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Multidisciplinary practice in juvenile justice.

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Signed Declaration

I declare that this research dissertation and the research involved in it are entirely the work of the author. The work, or part of it, has not been submitted for a qualification to any other Institute of Technology or any University.

Signature..... Date.....

Abstract

This study sets out to explore multi-disciplinary engagement between professionals in the juvenile justice system. It examined professional's views and experiences in the area of multi-disciplinary practice. The study was conducted with six professionals who are working with young people who are coming to the attention of the criminal justice system. The combination of convenience sampling and snowballing sampling resulted in the author obtaining a range of different participants. These include: a Family Support Worker, Community Garda, Youth Worker, Probation Officer, Youth Diversion Project Worker and a Mentoring Project Co-ordinator. In order to ascertain this information the researcher adopted a qualitative approach in the form of semi-structured interviews. These interviews were carried out in six different geographical locations nationwide. The interviews were recorded and transcribed and then the results were thematically analysed.

The aim of this research was to investigate multi-disciplinary practices between professionals within the Juvenile Justice System in Ireland. It examined professional's views and experiences on how disciplines engage with other professionals and agencies. Finally it sought to identify the factors that support a good working relationship and those that inhibited multi-disciplinary practice.

A review of the literature investigated the current research on multi-disciplinary practice. Various academics and reports have highlighted the importance of multi-disciplinary working. Likewise, various reports and documents have recommended professionals to amalgamate together. Often each professional possess different values, norms and understanding of the complex issues they are dealing with. Kilkelly (2006) argues that the lack of co-ordination, communication, between departments and the absence of clear lines of accountability has led to a disjointed system of addressing the problems of children at risk. Coinciding to the literature, results showed that professionals had a clear understanding of the benefits of working together. Professionals highlighted the main factors that support a good

working relationship as clear honest communication and an understanding of other professional's roles and duties. The author explored the levels of engagement between professionals. Interestingly, the changes that have occurred in the field of the juvenile justice system and with the establishment of the Irish Youth Justice Service which both recognise the need for multi-disciplinary practice, the results from this research indicate that an integrated approach is not improving between professionals. Furthermore, it is evident from the professionals who participated in the research study, that there was a clear interest and desire for professionals to amalgamate for a type of training together.

The research concluded with recommendations for the introduction of a shared communication network database to encourage greater contact between professional and promote the importance of sharing information and data. It would be useful to have greater links between ranges of professionals as this would encourage a more integrated approach. The author made recommendation for a duplicate training programme similar to Copping-On Crime Prevention Training Programme to commence. A further recommendation was outlined for on-going research in order to monitor the levels of engagement amongst professionals.

Introduction

Introduction

This study sets to explore multi-disciplinary practice between professionals in the juvenile justice system. It examined professional's views and experiences in the area of multi-disciplinary practice. In the field of working with children and young people there has been an increasing emphasis on working together in partnership across professional and organisational boundaries (Frost, 2005). This is similarly echoed by Clarke, Eustace and Patterson (2010) who explain the ongoing need to examine multi-disciplinary practice at all levels. There is a notable void in research that investigates professional's views and experiences about multi-disciplinary practice.

The aim of this research was to investigate multi- disciplinary practices between professionals. Specifically:

- To identify professionals views on the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System.
- To explore participants experiences of professionals working in direct contact with the Juvenile Justice System.
- To identify participants views on the factors that support multi-disciplinary practice.
- To ascertain participants barriers that effect multi-disciplinary practice.

This study is divided into six sections. The first section outlines the research study. Section two reviews the literature related to the juvenile justice system and multi-disciplinary practices. In section three, the rationale for the study and the methodology adapted will be presented. The findings of the research study will be highlighted in section four and these findings are analysed and discussed in section five. Finally, section six concludes the significant and relevant points of the research and outlines recommendations for the future.

Whilst this research is a small study it demonstrates that there is a value to seeking the views and experience from professionals who are working on the front line of the juvenile justice system.

Literature Review

Literature Review

This section will provide an overview of the juvenile justice system in the Republic of Ireland. A critical analysis of current research on multi-disciplinary practices in the juvenile justice system will be provided. The chapter concludes with an identification of the gap in the current knowledge and proposes the reasons and aims of this study.

Introduction

The juvenile justice system has received much attention in recent years. This can be attributed to changes in the justice landscape that now endeavours to focus on the needs rather than deeds of the young person who offends (Children's Act, 2001). Various advocates including Fr. Mc Varry and the Ombudsman for Children endeavour to highlight issues around the juvenile justice system (Ombudsman for Children's Office, 2011; Hough, 2011). In the field of working with children and young people there has been an increasing emphasis on working together in partnership across professional and organisational boundaries (Frost, 2005). Assessing the risks and needs of young people involved in criminal behaviour has become an important and standard practice in many juvenile justice jurisdictions (Olver, Stockdale & Wormith, 2009). Within the Irish Justice system young offenders are dealt with in a distinct fashion. Juvenile justice in Ireland is couched in the language of 'welfare' (Ilan, 2007). The juvenile justice system can be described as either 'welfare or justice' in approach. The welfare system generally focuses on the needs of the child by attempting to address underlying issues. The justice model has accountability and responsibility as its core values and ethics. According to Kilkelly (2006) the 'welfare' and 'justice' system have both supporters and critics. It is argued by many commentators that the justice approach, with its focus on accountability is viewed as a 'punitive and harmful way to deal with young offenders'. In contrast, the welfare approach is regarded as less formal and a more lenient

approach (Kilkelly, 2006; O'Connor and Murphy, 2006). The age of criminal responsibility is a defining feature of any justice system. According to Hamilton (2011) 'age of responsibility provides an important indicator of the extent to which factors such as age and maturity are taken into consideration in responding to offending behaviour by children'. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland for most offences is age twelve. Nonetheless, there is a lower age of ten years for children who are charged with certain offences, these include rape, sexual assault and manslaughter (Kilkelly, 2006).

The Irish Youth Justice Service was established in 2005 as an executive office of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to work with the Office of the Minister for Children (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2006). A number of agencies are incorporated into the Irish Justice system including the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform; An Garda Síochána; the Director of Public Prosecution; The Court Services; Probation Services and the Irish Prison Services (Hamilton, 2007; Freeman, 2009; Carroll and Meehan, 2007).

O' Dwyer (2001) put forward an argument and recommended there should be more emphasis on professionals for working together to reduce youth offending. The lack of co-ordination, communication, between departments and the absence of clear lines of accountability has led to a disjointed system of addressing the problems of children at risk (Kilkelly, 2006). The necessity and the aspiration for multi-disciplinary practice is evident in a number of policies documents and strategies, these include the National Youth Justice Strategy 2008-2010, The National Children's Strategy and the Agenda for Children's Services (Duggan and Corrigan, 2009; Government of Ireland, 2000; Office of the Minister for Children, 2007).

Despite this commitment to multi-disciplinary practice, various reports such as the Newtown House Inspectorate Report in 2001 and research carried out eight years later by Freeman in 2009 identified similar barriers to multi-disciplinary practice and both strongly recommended that work is undertaken to ensure professional work together more effectively. Kilkelly (2003) identifies that there is room for improvement for passing relevant information between professionals and non-professional carer's and between different parts of the justice system. However, it is important to note that the lack of multi-disciplinary practice has also been highlighted by young people who offend in the report Listen to Our Voices (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2011).

Kilkelly (2006) has argued that Ireland suffers from a dearth of official statistics and empirical research into the characteristics and the individual circumstances of young offenders. This is a long standing problem as far back as the Kennedy Report (1970) and the Whittaker Report (1985) both highlighting the fact that there was a notable lack of research on the Juvenile Justice System in Ireland.

The only data available on offending are records from An Garda Síochána. This evidently makes multi-disciplinary practice somewhat difficult due to the dearth of research and statistics. When reviewing the literature (Freeman, 2009; Carroll and Meehan, 2007; Bowden & Higgins, 2000) it is a common theme that there is an absence of research on what constitutes multi-disciplinary practice in youth justice literature. In addition, it is identified that 'the importance of robust and consistent data on young offenders is recognised as essential in order to identify and analyse the scale and nature of youth offending and the Juvenile Justice System' (Kilkelly, 2006). Clarke, Eustace and Patterson (2010) explain the ongoing need to examine the effectiveness of co-ordination of services and multi-disciplinary working at all levels. Young people who offend and or reoffend often work with a range of different professionals. The absence of and the need for a unified approach has been widely recognised in order to reduce levels of crime.

Historical Developments

The Kennedy Report (1970) and the Task Force (1980) both refer to the fact that administrative responsibility for child care services was divided between three government departments – Health, Justice and Education. The Department of health was responsible for personal and social services. Department of Justice administered the adoption services and juvenile justice system. Thirdly, the Department of Education was responsible for the industrial and reformatory schools (Curry, 1993). Both the Kennedy Report (1970) and the Task Force (1980) recommended that the Department of Health should have overall responsibility for all child services. The two reports recommended an independent advisory body. At present, neither of the recommendations has been acted upon nor implemented (Curry, 1993; Walsh, 2005). The Irish Youth Justice Service aims to improve the delivery of youth justice services to young people who offend and to reduce youth offending in general. The Irish Youth Justice Alliance (2004) argues that the lack of accountability, poor co-ordination and communication between the three agencies has been the main causes of major

delays and problems in the system in the juvenile justice system. The National Justice Strategy 2008-2010 aimed to ensure a more co-ordinate strategic approach to service delivery for young people.

Legislation Framework

Until recent years, the main legislation governing the justice system was the Children's Act of 1908. Kilkelly (2008) identifies that the 1908 Act lacked modernity which played a vital role in the replacement. The Children Act 2001 is the current legislative framework that underlines the justice system for young people in Ireland. Kilkelly (2006) states the Children's Act 2001 underlines Ireland's principal approach to youth offending as a "due process" model which holds young people with accountability for their actions and behaviours. The ethos of the Children's Act 2001 is to provide a range of responses that can be tailored to ensure that young offenders receive adequate care, education and overall adequate treatment. The Children Act 2001 has the main objective which is the need to divert young impressionable individuals away from the justice system and from detention centres. Section 96 of the Children's Act 2001 outlines that the placement of a young person in an institute shall always be a last resort measure and that the young person shall only be detained for minimum time necessary (Kilkelly, 2006; Walsh, 2005).

The Children Act (2001) allows for the involvement of a range of professionals and agencies in both restorative cautions and conferences, recognising the potential need for a multi-disciplinary practice (Bowden & Higgins, 2000; O'Dwyer, 2001). Significantly and consistent with the UNCRC, the Act defines a child as a person who is under the age of eighteen. This categorises those who commit offences that are minor and that are under the age of eighteen into the juvenile justice system. O'Leary and Halton (2009: 98) maintain that with an 'array of community sanction' available under the Children Act, there is a demand on professionals to determine a recommendation that meets the seriousness of the offence and to assess the likelihood of the offender to reoffend. In order for professionals to determine recommendations for young offenders, an amalgamation of professionals are often required in order to determine a recommendation deemed best suitable.

Current Landscape

In 2012, the Inspector of Prisons presented his Inspection report to Alan Shatter, the Minister for Justice and Equality. The report expressed concerns that the rights of young people detained were in some cases being ignored and or violated (Department of Justice and Equality, 2012). Similar to previous literature, recommendations were made for cohesive approaches to work from experts. There are currently three detention schools in Ireland; Trinity House School, Oberstown Boy's and Oberstown Girls School. Each of the detention schools are located in Oberstown, near Lusk, County Dublin. St. Patricks Institute is currently closed. The Irish Youth Justice Service is responsible for overseeing the development of a new national children's detention facility. The new facility is scheduled to open in 2015 (Irish Youth Justice Service, 2012).

A Multi-Disciplinary Approach

The term multi-disciplinary is often used interchangeably with other terms such as 'interagency working', 'joined' up, or 'multi-agency' (Owens, 2010). Interagency working requires information to be shared between different organisations in contact with young people and their families in order to build a full picture of the young person's needs and risks (Horwarth, Buckley & Whelan, 2004). Multi-disciplinary practice unites people of diverse professional skills for a shared purpose. Often each professional possess different values, norms and understanding of the complex issues they are dealing with (Martin, Charlesworth & Henderson, 2010).

Multi-disciplinary practice involves justice associated agencies which include An Garda Síochána, Juvenile Liaison Officers, Probation Services, Youth Diversion Projects, Social Workers, the Courts Services, as well as education, welfare, health agencies (Corrigan & Duggan, 2009). Seymour (2006) outlines how An Garda Síochána has a policy which prevents prosecution of a young person unless their previous offence or current offence is considered serious enough to warrant such an action. Youth Diversion Projects are funded by the Irish Youth Justice Service in Ireland. They are community based and offer a multi-disciplinary approach to youth crime prevention. The child is generally referred to a project by a JLO (juvenile liaison officer). However, referrals can come from other agencies. Probation Services is an agency within the Department of Justice and equality. Their role is to work with young people who offend and to assess the probability of reoffending, motivate

behavioural changes and to support the young person (Probation Services, 2012). Family support offers a wide range of interventions for a young person and their families. The Health Service Executive (HSE) is obliged under section 3 of the Child Care 1991 to provide family support services to promote the welfare of children not receiving adequate care (O'Doherty, 2004). Youth Workers are primarily concerned with the education and development of young people; it contributes to positive social change. Youth work is described in section 3 of the Youth Work Act 2001 as a programme of education and design for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through the young person's involvement (Spence, 2007).

The Government's Every Child Matters UK white paper sets out a Children's Trust Model of practice, involving a range of professionals working together in an integrated way. An integrated approach focuses on the delivery of services on the user (Atkinson, Wilkon, Scott, Dorothy & Kinder, 2012). The key distinction of a multi-disciplinary team is that the members have diverse professional backgrounds giving them distinct training and skills (Carpenter, 2011). Laxton and Laxton (2008) called for greater co-ordination and planning between health, justice, education and training agencies and services to provide supports to children in 'comprehensive and coherent manner'.

Recent changes in the field of the Juvenile Justice System, and the establishment of the Irish Youth Justice Service, recognise the need for multi-disciplinary practice when working with young people who offend. Carroll and Meehan (2007) outline a summary of the justice system in Ireland. This states that the Irish Youth Justice System has been operating under a mask of uncertainty for many years and that there is a limited number of reports that have been commissioned by the government. These reports highlight the need for better facilities within the detention institutions particularly in relation to the education of young people and improved co-ordination between the relevant agencies and the need for extensive ongoing research to be carried out. The National Crime Council (2002) cites the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform's Strategy Statement, which highlighted the need for an interdepartmental approach to law and order in partnership with the community (Duggan and Corrigan, 2009).

Allen (2003) argues that the shift towards increasing coordination of services for children, young people and their families may be politically and theoretically undesirable. He argues that 'joined-up' working generates 'joined-up powers' which tend to blame individuals for the

failings of the system supposedly designed to help them (Allen, 2003). In contrast, Bowden and Higgins (2000) argue that multi-disciplinary practice and a multi-agency engagement and cooperation will prevent youth crime. Similarly, the National Crime Council (2002) highlights the need and the importance to involve a range of professionals which will have an indirect role in crime prevention. The argument is based on the ideology that young offenders have a wide range of needs, and these needs cannot be met by any one agency, but rather requires a range of responses. The Report on the Youth Justice Review states that both international and national research highlights the importance of multi-disciplinary and interagency working in the field of youth justice (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2006).

Research has outlined the main benefit from an integrated approach as improved services, with direct outcomes and prevention for young people (Atkinson et al, 2012). Multi-disciplinary practice has positive impacts on professional development in terms of increased knowledge and understanding of cross disciplinary issues. Atkinson et al, (2001) outline that the establishment of effective working relationships depend on clarifying roles and responsibilities; commitment levels and fostering understanding between agencies. Working together in co-operation is reported to aid professional development through increased knowledge and understanding of the roles of other agencies. Multi-disciplinary practice can make professionals feel more accountable when working across sectors. Similar findings were reported in the Ballymun Network case study. Rafferty and Colgan (2009) outlined in the network case that workers indicated that they are more supported by each other by working together, and there is now a sense of shared responsibility especially with difficult cases.

However, the difficulties of engaging with other professionals are highlighted in a number of researches (Duffy, 2005; Henderson and Atkinson, 2003). The common barriers include confusion over roles and profession identities, concerns over professional status, with certain professionals feeling that their colleagues were not taking their roles seriously. Research identifies role demarcation as the main factor that can inhibit multi-disciplinary practices (Hibernian Consulting/ CAAB, 2009). Similarly, Duffy (2005) cited in Duggan and Corrigan (2009) outline common barriers that can prevent multi-disciplinary engagement between different professionals. These include the amount of time needed to work effectively, heavy workloads, poor communication, lack of understanding of roles of organisations and what work they carry out and an unwillingness to share responsibilities. One of the consequences

of the growth of multi-disciplinary practice is the potential for tension based on the different values and norms that arise from diverse professional backgrounds (Henderson and Atkinson, 2003). A major factor which was identified as having an influence on multi-disciplinary practice was the differences between the agencies involved. These differences and barriers include different boundaries and authority organisation, different expectations, lack of time, different viewpoints and priorities and different working methods and roles. Among the barriers to effective multi-disciplinary practice that is often highlighted are rivalries that can occur between the different professionals and the lack of team work (Lalor & Share, 2009).

It is important to highlight one such initiative that promoted multi-disciplinary practice, this initiative was called 'The Copping On-National Crime Awareness Initiative'. The focus of Copping On-National Crime Awareness Initiative was to implement a crime awareness programme with young people at risk, and the development of multi-disciplinary and agency responses to the issues of youth offending (Duffy, 2005). The Copping On-National Crime Awareness Annual Report in 2000 noted that "promoting and enabling multi-disciplinary practices to youth crime prevention at community level is central to the ethos and practice of Copping On (Duffy, 2005:48). Its evaluation report of multi-disciplinary practice noted that there is evidence that joint training and team building can support joint up multi-disciplinary approaches working. The Annual Report in 2000 outlined that difficulties between professionals engaging in multi-disciplinary work may result from personality clashes between professionals and the resistance to sharing information (Duffy, 2005). Similarly, the report states that poor communication between agencies and individual professionals often results in frustration and conflict.

Despite the success of this programme, this programme is no longer provided due to the lack of resources and funding. The need for multi-disciplinary practice is evident when we examine the complex needs of the young person who offends.

Research on the profile of young offenders provides a clear rationale for multi-disciplinary practice. According to Corrigan & Duggan (2009) community risk factors for youth offending are identified as high levels of unemployment, early school leavers, poor educational academic achievement, and lack of facilities for a young person and high youth population.

In 2001 a study was conducted by the Centre for Social and Educational Research in Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) which involved describing the participant of Garda Special

Projects. The study noted a profile of the risk factors that expose young people to offending behaviour. However, eight years later research carried out by Corrigan and Duggan (2009), highlighted similar findings. The results from the Centre for Social and Educational Research in DIT (2001) indicated that participants typically came from areas characterised by high youth population, a general lack of youth facilities, high unemployment rates and high levels of early school leaving. In order to intervene effectively, it is paramount to take a holistic view of the child's life. This is further echoed by Mason, Prior, (2010) which outlines there is a number of environmental factors that influence a young person into a world of offending. "There is a link between youth involved in crime and the environment they live in" (Farrington, 1992, cited in Hill, 2007). Therefore it is not just on professional in one sphere of a young person's life.

Education has also been identified as a risk factor. O'Sullivan (2007) distinguishes that young people who offend generally have poor education outcomes and behavioural problems which in turn find themselves in youth justice services. Whilst it is important to note that young people from a range backgrounds and upbringings can present themselves in these services for offenders. Research indicates that young people from low socio-economic backgrounds have a higher prevalence of offending (Hill, Lockyer, 2007).

Kilkelly (2006) states that young people in Ireland that are in conflict with the law are predominately male, between the ages of sixteen and seventeen. Generally, the males share the same social, economic, and educational disadvantage. Similarly Carroll and Meehan (2007) identifies the profile of an offender as a young male averaging age of sixteen to seventeen residing at a home that faces numerous difficulties. An integrated approach between government agencies and organisations are becoming a key concept underlying how we provide services to young people and their families (Owens, 2010).

One area of increasing concern in the juvenile justice system is the relationship between addiction and offending. A recent study by Probation Services study outlined that 87% of the young people that had participated in the study had misused a substance, 62.4% had misused both alcohol and drugs. Alcohol was the substance of misuse that was most linked to offending behaviour (Probation Services Research Report, 3, 2013). Research that has been carried out demonstrates a holistic approach that is needed for interventions for young people who offend. Hasse & Pratschke (2010) outlines that research has identified those risk factors for drug and alcohol misuse for young people include early school leaving, poor mental

health, involvement in crime and marginalisation and drug taking peer-networks. The above risk factors are similar to those highlighted by Kilkelly (2006) and O'Sullivan (2007) who outlined a profile of the risk factors that expose young people to offending behaviour. These results yet again provide a clear rationale for multi-disciplinary practice. The need for co-ordinated and integrated services and interventions are required for working with young people for the prevention and the treatment of drug and alcohol misuse and abuse (Probation Services Research Report 3, 2013).

Current Study

It is evident from the literature that needs of young people who offend require a multi-disciplinary response. Young people who offend require professionals that can work together to meet their needs. Despite this being recognised in policies and reports, very little research has explored multi-disciplinary practice in the area of the juvenile justice system. If we want to address the increasing concerns among young people who offend, we need to identify what facilitates and inhibits multi-disciplinary practice. This study hopes to address this gap.

Specifically the objectives of this study are to;

- To identify professionals views on the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System.
- To examine participants experience of the levels of engagement between professionals working in the Juvenile Justice System.
- To identify participants views on the factors that support multi-disciplinary practice.
- To ascertain participants barriers that effect multi-disciplinary practice.

This research will contribute to the body of knowledge through the examination of professional views and experiences of multi-disciplinary engagement. The Literature Review has given an overview of the background of the juvenile justice system in Ireland and looked at the literature which is relevant to the research project and outlines the overall aims and objectives of the research.

The next section of this research will present the methodology and permit the reader to follow the researcher through the path of this research process.

Methodology

Methodology

Introduction

This section discusses the research methodology. The purpose of this section is to permit the reader to follow the researcher through the path of this research process. It highlights the qualitative approach used to obtain and analyse research findings. This section details how the sample was drawn, considers the ethical issues involved and describes the process that was followed to undertake the research. Also the factors that influenced the methodology, the topic investigated the nature of the research questions, and the quality of my research will be discussed.

The research question

The research aims to explore and examine professional's views and experiences of multi-disciplinary practices in the juvenile justice system.

Specifically the objectives of this study are to;

- To identify professionals views on the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system.
- To examine participants experience of the levels of engagement between professionals working in the juvenile justice system.
- To identify participants views on the factors that support multi-disciplinary practice.
- To ascertain participants barriers that effect multi-disciplinary practice.

Research Design

Many commentators outline that the choice of appropriate research methods is essential (Bowling, 2002; Cargan, 2007; Bryman 2010). The researcher explored a number of research methods. When choosing an appropriate research method, the researcher considered both

qualitative and quantitative approaches and took into account the advantages and limitations of both approach (Mason, 2002).

Focus groups were given consideration. Wilkinson (1998) notes that in a group situation all participants may not have actively participated or may have ‘borrowed’ ideas from each other, therefore, it would have been difficult to identify participants’ real experiences. Nonetheless, due to time and travel constraints this approach was discarded since the participants in the study were from different disciplines and locations, and the researcher aimed to get a deep insight and understanding of the participants views and experience. Bryman (2004) advises that questionnaires can collect data in much the same way as interviews. Similarly to Mason (2002) who outlines questionnaires can evoke the same responses from an interview. However, due to the fact that the researcher aimed to get a personal, face to face interaction and understanding of the participant’s experiences this method was discarded.

The author decided upon the method of qualitative research in the form of semi- structured interviews which allows the interviewee to speak openly and freely about their views and experience. Flick (2006) outlines that it is generally understood that the interviewee has information and subjective knowledge about the topic. Bryman (2004) claims that semi-structured interviews allow specific information on the research topic to be elicited, while affording flexibility and freedom of expression to both the interviewer and the interviewee. Riessman (1993, p.34) notes that qualitative data provides ‘richness, diversity, accuracy, and contextual depth’. Bryman (2004, p.338) outlines that qualitative research in the form of interviews provides the interviewer with the opportunity to “see through the other’s eyes”. Qualitative research gives participants the opportunity to tell their narrative of experiences and perceptions (Mason, 2002). The advantages of the interview process is that broad stated questions about the professionals experiences can generate rich descriptive data that helps to gain a clear picture (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008; Corbin & Strauss, 2007). The effective use of the interview technique had the ability to probe and explore areas of the experiences of the professional participants (Bell, 1990).

My aim was to explore professional’s views and experience on multi-disciplinary practice in the juvenile justice system in Ireland. Therefore, an interview approach was regarded as the most suitable approach as I wished to get an in-depth understanding of the experience and views of the participants. Qualitative interviews were deemed the most suitable, as the author

believed it necessary that the participants had the flexibility to explore issues, discuss experiences and events which were important to them.

Semi-structured interviews rely on a set of questions which aim to guide the researcher, the conversation must leave space for unexpected direction in the conversation (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2011; Bowling, 2002). Essentially, the interview questions acted as a guide, the questions were open which allowed for the participants to go into depth on certain areas and topics. Holiday (2007) notes that in an interview, opportunities can arise for the researcher to ask follow up questions and to clarify information and questions. In contrast, quantitative methods would limit this opportunity as researchers have no one to one personal contact with participants (Puchta and Potter, 2007).

In-depth verbal and non-verbal communication skills are vital aspect to successful qualitative research (Bryman, 2004). This is echoed by Ribbens (1989, cited in Whiting, 2007) which outlines the importance of listening beyond oral communication, acknowledging non-verbal; such as the participants tone of voice and modulation and body language. The researcher must acquire the skill of manipulating their communication skills in order to gain additional information, such as; asking probing questions, being responsive to participants and ability to actively listen (Patton, 1990). During the interviews, the author used tools such observing body language and taken note of the participant's tone of voice.

Participants

A sample is a portion or a subset of a larger group of people referred to as a population (May, 2001). A non-probability sampling technique was applied in the form of purposive sampling and convenience sampling. The sample of participants selected for the research study was a convenience sample meaning that it involved asking and using participants that were conveniently available for participation. This is more commonly referred to as purposive sampling or convenience sampling (Bryman, 2004; Flick, 2006; Onwuegbuzie, 2003). Bryman (2004; 33) states that “purposive sampling is essentially strategic and entails an attempt to establish a good correspondence between research questions and sampling”.

Due to the nature of the study, the author also used the process of snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is explained as the process of where there researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research study and then uses the group

of people to establish contacts for other possible participants (Bryman, 2008). The author of the research contacted Probation Services and spoke with a participant who provided contact details for other participants. The participants all had extensive experience in different disciplines which were relevant to the topic been researched. Participants were selected based on their professional discipline and interactions with agencies, professionals and the juvenile justice system. A small sample of six participants was used to gain sufficient information for this research study.

Table 1:

The professional occupation of each participant

Participant 1	Family Support Worker
Participant 2	Probation Officer
Participant 3	Mentoring Project Co-ordinator
Participant 4	Youth Worker
Participant 5	Community Garda
Participant 6	Youth Diversion Project Worker

Materials

In order to undertake the semi-structured interviews, an information sheet (appendix 1) was designed and consent form (appendix 2) so the participants were fully informed and aware about the study. I designed an interview schedule (appendix 4) which acted as a guide in the interview process as it aided in keeping my questions and the conversation focused.

The use of a tape recorder was used when carrying out the semi-structured interviews. All participants agreed to allow the use of a recording devise. Additional observations were made and notes were taken to support the data recorded. Patton (1990) recommends the use of a tape recorder when conducting interviews which is helpful for analysing the data.

Ethical Consideration

Codes of Ethics are formulated to regulate the relations of researchers to the prospective participants and the field they intend to study. Flick (2006) outlines that research should be

based on informed consent and require that the research should avoid harming the participants and not deceiving them about the aims of the research. According to O'Leary (2004) research should be conducted in a manner that protects the dignity and welfare of the participants. My research proposal was approved by the ethics committee at Athlone Institute of Technology in March 2014. I was mindful of all these points as I conducted my research.

As a researcher one has a duty to protect the privacy and the dignity of all respondents participating in the research process. All participants were given voluntary consent to participate (Appendix 2) and information sheets (Appendix 1) about the interview procedure which outlined the possible risks and why participants were chosen in the selection process. All participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity with an assurance that no identifying information would be used in the final research document (Walliman, 2005). Each participant was informed that participation was voluntary and at any stage during the interview process they could terminate the interview. After each interview commenced, I checked with each participant to ensure that he or she was not upset.

Procedure

In order to get an insight on multi-disciplinary practices between professionals who work in the juvenile justice system, the researcher facilitated interviews with six professionals currently working in the juvenile justice system.

The researcher conducted face to face semi-structured interviews. The interviews took place in April 2011. At the beginning of each interview it was reiterated that all information was confidential and that the recordings and field notes would only be used solely for the purpose of this study. Participants were informed that the information recorded would only be transcribed by the author of the research. The author verbally reminded all participants that the transcriptions from the semi-structured interviews would be kept in a locked storage space and that all typed information would be saved on a password protected file on my computer.

Interviews were conducted in location chosen by the participants. The participants decided the dates and times at their convenience. All six interviews were conducted over a two week period. Burns and Grove (2005) advise that interviews be held in a venue of the participant's choice. All the interviews were conducted in quiet areas with no distractions. The interviews

consisted of ten core questions (appendix 4). These questions were decided upon after guidance from my supervisor to ensure suitable questions were asked in order to get the relevant information for this study. Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes each. Each participant was asked if they would like to receive a copy of the transcript once completed. Conversely, each participant declined this offer. At the end of each interview participants were asked if there was anything they wished to contribute or omit any information.

Data Analysis

Immediately after each interview the author transcribed the data collected. The author read and checked the transcripts in order to form common themes and get a general understanding of the data. Field notes were also written up which aided in identifying common themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews. Once the author became similar to the emerging data, the process of coding began. Huberman and Miles (1994) describe coding as a mechanism for thinking about the meaning of data and for reducing the data gathered. Tracy (2010) argues that thick description of information and data is important in order to achieve credibility in qualitative research. Once the author had a clear view of the emerging themes, themes developed which led to sub themes evolving.

The Quality of my Qualitative Research

Quantitative and qualitative researchers have often diverged in their approach to reliability and validity (Silverman, 1993). A common characteristic of qualitative research is that it is difficult to measure the reliability and the validity of the piece of research. This particular research study cannot be replicated. Therefore it does not have external reliability. In qualitative research, truth value is usually obtained from the discovery of human experiences as they are lived and perceived by informants (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Masson (1996) refers to validity as 'what you are observing and identifying and measuring what you say you are', whereas, reliability refers to the extent to which a study can be replicated (Flick, 2006). Moreover, as this research study was a small scale project, the findings and results cannot be generalised beyond this research context. Strength of qualitative research method is that it is conducted in naturalistic settings and each situation is defined as unique and is less amenable

to generalisation (Guba, 1981). Reflexivity is referred to as reflectiveness among social researchers in relation to the implications that can arise from values, bias, decisions and the mere presence of the research whilst investigating a topic (Bryman. 2008). Reflexivity entails that the researcher is sensitive to the participant's culture and knowledge. Bryman (2008) discusses the importance of the researcher whilst investigating a topic and outlines that the researcher must be aware of their presence and understanding of bias and observations and the way in which an account is transmitted in the form of a text. As this was my first time to conduct research interviews the author was conscious of inexperience. The author was mindful of all these points set out in the literature.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this section outlined the methodology applied to the gathering and analysis of the research data. This section explained the research design, the material used, ethical consideration and the procedure that was followed. Also, this section discussed the quality in qualitative research and how the author tried to achieve this.

The results and findings of the semi-structured interviews and the themes that emerged are presented in the following section

Results

Results

Introduction

This section describes the findings obtained from semi structured interviews which examined professional's views and experience of multi - disciplinary practices in the juvenile justice system.

Method of Analysis

To analysis the findings a thematic approach was used by identifying the re-occurring themes which emerged from the semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis focuses on identifying similar data that emerges from fieldwork research. According to Joffe and Yardley (2004) in order to identify themes coding must be applied. This enables the researcher to identify the patterns in the data. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to increase their understanding about individuals, situations and organisations (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Many themes emerged during the interviews that were conducted. The author of this research primarily focused on the re-occurring themes and the themes that were directly related to the research. While presenting the results of the participants, each participant will be referred to by their profession in order to protect the identity of the participants.

The themes that emerged will be presented under the following headings:

- Professionals views on the effectiveness juvenile justice system.
- Participants experiences of engagement with professionals in the juvenile justice system.
- The factors that support a good working relationships.

- The barriers to effective multi-disciplinary engagement
- Training together with other professionals.

Individual factors

Participants were asked about the length of time in their current position. The results are shown in the table below.

Table 2:

Participants	Length of time in current position
Family Support Worker	1 year
Mentoring Project Co-ordinator	7 years
Probation Officer	6 years
Community Garda	3 years
Youth Worker	4 years
Youth Diversion Project Worker	1 year

Theme One - Professionals views on the Juvenile Justice System

The first question for professionals explored the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System in Ireland and if they thought it was working well. A number of similar responses occurred and themes emerged when analysing this theme. The responses to this particular question were divided evenly. 50% of the six participants expressed concern in relation to the effectiveness of the Juvenile System.

The 50% of the six participants that raised concerns regarding the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System were professionals who work on the front line with young offenders and or their families. The Family Support Worker explained ‘*I think no to be honest, no that*

it isn't working really and instead young people are slipping through the net'. As the Mentoring Project Co-ordinator explained *'I don't think it is effective I think there needs to be more alternatives than sending young people to St. Pats or Oberstown'* This participant emphasised that the majority of young people she worked with were not hardened criminals and that it is always circumstantial to the reasons the young people were involved in crime. This response was similarly echoed by the Youth Worker who explained the system was not as effective as it should be stating *'I don't think it is working I also think that surely the juvenile justice system needs to be a collaborative set up'*. The Youth Worker expressed concerns about young people getting no reprimand for committing crimes.

The same three participants who believed that the juvenile justice system was not as effective as it should be for rehabilitation and for preventing and diverting young people away from crime shared similar responses in highlighting the need for more supports to be put in place for young offenders. This was illustrated by the Family Support Worker who stated *'the system needs to be more proactive in diverting young people away from crime. You know there needs to be more supports, constant supports'*. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator discussed factors such as the recession and lack of funding which has had a knock on effect on initiatives for young people. She explained *'more initiatives and supports would help'*. This participant works with young people on a daily basis and she believed that young people who offend should be diverted to courts early in order to get access to services they require. She stated *'divert young people to courts early and given community sanctions, that way the young person will get more supports, interventions and training centres made readily available to them'*. Correspondingly, the Youth Worker expressed her views by explaining that more supports were required to meet the needs of the young people who come in contact with the Juvenile Justice System and *'more structures need to be put in place'*.

Despite the above three participant's perspectives, the remaining three participants had different responses to how the juvenile justice system is working. The three participants that shared their views and belief that the system is working well were the Probation Officer, Youth Diversion Project worker and Community Garda.

The Community Garda believed the juvenile justice system is effective. As he explained *'Garda Diversion Projects works well in keeping juveniles away from the system. I think it is working its working well, especially for first time offenders'*. The Probation Officer shared her experiences of working with young people who offend and explained *'overall it is*

working, the right ideas are there. You know were working definitely in the right direction...I think young people that get their cautions and are before the court that most judges uses sanctions correctly'. This participant discussed community sanctions that were brought in from Probation Services and illustrated *'the community sanctions work well'*. She further outlined that young people who offend that are under probation can get referrals to types of interventions and supports.

During the discussion on the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system, a common sub theme emerged on the impact and the connection between young people who offend with drug and alcohol use and addiction. Five out of the six participant outlined that drugs and alcohol played a significant role in the lives of the young people who committed offences and ended up in contact with the Juvenile Justice System. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator explained *'95% of young people I work with have alcohol or drug problems'*. She provided the researcher with an insight to the lifestyle of the young people she works with which highlighted the correlation between criminal activity and substance misuse. As she stated *'The lads would tell me they had been drinking too much or were high when they saw a car and just took it, saying it seemed a good idea at the time and didn't think of the consequences. Saying it was only a bit of crack or we stole it for the buzz'*.

The Youth Worker concurred with this view. She briefly discussed how she has heard young people who attend her project discussing their intake and usage of drugs. As she stated *'the fellas in the project would often talk about taken drugs at the age of 10. They don't see anything wrong either'*. Similar responses were echoed by the Youth Worker as she discussed how socio economic background often plays a role in the lives of the young offenders. She believed that the young people who grew up in lower socio economic areas had a higher prevalence of substance abuse and criminal activity. As she stated *'these young fellas don't know any different, it's where they grow up, the people they are hanging around with, drugs and alcohol are what these lads grew up with'*. The relationship between young offenders and substance misuse was apparent in the discussion by the Probation Officer. As a professional who works young people involved in the juvenile justice system she provided the researcher with a clear insight. This is illustrated as she stated *'a good percentage of young people who come before the courts have mental health issues, drugs or alcohol problems, self-medicating is a big issue...really its only 10% of people before the courts that have not misused alcohol or drugs prior to offending'*.

Theme Two - Factors that support a good working relationship

All participants explored factors which contribute to a good working relationship. A number of similar themes emerged from this exploration. The main similarities that were discussed were communication, honesty and clarity of roles.

The Youth Worker discussed the importance of communication between other agencies. As she stated *'good communication is absolute key'*. She highlighted that it can be difficult to proceed with other professionals if communication is not clear. She explained how she felt clarity of job roles of other professionals is important for engagement levels. As she stated *'people need to be clear on who is doing what'*. The Family Support Worker concurred with what she felt contributes to a good working relationship. This participant emphasised the importance of staying up to date with work case loads and to always be honest when communicating with other disciplines. She explained *'honesty and communicating all the time, and to stay on top of the work'*. The Probation Officer placed emphasis on the importance of role clarity amongst professionals. She explained *'when dealing with young children it is good for colleagues and professionals to be clear on their roles and to not when not to cross over onto another professional's role and duty...Professionals need to be clear on what it is I do and what it is I am trying to achieve and that is done by communicating'*. The Youth Diversion Project Worker again echoed the response of other professionals in stating that communication is a key factor. She explained that *'keeping lines of contact open'*. She described the importance of clarifying information with colleagues if unsure about information in a file. As stated *'if unsure about something, check and double checking is a big thing that supports a good relationship'*. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator felt communication, clarity of roles and professional courtesy are imperative when engaging with other professionals. She expressed concerns that her observations are not always taken into account to the extent she would like. Emphasising *'Respect for other peoples roles...know when it starts and know when it finishes, Professional courtesy and respect go a long way'*.

One of the six participants stated that accountability is very important. The Community Garda explained that due to past mistakes that have occurred in the past, professionals are

more aware of issues, accountability and communication. He placed emphasis on this being a good change, especially when dealing with young people. As he stated '*accountability is definitely an important factor*'.

Theme Three - The levels of engagement and contact between different disciplines

Each participant was asked about the type of professionals they worked with, the type of contact they had and were they satisfied with the level of contact. Each of the six participants all outlined the various professionals they engaged with the main disciplines including Social Workers, JLO's, Garda, Youth Workers, and Probation Services. However, Addiction Counsellors were discussed by all of the participants as a professional they generally contact to make arrangements with through their service for a young person but tend not to work or engage regularly with this particular discipline.

Table 3 below illustrates the type of professional each participant engages with:

Probation Officer	Youth Diversion Project Worker	Mentoring Project Co-ordinator
1. JLO's	1. Garda	1. Probation Officers and Probation Service Staff
2. Social Workers	2. Social Care Practitioners	2. Youth Workers
3. Garda	3. Volunteers	3. JLO's
4. Educational Staff and Schools	4. Families	4. Social Workers
5. Judge/Solicitors/Court Personnel	5. Addiction Counsellors	5. Community based drugs initiatives
6. Project Staff (Probation	6. Youth Workers	6. Garda Diversion Projects

Services)		
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Youth Worker	Family Support Worker	Community Garda
1. Liner Managers	1. Social Workers	1. Garda Síochána
2. Garda	2. Probation Officers	2. Probation Officer and Probation services
3. Volunteer Services	3. Public Health Nurse	3. JLO
4. Mental Health Workers	4. Addiction Counsellors	4. Educational Services (Staff)
5. Addiction Services	5. Family Therapist	5. Volunteer Services (Staff)
6. Staff members	6. Advocates	6. Court Personnel

From analysing the data collected, Youth workers were outlined as an important person in the life of a young person involved in the juvenile justice system by 50% of the participants. The Family Support Worker explained that from her experience of working with young people who offend, she believed that youth workers are significant people in their lives. She explained *'no one feels threatened by them (youth workers)...we all want people to talk to us at our own level and not to be judged'*. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator explained the importance of a youth worker in the lives of a young person involved in crime. She discussed the importance of stability and that it is often the case that a youth worker can provide the stability by being the person that encourages the young person and acts as a role model. As stated *'they (youth workers) just click with the young person...friendships are formed and the young lads end up trusting them (youth workers), they (youth workers) can support the lads and make a difference'*. The Youth Diversion Project worker coincided with the previous two participants. The Youth Diversion Project Worker explained she felt by working with young

people in a non-judgemental manner can make a significant difference in their life. She explained *'working with the young lads and not to judge their mistakes is the one of the main reasons youth workers can achieve goals with young lads and get on so well with them. It's the smallest things that can actually make a difference'*.

All participants outlined the type of contact they had with other professionals with 50% of the participants stating that telephone calls was their main form of contact. The Youth Worker explained that quiet often contact is made by phone. As she stated *'calls are easiest but often it's an answering machine I end up talking to'*. The Family Support Worker discussed how she makes contact by phone regularly with the other professionals that are working with a young person or their families regardless if there is a query on her behalf. She explained *'I always make contact by phone, just to check if there has been any changes in a case or with a young person and sometimes just to check that contact has been made by the other professional with the child...sometimes I could end up making the same call for a week'*. The Youth Diversion Project Worker explained that if contact was made it would always be done via the phone *'it would be phone calls if I need to contact someone else'*.

Two participants explained they had preference to emails as their main type of contact. The Community Garda discussed the importance of emails. He emphasised the importance of a paper trail. He stated *'it's all emails, the way things have gone it's an email network...with accountability being important in the work we do a paper trail is essential'*. This was echoed by the Mentoring Project Co-ordinator. The Mentoring Project Co-Ordinator explained that for the work she carries out it is important to always have something to look back to clarify details and arrangements. She explained *'emails or text message to make arrangements because you have something to look back on and you have trail if anything is queried'*. In contrast to the other forms of contact used by participants, the Probation Officer explained that letters are commonly used in Probation Services regarding meetings. As she explained *'we would use letters quiet often for arranging meeting...more so than an email, I would not use emails that often really'*.

There was a comparable response amongst all of the participants when asked about the formalities of engagement with other disciplines. Four of the participants stated that contact was always a mix of formal and informal contact. Two participants stated that contact is always formal.

The Probation Officer explained her engagement is a mix of formal and informal. She stated *'contact would always be formal when dealing with a young person and their family but with colleagues its informal but would be a formal setting'*. The Youth Worker outlined that her engagement is always a mixture. As stated *'I guess it can be a mix of both formal and informal but...really it depends on who I am meeting. Dealing with lads in the service I would try and be as informal as possible but meeting about a particular case or my line manager I would be more formal'*. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator emphasised that when meetings are arranged to discuss a case or to review a case then engagement levels are always formal *'Formal contact when I am meeting professionals'*. Nonetheless, she explained when working on a one to one with mentoring colleague she would take a more relaxed and informal approach. Similar to the previous participants the Family Support Worker explained that often she would adapt an informal approach to meetings and engagement but highlighted that the meetings are usually conducted in a formal settings. As stated *'mostly informal but always in an office so it would I suppose be a formal setting apart from case conferences than engagement it one hundred percent formal'*.

Moreover, the Community Garda explained he believed that there is standard level of professionalism across the board with all professionals he comes in contact with and engages with. He stated *'Formal engagement, there is a high level of professionalism involved with working with others'*. The response by the Youth Diversion Project Worker was similar to the Community Garda as she indicated that all contact she has with other professionals is conducted in a formal manner. She highlighted *'every meeting is approached in a formal manner...meetings are mostly held in work and when there with other professionals it's formal. They are never any other way'*.

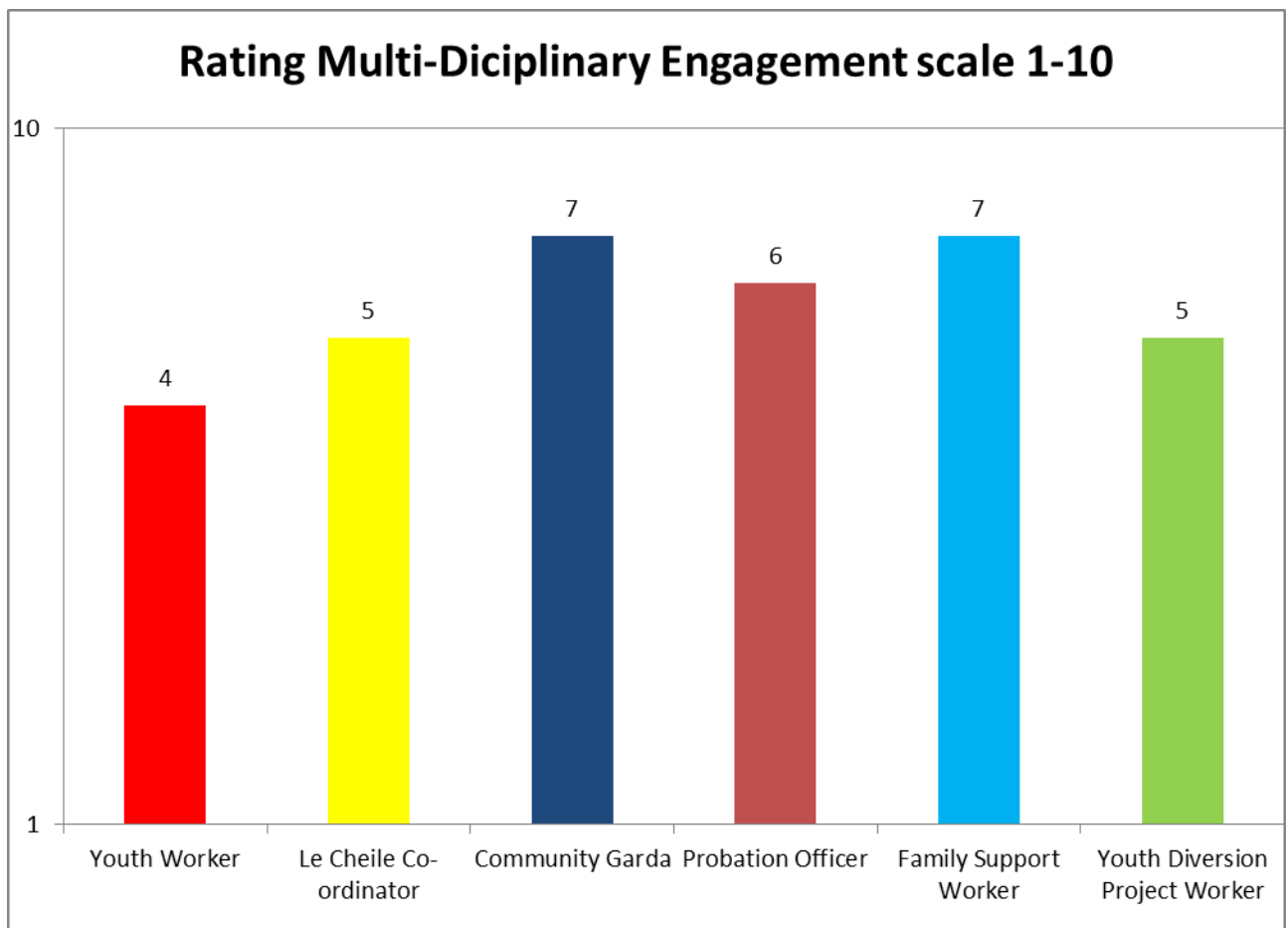
During the semi-structured interviews participants were asked about satisfaction with contact and engagement levels. The results indicate that 4 out of the 6 were satisfied with the contact and 2 participants specified that they would like a more regular type of contact not just making arrangements or clarifying details of an individual's case file. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator illustrated that she was *'happy enough'*. However, she stated *'I would like a bit more but things aren't always feasible'*. The Probation Officer pointed out that she was satisfied with the levels of contact with other professional's declaring *'you only need to make arrangements when needed; people are very busy'*. The Youth Worker explained that she was satisfied by stating *'I am happy enough'*. Nonetheless this participant clarified that she would like to be more involved stating *'I would like to be more involved and have more contact'*.

The Community Garda was satisfied with contact levels and highlighted that overall he could honestly say he makes an effort to maintain contact with professionals. He detailed ‘yes *personally and I can only answer for myself but I am satisfied*’.

Two of the participants in the research conveyed their concerns regarding the levels of contact between the main professionals they work with. These results indicate that the two participants would prefer a more regular and constant form of contact. The Family Support Worker highlighted that she always makes regular contact stating and was unsatisfied with levels of engagement, stating ‘*No I end up doing all the calls, if I didn’t ring the social worker or whoever I often wonder would they contact me*’. Similarities emerged in the response by the Youth Diversion Project Worker who highlighted ‘*maybe more contact and sharing information would prevent these problems*’.

All of the participants were asked to rate their involvement in multi-disciplinary practice. The author of the research explained that 1 = poor and 10 = excellent. The results are illustrated on the figure one below.

Figure 1:



Once each participate rated their involvement, a similar response emerged amongst 5 of the six participants. The following extracts indicate that each professional is enthusiastic about their personal levels of engagement with other professionals to increase in the future.

I would give 5 out of 10 with hopefully moving forward to a 7 or 8 (Mentoring Project Co-ordinator).

Probably 4 even though it should be more I'd say (Youth Worker).

7 for me personally...I think a 7 is good (Community Garda).

Well a 6 at the moment... (Probation Officer).

7 really for the work I do and sometimes that is chasing people.. (Family Support Worker).

It's hard to say but I would go 5 for now and aiming to reach higher as time goes on really (Youth Diversion Project Worker).

Theme 4 - Train together with other professions

One of the themes to emerge from this section is that all six of participants were interested and thought a form of training or conference where all professionals gather together would be beneficial and educational. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator stated *'Probation are my main referral so I think a train together concept would be good...some type of multi-disciplinary training... my main referral is from Probation and JLO's but besides them my project isn't well known I think something like this would help other professionals to know what we do'*. A similar response was echoed by the Family Support Worker who explained she believed training together would be beneficial in relation to gaining a clear understanding of what other professional's roles entail. As she stated *'It would be good to have something facilitated to come together for things to be discussed...it would be good for clarity of roles. Other professional needs to get an understanding of everyone else's clear roles for us to work together properly you know...'*

When the Youth Worker was asked about the idea of training together with other professionals she expressed great interest and explained she personally would benefit from it. This participant felt that sometimes she is unsure of what professional to turn to if she encountered a problem as she was not clear on other professional's roles and duties. As explained *'when a lot of people are involved sometimes it is hard to know who to turn to... I do think it would be good in a professional sense, I'd definitely learn from it, practical experience of working and learning would other professionals would be mighty I think'*.

Again the aspirations for training together with other professionals were echoed by the Youth Diversion Project Worker. She explained that she was unsure how something like this would happen by amalgamating a variety of professional's. Nonetheless, it was an idea she was very interested in. As she stated *'I don't know would a specific training that could be consolidated into something short term with a load of different professionals work...it's something that does have to happen but line managers need to take this on board for it to happen. People need to prioritise time for this in their diaries for it to happen; I would be very interested in attending'*.

The Probation Officer and the Community Garda had comparable responses when questioned about training together. The Community Garda explained that anything that brings professionals together is a good thing. As he highlighted *'anything that combines*

professionals together is a good thing, it gives us a chance to understand what other professionals think we are doing wrong...if there is anything. It's definitely something that needs to happen'. The Probation Officer explained she felt training together with other professionals does occur but it is the choice of each individual if it is something they wish to participate in. As explained 'it is happening on a small scale... I received an email about training only yesterday... it is something that is good. Anything that can attract professionals together is worthy'.

Theme 5 - Barriers to effective multi-disciplinary engagement

Participants were asked what barriers they experienced and encountered which prevented engagement with other professionals. Time, workloads and communication were three predominant themes that emerged during the fieldwork. This is illustrated below by the Mentoring Project Co-ordinator who stated the barriers she experienced *'People just don't have the time...communication is problem, word loads would be a big barrier for me too. I think people are just so busy. You can phone someone back a couple of times and then things fall off your radar when other things come up'*. Similar barriers were identified by the Youth Worker who highlighted that time is a barrier that she regularly encounters which prevents engagement. As she explained *'ok well for me time is a big factor...and the amount of paperwork that needs to be done can hinder the time on the ground let alone for meeting professionals'*. The Youth Diversion Project Worker explained that that time is a major factor. She highlighted that rules and procedures on other agencies can often arise as a barrier mainly due to the lack of clarity and understanding of other agencies rules and procedures. This was illustrated by the following quote *'Rules and procedures in other agencies and services can be a barrier... communication and time is an issue, everyone just wants to get their job done, everyone is so busy doing their own thing, meeting their deadlines and their own targets and goals.*

The Community Garda and the Probation Officer had comparable responses to the barriers they encountered. The Community Garda referred to accountability as the main factor which prevents engagement and highlighted that communication can cause a barrier. As explained *'I think accountability...if a colleague or whoever makes a mistake and does not report something or document and then there are repercussions down the line. Accountability is a big barrier and communication'*. Similar to the Community Garda, the Probation Officer

stated 'accountability' can be a barrier. She explained that *'Work, communication and the build-up of cases, it's understandable and it's only human...people build up their own networks too. I tend to use certain services that I am use to and that I like best and can trust...people just always have their own natural networks which happens in every profession'*.

The Family Support Worker emphasised that communication is the main barrier she personally encounters. She explained that *'for me working with a young person and their families you end up nearly fighting for that person but the final decision might not fall with me...it could be the social worker or probation or whoever but they wouldn't have had that constant contact and involvement...they are always too busy. There isn't that level of communication. Time too there just isn't enough time to work so closely and together really'*.

Regardless of participants stating their views on the barriers that they encounter, 50% of the participants felt things will change in the future. The 50% that felt these barriers could be removed showed enthusiasm towards working as part of a multi-disciplinary team with better engagement. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator felt that things were progressing towards a more unified approach amongst professionals. She explained that *'things are slowly progressing...especially in the last year. Cuts have hit social workers so badly they have almost been forced to acknowledge what they can and cannot do. This is good'*.

The Family Support Worker was confident that barriers she encounters can be removed. As stated *'I think that shift can happen'*. She explained *'I would be delighted to work closer with social worker involved with the young people I work with but you know that relationship isn't at that level... We don't all have to be pulling in opposite directions all the time'*. This level of confidence and enthusiasm was similar by the response by the Probation Officer *'It can happen...with the children's services committee the idea is coming together to see who is best to engage or work with a particular individual or the family. I think this is a whole step forward for professionals. The working for children imitative is hopefully the beginning of something new; it's a wider partnership approach where the entire community is taken ownership. Hopefully things will move forward to a whole new respectful team approach'*.

Conclusion

During the fieldwork many themes emerged. The themes identified were presented under the following headings:

- Professionals views on the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System.
- The factors that support a good working relationships.
- The levels of engagement and contact amongst different disciplines.
- Training together with other professions.
- The barriers that inhibit multi-disciplinary practice.

Fifty percent of participants felt that the juvenile justice system is a success and working well. Nonetheless, the other fifty percent outlined similar responses in that more supports and initiatives were needed.

Each participant similarly outlined honest communication as an important factor that supports a good working relationship. Clarity of roles emerged from the author's research and it was identified as an important factor. However, clarity of roles equally emerged during the discussion about challenges and barriers. Additional challenges and barriers the professional participants highlighted within the results included time and individuals being extremely busy with work and cases.

Each participant rated their personal multi-disciplinary engagement with other professionals and highlighted their desire and enthusiasm for this level of engagement to grow in the future.

The results indicate that professionals think there is a need for a form of multi-disciplinary training. The results illustrate how participant believe this would be a learning experience, important for networking and to gain a clearer insight and understand to other professionals job description and roles. This draws a conclusion to the main findings of this present study.

The next section will discuss in more detail the themes that emerged in relation to the current literature.

Discussion

Discussion

Introduction

This section highlights the key findings of the research study and links the emergent themes to the relevant literature. The research aims and objectives will be outlined throughout this process. This section will address the challenges and barriers of multi-disciplinary engagement between professional. The limitations of the study will be noted. Similarly, the author will outline some recommendations that may enhance multi-disciplinary practice.

In order to do this the research focussed on the following objectives:

- To identify professionals views on the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System.
- To examine participants experience of the levels of engagement between professionals working in the Juvenile Justice System.
- To identify participants views on the factors that support multi-disciplinary practice.
- To ascertain participants barriers that effect multi-disciplinary practice.

It is necessary to note that this research study focused very much on the individual views and experience of participants. This study has attempted to gain an insight into the views and experiences of professionals who engage in multi-disciplinary practice in the juvenile justice system.

The focus of objective one was to examine professional's views and experience on the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system. Participants were asked to give their opinions on how they felt the juvenile justice system was working. One of the first items that became apparent during the analysis stage of this research project was the similarities in the views of the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System. From the professionals that participated in the research, 3 of the 6 participants held similar views regarding the effectiveness of the justice system. Interestingly, the Probation Officer, Youth Diversion Project Worker and the Community Garda expressed comparable responses each highlighting that overall the system is working well. The Community Garda explained he felt it is working especially for first time offenders. This was further echoed by the Youth Diversion Project Worker who stated that 'it does work'. The Probation Officer explained she felt it was working and it was effective especially in relation to community sanctions. In contrast, the Family Support worker expressed concerns about the need for more supports explaining '*there needs to be more done*'. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator shared similar concerns expressing that '*I think there needs to more alternatives than sending people to St. Pats or Oberstown, I am not saying go for the cheaper option but more initiatives and supports would help*'. The literature review illustrated the key distinction of a multi-disciplinary team in that the members have diverse professional background giving them distinct training and skills (Carpenter, 2011). Nonetheless, with each professional possessing distinct training and skills,

participants had similar views and responses regardless of their professional discipline when asked about their views on the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system in Ireland.

These findings highlight that the 50% of professionals who elucidated that they believed the juvenile justice system was working well were professionals with responsibilities for the system. These findings are interesting as it could be suggested that those who held the view that the system was a success and was working well were professionals that have direct responsibility and accountability in relation to services and initiatives for the young people involved. On the other hand, the professionals who believed that more supports were required were professionals who work on the front line and have daily contact with young people. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator and the Family Support worker explained that they have more direct and regular contact with the young person and or their families than Probation Officers and JLO's. These findings highlight the split views of participants. Likewise from these findings it could be argued that the professionals who work on the front line with young people who offend have a clearer outlook on requirements and supports that are desired.

Multi-disciplinary engagement unites people of diverse professional skills for a shared purpose, and the shared purpose is to combine their unique skills, training and expertise in order to meet the needs of the young person. There are a number of professionals and agencies that work in the justice system. As outlined in the literature, multi-disciplinary practice involves justice associated agencies. This was apparent from this research study. The results illustrated the main disciplines which included Social Workers, Garda, Probation Services, JLO's and Youth Personnel.

Whilst analysing the data, it was clearly evident that professionals were aware of the importance of working together in a unified practice. All of the participants agreed that there are many benefits to multi-disciplinary practices. The importance of multi-disciplinary practice amongst professionals is outlined in a number of documents; this is equally echoed in the literature available on the juvenile justice system in Ireland. It became apparent from the fieldwork that there are number of benefits to multi-disciplinary practice between professionals. The benefits include smaller work-loads and support when dealing with a specific case or young person. Research on the benefits of multi-disciplinary practice provides a clear rationale for a combined approach from professionals. The author is in agreement with research by Atkinson et al (2012) and Duffy (2005) who states that an integrated approach is more holistic with the focus of service delivery on the user. This is

similarly evident in the Copping-On National Crime Awareness Annual Report (2000). However, the author found it remarkable that the benefits discussed by the participants were more frequently associated with the professionals rather than benefits for the young person in a holistic manner.

However, despite the recognition of the benefits of multi-disciplinary practices, when professionals were asked to rate their involvement in multi-disciplinary engagement, the results were not as high as the author has anticipated after exploring the participants views on the benefits. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator explained '*I would rate engagement 5 out of ten*'. The Youth Worker stated '*probably a 4 even it should be more I'd say*'. The Family Support Worker felt stronger about ratings of multi-disciplinary engagement outlining '*7 really for the work I do and sometimes that is chasing people*'. The Family Support Worker placed emphasis on the work she carries out stating '*I end up doing all the call, if I didn't ring the social worker or whoever I often wonder would they contact me*'. Interestingly, the changes that have occurred in the field of the juvenile justice system and with the establishment of the Irish Youth Justice Service which both recognise the need for multi-disciplinary practices, the results from the fieldwork suggest and indicate that an integrated approach and professionals working together is not improving between professionals. Equally, each of the participants was asked if they were happy with the levels of engagement with other professionals and what type of contact they would have with other professional. The data that emerged from these questions highlighted the barriers again which prevented multi-disciplinary practice between professional. Four of the six participants stated that overall they were happy and went on to outline that sharing information and more contact would improve their satisfaction levels.

It could be argued that despite the recognition on the importance of working together and the benefits that are highlighted, multi-disciplinary practice is not improving on the ground with professionals in the juvenile justice system. Conversely, regardless of this research findings suggesting that multi-disciplinary practice in not improving between professionals, each of the participants were hopeful and enthusiastic about engagement levels increasing in the future. This suggests to the author that the professionals understand the benefits of multi-disciplinary and possibly need to overcome obstacles and barriers which are highlighted in the findings that emerged. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator explained that she was hopeful that her level of engagement with other professionals would increase. This enthusiasm was echoed by the Youth Diversion Project Worker '*I would be aiming to reach*

higher as time goes on'. The author is lead to conclude that multi-disciplinary practice has not greatly improved as professionals have not had the opportunity to work closely with other disciplines due barriers they encounter. It must be acknowledged that each of the six participants took the time from their busy schedules to voluntary participate in this research. This highlights that professionals are interested in a more unified multi-disciplinary practice moving to the future. Therefore, it is hopeful that engagement levels will increase.

The six participants expressed their individual views on what factors they felt supported a good working relationship. Five of the six participants' explained that clear and honest communications were very important factors that contribute to a good working relationship. The Family Support worker outlined '*honest and communicating all the time*', the Probation Officer discussed communication. The remaining participants equally discussed communication as a key factor that supports a good working relationship. These findings coincide with the literature. Duffy (2005) outlined in the Copping-On National Crime Awareness Initiatives Annual Report that clarity of roles and understanding was imperative in order for professionals to successful work together. Correspondingly, Atkinson et al, (2001) outlined previously that the establishment of a good effective relationship depends on the clarity of roles and responsibilities, commitment levels and an understanding between agencies. When each participant were asked the factors they felt supported a good working relationship the results indicated similar responses to what is illustrated in the literature. Other factors that emerged from the research were the need for sharing information, accountability and having an understanding of the roles of other professionals.

A key aspect of multi-disciplinary practice is the importance of sharing information with other professionals. A number of participants highlighted their understanding of this issue. The Family Support Worker expressed concern and explained that file information needs to be shared with other professionals. The Youth Diversion Worker explained that she felt it was important to check information with other professionals that are working with a particular young person. It was apparent from the study that professionals had aspirations for this level of engagement where information was easily and freely exchanged. These findings coincide with the literature in particular with the National Youth Justice Strategy 2008 who identifies that there is room for improvement for passing relevant information between professionals and non-professional carer's and between different parts of the justice system

(Duggan and Corrigan, 2009; Kilkelly, 2003). The need for improvement for passing relevant information was apparent in this study.

Multi-disciplinary engagement will undoubtedly bring with it challenges for those who are involved. Participants identified barriers they experienced in relation to multi-disciplinary practice. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator explained that *'people just don't have the time...workloads are a barrier to me'*. The Youth Worker explained that time is a major barrier. Literature outlined in Hibernian Consulting/ CAAB (2009) identified professional status as a barrier stating that certain professionals felt that their colleagues were not taking their roles seriously. This literature was echoed by the response from the Mentoring Project Co-ordinator who highlighted that certain professionals don't take other peoples observations into account and that professional courtesy and respect goes a long way. Likewise, the Probation Officer discussed that she felt professional courtesy was significant. The results from this research are similar to the barriers that are highlighted in the literature by Atkinson et al, (2001) and CAAB (2009) as discussed previously. These include the amount of time needed to work effectively, communication and heavy workloads. These common barriers that are outlined in the literature also emerged from the results. These findings support the barriers that are illustrated in the literature.

The author found communication an interesting barrier as outlined in previous literature. According to Henderson and Atkinson (2003) poor communication can prevent multi-disciplinary engagement amongst professionals. This was echoed in the results of this research when participants were asked about barriers they experienced. The Probation Officer explained communication and the build-up of cases affect engagement. This was outlined similarly stated by the Family Support Worker who explained that *'there isn't that level of communication'*. The Family Support worker went on to explain that she does not meet that often with other professionals explaining *'we don't meet as such'*. The Youth Worker discussed how communication between other agencies does not occur. This was particularly interesting that communication is outlined in the literature and is evident in the findings from this research. The author of this research is surprised by these findings that highlight communication as barrier considering the efficiency and advancement in technology in today's society. Interestingly communication is still a barrier despite the fact that technology has never been as effective as it is today. Most professionals have access to telephones to make calls, emails, text messages and fax facilities. Additional to the above, the advancement in smart mobile phones has led to the development of social media apps, for

example, viber and whatsapp as a form of communication. The author believes communication levels needs to be increased in order to overcome this obstacle. The author feels that communication as a barrier should be overcome otherwise professionals are going to be less involved in multi-disciplinary practices and may become more isolated from unified work.

The National Crime Council (2002) highlights the need and the importance to involve professionals which will have an indirect role in crime prevention. The National Crime Council outlines that young people who offend have a wide range of needs which cannot be met by one particular professional or agency, but it requires a range of responses from professionals. Despite what the literature recommends, the findings from this research suggest that professionals generally only feel the need to contact each other when necessary. The Probation officer explained '*you only need to make contact when needed*'.

Correspondingly, the Mentoring Project Co-ordinator explained that '*things aren't always feasible*'. The responses are attention-grabbing as the author feels if the literature states how young people who offend require a range of professionals in order to address the young individuals complex needs, certainly contact levels should not just occur when '*needed*' and feasibility issues should be overcome if the child is paramount and meeting their needs are priority in order to address crime prevention. It could be argued that professionals are not working together by planning together or working on initiatives together. This could lead one to argue that professionals are acting in a manner that is referred to as more reactive than proactive.

Whilst analysing the data, it was evident that Youth Workers played an important role in the lives of the young people involved in the Juvenile Justice System. The Youth Worker outlined that when she is dealing with young people in the services she tends to be down to earth, stating '*dealing with young people in the service I would always be informal and at their level*'. Spence (2007) highlights that youth work contributes to positive social change. The Family Support Worker explained that '*no one feels threatened by them*'. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator illustrated that friendships are formed between the youth worker and the young person who has offended '*the young lads end up trusting them (youth worker)*'. This is similar to what is highlighted as the purpose of a Youth Worker. As previously outlined in the literature review, the Youth Work Act (2001) describes youth work as a programme of education and designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of the young person involved.. The results strongly indicate that youth workers

play a significant role in the lives of young people who come in contact with the juvenile justice system. The responses from participants suggest to the author that the young people who offend are more comfortable with youth workers as there is not professional status attached to the work they carry and work is less formal in comparison to other disciplines.

During analysing the data and identifying themes, it became evident that there was a worrying relationship between substance misuse and criminal activity. This was additionally apparent in the literature previously outlined. In the literature a report conducted in 2013 by Probation Services Research Report 3 highlighted the strong relationship between drugs and alcohol with a young person who offends. The report highlighted the correlation between alcohol misuses, drug misuse and highlighted the relationship that existed between substance abuse and misuse with young people committing offences. In this research, each participant discussed the impact and the connection between criminal activity with use of alcohol and drug addiction. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinator highlighted *'around 95% of the young people I work with have alcohol or drug problems'*. The Youth Worker talked about addiction issues being associated by environmental factors *'drugs and alcohol are what these lads grew up with'*. Correspondingly, the Probation Officer illustrated that *'a good percentage of young people who come before the courts have mental health issues, drugs or alcohol problems, self-medicating is a big issue'*. These findings are highlighted in the literature by Hasse & Pratschke (2010) who highlights the risk factors for drug misuse as involvement in crime and marginalisation and drug taking peer-networks. When the participants were asked about the type of professionals they engaged with on a regular basis, each participant mentioned Addiction Counsellors as a professional they generally contact only to make arrangements with through their service for the young person. Nonetheless, all six of the participants stated that they do not work or engage regularly with Addiction Counsellors. The findings from this research illustrate that regardless of the acknowledgment that the majority of the young people involved in criminal behaviour have addiction problems, and the need for an integrated approach highlighted by the Probation Services Research Report in 2012, the level of engagement and amalgamation of services is not improving on the ground between professionals and the young people with addiction and substance misuse. The author believes this is an area for concern.

Furthermore, it is evident from the professionals who participated in the research study, that there was a clear interest and desire for professionals to amalgamate for a type of training together. As the Family Support Worker explained she thought it would be good to have

something facilitated for professionals to come together. This positive attitude towards training together was similar echoed by the Mentoring Project Co-ordinator who explained '*I think a train together concept would be good...some type of multi-disciplinary training*'. This professional outlined that she felt she would benefit and learn from training with other professionals. The Mentoring Project Co-ordinators views were additionally echoed by the Youth worker who outlined '*she would definitely learn from it*'. The Community Garda thought there should be a type of training together with other professionals as he believed it gave professionals the opportunity to come together and in open discussions to know how other agencies feel towards Garda and Community Garda and to learn from other agencies what they are doing wrong if there is anything. The findings provide evidence that a service or training similar to the Copping-On two day training programme that previously commenced where crime prevention awareness was promoted but also enabling and promoting multi-disciplinary practice is sought after by the professionals who engaged in this research study. There is a necessity for this type of training to be duplicated as it will encourage and promote multi-disciplinary practice between professionals (Duffy, 2005).

On discussing the findings, it is evident that professional's views and experiences provide an invaluable insight to how professional's engage with each other, the factors that support a better relationship and the barriers they encounter.

Evaluation of Method and Limitations of the Study

The qualitative method of semi-structured interviews allowed for an in-depth analysis of the research question. This was evident through the use of core questions in conjunction with probing questions which allowed the researcher to probe further into the participant's answers in order to gain a clearer and deeper understanding. This study was designed with a single research method, and that was qualitative research. It is possible that conducting interviews with a larger related group on the same topic, such as a larger sample of each of the participants would have produced different results and findings. Although this could be viewed as a limitation, it should not take from this research study and its analysed findings.

Yin (1989) argues that small numbers used in research can be acceptable, provided it met the established objective of the study. I am aware of some weaknesses in qualitative data

collection – for example poor questions, response bias and incomplete recollection. However, the research design for this study included several drafts and pilot question sessions in order to counter for poor questions. The author of this research believes that a reasonable set of questions were achieved from guidance and support from my supervisor (appendix 3) which helped to achieve the objectives set out.

Whilst the current research study was relatively small in nature, the purpose and nature of the study must be emphasised. Being conducted as an exploratory qualitative study, participants were chosen to enhance the identification of common themes and for areas of future research. The researcher acknowledges the limitations of a small sample size in relation to external validity (Bryman, 2004). The small sample size in this research was the results of a combination of time and cost resources given the geographical locations of the participants. The purposive sample leads to problems for future researchers aiming to replicate the study. Although future researcher could replicate the procedure, the participants will be different which may generate different results. Finally, as I first time researcher I aimed to facilitate open rich data.

Conclusion

This brings to close the discussion of the main findings. The next section conclusions will be drawn and recommendations will be outlined.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Addressing the objectives directly, participants held mixed views on the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system. Participants with direct responsibility and accountability held similar views in the sense that they believed the system was working well. On the contrary, the remaining participants who work on the ground with young people who are involved in the juvenile system believed more supports and initiatives are needed in order to deter young people from crime. Participant's highlighted similar responses to the factors they believed supported a good working relationship; these findings were similar to those illustrated in the literature. The barriers that emerged from this research were consistent with the literature; no new barriers emerged from the data that are not already indicated in the literature.

Nonetheless, the author was astounded that communication is classified as barriers in today's society, especially as technology has never been as hi-tech as it is in the current climate. Furthermore, Participants rated their involvement in a multi-disciplinary engagement and the findings showed that the high levels of contact were not improving between professionals working in direct contact with the juvenile justice system.

The author of this research hopes that this research will add to the body of knowledge. Regardless of this study being small in scale, it is hoped that the inclusion of a professionals views and experiences who work in the juvenile justice system can highlight the obstacles that professionals need to overcome in order to promote better practice and working relationships in multi-disciplinary practices.

Finally, whilst the literature available highlights the importance of multi-disciplinary practice between professionals who work in the justice system, outlining the benefits and the recommendations for an integrated approach to happen nationally, the reality is the findings from this research indicate that it is not improving at the level that the literature recommends. This study has shown that qualitative research involving the examination of professionals views and experience of multi-disciplinary practice is absent from the current body of knowledge. Future research is required in order to examine the extent to which the common barriers and preventions that this study highlights are overcome. Nevertheless, below are some recommendations, which may further enhance multi-disciplinary practice in the future.

Recommendations

The author of this research would recommend for the introduction of a shared communication network database to encourage greater contact between professional and promote the importance of sharing information and data. It would be useful to have greater links between ranges of professionals as this would encourage a more integrated approach and improve multi-disciplinary practice.

A second recommendation is for a duplicate training programme similar to Copping-On Crime Prevention Programme to commence. This is sought after by each respondent who

engaged in the research. All illustrated that this form of training would be beneficial, educational and can provide professionals with the opportunity to engage with others and to become clearer on role clarity thud in turn working together in an integrated approach to prevent crime amongst young people. This is highly recommended in the future when there is funding available.

Finally, on-going research has a critical role to play in order to monitor the levels of engagement approach amongst professionals as all the literature and document recommend working together in order to meet the complex needs of young people involved with the Juvenile Justice System.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Information Letter

Information Sheet

As part of the requirements for my Master in Child and Youth Care in Athlone Institute of Technology, I have to carry out a research study. The study is concerned with exploring multi-disciplinary engagement between various professionals.

What will the study involve?

If you wish to participate in this study I will conduct an interview with you at an agreed location and at an agreed suitable time on a single occasion for a maximum of forty five minutes.

Why have you been asked to take part?

You have been asked because you are a professional who works with or comes in contact with young people who offend as part of your daily profession.

Do you have to take part?

Participation is voluntary and you do not have to agree to participate. If you do agree to participate you can withdraw at any time. If you agree to participate, you have two weeks after the interview if you wish to withdraw and all data will be destroyed. For the interview, I ask your permission to audio tape the conversation. If you agree to participate, you can stop the interview at any time.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential?

Yes. I will ensure that no clues to your identity appear in the thesis. Any extracts from what you say that are quoted in the thesis will be entirely anonymous. Information provided will be confidential. Your name or work location will not be presented in my report. I will refer to you and the information you provide by your discipline.

What will happen to the information which you give?

The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study. All data will be stored on a password protected file on computer. Each participant will be referred to by their profession appose to their name or work address for animosity. On completion of the thesis, all data will be destroyed.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be presented in the thesis. They will be seen by my supervisor, a second marker and the external examiner. The thesis may be read by future students on the course.

If you agree to take part in the study, please sign the consent form overleaf.

Any further queries:

If you need any further information, you can contact me:

Edel Quinn 0876415723

edelquinn.e@gmail.com

Appendix 2 – Consent Form

Consent Form

I.....agree to participate in Edel Quinn’s research study.

I.....give permission for my interview with Edel Quinn to be tape-recorded

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing.

I am participating voluntarily.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within two weeks of the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising my identity.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications if I give permission below:

(Please tick one box:)

I agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview

I do not agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview

Signed.....Date.....

Appendix 3 – Pilot Questions

Interview will be categorised into three main sections:

- Causes
- Solutions
- Changes.

General Information:

1. What is your job title?
2. How long have you been in your current profession?
3. Male/ Female?

Professionals Views:

4. Does your current role involve contact with children coming to the attention of the Juvenile Justice System? Explain
5. What are your views on youth offending in Ireland?
6. In your opinion, what are the most common reasons for a young person to offend?
7. What challenges have you encountered working with a young offender?
8. What is your experience of working with other agencies?
9. What are the challenges for you as a professional engaging in the justice system?
10. What challenges have you encountered working with other agencies?
11. In your opinion, do you feel there are enough resources available?
12. Research indicates the link between addictions and offending, what is your view on this?
13. As a professional, do you think there is enough deterrents to prevent a young person from the cycle of offending?

14. What would you identify as being the most effective interventions for a young person?
15. What changes to you think need to happen?
16. Any other comments or topics you would like to discuss?

Appendix 4 – Revised Interview Guide

General Information:

1. Male/ Female?
2. Job title?
3. How many years are you in your current position?

Core Questions - Professionals Views:

4. What are your views on how the Juvenile Justice System is working in Ireland?
If you think it is not working, why?
5. What professionals do you work with?
6. How often are meetings held?
7. In your experience, what factors support a working relationship?
8. What barriers do you think inhibit multi-disciplinary practice?
9. How would you rate your involvement in multi-disciplinary practice? 1= poor and 10=excellent?
10. Describe your working relationship with other professionals?
11. How would you like your working relationship to be?
12. What recommendations would you suggest to make it more effective?
13. Do you feel you need to train together with other disciplines?