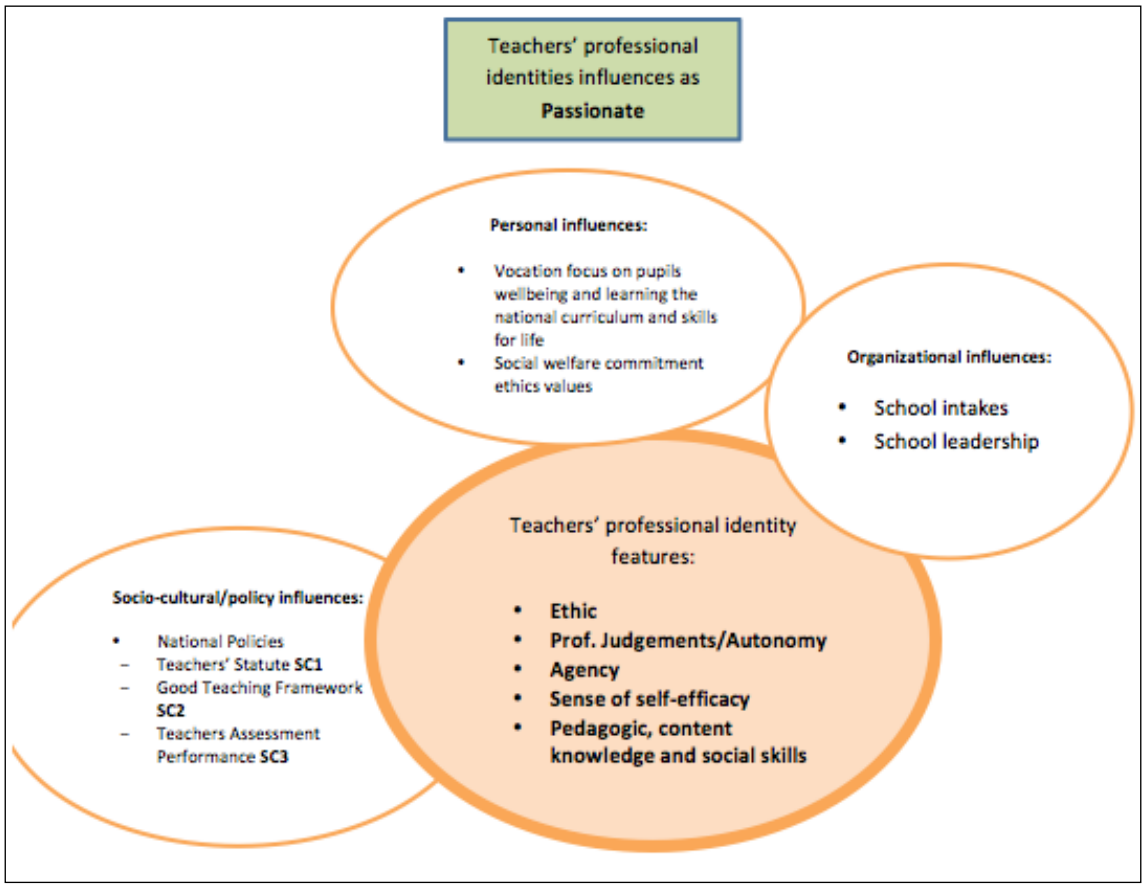
> “I do support everyone at school, I am especially aware of parents. If they are wandering around, I always ask and put them in the right direction to solve their queries. Although this is not my job, everyone recognizes it and trusts me on this.” Marco, Bolivar.

These informal duties contribute to the enhancement of teachers’ self-confidence and their sense of self-efficacy, since these additional responsibilities are perceived as trust in their professional capacities; they

strengthen their sense of self-efficacy and professional self, and thus, professional identity.

As it has been found in other studies (e.g. Day and Gu 2010; Leithwood and Beatty 2008), the professional culture of the school in terms of support and companionship are key factors for these teachers. In terms of identity, school leadership and culture provide meanings of being professional, contributing to teachers' self-confidence, their sense of efficacy and wellbeing.

Figure 7. 3: Summary of influences on key aspects of 'Passionate' professional identity



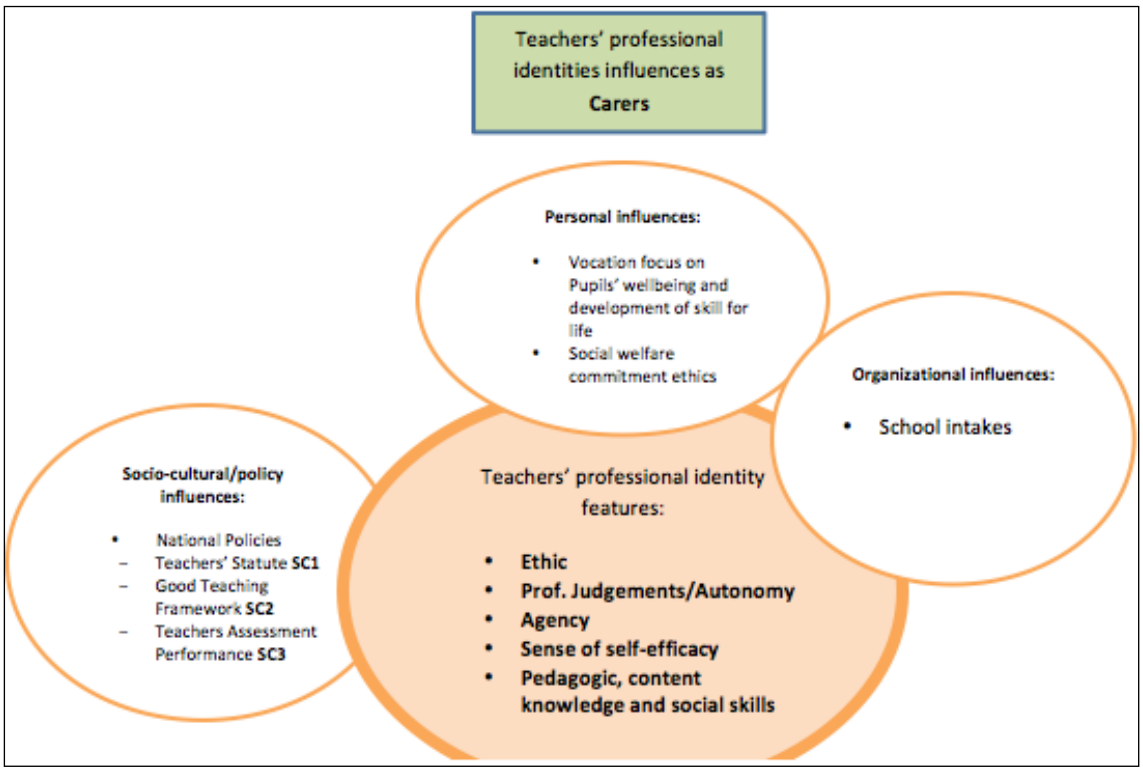
Profile 3: Carers

The *Carers* professional identity has a focus on “social welfare commitment, acceptance and retirement”. The influences that interact are a vocation for pupils’ wellbeing, and teachers’ perception of pupils' and parents’ needs. These teachers also have a vocation focused on students’ learning, mainly those aspects that entail skills for life, rather than those privileged by the national curriculum, though two teachers are also committed to this. The ethics of social welfare commitment are another influence acting on this professional identity, motivated by pupils’ health and happiness. The perception of unrealistic goals of the national curriculum along with the combination of these two influences (vocational focus on pupils' wellbeing and an ethic of social welfare commitment) may compel teachers to concentrate on attempting to compensate for the lack of basic necessities of students by providing a happy and safe place to be, rather than creating a place for learning the national curriculum, for instance, as Amelia states (Chapter 6, above, section 2, ‘Emphasising pupils’ health and wellbeing’), slightly blurring the focus on academic achievement in their professional identity, and easily distracting them from academic achievements.

The combination of these influences can be aggravated if we consider that three out of four work in rural schools in the study, where teachers often refrain from following formal instances of professional learning, since they are quite isolated. At the same time, isolation also contributes to the scarcity of help and companionship for teaching, suggesting a scarcity of positive influence from the

leadership teams for these teachers, even though they are from different schools. This goes hand in hand with a lack of professional development opportunities (Chapter 5, above, section 2, 'Professional development support'). For most of these teachers, self-efficacy is focused on results beyond the school, as Felipe's and Carol's experiences affirm (Chapter 5, section 3, 'The indicators of satisfactory performance of students'). It is therefore possible to infer that job satisfaction appears after long periods of time, reducing the possibility of feeling regularly rewarded for the job. Perhaps, this is the reason why most of these teachers are waiting to retire rather than looking forward to other career phases/challenges.

Figure 7. 4: Summary of influences on key aspect of 'Carers' professional identity



3. Consequences for teachers' professional identity aspects

The three professional identity profiles or groups entail different consequences of the key features/aspects of teachers' professional identities explored in this study. The following table (7.3) presents a summary of the three profiles in relation to each feature of teachers' professional identity.

Table 7.3: Summary of teachers' professional identity profile and its key aspects

	Activist (5)	**Passionate (11)**	**Carers (4)**
1.Professional ethic	Political activist commitment	Social welfare commitment	Social welfare commitment
2.Professional judgements, autonomy	Strong autonomy guided by commitment to developing social awareness and critical thinking led by ideas of social justice	Strong pedagogical and classroom autonomy in the frame of national curriculum in teachers in early career phase. Strong autonomy led by the wellbeing of pupils and families among other teachers.	Restricted autonomy in the classroom led by the perceptions of pupils/families' needs and demands
3.Agency	Strong agency led by actions and attitudes consistent with desire for social justice and to move beyond	Strong agency supported by leadership teams. This contributes to addressing learning and professional development and classroom issues in the frame of the national curriculum as well as strong agency addressed by a sense of mastery and confidence in social skills and personal networks in teachers with more than 20 years of experience	Weak agency beyond classroom activities and pedagogical duties
4.Sense of self-efficacy	High	High	Low

5.Pedagogic, content knowledge and social skills	Defined by national policy and the perceptions of the pupils' and parents' needs/ school intake	Defined by national policy and the perceptions of the pupils' and parents' needs/school intake	Defined by national policy and the perceptions of the pupils' and parents' needs/ school intake

1. Professional ethics

Two main professional ethics emerge among teachers: political activism and social welfare commitment. These ethics are triggered by vocation, personal values, and biographic experiences, along with the perceptions of the students' and parents' needs (See Chapter 6, section 6). Ethics provide a foundation for teachers' action, attitudes, behaviours and decisions. They shape teachers' relationships with colleagues, parents and pupils since they pursue a meaningful contribution to society. These ethics are not always explicitly embracing the school organisation, but they do affect teachers' professional judgements, shape characteristics of agency, define parameters for self-efficacy, and draw professional learning priorities consistently with their personal ethics values.

2. Professional judgements

As described above, the combination of vocation and personal values shape professional ethics that drive professional judgement among teachers, defining priorities and setting boundaries. In activist teachers, these convictions contribute to shaping their autonomy by providing discretion about the emphasis

of the national curriculum according to pupils' needs and their own beliefs, as Victoria (Chapter 6, section 2, 'Responsibility for continuous professional development') and Bélgica explain (Chapter 6, section 2, 'Embracing civil responsibilities of the profession') because their current organisation provides sufficient levels of autonomy to enact their own views and principles within their classroom, emphasising aspects of the curriculum that serve these purposes (Chapter 5, section 3, 'Professional judgement in the classroom').

Passionate teachers feel fairly free to decide about their classroom activities and methodologies, addressing pedagogical matters in spite of the explicit restriction of autonomy, as they explain. However, among these teachers, workplace influences have strong effects even within the same organisation; these can be depicted in the different perceptions of their autonomy in Pamela and Mariana (Chapter 5, section 3, 'Professional judgement in the classroom'), or in different organisations, like those of Marco and Melisa (Chapter 7, section 2, 'Profile 2: Passionate').

While Mariana feels empowered to solve all sorts of different problems in her school, Pamela feels less able to enact her professional judgement in her lesson planning. The school authority reduces her capacity to decide about the lessons, and it has restricted her autonomy about methodology, which is not consistent with the levels of autonomy performed once she introduced the use of IT to her lessons with her personal own resources.

In the same vein, but examining teachers from different organisations, while Marco is empowered to solve a variety of issues in his organisation, whereas Melisa is very cautious in her actions and decisions, always seeking approval and support from the school leadership team, despite the fact that she feels confident in other aspects of her work.

The boundaries of professional judgements emerge in different shapes among ‘carer’ teachers who exercise their judgements based on students' and parents’ needs for children's general wellbeing within the classroom. Their professional judgements are influenced by priorities related to providing a welcoming and safe environment for pupils’ wellbeing that will be the first step in learning for these teachers.

Thus, when within the organisations there are systematic efforts and designs to address aspects of professional identities, it is likely that teachers embrace them if institutional goals are attuned to their personal ethics, values and vocation as in the case of Marco and Melissa. In the absence or in the case of unsystematic attempts to address features of professional identities, teachers appeal to their personal strengths, as in the cases of Pamela and Mariana.

3. Agency

Activists and passionate professionals express a strong sense of agency. Their professional ethics drive their capacity to define priorities in their decisions and attitudes, leading to self-discipline and ideas of professional development.

Activists act in a way which echoes their commitment to social change, while passionate subjects' actions are anchored in a combination of social welfare commitment, social recognition and respect bestowed by the leadership team.

Teachers are responsive to all institutional requirements for the occupation driving their agency. However, in spite of the agency defined by organisational and socio-cultural influences as ‘structure’ or ‘habitus’, teachers enact further aspects of agency such as professional learning and development, since all of them have been involved in systematic activities of professional development in formal and informal settings, led by personal needs and motivations.

Teachers' capacity for agency is also addressed in collegial relationships. The teachers in this study collaborate occasionally with colleagues depending on their needs, often in their role as tutors of their class and with colleagues who are also friends and with whom they share the same teaching subjects, as Monica and Cindy explain (Chapter 5, section 3, ‘Informal collaboration as collegiality’). Although Monica, Cindy and Lili have the same professional identity profile, it is possible to distinguish the tenuous effect of organisational support for collegiality in teachers’ professional identities. While Monica explains the value of the ‘microcentros’ as an expression of formal collaboration and exchange of experiences in Laguna Negra, Cindy describes the value of collaboration among colleagues in her school (Bolivar) in spite of time and resource constraints. Within the same professional identity profile, Lili (from Gabriela School) states her preference to work alone even when she describes the challenges to making agreements between teachers (Chapter 5, section 3,

‘Informal collaboration as collegiality’) within a school with little support for collaboration.

These differences among teachers within this professional identity profile suggest that contextual influences have an effect on teachers’ professional identities, for these influences define and affect their relationship with colleagues, pupils and parents. Thus, if the organisation provides support for collaboration, it is likely that teachers within the organisation will follow suit.

At the same time, all teachers emphasise their capacity to deal with diverse situations within the school. They exhibit high levels of self-confidence and mastery, reflecting different natures of the interactions within schools, and consequently, strong levels of agency according to their personal priorities.

Carer teachers express a weak sense of agency restricted to classroom activities and pedagogical duties. Although these teachers have a personal sense of agency, the leadership teams have not provided enough social recognition to empower their agentic capacity in spheres beyond the classroom or the assigned tasks, affecting their sense of self-efficacy. This we will review in the next section.

4. Sense of self-efficacy

A sense of self-efficacy has been built by different criteria among teachers. Activists and passionate teachers nourish their sense of self-efficacy, firstly through students' attendance and feedback on lessons, and secondly in regard to test scores. In contrast, carers develop a sense of self-efficacy related to long-term achievements often beyond the school walls, and their sense of self-efficacy lies in other factors that often escape the teachers' command.

Although for 'activists' school leadership does not appear as important as an influence, for 'passionate' teachers it seem to play an important role, since it is a resource for recognizing skills and capacities that nourish self-confidence and that enhance a sense of self-efficacy. In contrast, 'carers' do not perceive strong influence of school leadership in this sense, and thus, their sense of self-efficacy remains confined to the perception of long-term achievements, explaining perhaps their low sense of self-efficacy (more details in appendices 3, 4 and 5).

The role of the leadership team in teachers' sense of self-efficacy corroborates existing works on school leadership (Leithwood and Beatty 2008; Day, Gu and Sammons 2016), which have shed light on the effects of distribution of responsibilities among teachers and trust within schools.

5. Pedagogical content, knowledge and social skills

The characteristics of the school intake seem to be the first factor affecting the definition of pedagogical content and social skills, while knowledge content is prescribed by the national curriculum. However, teachers define priorities according to their own ethics, values and the urgencies raised by interactions with pupils, parents and colleagues within the contexts of their job (Chapter 5, section 3, 'Mechanisms for improvement'). Previous research on effective inclusion in school has shown that when professional development is driven by priorities identified by teachers interacting with students, it may become an important strategy for improvement since teachers' practices create personal knowledge that contributes to the development of professional knowledge (Ainscow, Howes, Farrell and Frankham 2003).

4. Considerations regarding the main influences on teachers' professional identities

If we concentrate on the similarities among these teachers' professional identity profiles, vocational and ethical values emerge as prominent influences driving teachers' job and shaping teachers' professional identities. The strong components of vocation, personal ethics values and beliefs in teachers' professional identity profiles suggest that teachers' viewpoint and reflections regarding teaching and being a teacher are embedded in their personal characteristics, since beliefs and ethical values encompass identities (Pearce and Morrison 2011). In the same vein, beliefs and ethical values tint actions and decisions affecting teachers' jobs, along with their professional identity.

Additionally, the strong components of vocation, personal ethical values and beliefs in teachers' professional identity profiles raise concerns in regard to the extent to which vocation, beliefs and ethics values are present in the educational discourse, school leaders or among teachers' educators as elements of reflection and discussion binding social agreements in favour of consistency within the system. Expanding this point, we will move on to explore the significances in terms of vocation first, and ethical values later, among organisations and individuals.

Concerns in terms of vocation

Although vocation appears as a common factor influencing teachers' professional identities, the meanings of vocation elicit different understandings among teachers, creating a variety of nuances in its enactment. The nuances in the focus on vocation in everyday life shape differences in the profiles, altering professional identity aspects/features.

'Activist', 'passionate' and 'carer' professionals share a sense of vocation with an emphasis on pupils' learning skills for life. Activists and passionate teachers share a vocation with a focus on the national curriculum, while passionate teachers and carers also assign to vocation an emphasis on pupils' wellbeing. Teachers in everyday life form their professional judgements according to their understandings of vocation. At the same time, vocation fuels their agentic capacity, inspiring them in their work and shaping their professional identities.

In this study, vocation is important because it drives aspects of professional ethics, and contributes to defining the criteria for professional judgement and the topics and limits for actions in terms of agency. In the cases of teachers involved in training activities, vocation also contributes to the definition of needs in relation to pedagogical and content knowledge and social skills.

As stated in the section above, in terms of the personal dimension of influences, all teachers in the study have been explicit about their vocation. It is clear that teachers hold a sense of vocation that provides a balance between self-reward and a meaningful life (See Chapter 3, section 3, ‘Personal Influences’). This may mean the ability to practise a job or serve ‘others’ consistently with personal ideals and principles by being responsible for their methods and outcomes, which in the case of teachers means pupils' learning and wellbeing. However, it is not clear whether teachers have enough capacities and control to be held accountable for pupils' learning and wellbeing, compelling teachers to define their own personal set of goals in order to be accountable to pupils and parents. The definition of personal goals in their practice may provide satisfactory results, but the absence of consistency with a broader context may dilute teachers’ efforts. In this vein, the dialogue about vocation involves the two main issues: i) vocation as a discourse for exploitation, and ii) the need for a collective meaning of the term.

i) Regarding the risk of exploitation, vocation is often linked to situations of abuse of goodwill and commitment among different professions and teachers in this case, as Marco explains:

> “In everyday life vocation should be circumscribed by your work conditions because sometimes there is a tacit belief that your vocation means that you can work extra hours without expecting any reward or recognition and this is not fair, we are human beings with families and needs that we try to satisfy. Of course there are exceptions but sometimes employers are abusive. Luckily our principal is very respectful about this.” Marco, Bolivar

Although teachers recognize that vocation drives their job, the ‘extra mile’ that they concede to the occupation from their personal life and resources is a private choice.

For teachers in this study, the sense of vocation helps in overcoming difficulties. It provides job satisfaction, elicits love at work and motivates teachers to give their best (Chapter 6, section 1). Thus, by promoting discussion and reflection about vocation, teachers, teachers’ educators and school leaders will be able to support and encourage it in order to sustain it, as more experienced teachers have done, and to ensure that teachers are able to overcome difficulties, and that they obtain satisfaction in their work, evoking love at work while staying motivated to give their best in their activity.

Additionally, conversations about vocation can create collective meanings to enact on a daily basis, defining intentions and unifying criteria for the job within the organisation. This may mean taking into account not only the learning of the curriculum but also the development of skills for life, as well as pupils’ wellbeing in driving the organisation's priorities, alliances and so on, increasing the effectiveness of the whole school and assuring the sustainability of the sense of vocation while strengthening the staff.

ii) Regarding the need for collective meaning, it is important to consider that vocation is linked to individuals and their perception of pupils and parents' needs. Thus, there is a possibility to explore and discuss the concept, considering vocation on a daily basis within the school illuminating the potential benefits of this discussion. This discussion may enhance and support professional identities beyond individuals, creating collective meanings of vocation among teachers that are likely to provide foundations for communities of practice to emerge and develop, generating the opportunity to strengthen organisational effectiveness.

However, the discussion of vocation could mean not only the enactment of vocation on a daily basis in the practice at school and in relationship with pupils, parents and colleagues, but can also be related to the limits and expectations of it, contributing to the generation of common grounds within the same organisation. It provides meaningful guidelines to teachers for the enactment of their professional identities consistent with themselves and within schools, this is likely to ensure a positive sense of self-efficacy and healthy emotional wellbeing, thus enhancing the capacity to provide genuine significant learning experiences.

Concerns in terms of ethical values

In this study, almost all teachers stress the importance of values in the occupation as a theme in their teaching, suggesting its importance for teachers' professional identity and showing values as a crucial part of these meanings. At

the same time, behaving and acting consistently according to values not only leads to genuine interactions with others, connecting individuals to the expectations of life and society, but also boosting individuals' wellbeing. Values represent a key part of identity as the self or primary identity (See Chapter 3, section 1, 'Identity'), and so, it is in this context that identities become relevant.

As was explained above, two groups share a personal ethical value of social welfare commitment (passionate and carers), while one group of teachers share a political activist commitment. On a daily basis, the social welfare commitment ethical value contributes to defining and solving teachers' professional development needs and to managing their personal time to deal with job requirements and collaboration. In some cases the ethic also leads to the contribution of personal resources to ensure significant learning experiences. Likewise, a political activist commitment seems to keep these teachers committed to their professional growth, defining the relationship with pupils and parents, and encouraging reflection and discussion of education issues beyond the school and among other social actors.

Since at least three schools in the study have variable definitions of organisational ethics and values (Chapter 5, section 2, 'Values within the school culture'), teachers embrace a significant amount of personal certainty in their professional identities. They appeal to their own ethical values to solve dilemmas with pupils within the framework of official regulations, shaping their professional ethic, defining the scope of their professional judgements and driving their capacity for agency. In the case of a political activist commitment,

their capacity for agency in the occupation goes even outside the school walls and into other institutions.

Teachers tie values to at least three different aspects of the occupation, not only in relation to the relevance of moral values among individuals, but also to other aspects that they believe are relevant to pupils' lives (Chapter 6, section 1, 'Learning skills for life'). Therefore, school staff and leaders, as well as the community, need to discuss, unveil and reveal these aspects in order to create collective meanings within the organisation. The collective meaning of ethical values will strengthen organisational culture (Chapter 3, section 3, 'workplace influences-school culture'), attuning individuals (staff, children and parents), creating bonds between individuals and the organisation, and hence: i) persuading individuals to do their best, ii) enhancing organisational efficacy, iii) and stimulating social agreement upon key social aspects of children's education thus, enhancing the impact of teachers' work in a democratic society.

i) Persuading individuals to do their best

Ethical values appear as an important theme for teachers, but the moral implications of the occupation seem to be absent in the scope of contextual influences on teachers' professional identity, and are neglected or dismissed at the institutional level. At the same time, to focus on values and visions may enhance the moral aspect of teaching, persuading individuals to give their best and increase retention in the profession (Margolis 2008), more than excessive monitoring, control and supervision. 'Ethical knowledge' (Campbell 2000, 2003)

appears distinctively among all identity profiles, providing boundaries for discretional judgements and autonomy, as well as defining the scope of agency.

This is what Campbell (2000, 2003) calls ‘ethical knowledge’, and which other authors call the ‘practical wisdom’ (Schwarts and Sharpe 2010) of the profession. These concepts are related to the moral implications of school-wide interactions where teachers enact certain moral positions while also being models of behaviours as expressions of ‘moral will’ related to the purposes of education, and ‘moral skills’ related to the individual capacity to deal with moral challenges and dilemmas (Ibid).

Moral will and moral skills are closely connected to individual beliefs and values since they represent expectations of life, society and individuals. Awareness of these elements contributes to genuine interactions between individuals, which guarantee emotional connections for learning (Gibson 1998). Consistency in values and beliefs between individuals will ensure emotional stability, inspiring teachers to teach their best.

Additionally, if we consider that significant learning experiences require emotional engagement, then we need to be sure that the individual teacher is working in a secure, protected and empathetic environment that ensures emotional stability with enough tools and resources to accompany teachers in times of verification or negotiation of professional identity meanings, considering

that these processes could lead to personal and professional learning, development and growth.

It seems that teachers enact these values as part of their role, even inspiring their agency sometimes, as Belgica explained (Chapter 6, section 3, ‘Social awareness as a value’). This is consistent with findings in Scotland by Biesta, Priestley and Robinson (2015) where teachers’ beliefs impact on their agentic capacity. However, it is possible that their efforts in the value formation of pupils are diluted by individual differences, since just one school seems to have a similar and explicit set of values among teachers (Chapter 5, section 3, ‘Values within school culture’) and the broader school community.

At the same time, the strong component of personal influences on teachers’ professional identities suggests that the acquisition of new practices could be better addressed by reflection tied to the meanings of vocational and ethical values, since in the three profiles vocational and ethical values have sustained teachers' commitment to the occupation and have strengthened their energy for professional development, while also facing challenges and dilemmas of the occupation.

The strong personal component in professional identities resembles the idea of ‘practical professionalism’ (Hargreaves and Goodson 1996) in which reflections may lead to the discrimination of contents in the curriculum, according to the nature of those reflections that invite us to embrace an independent intellectual

inquiry within the exercise of the job (Goodson 2003) that can be very fruitful, providing significant learning experiences and school improvement.

However, in Chile, reflection on activities beyond the classroom as a key aspect of being a teacher has been assessed recently but still in a quite theoretical form rather than in terms of real experiences or processes with colleagues. As other authors have pointed out (Nunez, Arevalos and Avalos 2012), the process of shaping teachers' professionalism needs to conflate initial training and professional development, appealing to identity, ethics and reflection, where ‘thinking the practice’ with colleagues in community may contribute to generating knowledge.

Since teachers are immersed in school organisations within a nation/state/country, teachers' professional identities are also defined by these contextual influences that, if attuned consistently, could enhance and strengthen teachers’ professional identities so as to create a better capacity to solve educational challenges as an expression of resilience, and better educational results as research in successful leadership has suggested (Day and Gurr 2013).

Day and Gu (2014) pointed out two characteristics of resilience in teachers, the first related to the nature of resilience in daily challenges and dilemmas within the school in order to achieve learning, and the second related to the role played by colleagues and school leaders, supporting and collaborating towards

shared purposes, assuring resilience. In this vein, the strength of professional identities in terms of discussion and awareness may contribute to resilience, since convictions, beliefs and ethical values affect interventions in everyday challenges at the school, and acting consistently with one's identities contributes to sustaining vocational and ethical values within the profession, and thus the moral purpose associated with the occupation. A strong sense of vocation enhances resilience at work (Dik and Duffy 2009), verifying or negotiating professional identity meanings and boosting (or not) resilience (Pearce and Morrison 2011).

However, acting consistently with the moral purpose of the profession is unlikely to happen in isolation. On the contrary, it needs to be part of the organisation as a common narrative. That is why it seems to be important to create instances of discussion and awareness about those aspects, boosting ‘tools’ for the daily basis of the job, which at the same time, could contribute to invigorating the job, avoiding perceptions of the profession as repetitive or mechanical, overcoming teachers' alienation, and, conversely, supporting individuals in daily challenges and dilemmas.

ii) Enhancing organisational efficacy

The findings of this thesis suggest that, in underperforming schools in challenging circumstances, the perceived impact of the school leadership on teachers' professional identity meanings includes only some aspects, for

example, the scope and boundaries of professional judgements, pedagogical mentoring and training, professional recognition and the assignation of status through the distribution of responsibilities within schools.

The role of ethics values has been seen with little attention in schools. Of course values are tacitly part of the narrative of schools, because most schools are committed to honest individuals, for instance, but the ethical consequences of some of the actions and attitudes enacted by school staff is rarely part of the dialogue. This is the case, for example, of the ethics values underlying school regulations, or the tacit values held by teachers, or their criteria to select and emphasis pedagogical contents.

Tacit values are not explicit and are often hidden from self and collective awareness. Nevertheless, these values implicitly embrace notions of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, shaping teachers’ contents and emphasis and the interactions within the classroom and the school, as Diego and Carol explain (Chapter 6, section 4). In the same section and page, Mateo provides an example of how he selected some topics he believes will increase pupils’ social and cultural capital without questioning the pertinence of the contents for his students, as well as the values underpinning his choices. Though in Bolivar school there is more awareness in relation to ethical values, teachers seem to have less consciousness in other schools.

In this vein, if we consider that the origins of schooling in most South American countries was related to the creation of nation-states and the dissemination of the Catholic religion, the curriculum still has some misinterpretation regarding the native cultures of the region and misses significant issues and values of certain ethnic groups (Mansell and Motta 2013; Humanos 2016). This assertion might also be valid in relation to local culture and knowledge, because an emphasis on such knowledge is not a priority in the curriculum and is often neglected in schools.

The process of reflection behind professional judgements and discernments in teaching will promote the development of moral will and moral skill among teachers. However, school leadership teams seem to be overwhelmed by external demands associated with school management, as teachers explain in relation to the focus of yearly public accountability:

> "In March we have a meeting with the school community and all the staff where the leadership team gives details about the school resource spending and organisation, activities of the past year and the results of the national tests, but it is just a report." Melisa, Gabriela

> "[E]very March we have our public accountability meeting among the school community. The central themes are school costs, the acquisitions and purchases of new stuff or school refurbishing, that is it.", Felipe, Del Valle.

The staff meetings also seem to have focused on managerial and administrative aspects of the already busy school agenda:

> "The staff meetings are also instances for dialogue and discussion but

> the discussion is often taken over by high amounts of practical information. In our staff meetings we could discuss relevant issues related to pupils and learning but we often are assailed by a lot of data and information that hardly allows teachers to talk to each other", Carol, Gabriela.
>
> "We are so busy with our goals for each period, so the time to reflect happens in the 'microcentros', where we support each other with learning strategies and up to date knowledge", Juan, Laguna Negra

It seems that in at least three schools (Del Valle, Laguna Negra and Gabriela), teachers are overwhelmed by other tasks that diminish the possibility to reflect, discuss and create collective understandings of vocation or ethics.

At the same time, schools seem to have little capacity to engage with external requirements for teachers, such as the national curriculum, teachers' status, teachers' assessment and a respectable teachers' framework, because schools have little capacity for the management of resources to embrace and support these policies. Only the 'Preferential Subsidy Law' provides enough freedom to school leaders to define priorities and allocates resources for professional development and other needs defined by leaders as an expression of school organisational autonomy and agency (See Chapter 2, section 2, 'Preferential Subsidy Law'). However, in spite of the capacities that this law provides to school leaders, it is still perceived to be difficult to address measures to assist teachers, since most policies seem to have a lack of connection and synergy (Donoso 2008), hindering any strategy for support and companionship.

In other words, the school leadership is continuously overwhelmed by external demands from the superintendents of education and municipalities, the quality agency and the ministry of education, through measures such as periodic visits for assessment and orientation (agenciaeducacion 2015), new indicators of measure (MINEDUC 2015) and the already busy organisational diary. Leadership teams have difficulty fitting in other priorities in the school agenda; which suggests low levels of autonomy and scarce organisational agency, as previous research has found (See Chapter 3, section 3, 'Workplace influences')

> "Once a week we meet, our main task is to coordinate everything for the week, the month and the term, because we inform and drive teachers. We work all together and in a coordinated manner in order to solve schools' challenges and meet the demands of the municipality, the quality agency and the ministry of education." Violeta, Del Valle

> "[W]e have constant demands in terms of paperwork and activities during the school year that leave us with little time to think about our practice and the reflection of important issues in the profession, such as professional learning, or other skills which are not part of the curriculum, like learning how to deal with discrimination. I wish to have more time to spend on these important things", Felix, Laguna Negra

Although teachers and leadership teams are always exposed to ethical challenges and dilemmas, leadership teams are not able to provide systematic discussion about professional ethics, nor to create bonds with organisations, collaboration among colleagues and priorities for professional learning and development, nor spaces for professional judgements and alliances for the enactment of agency. In other words, there is little time to address most of the range of professional identity features or the meaning of teachers' professional identity.

If we expand this point, however, we can see that even such weak leadership unsystematically affects some of the features of professional identity. In schools in this study, this happens with little consistency, and often with little capacity to manage intellectual and material resources. Thus, individual teachers are exposed to higher degrees of socio-cultural/policy influences interacting with personal ones, participating and mediating in the dialectic process of the dynamics of identity construction. As can be seen in all identity profiles, this decreases the degree of organisational influence in the process of identity construction, diminishing the potential for collective understanding of the key professional identity features and missing the opportunity to identify teachers' potential in the distribution of tasks and responsibilities. Thus, the school organisation misses the opportunity to enhance personal and professional growth in the process of identity-construction.

As a consequence, teachers embrace their own personal values, beliefs, ethics and vocation to shape and define the different features of their professional identities. They construct alone (Biesta, Priestley and Robinson 2015), or within a clique of friends, the features and meanings of professional identity. Thus, we can see practitioners who build their professional identity meanings in conditions of loneliness and isolation, increasing professional vulnerability, because the construction of key concepts of professional identity in this study, such as pedagogical and content knowledge and social skills, autonomy, agency and even collegial relationships (in spite of their collective nature), are not always shared meanings. This is also the case with the ethics and values involved in the challenges and dilemmas of the occupation, creating atomised

school cultures with few bonds and articulations within organisations. Thus, teachers' personal and professional growths depend on their own personal characteristics, sometimes threatening their emotional wellbeing and health.

As we can see, there are important personal influences on teachers' identity profiles. This does not mean that strong personal influences affecting professional identity can necessarily be very effective in sustaining commitment, whereas the strength of collective or shared meaning of professional identities might increase the impact of their job, providing high levels of self-efficacy, and thus emotional wellbeing.

The lack of explicit collective meanings within schools (with higher degrees in Del Valle school, most tenuous in Laguna Negra, and middling degrees in Gabriela and Bolivar Schools) is likely to jeopardise the impact of teachers' actions and decisions. Since there is no common ground, pupils get a variety of messages from teachers, undermining teachers' individual efforts. At the same time, teachers' individual efforts in terms of the moral objectives of the occupation may be diluted, because the organisation of the school does not guide teachers' decisions, actions and attitudes. On the one hand, teachers' efforts have few rewards, and this affects their sense of self-efficacy. On the other hand, teachers' professional identities become blurred, because schools do not always support their ethical values. Overall, it is likely that teachers feel fatigued, eroding their sense of self-efficacy and their emotional wellbeing, and affecting their capacity to provide significant learning experiences. A sense of self-efficacy and emotional wellbeing are very important in learning, because

effective learning lies in genuine emotional connections. Therefore, if teachers have a weak sense of self-efficacy and emotional wellbeing, their teaching is likely to have little impact on pupils.

The participation of teachers and other key actors (parents and pupils) in the discussion of these values may provide common meanings of education that will create a common narrative and help shape teachers' professional identities in a collective way through the interactions of contextual and personal meanings. Collective meanings contribute to a supportive collegial environment, assuring emotional stability that guarantees genuine emotional connection in the relationship between teachers and pupils and within the school, and thus underpinning effective learning. At the same time, research on school improvement in Chile (Bellei, Vanni, Valenzuela and Contreras 2015) shows that shared identity, a common story about the institutional mission, and a sense of belonging among a school's members are key aspects which enhance organisational capacity.

iii) Stimulating social agreement upon key social aspects of children's education

The dialogue and discussion about the values underlying schooling suggest the need for some social agreement among different social actors. This discussion also requires opportunities for individuals to enquire for themselves about the ends of education and the kind of society we all want.

In other words, we need opportunities to take responsibility as citizens, creating and participating in a kind of social dialogue about educational ends and values underlying education. Today, this is rarely a priority. This point is related to the reflection about the social identity of teachers, in that a shared sense of professional meaning could contribute to the social agreement about the purpose of teaching and education, which at the same time will contribute to providing fewer dissonances in teachers' professional identities, contributing to a better level on wellbeing, and finally to a higher quality of democracy in society (Hargreaves and Goodson 1996).

Conclusions

Summarising the discussion, the interactions of influences on teachers' professional identities promote three different professional identity profiles: activist, passionate and carers. Likewise, these identity profiles have consequences for the key aspects of professional identities. Personal ethical values shape professional ethics, the scope of professional judgements and the boundaries of agency. School leadership and pupils' feedback affect the sense of self-efficacy. Pedagogy, content knowledge and social skills are defined mainly by the teachers' perceptions of pupils' and parents' needs.

However, there is significant evidence that vocational and ethical values influence teachers' actions, decisions, attitudes and behaviours, shaping their professional identities. In this vein, the role of vocational and ethical values raises the need to reflect about the potential for teachers to teach their best.

This discussion will guarantee that individuals are attuned with the organisation, and it will contribute to the creation of collective meanings facilitating school planning, agreements and further improvement.

Organisations are responsible for providing timely intellectual and material resources for the discussion. This will assure that tensions or dissonances among professional identities promote personal and professional growth, as well as ensuring genuine social interactions, promoting healthy emotional environments and boosting individuals' well-being. Thus, it will contribute to healthy organisations able to provide significant learning experience to pupils, parents, teachers and school staff.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions

"As teachers, we must be in charge of renewing our fervour, as for them... We are the ones that must keep watch through time." Gabriela Mistral

Introduction

The following chapter will first summarise the main findings of the study. Secondly, it will suggest how this research contributes to knowledge of teacher professional identity, distinguishing the influences interacting in the process of identity-construction along with the implications for the personal and professional growth of teachers as key aspects of performance. Finally, the researcher addresses the limitations of the study, claiming that a participatory research approach could enrich understanding of the influences on the construction of teachers' professional identities, as well as providing further reflection on the academic journey.

1. Summary of the findings

This piece of research arises from a motivation of my own, regarding the exploration of both my own professional identity and my perceptions of the professional identities of colleagues. By means of an exploration of teachers' perception of the influences on their professional identities, informed by social identity theory and identity theory, and drawing on previous research on teachers' professional identity, this study explored contextual and individual influences on professional identity. This has unpacked teachers' professional identity in five key aspects: professional ethics, autonomy of discretional judgement, agency, sense of self-efficacy and content and pedagogical knowledge and social skills.

In terms of contextual influences in school in challenging circumstances, we found that the characteristics of school intake are: strong influences on teachers through identification with and empathy for the socio-economic circumstances of pupils and parents, enhancing/empowering a social welfare commitment in some teachers and a political activist commitment in other teachers. We noted the unsystematic contribution of the leadership teams in attending to teachers' needs and providing mentoring, companionship and help to teachers, which appears to be a contextual influence, since the leadership teams spend most of the time dealing with managerial requirements and limiting their contribution to small expressions of recognition and delegation of tasks and duties among a few teachers in each school. The conflation of these two influences leads to high levels of influence of individual-level factors on teachers' professional

identities, where vocation appears as the most robust influence, along with personal beliefs and values.

Among teachers in this study, the combination of these contextual and individual influences shapes the key aspects/features of teachers' professional identities, generating at least three different identity profiles: activist, passionate, and carer. The evidence from the research suggests that teachers' professional identities are strongly influenced by their sense of vocation, their personal beliefs and values defining their professional ethics, the scope of their professional judgements, the priorities and boundaries of their agency, their sense of self-efficacy and their pedagogical and content knowledge as well as their social skills.

2. Contribution to knowledge

This study sheds light on the professional identities of Chilean primary teachers. Although there are a few studies that contribute to the portrait of professional identities of Chilean teachers (e.g. Avalos and Sotomayor 2012; Contreras, Monereo and Badia 2010 or Sisto, Montecinos and Ahumada 2012), these studies do not discuss the influences that interact in the process of identity construction, nor the effects of these interactions for the key aspects of teachers' professional identities.

This study, which is based on research on Chilean school underperformance in challenging circumstances, appears to justify the idea that school leadership has little influence in the definition of professional identities since leadership

teams are overwhelmed by bureaucratic demands and by the current Chilean accountability system. Thus, professional identities are shaped mainly by teachers' vocational and personal values. These frame their perceptions, actions and behaviours in relation to the problems and needs of the students and parents in the school, often driving professional ethical values, professional judgements, a sense of self-efficacy and agency, and the needs of training and professional development that define teachers' professional identities.

In the context of Chile, these findings bring to light the characteristics of the professional identities of Chilean primary teachers. The findings show how the teachers built their perceptions of self-efficacy as well as how they enact agency and autonomy working in challenging circumstances when they have little support from school leadership. In Chile the role of school leaders has been discussed just for the last fifteen years mainly with emphasis on accountability and standardised tests. However, there are few instances that link accountability and standardised tests to teachers' professional development. Thus, this study reveals the need to understand how individual teachers use personal resources in making decisions and solve problems on a daily basis. At the same time, this contributes to rethinking the role of school leaders in Chilean schools in relation to teachers. Likewise, this study invites a review of the provision and nature of initial training, and teachers' and leaders' professional development in Chile (more details in the next section 'Implications of the findings').

Additionally, in Chile a Teacher Career Path (Law 20.903, 2016) has recently been introduced. This new element within the profession defines different tasks and responsibilities for teachers according to years of experience, assessment and professional development. In this context, the study of professional identity could illuminate elements to assure these new roles are in tune with teachers' sense of vocation and ethics. In this vein, consistency between a Teacher Career Path and teachers' sense of vocation and ethics may bring fulfilment in their practice as well as improve their capacity to engage emotionally with pupils, therefore, to provide significant learning experiences.

The study supports the view that teachers' professional identities include a strong humanistic and progressive understanding of the aims of education and the purpose of the occupation. Teachers believe in moral and social commitments as well as the civil responsibilities of the occupation, similar to the notion of "being professional", defined by Yinger (2005), where the needs of individuals and public wellbeing drive the practice. This idea is also supported by previous research on Chilean teachers' professional identities (Sisto, Montecinos and Ahumada 2012; Avalos and Sotomayor 2012), among both primary and secondary teachers. These aspects together shape behaviours, actions and decisions in response to teachers' challenges and dilemmas in everyday life.

Contrary to popular opinion, this study suggests that teachers, involved in organisations with little capacity for support and improvement, are still developing a strong sense of purpose and ethical values. These encourage

teachers to build their personal reservoir of learning, reflection and a sense of self-efficacy, which provide energy to do the job and maintain their commitment for years. In the same vein, research on successful leadership highlights the role of leaders in sustaining the quality of teachers' commitment. My research shows that strong ethical values with regard to the community that they serve is the key factor in maintaining teachers' commitments, echoed in their primary identities, which often overlap with their professional identities. However, leadership teams, even with little competency, do play a role with respect to teachers' abilities and skills, since they provide a sense of self-efficacy, as well as rewards and professional recognition that enhance self-confidence when performing the occupation, while strengthening teachers' commitment.

The size of the disadvantaged communities in the school intake, the unsystematic leadership role, as well as the strong individual components in teachers' professional identities helped to create three profiles (activist, passionate and carer). The characteristics of each profile bring to the fore a few points: i) The need for discussion of vocational and ethical values among teachers, staff, pupils and parents, ii) the relationship between acting consistently on personal values, and the capacity to provide significant learning experiences, and iii) the potential of the discussion for the organisational culture.

The discussion of vocational and ethical values of the profession (i) could be a strong tool for the improvement of the learning experiences at the school. This is related first to a process of raising awareness of values and beliefs, second to

the formation of collective agreement and shared values and beliefs among colleagues, staff, pupils and parents. The discussion may involve for example the meaning of the school for children in society, the purpose of education and the type of society that is desired for children. All together, these could lay the foundations for 'ethical knowledge' (Campbell 2003) about teachers, strengthening moral skills and moral will among individuals. In this vein, the discussion needs to be open to more social actors in an exercise for the improvement of democratic society.

The open discussion of ethical knowledge (ii) is likely to create awareness about values and beliefs, enabling individuals to enact decisions, behaviours, actions and attitudes consistent with their personal values and beliefs, enabling genuine relationships with parents, colleagues and pupils, while contributing to the creation of genuine interactions. This would facilitate emotional connections for learning and the capacity to provide significant learning experiences (Gibson 1998; Day and Leitch 2001; Hargreaves 1998).

In terms of the organisational culture (iii) the discussion of the meaning of vocational and ethical values contributes to developing collective meanings by increasing the impact of organisational work among individuals, and strengthens elements of the school culture, including espoused values and artefacts, as well as the exposure of underlying assumptions (Schein 2004) as explicit ethical knowledge. This clarity will contribute to creating a shared organisational culture with explicit ethical knowledge, and to enrolling empathetic individuals in the school organisation. At the same time, explicit

ethical knowledge will promote genuine interactions within the organisation, helping to improve the quality of learning experiences and facilitating personal and professional growth in any identity crisis.

Research on teachers' resilience (e.g. Day and Gu 2014) suggests that the capacity for resilience contributes to sustaining teachers' commitment. I add to this that strong ethical values obtain added potency in the vocation and the capacity to overcome instabilities in professional identities, boosting resilience and promoting personal and professional growth. Thus, the awareness of personal values and the sense and meaning of vocation will be a key point to discuss among teachers who do not always work in organisations with a clear sense of purpose and efficient leadership teams, which is the case in most Chilean state schools.

In relation to school leadership, this piece of research corroborates early work about its influences on teachers' professional identities since recognition and rewards help maintain teachers' commitment, enhancing professional identities. Additionally, this work also raises awareness about the need for a collective understanding of different aspects of professional identities, in order to increase the impact of teachers' activities in schools.

3. Implications of the findings

There are at least two main implications of this study. They are related to instances that provide teachers with robust skills as well as a deep

understanding of how to embrace the challenges and dilemmas that they face in everyday life in different settings. These implications are for i) initial training and teacher educators, and ii) the design and definition of professional learning and development of teachers.

In terms of initial training and teacher educators, this study reinforces the significance of the discussion of philosophical aspects of the profession, such as values, ethics and beliefs. This may include motivations for the choice of career among student teachers, and the values underpinning their sense of vocation as well as their individual ethics, values and beliefs. This discussion could also examine how these aspects take form in the interactions in the school and among its different members (colleagues, pupils, parents and staff), reflecting on their effects on teachers' actions, decisions, attitudes and behaviours while promoting a 'reflexive turn' (Ainscow 2007, p. 7) in the occupation for a more inclusive education, able to provide significant learning experiences in all children without distinction.

This might enhance the moral dimensions of the occupation. At the same time, it could shed light on the moral challenges of schools, supporting teachers' professional identities, and ensuring that new teachers are aware of their own values and ethics, as well as their prejudices and biases in the classroom. Likewise, new teachers would have more tools to embrace this reflection and discussion in any setting and with different social actors. Thus, they will be able to promote awareness of the value and ethics, creating collective meanings and social agreements about them. This social agreement within the wider school

community and society will generate clear aims and objectives for the school as an organisation; it will also ensure coordinated efforts to achieve these, considering and respecting individual differences.

In terms of professional learning and development (PDL) the study raises implications related to how professional learning and development is envisaged. The concept of identity provides an insight into the need to understand professional learning and development as i) reflection on practice and ii) as a continuing process.

In terms of a reflection on practice, the awareness of teachers' professional identities may contribute not only to unveiling individual dilemmas on the job, but also to revealing aspirations, desires and abilities, exposing the teacher 'it is possible to be', while also addressing further stages of career development.

In other words, reflection on practice means to make intentional/deliberate efforts to create opportunities for careful thought about the challenges of practice, in order to increase understanding of the job and the role of the individual (and personal identity) within the job. In this sense, focusing on teachers' professional identities may strengthen self-awareness in relation to practice, and values and beliefs underpinning this practice. As Mockler (2011) points out,

> "teacher professional identity might be explicitly shaped and formed out of professional learning and development experiences that focus not only on 'what to do', but also on the kind of teacher it is possible to be. [It]

> suggest[s] that good, thoughtfully constructed professional learning and development which incorporates opportunities for teachers to not only expand their practice but to authentically reflect on their practice and how it relates to how they are as a teacher, might work to anchor and orientate teachers to a new and different dimension of their work". (p. 136)

In this vein, the process of recognising the teacher it is 'possible to be' will identify the inclination and skills of individuals that help to discover the set of skills and knowledge available in the school organisation, illuminating the role of school leaders in the distribution of task and responsibilities among teachers, and developing organisational capabilities for improvement. This requires the timely provision of intellectual and material resources as well as a collective endeavour beyond the school walls in order to create synergy for PLD. As Day (2017) points out,

> "[Professional learning and development is] the process by which, alone and with others, as change agents, teachers review their sense of positive professional identity and extend their emotional and intellectual commitment to the broader ethical and moral purposes of teaching in contexts of national reforms, and by which they acquire and develop critically the dispositions, qualities, values, knowledge, skills, planning, practice and capacities for the commitment and resilience needed to educate children, young people and colleagues to their best within and across schools through each phase of their teaching life" (in press)

At the same time, the dynamic process of negotiation in identity construction suggests that PLD needs to be a continuing process as a 'companion/partner' in a career, attending to the different stages and needs of the individual in the profession, ensuring that identity tensions will generate personal and professional growth, and providing emotional stability.

In the case of Chile the discussion of teachers' professional identity could illuminate the recent implementation of the 'Teaching Career' law (January 2016, Law 20.903) that establishes progression in the profession in terms of responsibilities and tasks, according to years of experience in teaching, assessment results and training. The discussion of teachers' professional identity could be a complement to their teaching career by means of work and reflection on professional identity, such as creating statements/profiles. These could be reviewed periodically in the context of the workplace in order to assure validity over time. Then, this discussion could benefit not only teachers, but also pupils, parents and the wider community since this discussion may challenge old beliefs, while creating new ones:

> "teachers' professional identity might be capable of functioning as a tool for the profession and those who support it, bringing to life a transformational vision of education" (Mockler 2011, p. 136)

The concept of a transformational vision of education recalls the idea that teaching is more than a technical endeavour that ignores the progressive tradition of teaching in society and their vocation.

4. Limitations of the study

As with all studies, this study has limitations that circumscribe the scope of the findings as well as suggesting further areas for research. In this particular case, the limitations relate to the characteristics of selection of participants, to the choice of research methods, and to time and resources constraints.

There are a few considerations related to the selection of participants. All teachers belong to the same region, which has typically crowded schools. As a consequence, the study provides restricted knowledge of Chilean teachers' professional identities. In this sense, it is likely that a wider selection of teachers, from more diverse contexts, would reveal new interactions affecting teachers and their classrooms, and thus, more professional identity profiles. Likewise, there is little participation of teachers in the middle of their career, so it is difficult to obtain a clear portrait of them. At the same time, to explore this absence could mean revealing new interactions and influences on professional identities of teachers in this career phase, and this might enrich the landscape for career support and development.

The qualitative nature of this piece of research provides insights into the different influences on teachers' professional identities only in underperforming schools in challenging circumstances that confirm the uniqueness of findings, since they are related to individual perceptions in specific contexts. As Miles, Huberman and Saldana (1984) explain:

> "Qualitative data is the focus in naturally occurring, ordinary events in a natural setting… […it] has emphasis in people's lived experiences, are fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives and for connecting these meanings to the social world around them" (p.11).

In this context, knowledge of teachers' perceptions of the influences on professional identity development and construction could be improved by the

selection of a participatory research approach, where individuals work alongside the researcher in the creation of knowledge in all stages of the research project. As Miller and Crabtree (2005) point out, the main characteristic of these approaches is:

> "[C]ollaboration between the researcher and the researched, a reciprocal process whereby each party ducats the other, and intent to create local knowledge for improving the conditions and quality of life." (p. 615).

In other words, this means teachers are part of the research project from the beginning and they are fully committed to it by designing projects, collecting data, enquiring and analysing, reflecting on the implications of the findings and disseminating these among colleagues and the wider educational community with total ownership. In this vein, the next step of this study is to return the findings to the participants in Chile and discuss them in order to enrich the professional identity profiles of Chilean primary teachers, and hopefully one day among other South American teachers as well.

5. Conclusions and further reflections

The journey as a researcher has not been free of ups and downs, exposing myself to situations of personal growth and academic challenges. In this sense the journey has provided me with the opportunity to work on my humility as a learner and professional. Likewise, I have developed the capacity to overcome anxieties about being criticised, recalling continually my identity as an individual motivated by my own inner self rather than social influences and expectations.

As a result, by looking back on these years I have appreciated the process of reflecting and writing in a second language, discovering new words and expressions, and starting to understand some aspects of the Anglo-Saxon culture as well as my own. Overall, I have learnt to enjoy every progression in my self-confidence and in broadening my understanding of the world.

Along with the discovery of my intellectual and emotional limitations, perhaps the main source of joy has been the discovery of the first steps of my academic journey; this has helped me to expand my understanding of teachers and to develop my 'work style'. The most challenging experience has been developing my critical thinking. I presume that my positionality as a woman, coming from a colonised country, where there is an implicit admiration and aspiration towards 'developed' nations, to build one's intellectual demeanour, is not easy. Also, at school we learned a significant amount of knowledge regarding these nations—which does not contribute to the development of critical thinking. On the contrary, it was very difficult for me to understand that even knowledge created by individuals from universities in the 'first world' is susceptible to being criticised; one can question standpoints, methodologies and so on. At the same time, I understood that 'criticism' is not a 'bad' thing that 'puts you down', rather it contributes to improving your thinking and moving further in your work. Although my capacity for critical thinking has improved, I am still experiencing difficulties in intellectually moving away from dichotomies so as to distinguish and explain the richness in nuances of the social world.

I wish in retrospect that I already had all these experiences at the beginning of my journey. This would definitely have changed some aspects of my research. I would have used more visual data, perhaps starting my fieldwork with a workshop for participants, boosting connections to participants in preparation for later stages of the fieldwork. I think that in the next research project I would be braver and work with more visual elements, perhaps by creating images/posters at the different stages of the research, reflecting, analysing and writing about further features of identity, professionalism, educational goals and so on.

Finally, this journey has enhanced my beliefs about the ethical role of education, and the need to revisit the initial motivation of any learning activity in Latin America in order to discuss and shape schools for Latin American children in Latin American societies, rooted in our native ancestors and culture where teachers are in charge of renewing the fervour of old truths, and also responsible for shaking these truths from time to time, in order to ensure that children are learning these truths, along with their parents and the communities in which they live, revisiting the choice of teaching as an occupation, motivated by the vocation of public service and the joy of children for learning and wellbeing, rebuilding dreams of our society in a globalised world so as to enhance our happiness.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Teachers' interview number 1

The interview will focus on:

1. To understand the teachers' perceptions about the dimensions of their personal identities in four public schools.

2. To find out the teacher's perceptions about the dimensions of their professional/role identities in four public schools.

3. To understand the teachers' perceptions about the dimensions' situational identities in four schools.

4. To grasp the perceptions of teachers about the relevant factors of influence (policy, leadership, school culture, school context) in Chilean teachers' identity in four public schools.

Introduction for all interview participants

1) Introductions and brief explanation of the project focus, aims and objectives.
2) Research ethics (confidentiality): Participants (schools and individuals) will not be identified in any form of reports or publications.
3) To read the participant information sheet.
4) To sign the participant consent form.

Biography

1. How long have you been in teaching?

2. How long have you been working in this school?

3. How many schools have you worked?; Why did you choose this school?

4. Are you enjoying your work here?

    - Yes: could you describe the things that you enjoy most?

    - No: why not? what changes would you like to happen so that you would like working here?

5. Why did you decide to become a teacher?

6. Have you ever thought about leaving the profession?, why/why not?

7. What has kept you in the profession?

8. What have you achieved as teacher?

9. What would you like to achieve as a teacher?

10. What has supported you in achieving your goals?

11. Have you got any ambition for the next stage of your career?, what are they?

12. Please, could you describe if you have ever felt disheartened about your teacher commitment?

•Could you identify critical moments, landmarks or situations that triggered changes in your commitment (?) to this career? (Day and Gu 2011) And also perceptions of being an effective teacher? And/or sense of job fulfilment (see Gu, 2013)

Circumstantial questions

•Do you remember your beginnings as a student teacher? Could you describe your beliefs about teaching at this time?

•Did you keep any of these beliefs after working some years? Yes: which ones?; No: why?

•What situations make you feel happy in your role as a teacher or middle leader? (MCT) Please explain why.

Professional Identity

Competence/Professional Knowledge

13. What are the key qualities that you need to have to do your job well?

14. What skills and qualities would you need to enable you to do better?

15. What will it be the essential knowledge to fulfil your role effectively? (formal e informal)

- subject matter
- pupils and pedagogical knowledge
- didactical knowledge
- knowledge about educational policy and system?
- Knowledge about the community which the school serves?

16. Have you got strategies/plans to update your subject knowledge and skills?, could you explain?

17. Is there anything that helps to improve your teaching skills and knowledge at the school? How? (LEADERSHIP)

18. Has your professional development been supported and encouraged? How? (LEADERSHIP)

19. How do you acquaint the educational material and the new developments on teaching and learning strategies?

20. What mechanisms have you got to understand changes of structures and institutions associated to the schooling? (school rules and assessments, school and agencies hierarchy, new curriculum policies, school management and finance).

21. Do you think that you are doing well in your job? Could you explain? Please provide evidence.

Agency (self/professional management)

22. Have you ever registered/documented your good practises and experiences of teaching and learning?

23. Do you think you are an effective teacher in your role (classroom+others)?.

24. What do you do to improve in the effectiveness of your roles?

25. What matters most in your role as a teacher (or a middle leader)?.

26. Do you work closely with your colleagues in this school? Why/why not?, please, could you provide examples? (COLLEGIALITY)

Autonomy

27. Do you have to report your work in on a regular base? If so, what to report? To whom? Is it helpful to improve your practice?

28. Are you feeling free to decide about contents and pedagogies of your lessons?, Please, could you explain?

29. Are you encouraged to explore new ideas and initiatives in teaching? Please, could you provide examples? (Leadership, school culture)

30. Are you regularly exploring new ideas and initiatives in your classroom? Could you give me examples?

31. If you do innovations, how are you sure that innovations are tuned with the school aims?

32. Do you have the freedom to explore your own professional interest in your work? For example: How do you want to teach? or How do you want to work with people? Achieve what you aim for in your classroom/role?

33. Please, could you describe how you make decisions about your lessons, students and parents' issues, such as collaboration and commitment with the learning?

34. Is it available in your school accountability mechanisms or system to analyse results?

Situational Identity

Institutions and community

35. Has the principal got high expectation of teachers' work with pupils and parents? Could you explain? (Leadership)

36. Do you think that you make a difference to children in this community? Could you explain?

37. Do you feel valued working in this schools and community?

38. Which factors (in the school?) support you to become an effective teacher?

39. Do you think that you raise the expectation for children of this community? Could you explain?

40. What do you think are the bases of teacher's behaviour for an effective performance?

41. Do you get social recognition for your job? Could you explain?

42. Do you have support from the school or municipality?

Collegiality/Social relationships at the school and the municipality/district

43. Have you got any help or assistance from your colleagues at the school?, please, could you describe? ? (COLLEGIALITY, S.CULTURE) do you support other teachers regularly? could you provide examples? do you work closely with your colleagues? could you provide examples? How is it arranged?

44. Are you getting on with other teachers?, for example, do you socialise after work? could you explain? do you share experiences, knowledge, didactical material, philosophy, values…?

45. Is the principal encouraging collaboration among colleagues? (leadership)

Organisational roles identities

46. In this school are clear the aims and objectives?

47. Is the principal playing a role in your classroom decisions and practises? Could you explain?

48. Do you know what is expected from you in this school? (AGENCY)

49. Do you know what the responsibilities that you have in this school are?

- Regarding to teaching

- Any other activity (AGENCY)

50. Could you describe what are the key challenges and achievements?

51. What are the facilitating factors in achieving the school challenges and achievements?

52. Does any external or internal mandate change your ties with the school, colleagues, your students or parents? (OR)

53. Could you describe the role of the principal in the school? (Leadership)

- Is steering the school in different ways?

- Is working collegiate and in approachable way? Could you explain?

- Is encouraging the links with parents and the community?

- Is supporting the use of data collected by regular assessments?

Appendix 2

Second interview

Autonomy

- What aspects of your freedom in teaching do you appreciate the most?

Agency

- Could you mention your strengths and weaknesses in teaching?
- How are your strengths deteriorated or damaged in teaching; and how could they be enhanced?
- How do you improve your teaching?
- Could you describe the consequences of strong support in your job? And the consequences of lack of support?
- Could you describe the decisions that you make every day at the school?

Commitment, vocation and 'entrega'(giving--commitment)

- How could you define 'entrega' (delivery. What you deliver) `(resources and love) in teaching?
- How could you define commitment in teaching?
- How could you define vocation in teaching?
- What experiences in your life have been relevant for nourishing your vocation, and political/social commitment? (biography and ethics link)
- What sort of situations/ aspects makes commitment, vocation and 'entrega' stronger in your job?

- What sort of situations/aspects makes your commitment, vocation and ‘entrega’” weaker in your job?

Values

- What are the values that inspire your daily work?
- How do you promote these values in your classroom among your students and colleagues?
- How did you develop the sympathy for these values?/What experiences in your life have been significant for embracing (appreciating) these values? (biography and ethics link)
- What are the aspects that reward and fulfil you in your job?
- What sort of situations contributes to fulfil your work as teacher, what are the rewards for being a teacher?
- Could you describe any other role that you have in the school? (ORI)
- At the school are there any aspects of the job that it is expected of you in addition to being a teacher?

Appendix 3

Table of influences upon activist teachers

Activist (5)		Vocation				Workplace influences			Socio-cultural/policy influences		
	Key features of TPI	Children welbeing	Children learning Nat. Curric.	Children learning skills for life	Politic Activist commit ethic values	Biography	School intakes and families	school leadership	School culture	National Policy	Tradition
Victoria	**ethic**		+++	+	+++	++	+++	+	++	--	
	prof. judgement		++		+++						
	Agency		++		+++			-		++	
e	**Sense of self-efficacy**						++	-		++	
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills				++		++			+	
Clara	**ethic**		++	++	+++	++	+++	++	--	--	--
	prof. judgement		++	++	+++						
	Agency		++	++	+++					---	
	Sense of self-efficacy						++	++			---
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills			++	++		++				
Violeta	**ethic**			+++	+++	++	+++				
	prof. judgement			++	+++					++	++
	Agency			++	+++	+++				---	++
	Sense of self-efficacy						++				
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills				++		++				
Jose	**ethic**		++	+	+++	+	+++				
	prof. judgement				+++						++
	Agency				+++	++					++
	Sense of self-efficacy						++	+++		+	
	Pedagogical knowledge and soc		++		++		++				
Belgica	**ethic**		++	++	+++	+++	++				
	prof. judgement		++	++	+++						
	Agency		++		+++	+	++			++	
	Sense of self-efficacy						++			++	
	Pedagogical knowledge and soc		++	++	+++					+	

Appendix 4

Table of influences upon passionate teachers

Passionate		1. Vocation				2.Social Welfare commit ethic value.	Biography	Workplace influences			Socio-cultural/policy influences	
	Key features of TPI	Children welbeing	Children learning Nat. Curric.	Children learning skills for life	Summary vocation influencing factor			3. School intakes and families	school leadership	School culture	National Policy	Tradition
Lili	Ethic	+	+++	++	+++	+++			+			
cognition incr	Prof. judgement				+++	++						
s welbeing ar	Agency				+++	++						+
	Sense of self-efficacy							++	++			
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++			++	
Monica	Ethic		+++	+	+++	+++	++					
	Prof. judgement				+++				++			
	Agency				+++				++			+
	Sense of self-efficacy							++				
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++			++	
Pamela	Ethic		+++	+	+++	+++						
	Prof. judgement				++	++			++			
	Agency		+++		+++	+++						+
	Sense of self-efficacy							++				
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++			++	
Diego	Ethic	+	+	++	+++	+++			+			
	Prof. judgement					++		+	++		++	
	Agency				++	++			++		++	+
	Sense of self-efficacy							++	+++		++	
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++			++	
Cindy	Ethic		+++		+++	+++			+			
	Prof. judgement				+++	++						
	Agency				+++	++			++			+
	Sense of self-efficacy							++	++			
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++			++	
Juan	Ethic	+	++	+	+++	++	++	+++				
	Prof. judgement	+	++	+	+++	++		++	++		+++	
	Agency								++		+++	
	Sense of self-efficacy							++	++			
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills			+							++	
Marco	Ethic	+++		+++	+++	+++	++	++				
	Prof. judgement				+++	+++						
	Agency				+++	+++		++			+	
	Sense of self-efficacy							+++	++			
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++	+			
Mariana	Ethic	++		+++	+++	+++		++				
	Prof. judgement				+++	+++						
	Agency				+++	+++		++			+	
	Sense of self-efficacy							+++	+			
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++	+			
Ada	Ethic	+		+++	+++	+++		++				
	Prof. judgement				+++	+++						
	Agency				+++	+++		++			+	++
	Sense of self-efficacy							+++	+++			
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++	+			
Melisa	Ethic	++		+++	+++	+++		++				
	Prof. judgement				+++	+++						
	Agency				+++	+++		++			+	++
	Sense of self-efficacy							+++	+++			
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++	+			
Felix	Ethic	++		++	+++	++						
	Prof. judgement	++		++	+++	++		++				
	Agency					++					+++	++
	Sense of self-efficacy							+++				
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++			++	

Appendix 5

Table of influences upon carers teachers

Careres (3)		1. Vocation				2.Social Welfare commit ethic value.		Workplace influences			Socio-cultural/policy influences		
	Key features of TPI	Children welbeing	Children learning Nat. Curric.	Children learning skills for life	Summary vocation influencing factor		Biography	3. School intakes and families	school leadership	School culture	National Policy	Tradition	
Carol	**Ethic**		+++	++	+++	+++		+++					
and develop	**Prof. judgement**		+++	++	+++	+++			++		+++		
lue	**Agency**							+	++		+++	++	
	Sense of self-efficacy							++					
	Pedagogical knowledge and soc		++			+++					++		
Felipe	**Ethic**	+	++		+++	+++	++	+++					
	Prof. judgement	+	++		+++	+++		++					
	Agency					++		+	- - -			++	
	Sense of self-efficacy							+++					
	Pedagogical knowledge and soc		++										
Mateo	**Ethic**	++		+++	+++	+++	+++	+++					
	Prof. judgement	++		+++	+++	+++		++					
	Agency					++		+	- - -			++	
	Sense of self-efficacy							+++					
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills										++		
Amelia	**Ethic**	++		++	+++	+++		++					
	Prof. judgement	++		++	+++	+++		++					
	Agency					++					+++	++	
	Sense of self-efficacy							+++					
	Pedagogical knowledge and social skills							++			++		