TEACHER
PROFESSIONALISM IN SASKATCHEWAN'S COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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by
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of community schools on teachers’ sense of professionalism. The central question was, "what factors best explain teachers’ sense of professionalism while working in community schools?" Community schools in Saskatchewan focus on health and behavioral outcomes as well as improving academic achievement for Aboriginal, Metis and at-risk children. In community schools, considerable numbers of students are considered at-risk for academic failure because of behavioural disorders, difficulty getting to school on time, poor attendance and living with families who frequently move. Thus, community schools have a “community” orientation, including after school programs for students, evening programs for parents and the inclusion of medical, dental and social service personnel. Community schools employ a full-time community coordinator and typically have as many para-professional people on staff as there are certified teachers. Community schools are very busy places and teachers working in them frequently face additional demands that go well beyond the expectations of teachers working in non-community schools. The researcher’s hypothesis was that teachers working in community schools, over time, faced the likelihood of having their sense of professionalism eroded.

Theoretically, this thesis utilized scholarship drawn from (a) building organizational capacity in professional learning communities; (b) building personal capacity in communities of practice; and (c) developing interpersonal capacity through knowledge management practices. Ultimately 124 teachers, working in ten
rural community schools and two urban ones completed the survey and, of these, twelve were also interviewed. Methodologically, this research relied on statistical analysis to understand teacher professionalism. Factor analysis, generated three factors which were labeled School Climate, Teachers’ Work Environment and Knowledge-based Environment. In promoting organizational capacity, school leadership emerged as the principle factor. Results of the survey questions in the first factor—School Climate—indicated that teachers working in community schools needed a principal and school leadership that made them feel supported, rewarded and valued. Furthermore, teachers working in community schools who had opportunities to network in professional association with each other and share information were three times as likely to rate their school as a professional workplace.

The survey items comprising the second factor—Teachers’ Work Environment—were related to personal capacity. It became apparent that when teachers had their teaching skills and talents recognized by school administrators, they rated their school highly as an enjoyable workplace and felt better able to commit themselves to their professional occupation. Personal capacity was enhanced when teachers felt effective, valued and had opportunities to become continuous learners through personal and intellectual growth.

The third factor—Knowledge-based Environment—was related to building interpersonal capacity. The opportunity to locate, exchange and connect with like-minded people, in an environment with adequate resources, led teachers to feel
positively about their career and their opportunities to “invest” in professional growth.

Stepwise regression determined four predictor variables which best accounted for the criterion or dependent variable—teacher professionalism. These four predictor variables were labelled valued, effective, commitment and newways. In essence, teachers in this study who felt their knowledge base was valued, their teaching strategies were effective and who were able to experiment with innovative ways of teaching perceived a stronger sense of self-commitment to the teaching profession. The degree to which teachers experienced these items varied considerably from school to school. A school’s leadership appeared to be the principle influence in whether or not the school was able to work towards becoming a school-based learning community.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Education has been affected by an enormous range of changes and North Americans have been ever eager to debate issues in schooling. Political, legal, social and ideological processes have provided an effective backdrop to current discussions on schooling. In the aftermath of the USSR/USA space race during the late 1950s critics of American schooling practices wanted to know why "Johnny" couldn't do mathematics but "Ivan" could. In a similar vein, contemporary critics claim that John's son still can't do math but "Tatsuya" and "Xio-Ming" can. Business and industrial leaders claim that our students are being poorly prepared for the job market and lack the intellectual capital necessary to maintain North American hegemony in the market place (Kerchner, Koppich & Weeres, 1997).

The past one-hundred-and-fifty years have seen repeated cycles of intense, sometimes frantic searches for remedies designed to "fix" schooling problems. Reformers and policy analysts alike have shifted their hopes from one attractive remedy to another—championing policies and initiatives that address schooling problems on a piecemeal basis. Throughout decades of various educational reform strategies diagnosing a variety of ailments, one recurrent theme has emerged—a call for the enhancement of teaching as a profession. Teachers themselves, it has been widely claimed, constitute the main "problem" in education and much attention has been devoted to the matter of improving teachers' professionalism as well as the professional status of teachers (Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Britzman, 1991; Murray, 1992). The
likelihood of finding anyone actively opposed to the concept of teacher professionalization has been, in fact, minimal.

Educators have frequently responded to concerns about schooling with creative recommendations for teachers' professional development and calls for the professionalization of teachers emanate from a wide array of sources (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000; Burbules & Densmore, 1991; Sockett, 1993). Such calls, of course, imply that teaching is “less than” a profession, and that there is something desirable for both teachers and public enterprises in having them ordained as such.

Professionalization and Teacher Professionalism

Historically, shifts for teaching to be acknowledged as a professional endeavour have been overwhelmed with dilemmas. Bascia (1998) noted that the current focus on teacher professionalism stems from several motives: a genuine desire to help teachers work more effectively; to give teachers a more informed role in shaping educational practices; to improve the public image of teaching; to act ethically and morally and to encourage teachers to adopt certain world views consistent with educational reform strategies (pp. 38-40). Abbott (1988) insisted that professionalization has been more a process than an outcome and thus the important issue is not whether the current efforts to professionalize teachers will secure them a ranking equal to the “higher” professions, but whether it will yield any results at all. Yet Sykes (1987) argued that partial success is better than nothing and therefore, the professionalization project is worth pursuing.

For Labaree (1992), “professionalization is always tentative, a discursive set of processes subject to counter claims and changing fortunes as conditions in any particular systems of professions change over time” (p. 126). Sykes (1989), as well as
Burbules and Densmore (1991), remained skeptical of the teacher professionalization project. These authors challenged a movement that attempted to “mimic” traditional professions such as law and medicine and expressed concerns that such a project would distance teachers from their students as well as the parents of students and may even marginalize women and under-represented minorities. Instead, the uniqueness of teaching ought to be emphasized and educators and reformers should be forging a professionalism that is distinctly suited to the ideals and needs of teaching.

Professionalization and Education Reform

A review of the literature has revealed successive waves of educational reform policies meant to enhance teachers’ professional roles. The first wave of educational reform, circa 1870-1900, a teacher “skilling” era, attempted to overcome teacher “deficiencies” by introducing normal schools, teachers’ colleges and university credentialing (Herbst, 1989; Murray, 1992). These efforts were promoted by administrators who embraced the tenets of scientific management, established new requirements for teacher training and developed extensive curriculum guides to direct the work of North America’s future teachers. “The view was that to become a professional, teachers only needed to carry out the directives of their more knowledgeable superiors” (Murray, 1992, p. 495).

By the early 1980s, particularly in the United States, the question of teacher professionalization surfaced once more. A “batch of excellence” reports also surfaced—most notably A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the Twenty-First Century, from the Carnegie Forum (1986) and Holmes Group (1986) reports—both of which became a central focus for educational reform initiatives. During this period of economic and
social unrest the bifurcated nature of educational reform became rather transparent. While teachers were becoming increasingly involved in school planning and development and collective decision making, political pressures were being exerted on educational policy makers to restructure, regulate and monitor teachers work. Many state level administrators perceived teachers to be “moss-backs who resist change” (Hess, 1999, p. 18). The language of reform also became a language of control, rationalization, efficiency and outcomes while exhorting teachers to professionalize through the use of career ladders, lead teachers and professional development schools. Goodlad (1990) noted that “widely varying reform initiatives cloak themselves in the language of advancing a true professional while pursuing often contradictory ends” (p. 12). From the mid 1960s to the end of the 1980s, many scholars wrote about the processes that appeared to be de-skilling teachers. Critical theorists objected to reform activities that restructured teachers’ work along lines of balkanization and patterns of proletarianization (Apple, 1986; Hargreaves, 1994).

As we move into the first decade of the millennium, a third wave of reform is now upon us, hopefully, a teacher en-skilling moment where reformers and policymakers truly begin to take inventory of the social and intellectual capital that our schools often do foster (Deal & Peterson, 1998; Hord, 2004). The current buzzword is “community” and whether this be a community of scholars, a learning community or a community of practice, the essential focus is that it is the notions of “community” that may provide us with a point of entry into rethinking and refining our teaching practices. The framework in this third wave of reform still emphasizes teachers’ professionalism, but focuses on the belief that productive people working in productive organizations are
the diligent implementers of change and are key to institutional performance. Beck (1999) has argued that “there may be multiple points of entry into community” (p. 37) which direct our attention to the promises and perils associated with moving educators to practices of collegiality, shared planning and decision making and, most of all, professionalized learning.

Tensions in Teacher Professionalization

Ideas about professionalism and teacher professionalization have been politically and ideologically grounded. All too often, researchers and the literature they produce have given the impression that ideas about professionalism are commonly held, unchanging and gender neutral. Historically, professionalization projects have been associated with men, inculcating procedures, protocols and practices that are euro and andro-centric. Very few scholars have critiqued the perception of professionalization as being gender neutral but, with a continued interest in feminist epistemology, concerns about the gendered nature and practices of teacher professionalization are slowly emerging. As Roland (1985) noted, when the works of women have scarcely been mentioned, as are their experiences and achievements, males and females will come to believe more strongly than ever that the things women have done and the ways in which women have lived have no value (p. 78). Apple (1986) pointed out that teaching is not just work; it is gendered work dominated by women who are vulnerable to the kind of rationalization seen in each successive wave of educational reform.

Intent on communicating a specific vision, educational reformers conveyed particular values and worldviews and early attempts to professionalize teachers did, indeed, reflect such ideals and needs; defined largely by male administrators. During
the first significant wave of reform (1880s to 1920s) male teachers sought to establish their professional identity through their subject while women did so through their role as elementary school educators, since other avenues to professionalism were closed (Herbst, 1989, pp. 26-30). Philosophizing from democratic principles, Dewey (1911) argued that women's entrance into the professions would humanize them, bringing in an element of service to counteract the American tendency towards profitability. In the 1980s, during a time of heightened activity surrounding educational reforms, many scholars (Stone, 1988; Tyack & Cuban, 1995) argued that the prevalence of women in the classrooms contributed to the strengthening of bureaucratic controls, thus giving teaching the image of a lower-skilled profession. Thus, opportunities for both men and women to develop strong professional identities were minimal.

While the issue of gender has been an important variable complicating teacher professionalization so too has teachers' lack of "voice" resulted in an unwitting acceptance of their "deficiencies." While administrators, politicians, academics and researchers have participated in the debate about how to reform teaching, teachers' perceptions have not been consistently incorporated (McDonald, 1986). What understandings and opinions do teachers themselves have about their own sense of professionalism? What factors best explain or account for teachers' sense of professionalism? Discussions around professional practice have generally identified formal and functional criteria, such as the utilization of esoteric knowledge, workplace autonomy and social accountability. Such vagueness about the nature and content of teacher professionalism has been counterproductive to the teacher professionalization project. In a recent survey the National Center for Education Statistics (1997) noted that
“little is known of what ways the many different aspects of professionalization affect teaching and teachers” (p. 2).

In fact, the debate about whether or not teaching is a profession has been a debate largely conducted outside of the teaching profession itself. Debates in educational reform literature and sociological analyses have acted as a “launchpad” for assessing whether or not teaching is a profession. However, as this research project has shown, teachers regard their occupation as a professional one and perceive themselves as professionals. Teaching has now been positioned as a *bona fide* professional occupation and the literature points to the utility of examining teacher professionalism in light of recent research on learning communities.

Useful Terminology

In 2001, Saskatchewan’s Task Force on The Role of the School recommended that a community school philosophy be adopted for all public schools in the Province (Saskatchewan Learning, 2001). This recommendation represented a major reform initiative, an initiative that attempted to re-conceptualize the practice of teaching. Turning schools with large numbers of at-risk students into community schools offered educators the potential to redefine the ways in which students learn, to re-think pedagogical practices and to develop school-based professional learning environments or communities. Thus, community schools are defined as schools located in high needs areas which are open to students, their families and the community before, during and after school incorporating community agencies to help design and implement activities that promote high educational achievement and positive youth development (Saskatchewan Community Schools Association, 2005).
Although the strict definition of a learning community lacks agreement, Hord (2004) defined a school-based professional learning community as a school that operates with supportive leadership, shares common values and visions, establishes shared personal and professional practices, and incorporates collective learning and its application (p. 1). In essence, a school-based professional learning community provides a focus for those seeking, pursuing and maintaining their identity as professional practitioners. An essential ingredient in creating such learning environments requires that everyone work in communities of practice (Sergiovanni, 2000; Wenger, 1998) designed to leverage social capital.

In organizations, Wenger (1998) defined communities of practice along three dimensions:

(a) what it is about: a joint enterprise as understood and continually renegotiated by its members (pp. 86-102);

(b) how it functions: mutual engagements that bind members together; (pp.188-209) and

(c) what capabilities it has produced: the shared repertoire of communal resources developed over time by an organization’s members (pp. 214-221).

Thus, participants have a stake in “investing” in their communities of practice because it becomes part of who they are. In community schools, the opportunity to have one’s work and professional identity supported by a constellation of like-minded others could yield a “new” teacher professionalism, especially since teachers are by far the largest group of knowledge workers in today’s post-industrial world. The ability to acquire, process and manage knowledge is integral to nurturing healthy learning communities.
In this thesis, knowledge management is defined as a process of information acquisition, transformation, sharing and evaluation (Holsapple, 2003). It includes the activities teachers need to not only acquire, transform, share and evaluate strategic information but also activities requiring teachers to reflectively use their management of knowledge as a tool to enhance the status and activities of the teaching profession. This can be done by utilizing new structural arrangements in schools which reflect collaborative and cooperative discourses. Such ability forms the “engine” of a learning community/environment.

There are wide differences in what is meant by profession, professional, professionalism and professionalization (Bledstein, 1985; Metzger, 1987). Sockett (1993, p. ix) distinguished between professionalization, which is a concern with the status of the occupation, and professionalism, which describes the day-to-day quality of a person’s activities as they relate to their profession. “Every action within the role is to be judged by standards specific to the profession” (p. 9). Darling-Hammond (1989) declared, “it is the degree to which teachers assume collective responsibility for instructional quality that determines professionalism” (p. 18). Professional development, unlike professionalism, focuses solely on enhancing teachers’ knowledge, skills and concrete classroom practices through one day in-service programs offered on an intermittent basis. This thesis is about teacher professionalism, not professional development.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that best explain teachers’ sense of professionalism while working under a relatively new educational reform,
turning specified schools in Saskatchewan into community schools. School reform literature has begun to reflect a view of schools as "communities" where multiple stakeholders come together in a progressive learning environment to form a community of learners and to enhance school effectiveness. Turning selected schools into community schools is a major reform in Saskatchewan, and teachers working in these schools often interact with children requiring substance abuse treatment, mental health services, crisis interventions, counseling, nutrition/weight management programs and who frequently have low levels of numeracy and literacy. In community schools, teachers often work with community police officers, social workers, health officials and treatment centers in addition to developing lesson plans based on co-operative learning, remediation, life skills and the provision of basic educational skills. Very little research has assessed teachers' sense of professionalism while working in such "busy" environments, where time is a precious commodity and the work is demanding. Thus, five open-ended questions guided the research question.

1. In community schools, what schooling supports define a professional workplace for teachers?

2. In community schools, what factors enhance and erode teachers' sense of professionalism?

3. In community schools, which aspects of a knowledge management system are most important to teachers' work?

4. What are teachers' perceptions of their professionalism?

5. Overall, what are teachers' opinions of Saskatchewan's community school initiative?
Significance of Study

Often reformers fail to understand the depth and complexity of teaching. They approach teaching in a one dimensional way as a set of skills, beliefs and behaviours that teachers must change. Reformers rarely recognize that the very systems they are attempting to reform are also complex, bureaucratically organized structures shaped by strongly articulated political and ideological agendas. Prescribing change does little to develop a stronger professional identity among teachers until we know how teachers personally experience educational change and how change impacts teachers’ sense of professional identity. Once we have this information we can then focus on working with a teaching force that has a greater capacity to respond effectively to a range of local and changing conditions with more commitment to continuing its improvement and being more satisfied with their work (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000, p. 14).

We know little about the unintended consequences of reform as well as the advantages it triggers. Educational change must connect teachers to the system and the system to teachers. By fleshing out critical issues in teacher professionalism this research can contribute to a firmer understanding of the schooling factors that shape and support the work of our teachers. Their perspectives are ignored and yet they may have something important to tell us. As Bailey (2000) pointed out, “teacher’s perspectives have been a missing factor in the development of innovations” (p. 112). In part, this study is intended to remediate this situation.
Findings of this study could be of interest to organizations such as teachers' federations, special subject councils, Saskatchewan Education Leadership Unit (SELU), school administrators and school boards. Researchers, administrators and policymakers must listen more to what teachers say, take the issue of supporting them seriously and acknowledge the important role teachers could play in being a part of positive educational change. This study has been designed to provide an in-depth description of the perceptions teachers carry about their own professional identity especially since their work is fueled by such identities and the aforementioned organizations have the potential to provide better support to their respective constituents as a result of this investigation.

If, as several authors (Etzioni, 1995; Mitchell & Sackney, 2000; Wenger, 1998) suggested, we are headed in the direction of organizational learning, out of which specific kinds of communities of practice emerge, then the movement toward enhanced teacher professionalism should reflect the view that effective organizational change is critically dependent on the learning and beliefs of those in the organization (Hargreaves, 1994). This investigation can provide insight into the interplay of politicized and ideological junctures and disjunctures that profoundly affect organizational learning, and by extension, affect educational change as well.

Assumptions in this Study

This study had the following assumptions:

1. Teachers can articulate their understandings of professionalism and the kinds of schooling supports they require for continuous professional growth.
2. Teachers have an interest in, and can reflect on, their professionalism.
3. Community schools operate as communities of practice.
4. Different community schools are at different stages in terms of functioning as professional learning communities.

5. An effective knowledge management system is a critical element in moving community schools towards professional learning communities.

Delimitations of the Study

For the purposes of this study the following delimitations applied:

1. Only teachers working in twelve community schools in and around Saskatoon were surveyed through the use of interviews and questionnaires.
2. In the twelve schools involved, only teachers who volunteered were interviewed and/or surveyed.
3. Only community schools eligible for the additional funding formula were surveyed.
4. The survey instrument defined the parameters of the data collected, as did the interview guide.
5. Data was collected in May and June when some teachers were already busily engaged in year-end activities.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are those commonly associated with survey analysis and interviews.

1. The findings from this sample of community school teachers may not necessarily be generalized to the larger population of all community school teachers.
2. Remote community schools, large urban community schools, Catholic community schools and First Nations schools were not part of this study.
3. Issues around the moral bases and ethical concerns of teacher professionalism were not included.

Researcher Interests

My interest in teacher professionalization comes from the personal, the political and the practical. Over the years I have been involved with an immigrant serving
agency. Many of the immigrant and refugee men and women who work for this agency spent considerable amounts of money and mental anguish trying to have the professional credentials in their country of origin formally recognized in Canada. I find it disturbing to see Yugoslavian oncologists cleaning office buildings, Ugandan teachers caring for our elderly as nurse assistants and Guatemalan social workers relegated to non-credentialed positions in the not-for-profit service sector. These are all professional people, working in non-professional jobs. What does it mean to be a professional? Does "professional" denote a noun or a verb—is "professional" an occupation, a role or an ideology? These musings of the personal have led to my involvement in the political.

As a teacher educator I have maintained a practical interest in teacher professionalization. My students are about to enter a profession that has been in a state of flux for some time. Debates abound regarding teaching’s temporal status as a profession, semi-profession or supra-profession—perhaps even a profession sui generis. On the verge of becoming credentialed, my students are highly qualified and strongly committed to the task of serving up a good education to the youth of our nation. Although the practice of inculcating them with feeling, acting and thinking like a professional may take several years of field experience it seems unlikely that many of these highly qualified teachers will be willing to tolerate the paternalism of a distanced bureaucracy and the idiosyncrasies of policymakers that treat them as a subservient group. I believe there is considerable merit in proclaiming teaching a profession and in promoting the social conditions necessary to publicly achieve this designation.
Overview of Relevant Theories

Since the purpose of this study was to examine specific aspects that best explained teacher professionalism while working with a high percentage of difficult and at-risk students in Saskatchewan’s community schools, the literature search provided a framework to delineate important influences in the analysis of teacher professionalism and pointed to significant gaps as well. In order to frame my survey, I relied on literature from (1) the role of historical educational change forces in shaping teacher professionalism; (2) sociological theories of occupational professionalization; and (3) concepts from organizational theory involving building capacity in school-based learning environments and knowledge management.

Historically, the low esteem of teachers and their occupation bears directly on the issue of teachers’ public and self image and the writers of historical education (Axelrod, 1997; Herbst, 1989; Manzer, 1994; Sadovnik & Semel, 2002; Warren, 1989) have examined the advances and setbacks of teacher professionalization in public education. These writers have grappled with the ways in which teacher professionalization has emerged as a result of educational reforms, state policies and political ideologies. Teacher professionalism has taken its cues from traditional professions such as law, medicine, the professoriate and the like. Sociological theorists (Abbott, 1988; Hoyle & John, 1995; Larson, 1977) noted that these occupations derived their status from an expanding material base and an engendering of work autonomy. Ideologically, professions work with little supervision, dictate considerable control over their work processes, are guided by codes of ethics and are primarily accountable to fellow colleagues. In turn, society holds these practitioners responsible for the
profession's assigned duties. However, the criteria of professionalism cited by sociologists does not adequately describe teacher professionalism. Bureaucratic demands, multiple players and layers in decision-making, unionization, work isolation and pervasive educational change all compromise sociological theories of professionalism. Historically, reform efforts designed to augment teachers’ professionalism led to a set of defining characteristics against which the conduct of a profession could be measured. Thus, the “old” teacher professionalism, a kind of “classical” professionalism based on credentialing, length of training, high levels of skill, a specified body of knowledge, client-centredness, autonomy and independent decision-making were all used to measure teachers’ professionalism. However, extant literature analyzing the teaching profession emphasizes the non routine character of the work and several scholars (Bailey 2000; Lightfoot 1983; Talbert & McLaughlin 1994) have shown that teachers require considerable individual on-the-spot judgment, creativity and intuition when applying professional expertise to their work. The “new” teacher professionalism stresses pedagogical flexibility, rapid changes to the knowledge base of teaching and proactive decisions where collaborative practices are a necessity. Sachs (2003, p. x) indicated that the time has come to think about what professional learning, professional knowledge and professionalism should look like for the next generation of teachers who will shape public education.

In the development of true school-based learning organizations, teachers ought to be viewed as an “investment” where their knowledge and its concomitant development is considered a valuable intangible asset to the organization. An essential component of teacher professionalism is their capacity to feel they are effective, valued
knowledge workers, operating in a sphere of shared symbolism, collaboration and genuinely recreating knowledge for themselves and their students—all within a professional environment. Theories of knowledge management through the activities and experiences of school employees strike at the core of school-based learning communities. Mitchell and Sackney (2000) wrote about improving schools by focusing on the development of “capacity” to structure the kinds of learning that should take place in a learning organization. These authors concluded with a cohesive model incorporating the key elements in building capacity for a learning community to take shape. Figure 1.1 outlines three theoretical arenas in looking at teacher professionalism.

Figure 1.1. Teacher Professionalism
Overall Organization of the Dissertation

The purpose of this research was to examine crucial factors in teacher professionalism. The material in Chapter One addressed the problem, purpose and significance of the study. The research questions were put forward, as were the assumptions, delimitations and the limitations of this research. In Chapter Two, historical educational strategies, theories of professionalism and the interplay of specific organizational management concepts were used to examine the current state of teacher professionalism. Historically, teachers faced *skilling, de-skilling* and *re-skilling* processes with each successive wave of educational reform. In Chapter Three the foundational aspects of qualitative and quantitative work frequently utilized in educational research were discussed. Data gathering techniques included interviews and the use of a survey instrument, all grounded in an interpretivist framework. Basic to the purpose of this research has been the assumption that human experience is mediated by social activities and subsequent interpretation. Data analysis involved generating descriptive statistics from the survey portion of the research methodology, augmented by data from the interviews. Briefly discussed in Chapter Three was a post-positivist philosophy that has becoming increasingly popular, termed the "mixed-method" paradigm. Issues of validity, triangulation and trustworthiness have also been outlined.

A quantitative overview of the results was presented in Chapter Four and the researcher not only provided an interpretation of the data in Chapter Five but also discussed the implications of this research for schooling practices, theory and future directions that need to be examined.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The following literature review is structured to frame a text that does justice to a historiography of teacher professionalization that is only recently beginning to emerge. Calls to render teachers' work and their workplaces more professional have been an enduring part of educational reform since the mid 1880s. Policymakers attempted to improve schooling by improving the professionalism of its teachers. Throughout educational history, a rhetoric of educational reform has exhorted teachers to become more professional and each critical period of educational reform has significantly influenced the kinds of knowledge teachers are expected to acquire. Ironically, however, a language of reform targeting the professionalization of teachers has also been a language of control.

The first section of this literature review draws from educational history, dating from the mid 1800s to 1900, in order to outline the "freeing" and "fettering" nature of reforms and to outline, briefly, the strategies utilized by educational reformers to promote teacher professionalization. Essentially, the first wave of reform (1850-1900s) attempted to professionalize the occupation of teaching, while the second wave of reform (1960s-1980s) tended to emphasize teacher de-professionalization through processes of work intensification and balkanization. The third wave of reform (1990s-present) has focused on teacher re-professionalization by emphasizing the positive aspects of "community" as an effective work environment.
The periodization used in this review was an amalgam of information taken from educational historians such as Herbst (1989), Labaree (1992), Manzer (1994), Murray (1992) and Zeichner (1991). Although each author applied different timelines to their discussion of the historical processes which shaped and shifted the teacher professionalization movement, each author did divide educational reforms into three distinct eras. Thus, the dates chosen for the three “waves” of reform in this dissertation are ones that I felt best provided a brief overview of significant developments affecting teacher professionalism.

The second section of this chapter briefly details sociological literature emphasizing the functional, critical and civic approaches taken to analyze the professions. These first two sections identify historical phases of teacher professionalism and look at a variety of theoretical orientations drawn from established studies of teacher professionalism and professionalization which are considered a legacy of the “old” professionalism. The third section of this literature review describes the ways in which communitarian thought has been attentive to a humanist need for connectiveness and the importance of living in a “world framed by a social compact” (Etzioni, 1995, p. 5). The concept of community schools as sites for “communities of practice” (Wenger, 1998) and “professional learning communities” (Eaker, DuFour & DuFour, 2002) is a derivative of communitarian thinking. The fourth section in this chapter links literature on knowledge management to contemporary changes in the work of teachers and draws from literature that looks at a “transformative” teacher professionalism by developing schooling conditions that are flexible, professional
development strategies that are wide-ranging and learning opportunities which are truly teacher-centered. These constitute the “new” teacher professionalism.

Figure 2.1. Thematic Map Outlining the Reform Measures
Figure 2.1 outlines the ways in which educational reform has both freeing and fettering components affixed to its ideological underpinnings. While being somewhat coercive in standardizing and routinizing what should be taught, how things should be taught and what needs to be known to teach it, educational change forces have also emphasized “investment in” and “support for” elaborating teachers’ professional expertise. Thus, each successive wave of educational reform put forward specific criteria for an augmented teacher professionalism that established conditions of work, determined appropriate avenues and processes in licensing and defined what constituted relevant professional knowledge.

First Wave of Reform (1850-1900)

Pasts we inherit affect who we become. In response to rapidly changing socio-demographic patterns a “first” wave of reform hit American schools during the mid to late 1800s (Gitlin, 1996, p 593). This was a highly contested era as traditional and progressive reformers sought hegemony for improving education. This section of the literature review does not provide original evidence in analyzing the professionalization of teachers, but serves as a backdrop for understanding current education reforms which are, yet again and over a century later, still attempting to professionalize teachers.

From the 1850s to the early 1900s educational practices gathered state and institutional support as wide-ranging endorsements of teacher professionalization threaded their way through the historical record. Teachers occupied a pitifully low position in the social hierarchy. Patronage was endemic, formalized procedures for teacher credentialing non-existent, wages were poor and the “feminization” of teaching
meant that girls taught for a few years until marriage while men used teaching as a "stepping-stone" to occupational advancement (Gitlin, 1996, pp. 598-599).

Until the early 1900s, political patronage made it impossible to set appropriate standards and credentials for the teaching profession (Manzer, 1994). Elsbree (1939) noted that hiring was anything but "democratic" as educational authorities tended to award the most desirable positions to their friends and relatives—especially female relatives. In urban areas school boards, frequently composed of prominent families, routinely hired their daughters who desired to earn a modest salary while awaiting marriage. According to Elsbree (1939), nepotism and patronage systems were routinely viewed as protected industries for the children and relatives of school board members and other civic authorities who were hostile to outside efforts to usurp their traditional right to hire whomever they wanted, and to spend only as much of the public treasury on education as they deemed adequate (pp. 39-40). Thus, nepotism and hiring practices generally assured a compliant, docile teaching force unwilling to risk losing a job in which they were likely never qualified to take on in the first place (Herbst, 1989, pp. 83-86).

Because teaching was associated with women's work, conditions were harsh and the pay poor. Carter (1989) noted that "teachers have always been poorly paid relative to the skills their positions require" (p. 49). Friesen and Friesen (2001) pointed out that Jean-Baptiste Meilleur, Lower Canada's first school superintendent, advocated that teachers "board around" by staying with different families so they could offer additional instruction during the evening. He opposed fixed salaries for teachers so as to not place undue financial burden on Lower Canada's burgeoning communities (p. 26).
Teaching was, however, one of the few occupations open to women in the latter half of the nineteenth century due primarily to gendered ideologies that legitimated the hiring of females. Shipman (1900) wrote, "it is the only way I have of earning money and it involves less risk than most other occupations" (p. 415). For young women, teaching was a socially acceptable vocation as it involved working with children, nurturing, caring and tenderness—attributes nicely aligned with women's personalities. Gendered associations about teachers did little to instill public confidence in designating someone whose qualifications required motherly and nurturing qualities as "professional." Clifford (1986) noted,

How, it could be asked, might teaching ever aspire to the status of a profession when so many practitioners were women, especially single women on whom teaching relied because of pervasive regulations against employing married women teachers? The apparent answer was that it could not be professionalized. (p. 442)

The Rise of Normal Schools

By the late 1860s a new philosophy of schooling began to take hold as legislators moved to establish "normal" schools—schools mandated with the task of training teachers for a burgeoning K-12 system (Manzer, 1994). Normal schools sprang up in an effort to improve the impoverished intellectual standards of teachers graduating from common schools and to develop teaching talent in a sustained way. The intent of reforms was to raise the quality of teaching and "professionalize" the industry in an effort to discourage those concerned only with "vocational" preparation. The objective was the direct preparation of teachers for their own professional work. To this end Phelps (as cited in Herbst, 1989), the first president of the American Normal School Association, declared "there is but one salvation for the Normal Schools, and that is,
they must be truly professional schools for training teachers” (p. 98). Normal schools sought to shore up the “remediation” necessary in its common school graduates. The lofty ideals hoped for by would be reformers are summed up eloquently by Wickersham (as cited in Warren, 1989),

...from the numbers that attend them, to instruct, train and inspire, with professional zeal, a body of teachers who, when scattered over a State, will, as principals of high schools, as superintendents of schools, as writers in educational journals, as instructors at teachers’ institutes, as leaders in educational reform, become a powerful agency in uplifting and making more efficient the whole work of education.... The normal schools can become the fountain of professional esprit de corps among the teachers of a State. (p. 233)

Normal schools, however, did little to elevate the perceived “profession” of teaching and raise the occupation to one of enhanced social esteem. Men were still not interested in teaching as a career, women still vastly outnumbered men at the elementary level, rural populations were a constant thorn in the professionalization project and tensions between academic and practical knowledge gained momentum as normal schools sought to professionalize their entrants. Administrators of normal schools began to push for better-qualified students who would require less remedial work in their intellectual developments (Gitlin, 1996, p. 59). Changes were made to hiring policies and curriculum and normal schools put together a program of teacher education that focused more on the priorities established by school administrators, superintendents and university instructors. Reformers tried to redirect the course of school instruction by recommending changes in normal schools’ objectives, content and teaching strategies (Murray, 1992).
The Rise of Teachers’ Colleges

While many reformers sought to remain faithful to the original mandate of normal schools—the education of elementary teachers—many others found this mandate uninspiring and frustrating. Rural pedagogues argued that normal schools had not, as yet, managed to conquer the problems of preparing teachers for their roles in elementary schools since rural teachers looked upon the business of instruction as a make-shift occupation and had little desire to outfit themselves for teaching any more than public opinion required. Rural pedagogues could hardly regard themselves as professionals while working in one-room schools, under impoverished conditions and being paid with bread and eggs (Axelrod, 1997, pp. 45-50).

Reformers, however, kept up the clamour—normal schools should move towards a more professional model in preparing teachers for their academic careers. These reformers sought to educate a new breed of master teachers, department heads and principals, who could then transmit their skills and knowledge of scientific pedagogy to elementary school teachers working in public and private schools. Teacher professionalization, according to reformers, needed to promote a vision of scientifically organized knowledge, grounded in rational thought (Labaree, 1992, pp. 135-136). Teaching needed to have an objective empirical base and standardized structures to gain social legitimacy. The principles of scientific management and the ensuing rationalization of teachers’ work both signaled a fundamental transformation in the theoretical underpinnings of teachers’ daily work. Taylor-type management practices divided “conception” from “execution,” thereby increasing the knowledge and authority of educational reformers and administrators from front-line teachers. Appropriating the
term "scientific" for processes that were not really rooted in science served to legitimate administrative control over the workplace. These new schools of teachers, however, promised to provide a form of specialized knowledge—scientific knowledge—associated with the success of teacher professionalization (Gitlin, 1996).

Thus, associated with teacher professionalization, the identity of technical and credentialed aspects of teaching were attractive to policymakers, state bureaucrats and even teachers themselves since occupational status has often been seen as a function of power. However, as broad political and social issues changed over time, so too did the processes of “maturation” in teacher professionalization. Although the occupation had achieved considerable success in being perceived by both the public and its educators as a true “profession,” teachers in the classroom were also running the risk of being seen as self-serving, self-interested and inward-focused (Haberman, 1986). By the 1960s a critical stance, particularly adopted by the American public and emulated in Canada as well, promoted the notion that schools and their teachers served particular interests to the neglect of others.

Second Wave of Reform (1960s-1980s)

By the 1960s schools, it was said, were in a state of crisis (Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Finn, 1991). Student achievement seriously lagged behind students from European countries and the Japanese. The report A Nation at Risk (1983) noted that “for the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach those of their parents” (p. 11). During this second wave of reform a “batch of excellence” reports emphasized teacher professionalization as a means of more adequately preparing youth for civic
participation and mastering intellectual skills. While teacher "empowerment," "collaboration" and "co-operative decision making" were deemed important to school administrators and reformers, in actuality "accountability," "bureaucratization," "proletarianization" and "rationalization" became the buzzwords (Apple, 1986; Giroux, 1988; Gitlin, 1996).

During this second wave of reform teacher professionalization was, to a large extent, dependent upon societal recognition, and the social, technical and economic impediments to professionalization were numerous. The public's belief that anyone could teach children, combined with expensive and ineffective systems of hierarchy, governance and control mitigated any significant degree of occupational enhancement since, as Cooper (1988) said, "status (reward) and control are not the characteristics of professionalism—they are the byproducts" (p. 47). Industrial assumptions came to rule educational decisions and included such ideas as bigger was better (school consolidation) and specialization was efficient (departmentalization) as were scientific management principles (administrative expertise) which all clearly established organizational superiority over teachers' work (Kerchner, Koppich & Weeres, 1997, p. 6). Administrators and policy planners alike assumed that the way to solve schooling problems was to create teacher-proof curricula and to enforce their use with management systems (p. 43). This meant, of course, that schools were rule-bound, with novelty and innovation being actively discouraged. Administrators began to rely on a one-best-system approach to teaching and regarded teachers as mindless "black boxes." Teachers would present lessons in small, manageable pieces (stimuli), ask students to
give answers (response) and then dispense reinforcement until their students become conditioned to give the right responses (Bruer, 1993, p. 8).

Educational reformers wanted their workforce to be efficient classroom managers, skilled in record keeping and curriculum delivery and exhibiting prudent use of resources (Apple, 1986; Giroux 1988). A persistent view that teaching did not require rigorous intellectual preparation, but did require specific pedagogical skills meant that teachers’ lacked an intellectualized vocabulary, the opportunity to work out complex ideas and forced teachers to act rationally, rather than intuitively. Thus, teachers’ knowledge was largely skills-based. Despite differing proposals, however, on how to go about improving American public education, attaining “professional” status for teachers remained a distinct calling. In this second wave of reform to professionalize the nation’s teaching force the Carnegie Forum on Teaching (1986, pp. 7-10) predicted that teaching “can and will self-actualize into a profession” and urged “professional and organizational efforts to elevate teaching to a true profession” while the Bicentennial Commission on Education (1976) also indicated that “there is no choice but change toward greater professionalization if schools are to meet their challenges” (p. 18). Goodlad (1990) observed that “the first [wave of reform] being perceived as having not washed very far” (p. 11).

The 1980s heralded a number of critical theorists (Apple, 1986; Carlson, 1987; Giroux, 1988) who put forward the proletarianization thesis which suggested that, over time, management began to limit tasks and augment control procedures so that workers were increasingly unable to conceptualize the entire production process and were thus deskilled. The contradictory mandate of educational reform in which control over
teachers’ work collided with teacher professionalization was aptly noted. Apple (1986) commented on the disastrous consequences that bureaucracy and rationalization had on teachers in that “the very things that make teaching a professional activity—the control of one’s expertise and time—are also dissipated” (p. 180) and furthermore, he noted the contradictory consequences of proletarianization processes which did “exactly the opposite of what many authorities intended” (p. 180).

A second aspect of teacher proletarianization was the intensification of their labour. Gitlin (2001) referred to the intensity of work as “how the pace of everyday labour influences a teacher’s ability to step back from his or her classroom practices and consider broader educational issues...if [they] have little or no time to step back...then the work is viewed as intense” (p. 230). Work intensification, according to Apple (1986), resulted in inferior teaching and a reduction in the quality of schooling services because such intensification tended to contradict the traditional interest in work well done. Hargreaves (1994) talked about the intensification of teachers’ work in which teaching demands led to reduced time for relaxation, reduced time to “retool” one’s skills and created chronic and persistent overload (pp. 118-119). Carlson (1987) also noted that in processes of proletarianization commodity production did not have clients; it had “consumers.” This required a state that safeguarded its consumers through certification of the people working in an occupation and mandating a particular level of “production” control. Thus, he argued, standardization of work tasks, an emphasis on efficient production and resource rationalization were all strategies of the state designed to protect consumers—regardless of the consequences for those delivering the services. The proletarianization thesis, however, overly focused on the control and management
function of educational reform while understating the autonomy that teachers did enjoy in their day-to-day work practices. Burrage and Torstendahl (1990) and Hoyle and John (1995) argued that a profession is an occupation which has successfully struggled for the right to control its own work, and has been granted legitimate autonomy, usually by a dominant elite or by the state.

In other words, teachers' claim to professional status meant that technical autonomy was exchanged for the affirmation of technical competence and control over practice was exchanged for practical, hands-on knowledge. (Labaree, 1992, pp. 125-129). The paradox of teachers' desire to work in autonomous classrooms, exercising control over how they taught while being subject to state rationalization and credentialing made pressures to augment teacher professionalism paramount in research reports. Reinforcing the vision of teaching as a technical activity, rather than a philanthropic one, resulted in what Darling-Hammond (1988) referred to as a "batch of excellence" reports.

While Canada produced very few, a surfeit of reports were commissioned to examine the crisis of American schooling. The Carnegie Forum on Teaching as a Profession (1986) published its report *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*. The Holmes Group (1986) issued *Tomorrow's Teachers* while it took several more years before the Ontario Royal Commission (1994) produced its report *For the Love of Learning*. These projects, in varying degrees, acted as "levers" to promote teacher professionalization. In the report *For the Love of Learning* (Ontario Royal Commission) one of the levers of change was, in fact, entitled "Teacher Professionalization and Development." Thus, teachers' professionalization and
continuing development were considered to be the cornerstone to any possible improvement in the quality of schooling. Furlong, Barton, Miles, Whiting and Whitty (2000) indicated that the batch of [American] excellence reports were really framed for ulterior state purposes. In Britain, these authors observed, the rhetoric of "partnership" was an extremely significant device in fostering a limited and limiting view of professionalism which concentrated on classroom autonomy and harmony of interests between teachers and their employers. They also noted that "an explicit attempt to change teacher professionalism through initial teacher education had at times to be pursued alongside other policy concerns that were significant in influencing the policies actually produced" (p. 3).

In spite of iterative reform measures, few researchers have explicitly asked teachers how they themselves experienced these. Earl and Lee (1999) reported, however, that teachers' experience of waves of reform as "flavour of the month" eventually led them to lose their enthusiasm and/or their ability to sustain changes in practice. At a time of ambitious policy activity in eastern Canada, Hargreaves (1994) studied teachers' experiences of mandated change in 1991 and found that the content of the reform did not matter as much as the deprofessionalizing and decontextualized top-down authority that told the teachers what to do. They felt denied of their right to professional expertise. Using five school districts in a Canadian province for their data, Levin and Riffel (1997) began their analysis by asking how social change was understood by teachers and administrators. Their conclusion—"we were struck by the negative tone of the comments we heard about social changes and their implications for schools....Nor did administrators and school board members see educational potential
in these changes” (p. 187). Levin and Riffel proposed alternative forms of education as “it seems evident to us that schools designed for the nineteenth century will not do justice to educational needs of the twenty-first century” (p. 193).

In this second wave of reform, teachers were extremely critical of reformers whose agendas viewed teachers as mere tools of those who make and enforce policy. McDonald (1986) noted “voiceless groups loath those who patronize them at least as much as they loathe those who oppose them; and they deeply resent tokenism” (p. 359). Thus, much of the reform efforts of the 1980s failed to support teachers as independent critical thinkers, to recognize their unique expertise or to integrate their professional practices. Teachers still worked under conditions and in organizations designed in the 1900s with a voice of under-articulated expertise.

In the past two decades, however, fundamental changes in Canada’s social and economic fabric meant that society, once again, has been redefining the skills and knowledge one needs for civic participation and teachers have been placed at the fore of this shift from industry-based skills to knowledge-based skills in order to impart the appropriate skills and abilities to Canada’s future generation (Hargreaves, 2003, pp. 11-14).

The Third Wave of Reform (1990s)

As we entered the millennium a third wave of reform began to unfold. This section outlines a third wave of reform—a teacher “re-professionalization” era—marked by connoting teachers as “intellectual workers” with a focus on building their capacity to be so. In making a case for professionalization, this wave of reform has drawn heavily on a discourse of “community” to imbue teachers with a sense of personal and
interpersonal capacity to pursue effective pedagogical practices in the classroom, commit strongly to their organizations and careers and experience high levels of professional satisfaction. Literature dealing with teacher professionalization and concomitant notions of “community” will be examined, followed by a review of scholars and researchers who focus their attention on professionalizing the workplace, rather than teachers. Of course, teacher practitioners, teacher educators and teacher researchers recognized the complexity of teaching and teachers’ opportunities for joint study, reflection and problem solving have always been restricted by schools’ structural and ideological arrangements. Many scholars wondered if attempts to enact the communitarian approach represented desiderata more than a model in use.

The state of teacher professionalism is at a crossroad (Hord, 2004). Developing new forms of teacher professionalism and professional identity stand at the core of current thinking about schools and those who work in them. The changing forms of associations and relations between teachers and various other educational interest groups place greater emphasis on the notions of community, collaboration and cooperation. On the other hand, professionalism is also about power and status. Lawn and Grace (1987) summed up the “crossroad” nature of teacher professionalism when they observed:

Ideologies of professionalism can be made to serve the interests of the state for control and containment of teachers or they can be effectively deployed by teachers to improve their terms and conditions of service and their enjoyment of social status and occupational autonomy. (p. 195)

Even at the turn of the millennium some theorists (Apple, 1986; Darling-Hammond, 1989; Gitlin, 1996) have persistently noted the de-professionalizing and de-
skilling balkanization of the teaching profession. Darling-Hammond (1988) indicated that the very definition of “professionalism” in teaching has traditionally been turned on its head. Rather than connoting a high level of pedagogical training and knowledge, born out in practice, she noted that policy reformers and administrators consistently used the term to mean unquestioned compliance with institutional directives. With respect to reform mandates, she wryly noted that “the professional teacher in common parlance is one who does things right rather than one who does the right things” (p. 61).

Others (Louis & Kruse, 1995; McCulloch, Helsby & Knight, 2000) have noted that teaching is becoming more professional. McCulloch et al. maintained:

Occupations such as teaching are becoming more professional, new skills are required, achieving good relationships with client and other stakeholders becomes more important, a more extensive knowledge base has to be mastered and more complex decisions need to be made. Rather than being deprofessionalized, it could be argued that teaching is being reprofessionalized although the new professionalism is different from the mythical professionalism of forty years ago. (p. 110)

Leithwood (1992) argued that teacher professionalism should be at the heart of schooling reforms. Fullan (2001) believed that current reforms ought to have given teachers greater control over curriculum, teaching resources and school organization. Sergiovanni (2000) viewed schools as communities of learners. He argued that professional teachers were key to building a school-based community with defined roles and responsibilities. Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) felt that teacher professionalism was best enhanced by monitoring the role schools should play in developing “a proper domain of professional expertise” (p. 14).

Regardless of one’s philosophy or its merit, sociological and educational writers have been increasingly turning to precepts of communitarian thought which focus on
the primacy of interpersonal communication and relations and the activities that support these (Deal & Peterson, 1998; Etzioni, 1995). It is the “social integration within and across subgroups that is achieved by aligning important norms and values while simultaneously creating a supportive environment for individual development” that is key to the essence of contemporary reform measures (Louis & Kruse, 1995, p. 11).

Sociological Theories of Professionalism

Later in this chapter how communitarian thought has shaped the concepts of schools as community schools, schools as communities of practice and schools as professional communities will be outlined. This next section, however, dwells briefly on the sociological thinking that has consistently underpinned notions of teacher professionalism, relying on functional, critical and civic theories.

*Functionalist Approaches*

By the late 1900s sociological theories of professionalism and of professionalization adopted an “essential” or functional approach. They identified the “essential” traits of professionalism and outlined the necessary stages in professionalization in order to underscore the positive functions for society. These theorists saw the rise of the professions as closely linked to the progress of scientific thought and modern society’s interest in technical rationality. Writers of the functionalist persuasion emphasized the legitimacy of professionalization on the basis of expert knowledge, the necessity of credentialing, work autonomy and a project of collective mobility developed in a competitive *laissez-faire* polity (Burrage & Torstendahl, 1990; Larson, 1977).
In the professions, occupational closure was considered an essential trait. Occupational closure kept other people away from the social capital advantages someone else cherished. This was done by acquiring skills and/or knowledge marketable only through professionals themselves and upon which they could make a basis for exclusionism. “Only groups which have acquired a considerable amount of abstract knowledge...are accepted as professions” (Burrage & Torstendahl, 1990 p. 53). Furthermore, preference of interpretation was made only within their special field of knowledge and praxis. The concept of occupational closure led to a second essential trait, particularly salient for teacher professionalization, the use of credentialing.

The knowledge gained to delineate occupational closure was legitimated through the use of formal examinations and thus, professional credentialing became the second essential characteristic of an esteemed profession. During education’s first wave of reform there was no method for teacher certification beyond the requirement of a rudimentary and often informal examination (Axelrod, 1997, pp. 19-23). This was considered sufficient for demonstrating competence and as a guarantee that one had, indeed, acquired a certain amount of knowledge. The function of credentialing was to inspire trust from the general public. In the teaching industry, examinations merely tested one’s formal knowledge since much of the necessary skilling took place after formal education. Professional know-how was obtained through tacit knowledge which constituted the bases where like-minded practitioners engaged in a “form of ritual reality-creation” (Collins, 1979, p. 18). Such ritual depended upon credentialing a group of practitioners who supported each other’s claims.
The third essential trait in sociological analyses of professionalism involved organizational unification. Differences in work conditions, personal interests and collegial loyalties were masked, as it was in the best interests of the association to portray member organization as a unity. The ideology of a professionalized unity acted as a powerful instrument for countering group differences and ameliorating loyalties that may be seen as more “rational” from the point of view of the individual (Burrage & Torstendahl, 1990, pp. 85-87). The concept of professional unity lay in the perspective that professionalization has always been a strategy for collective mobility rather than individual mobility.

Critical Approaches to Professionalism

Gore (1993) explained repetitive educational reforms by suggesting that “educational reformers are primarily located in ideologies of technical rationality, scientism and professionalism, all of which are avowedly apolitical” and “ignores the institutional constraints of much educational practice” (pp. 28-29). Thus, although teachers supervise, discipline, and indoctrinate students into their future service to capital, as a social class, teachers themselves serve as agents of capital interests and do not directly add “value” to productive processes. According to traditional Marxist thought, the work of teachers is not “productive” and teachers are caught in the tension between Marxist notions of “productivity” and industrial/business definitions of “productivity.” Social reproduction is associated with the work of women (Gerstel & Gross, 1987) and under advanced capitalism, teaching was clearly viewed as unproductive labour and therefore in need of state control and surveillance, thus making the occupation incapable of achieving a high degree of professionalism.
Carlson (1987) contended that teacher's collective interests, as service workers, may in fact have been more compatible with transformative than mere reformist change and thus, incompatible with state agendas. Ministries of education were primarily concerned about supplying well-qualified teachers in sufficient numbers at costs judged to be reasonable. North American's liberal democracy confirmed the status and power of its professions, but only within clearly defined ideological parameters. Little (1993) noted that "state and policymakers support professionalization when they see it as (a) sustaining a well-prepared and stable teacher work force and (b) coupled with assurances for positive student outcomes" (p. 132). These authors have reminded us that educational reformers, frequently in association with state polity, relied on a coercive, socially regulating rhetoric designed to promote a docile, subservient teaching force.

Labaree (1992) noted that "the chronic failure of bureaucratic reform to deal effectively with educational problems has not led to its abandonment" (p. 130). Underlying values, supported by bureaucratization and professionalization, have encouraged compliance to bureaucratic expectations while promoting the enhancement of professional potential. Larson (1977) argued that ideologies of professionalization supported bureaucratization. She suggested that "expertise" became the basis for rationalizing superior positions within bureaucracies thereby reinforcing the belief that one group deserved certain benefits and privileges denied others. Derber (1982) argued that many social institutions became "integrative professions," relying on bureaucratic controls which were used to reconcile professional and bureaucratic work dimensions by compromising certain beliefs and benefits for the preservation of others.
Both Larson’s (1977) and Derber’s (1982) arguments, however, denied that bureaucratization may, in fact, threaten an occupation’s status as a profession. Larson’s and Derber’s arguments viewed the underlying and lofty ideals of professionalization to be an extension of control under the guise of expertise while others saw it as an ideological cover for proletarianization, balkanization and work intensification (Gitlin, 2001; Labaree, 1992). Some critical theorists (e.g., Burbules & Densmore, 1991; Giroux, 1988) viewed these ideological “covers” as being important to legitimate the self-interest of socially mobile, professional groups.

Apple (1986) noted that although proletarianization occurs in complex ways, the bureaucratic dimensions of schools rendered ever increasing divisions of labour between management and workers. Teachers, and their work, have been controlled by state administrators and policy analysts who determined educational goals, but left it up to teachers to find ways of executing the goals. Thus, Apple observed that “conception” became increasingly distanced from “execution.” In her book Contradictions of Control, McNeil (1988) noted that “defensive teaching” occurred because the ideals teachers had for their students bore little resemblance to their actual workday practices. Teaching was being transformed into a technical enterprise with little use for conceptual and creative thought. Out of the proletarianization thesis came the concept of work intensification—the rate at which “execution” must be handled. Gitlin (2001) outlined the detrimental effects of work intensification:

the focus is on how the pace of everyday labour influences a teacher’s ability to step back from his or her classroom practices and consider broader educational issues or look at these practices in a more holistic sense. If teachers have little or no time during the school day to step back from their work, then the work is viewed as intense. (p. 230)
According to critical theorists, at the heart of balkanization (Hargreaves, 1994) and proletarianization (Apple, 1986) was the persistent debate about the occupational status of teaching. Was, in fact, the occupation a profession or a semi-profession? It was felt that, as intellectuals, teachers did indeed comprise a profession but they also occupied a dual-class position. Burrage and Torstendahl (1990) promoted intellectuals as both agents of blue collar “technique” and middle class (read educated) “expertise” (p. 224). Brint (1995) argued that a professional-managerial class emerged because the capitalist elites sought to quell working class unrest by improving methods of control over workers in their workplace and communities. Capitalist enterprises supported the development of science, engineering, education and health and welfare services and then teachers, social workers, nurses, accountants, lawyers and physicians comprised the new professional-managerial class. These occupations claimed commitment to public service, possessed an esoteric body of knowledge and sought freedom from evaluation and control by others. They were not, however, unified by their class position.

In sum, although I have not done justice to the complexity of such sociological debates, these writers have attempted to sort out and categorize the shifts in conceptualizing professional occupations based upon certain kinds of knowledge and their connections to social structures, and identifying themes integral to the complex process of class formation. With their emphasis on either the “economic” or “politics’ of professionalism, functionalist and critical theorists have been overly focused on specific dimensions of the “old” professionalism without paying due attention to emerging social issues that impact all the professions. As the crisis of professional
“legitimacy” gained momentum in the late 1970s, sociological theorists turned their attention to the emergence of a professionalism which was beginning to cast professionalization as a collectively shared social responsibility rather than seeing professionalization movements as the outcomes of economic struggles or political self-interest. The concept of a civic professionalism took hold (Sockett, 1993; Sullivan, 2005).

Moral/Civic Theories of Professionalism

By the mid 1980s, tensions within the professions, combined with a public perception that their professionals lacked integrity, quality of service and were too self-protected, jeopardized the teaching occupation. The teaching profession, some analysts argued, became a self-serving instrument of individualized thinking and action (Burbules & Densmore, 1991; Sockett, 1993). Teachers’ work lives have always revolved around planning, organizing, controlling, motivating and regulating the activity of others, even though ambiguity, complexity and unpredictability constitute much of the reality of their workplace. In short, the professional ideals of teachers are under strain. Teacher professionalism has always been associated with key public values, values that remained relatively stable and enduring for the past century. The bonds of social reciprocity between what educational stakeholders wanted as a public good and the kind of service teachers were able to deliver, meshed well together. Throughout the history of teaching, teachers have taken responsibility for the domains of knowledge and the imparting of skills essential to modern life. The public has needed this fiduciary role, and teachers have traditionally been perceived as having met this “social contract.” Recent events, however, have prompted a low-intensity crisis in
teacher professionalism. Several scholars (Brint, 1995; Haberman, 1986) have documented the long-term movements of public perceptions that once held the professions (including teaching) in much higher esteem than these currently face. Law, for example, has experienced considerable cleavage from its once lofty and prestigious state of affairs. The teaching profession has never fully recovered from the crisis of schooling discourse in the late 1970s and the field of medicine is now facing a similar discourse of crisis (Sullivan, 2005, pp. 57-58).

In response to this crisis discourse, some writers and scholars (Sockett, 1993; Sullivan, 2005) began to focus on a new form of professionalism—a civic or moral form of social trusteeship (Brint, 1995). For teachers, as well as other professionals, the burning question of the day has become “what is it that we need to do to restore public confidence” or, in other words, what do teachers need to do to become better professionals? (Sachs, 2003). Many educational scholars (Finn, 1991; Fullan, 2001; Sergiovanni, 2000; Sockett, 1993; Sullivan, 2005) feel they have the answer to re-enhancing teachers’ professional status and prestige through the concepts of conversation, collaboration, community and reflection. These authors advocated a model of civic professionalism in which:

- professional activities lead people to be capable of collaboration, communication and identification with local communities,

- new forms of pedagogy are developed through reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983) which strengthen teachers’ critical faculties as well as those of their students,
• teachers collectively work towards a vision for education in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century that is tuned to emerging forms of civil society; and

• epistemological reflection on professional regimes of knowledge is invited by and for teachers.

Thus, those sociological and educational theorists who subscribed to a revised model of professionalism—a morally cohesive, civic model—demanded that professionals work in ways that ensured obligations to their “social contract” have been met and that teaching has contributed to the core public values for which the profession stands. As Sullivan (2005, p. 23) stated, “to become a professional is not only to join an occupation; it is to assume a civic identity.”

![Figure 2.2. Theories of Professionalism](image)

Figure 2.2 characterizes the three approaches drawn from sociological theories of professionalism used in this document to show the paradigmatic shifts that have occurred in the “big picture” of teacher professionalism. The first approach involved the
functional and utilitarian aspects vital to the formation of a profession. A second stream of thought recognized that issues of sexism, feminism and racism introduced new ways of thinking about professionalism—who was “in” and who was not—an approach which examined the contingent and contextual aspects of a group’s move to professionalize. Theories of occupational professionalism have moved from functionalist assumptions of professionalism, encompassing a constellation of traits, to a moral/civic conception of professionalism which draws heavily from the influences of critical theory.

We are living in times when many professions are under the critical gaze of the public eye, particularly in terms of service accessibility, accountability and quality of service (Fullan, 2001; Sullivan, 2005). Particularly salient for teachers is the long standing debate about their occupational status. What does the term “professional” mean for teachers’ worklives, their ever-changing contexts and conditions, their unionized activities and the practices of teacher professionalism? The next part of this section on sociological theories outlines the debate that has plagued educational writers for many years, particularly as the occupation moves from “old” to “new” forms of teacher professionalism. There is, and has been, a distinct lack of consensus regarding the status of teaching as a profession.

*Teaching and its Indeterminate Status*

Professions have particular characteristics: they perform an essential public service; they possess esoteric knowledge based on intellectual principles; they control entry and exit to the profession; and they have a code of ethics to manage employees (Bledstein, 1985; Hoyle & John, 1995). Many accounts of teaching as a profession
have concluded that teaching is really a semi-profession (Etzioni, 1969; Pratte & Rury, 1991), while other accounts (Goodlad, 1990) have placed teaching squarely in line with professions such as nursing, social work and medicine. Other theorists and researchers (Haberman, 1986; Sergiovanni, 2000) argued for teaching as a distinct profession and a few investigators (Shanker, 1985; Sykes 1987, 1989) were cautious of any movement to professionalize teachers.

The critical tradition (Hoyle & John, 1995; Larson, 1977) has viewed professionalization not primarily in terms of acquiring certain “professional” characteristics but as the successful outcome of a political struggle to legitimate various social privileges and rewards. Ideological differences between elite and non-elite groups have been strongly emphasized and positive group identity, as opposed to individual identity, materially and symbolically organized a specific occupation. Larson demonstrated how elite professions created a market for their services, steadily defined who was competent to provide these, achieved a political mandate for an exclusive supply of their services and created an ideology of professionalism. Hoyle and John (1995) suggested, however, that persuasive notions of what a profession is were “less a descriptive than, at best, a symbolic or, at worst, an ideological conception” (p. 6). Furthermore, “These efforts to create the recognition of an occupation as a profession are sometimes amusing—especially in the case of those occupations where professional status is highly dubious—and sometimes a sign of status desperation” (p. 7).

Pratte and Rury (1991) argued, however, that teaching failed to be a profession on several counts. Teachers belonged to unions, they were lower middle-class workers, they did not set standards for performance nor were they responsible for “weeding” out
the unfit. "Furthermore," they noted, "teaching is devalued because it is often viewed as predominantly a female pursuit, a low-risk occupation providing reasonably secure and safe employment with a modicum of financial reward for nine months' work a year" (p. 61). If professionalization was nothing more than a deliberate attempt at occupational aggrandizement, with its workforce deserving of greater respect, status and salaries, there were innumerable skeptics in the crowd.

Sykes (1987) felt that teachers might "lose their concern for caring and compassion," or might distance themselves as remote experts "cloaked in the mysteries of technical knowledge," thus driving "women, immigrants and minorities out of their ranks" (p. 21). He concluded that teachers should not mindlessly ape the professional discourse of doctors and lawyers, but forge a professionalism suiting the aims, commitments and practices of teaching. He noted,

Professionalism alone is not enough. There must be a social vision animating reform that encompasses but is not limited to the interests of teachers. Educational reform must embrace equity goals, must honour the rights of parents and communities, must promote tolerance for diversity and responsiveness to clients. (Sykes, 1989, p. 52)

Burbules and Densmore (1991) suggested that "proposals which assume that the attainment of professional status by teachers would change the bureaucratic structure and work conditions of schools overlook the substantial evidence that, on the contrary, such factors are transforming the professions" (p. 50). These authors reminded us that even the esteemed professions of medicine and law, in becoming increasingly bureaucratized, were experiencing less autonomy over their everyday work, certification procedures and remuneration, these being "supplanted by a new professional work process consistent with the logic of large-scale capitalist and state enterprises" (p. 50).
Furthermore, they indicated that the rhetoric of teacher professionalization would ultimately translate into “professionalism for the few.” They noted that “raising standards, more extensive educational requirements and stricter examinations would lower the already under-representative proportion of minority teachers” (p. 53). Indeed the Holmes Group (1986) expressed concern over this very issue and the report called for additional initiatives, financial assistance and vigorous recruitment to entice visible minorities. In addition to the problem of minority representation came the problem of “women” too. Given their earlier argument, Burbules and Densmore (1991) also noted that “an under-representation of women at the fully professional level of teachers could be expected as well” (p. 54).

The Carnegie Forum of Education (Carnegie Forum on Teaching, 1986) spoke about raising standards, certification requirements and salaries to attract “people who must now be attracted to teaching” (p. 36). This obviously referred to those who were not currently attracted: white, middle-class males. “And why not?” asked Burbules and Densmore (1991)—“these are the people who made the other professions into professions” (p. 54).

Oppenheimer, O’Donnell and Johnson (1982) noted that the more traditional professions such as law and medicine manipulated their “publics” by defining the problems they wished to address and by addressing the problems they wished to define! These professions catered to a service ideal that defined the parameters of their work through professional associations but not through genuine public participation. If the teacher professionalization project recruited a more privileged group into teaching, minority, poor and rural families would likely be even more distanced from educational
decisions being made for the “benefit” of their children. Burbules and Densmore (1991) stated that “the acid test of reforming teaching should be that it improves the education of children from all strata and segments of society. Yet no proposal has made a convincing case for teacher professionalization primarily on such grounds” (p. 56).

Bascia and Hargreaves (2000) noted that “emotional understanding is threatened when policies, structures and change practices create excessive distance between teachers and those around them…. This occurs when teachers construct their professionalism in insular and exclusive ways that place them on inaccessible pedestals above parents and their wider communities” (p. 11). Embracing professionalism, without paying attention to the uniqueness of the occupation, has caused some thinkers to recast the definition of “profession,” discarding the notion of hegemony over clients. Schon (1983) drew on the practice of architecture, town planning and music when he invoked the conception of reflection-in-practice which entailed learning from one’s personal interaction with clients and the environment. A reflective professional “gives up the reward of unquestioned authority” in exchange for more substantive knowledge and enters into a “continuing practice of self-education” (p. 299).

In his discussion of teacher professionalization, Shanker (1985) clearly posited a position in which professionalism may only serve to trivialize teaching. He told of a principal who indicated to a teacher that scraps of paper on the floor were “unprofessional” and another principal who accused a teacher of being “unprofessional” because she refused extra supervision outdoors on cold days. He noted that “the aura of professionalism was used to manipulate teacher acceptance of orders, responsibilities and work conditions that no true professional would put up with” (p. 69). Externally
imposed curriculum and resource allocation, management innovation and, in some cases, marketization processes have led to intensification of teachers' workday, occupational destabilization and burdensome workloads. In this vision, teacher professionalism has been tied to a discourse of "managerial professionalism" advocated primarily by school administrators and employers (Sachs, 2003).

With all of the debates and counter-debates, it would appear that teacher professionalism has, for some time, been a site of ideological struggle nested in social, political and economic issues. However, a new kind of discourse recently began to circulate around teacher professionalism—that of a "democratic professionalism" (Sachs, 2003). Sachs noted that, "the core of democratic professionalism is an emphasis on collaborative, cooperative action between teachers and other educational stakeholders" (p. 28). This "new" professionalism recasts teachers as learners intent on breaking with traditional parochial conceptions of teacher professionalism. Emerging and shifting forms of the "new" professionalism have been influenced by communitarian thought since communitarians seek to design social institutions and policies in ways that promote civic friendship and a sense of shared vision and purpose (Etzioni, 1995, p. 49).

The New Professionalism

The "new" professionalism has been characterized by scholars (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996; Hord, 2004; Sachs, 2003) as "active trust" where new kinds of social and professional relationships require new forms of collaboration between groups of people, and a "generative environment" which allows individuals and groups to make things happen, rather than to have things happen to them. Much of the work around the
“new” professionalism and its philosophical foundations stems from communitarian thought.

**Communitarian Thinking**

In explicating “community” one has frequently found a plethora of views as politicians, policy makers and scholars make use of the concept for entirely different purposes. Some have used the idea to make communities responsible for their own people, claiming that governments should not intervene in particular social issues (Selznick, 1995), whereas others have claimed that governments should help local communities (Kymlicka, 1998). In the face of pressing cultural pluralism, some communitarians cautioned thinking about “community” as a nomothetic entity (Etzioni, 1995) while others warned us of its dark side (Frazer & Lacey, 1993). In contrast with the ethos of empowerment, which tended to emphasize rights, communitarian thought has frequently underscored the balance between rights and responsibilities. Melnyk (1985) suggested that such a balance is characterized by collaboration, participation and the sharing of resources. In our current postmodern approach we are prone, as Saul (1995) succinctly noted, to “worship self-interest and a denial of the public good” (p. 187).

Manzer (1994) distinguished between conservative and radical communitarianism, each with different political expressions depending on what was understood to be the place, or relationship, of individuals to the community. “Conservative thinkers regard community as a hierarchical order in which individuals are unequal, governed by command and obedience based on relationships of legitimate authority” (p. 15). Talbert and McLaughlin (1994, pp. 129-131) are among few
researchers who actually examined teacher professionalism within schooling contexts. Their underlying proposition was that belonging to a "community" of educators fostered teacher professionalism. Without opportunities to acquire new knowledge, reflect on practice and to network with other colleagues, teachers were not likely to develop a sense of professional responsibility. Louis and Kruse (1995) argued that professionalization of teachers' work should be at the heart of current reform movements and that concepts found in the learning community literature would enable teachers' to improve their own professional performance as well as that of their schools.

Given the philosophy that "community" involves the voluntary coming together of people in relations concerned for self, others and the community itself a search for establishing common ground seems to be self-evident. Friedman (1982) drew a distinction between a community of affinity and a community of otherness. A community of affinity was a group of like-minded people who shared a similar discourse but did not have close social relations with one another. A community of otherness, by contrast, began from the assumption that members had different points of view and were not really alike but shared common concerns.

Thus, if policymakers, informed by a rhetoric of "community" as a basis for reform, are truly to develop procedures and protocols meant to successfully build professional workplaces in schools, then researchers and policymakers can only profit from learning how teachers view their workplace, how they struggle with the dilemmas of building professional identities and professional communities, particularly amid competing visions. "Learners must be able to invest themselves in communities of practice in the process of approaching a subject matter...participants in a community of
practice contribute in a variety of ways that become material for building an identity” (Wenger 1998, p. 271). In general, Wenger’s idea of communities of practice represented a shift from the individual as employee to the individual as a learner—acting in concert with like-minded others. Thus, moving public schools to community schools also reflected a recognition that schools were indeed, communities of practice, often nested in unique environments and with varying needs. The next portion of this discussion on the “new” professionalism suggests that community schools, especially in Saskatchewan, have had a unique opportunity to build strong foundations for developing learning communities.

*The Rise of Community Schools in Saskatchewan*

In 1980 the Saskatchewan Community School Program was developed by Saskatchewan Education (now Sask Learning) to promote the community school concept. In the early 1990s, in response to needs identified by school divisions, Aboriginal organizations and the Saskatchewan Community School Association, Saskatchewan Education began to encourage the building and enhancement of relationships between specific schools and outreach workers, cultural advisors and community service providers. One of the mandates for Saskatchewan’s community schools was to promote good relations between the school, the families and their community. Community schools are meant to serve as “hubs of activity” for various community programs and activities. Community members are identified for their ability to offer social and cultural capital, leadership development is sought, services and activities are provided within the community, integrated services and capacity building are all considered to be the *quoins* of a community school philosophy. Restructuring
schools to a community school model has been, therefore, *enacting* the philosophy of communitarian thought in which schools contribute to the public good.

In 1997, designated community schools began to receive funding from Saskatchewan Learning to assist in operationalizing specific initiatives and in 2001, the Task Force on the Role of the School recommended that a community school philosophy be adopted for all public schools in the Province and that funds be allocated to support the promotion and development of this initiative (recommendation 1.1 and 1.3). This same task force coined the term School$^+$ to re-conceptualize schools as centers of learning, support and community for the families and children they serve. Schools were to be viewed as "new" social institutions, directly supported by other social services. Thus, schools were not only responsible for educating children and youth, but were also to function as service and support centers; serving as centers at the community level for the delivery of appropriate social, health, recreation, culture, justice and other services for children and their families (Task Force on the Role of the School, 2001).

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 2.3. Community Schools and the Work of Teachers*
Figure 2.3 provides an overview outlining the sequence of events when Saskatchewan Learning responded to views of “community,” developed School Plus as a philosophical framework and then implemented this through community schools.

In the School Plus model, policies and goals were to focus on building local capacity and school leadership was to set high standards of accountability that advanced organizational capacity. It was hoped that the community school’s leaders, whether they be teacher-leaders or administrators, would promote stimulation of innovation to build interpersonal and personal capacity. Embedded in the philosophy of community schools has been the notion of a learning community of staff and students facilitating the dialogue needed for growth and creating new ways of working together (Saskatchewan Learning, 2001). Community schools, as communities of practice, can become nodes for the dissemination, interpretation and use of information but a process of continued personal and collective reflection will be needed to ensure that schooling practices are aligned with the philosophy of community education. Mitchell and Sackney (2000) argued that fiat or command can never solve complex problems, such as those found in schools, only a learning orientation can.

Thus, community schools have required a very human touch. Community schools grow and thrive only as well as the various stakeholders nurture, care for them and legitimate the school’s presence. The importance of building relationships based on trust, valuation and connection lend credibility to the work of teachers and their learners. A vibrant organization creates a sense of passion, collegial dialogue and supports active participation. It is human connections that do this, particularly in communities that Wenger (1998) referred to as “communities of practice.” Communities
of practice are groups of people who share information, insight and experience and this next section outlines the importance this concept has for teacher professionalism.

Communities of Practice

Individuals learn how to engage in work activities in particular ways. In teaching, the notion of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) offered a re-conceptualization of learning and identity formation as a process of social and personal transformation simply because learning is viewed as a feature of “membership” within a specific community. People, working in communities of practice actively shape their occupational identity as their network of occupational participation and professional relationships broadens (Wenger, 1998). The spiral character of occupational identity becomes evident as newcomers, for example beginning teachers, engage in existing practices that have developed over time and as they begin to establish their own identity with a view to future service. Writers who have exhorted the utility of working in communities of practice have indicated that as one becomes increasingly meshed with organizational beliefs and values, a deeper sense of the value of participation to the community and the learner lies in becoming part of the community (Etzioni 1995; Kymlicka, 1998; Wenger, 1998).

In his work on communities of practice Wenger (1998) emphasized that to understand the connections between theory and praxis and working and learning, it has been necessary to focus on the ecological aspects of both continuity and change in which work takes place. The development of communities of practice can be significant sites for teacher innovation and a re-visioning of teacher professionalism. Brouwer and Korthagen (2005) observed that over a period of years, the innovative
attitudes of teachers followed a U-shaped curve. Pre-service teachers were willing to be innovative in their pedagogical approaches while receiving education baccalaureates, became less willing to be innovative as they struggled for mere survival in their classrooms and with the accrual of professional competence and expertise, re-fashioned their attitude regarding pedagogical risk-taking. Brouwer and Korthagen (p. 179) noted that it would be worthwhile investigating the ways in which professional knowledge and professional growth develop hand in hand, and the kinds of models of professional development that teachers require as they move along their career paths, as well as what teachers do learn from their practice that would enable them to reflect, collude and converse so that the “membership” in a community of practice could grow together.

According to some scholars, the learning of professionals has been located in social aspects of learning. Wenger (1998) explained that in communities of practice humans learn within work-based groups, in informal as well as formal workplaces, called communities of practice. Wenger and Sergiovanni (2000) posited communities of practice as a means of both professionalizing the workplace and those who work in them. Promoting capacity building in teachers, embedded in a discourse of “community,” where all teachers have actively participated in decision making, have shared a common sense of purpose, collaborated extensively and accepted joint responsibility for the outcomes of their work will force administrators to move away from functions of “control” to one of “facilitation.” Teacher isolation is replaced with collaborative processes that are embedded in the daily life of the school and its stakeholders. A lurking danger is, of course, proponents of communities of practice have tended to weave their rhetoric around the idea that these teacher-communities are
alike and that building them merely requires a few hardy and determined souls (Hord, 2004). After all, the aroused appeal for professional collaboration has already been used as a reform lever in the mid 80s. What needs to be called for is not a chance gathering of a few bright, committed individuals, coming together around a few important issues but the deliberate creation of organizational conditions that make teacher learning vital, collegial and personally rewarding. This position is as much strategic as it is philosophical. Members of a community of practice are often informally bound by what they do together and thus, practices reflect the members’ own understanding of what is important (Sachs, 2004, p. 7) Thus, in teaching, reflection and action become iterative processes which continuously co-construct sense and meaning-making. In building personal capacity in schools, it is essential that teachers be viewed as members, working together in communities of practice, with exceptional skills and abilities and a wealth of knowledge.

Building Personal Capacity

Personal capacity is the ability to use personal resources to achieve specific goals. Personal capacity is also the power and influence an individual holds in social relations (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000, pp. 31-32). A key part of personal capacity is understanding one’s own influence and power. No school ever made progress towards becoming a professional learning community without its members wanting to do so. Changing school organization, governance and structures without altering people’s beliefs and behaviours would be counter-productive. As Wenger (1998, p. 5) observed, the way in which a person defines his or her job will determine the way in which he or
she performs at that job. Developing personal capacity for teachers is important because it:

(a) increases personal understanding about pedagogical theory, practice and policy;
(b) becomes a tool for self-engagement and self-empowerment;
(c) becomes a resource to help one identify their strengths and work on weaker areas;
(d) entails credibility—the overt desire to truly make personal mastery and growth a professional target; and
(e) is intentional—developing personally is something one must voluntarily do with oneself; it is not a process entered into begrudgingly.

In short, developing personal capacity involves changing old habits that have made teaching comfortable, predictable and low-risk.

Sachs (2003) noted that traditional professional development models assumed that teachers and their knowledge were deficient in some way, and that teachers’ gaps in knowledge threatened their professionalism. Sachs explored the relationship between teacher professionalism and teacher professional development and argued that teachers’ willingness to seek out professional development and build personal capacity was influenced by the stage and position they have reached in their career. This may mean, therefore, that building personal capacity in a beginning teacher results in different outcomes than for a mid-career teacher. Mitchell and Sackney (2000) suggested a different perspective for building capacity wherein “educators are assumed to have a wealth of information and professional knowledge upon
which to build” (p. 42). Putnam and Borko (2000) summarized the importance of building personal capacity in teachers when they concluded that:

persons who wish to reform educational practice cannot simply tell teachers how to teach differently. Teachers themselves must make the design changes. To do so, they must acquire rich knowledge of the subject matter...and must come to hold new beliefs in these domains....new ways of thinking about learning, learners and subject matter, thus construct a professional knowledge base that will enable them to teach students in more powerful and meaningful ways. (p. 21)

What it means to work in a school as a professional, learning adult has repercussions on the meaning and nature of “community.” According to several writers (Furlong et al., 2000; Hargreaves, 2003; Sachs, 2003) the new professionalism has teachers working more collaboratively with everyone in the school and its community in an innovative climate, supportive of risk taking, experimentation and oriented to school improvement. Thus, a school’s focus on collaborative decision making combined with personal inquiry, and the value the school places on both teachers’ and students’ learning are consistent with the principles of a professional learning community...a community that identifies conditions, processes and strategies to develop effective schools. As will be pointed out in the next part of this section on the “new” professionalism, the term “professional learning community” defines itself. “A school that operates as such engages the entire group of professionals in coming together for learning within a supportive, self-created community” (Morrissey, 2000, p. 3).
Professional Learning Communities

Professionalism in education, being recently tied to the notions of "community," has allowed the "learning community" concept to be distinctly positioned as a primary vehicle for professional growth and learning and school development. As Mitchell and Sackney (2000) noted, "...the term learning community is becoming the term of choice..." in particular kinds of educational discourse (p. 6).

One potential arena for professionalizing teachers has been through the workplace. Because current schooling arrangements, in which solutions have been more outside-looking-in than inside-looking-around (Cooper 1988, p. 45), obstruct the professionalization project, some scholars and reformers have proposed alternative arrangements. These arrangements have built upon teachers' capacity to become intellectual workers, critically reflect on their work and foster collegial work and interaction. Little (1993) clearly indicated that professionalization of the teaching occupation has rested in important ways on people's ability to professionalize the organizations in which teachers work. She suggested that learning organizations, learning communities and communities of practice have been necessary to overcome the "persistence of privacy" in order to build professional cultures. Bascia and Hargreaves (2000) also noted that current educational reformers advocated altering teacher working conditions and the professional climate in schools, rather than regulating and tinkering with teaching practices. They suggested that teachers be known as change authors as well as change agents.

Notions of professionalizing teachers' workplaces have been intricately linked to the concept of community—but community with a difference—"healthy" ones. Societal
anomie and disillusionment, fragmented and hierarchical social orders combined with authoritarianism and excessive dogma have many people searching for a more satisfying utopia (Fukuyama, 1995). Mitchell and Sackney (2000) pointed out that current paradigms in the business and education world have been moving away from a rational, analytical and individualist-centered worldview to one grounded in an ecological paradigm promoting community health. This view led them to note “we have found this sort of concern for community to be a central focus in much of the contemporary academic literature” (p. 3). Their central thesis was that professional learning communities are “not an easy beast to tame” and that there has been “little agreement in the literature on exactly how to go about structuring professional learning or on how to connect it with improved professional practice” (p. 5). Roberts and Pruitt (2003) assembled a kind of “nuts and bolts” guide meant to assist educators in the task of transforming schools into learning communities, as did Wald and Castleberry (2000). These authors focused on the role of teamwork, the principal, mentoring and professional portfolios. Hord (2004) recognized the difficulties of turning hierarchical, bureaucratic and parochial-thinking schools into professional learning communities when she worked with a number of community schools in disadvantaged cities in the United States. After several years researching “the field” she identified a number of characteristics that coincided with “flourishing” schools. Supportive and shared leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning and application, supportive conditions and shared personal practices all created conditions ripe for building organizational, interpersonal and personal capacity which represent the essential characteristics of professional learning communities. Eaker et al. (2002) provided a
conceptual framework that schools could work from as they engaged in the improvement process with the objective of becoming a professional learning community. Their thesis rested on the notion of reculturing schools to become professional learning communities. DuFour, DuFour, Eaker and Karhanek (2004) linked building personal capacity to professional learning communities by suggesting, “as educators develop their capacity to function as a PLC, they create a culture that stretches the hope, aspirations and performance of students and adults alike” (p. 179).

School Reculturing

Every organization has a culture; a historicity that underpins underlying and unwritten expectations that shape everything that happens in a school environment. A school’s culture is the summation of its norms, values, beliefs, rituals, stories and symbols. In positive school cultures, these features reinforce learning, commitment and motivation but only within a climate conducive to change. In the “old” professionalism, conventional models of professional development met the exigent needs of teachers, but teachers now need to be supported through the process of change in different ways. Hargreaves (2003) suggested that workshops may be valuable for promoting awareness of new practices or curricula and provide opportunities for teachers to network and share ideas, but in our current knowledge-based society this kind of professional development is no longer adequate. The time has now come for educators to bring about effective change in processes that include appropriate training, supportive observation and feedback and considerable dialogue. Fullan (2001) argued that reculturing schools has meant developing collaborative school support systems designed to focus on staffs’ continuous growth, professional renewal and learning—in a sustained manner. Fullan
(2001) also noted that student outcomes and teaching practices have always been influenced by schooling organization and thus, staff growth, renewal and learning need to be framed within iterative processes that are flexible, quickly adjusted and reflect a school’s values, mission and goals. Morrissey (2000) indicated that reculturing schools requires the creation of a professional learning community where each and every teacher view one another as a vital resource, complementing each other’s knowledge and skills and able to generate practical solutions to workday problems. As Fullan (2001) stated, "reculturing is the name of the game."

Deal and Peterson (1998) offered three key processes that principals and other school leaders should do to reculture a school: (a) read and understand their school’s norms and values; (b) assess the elements that support and hinder their schools purpose and mission; and (c) actively shape the desired school culture. Sachs (2003, p. 149) suggested that school reculturing took place only when the "drivers"—systemic and personal occurred. Furthermore, systemic drivers were divided into the four areas of planning, facilitation, implementation and application. Personal drivers referred to teachers’ personal desire and motivation to enhance and sustain their professional lives. Schon (1983) claimed that espoused theory, or canonical practice, could blind an organization’s core to the actual, and usually valuable practices, of its members. Thus, building organizational capacity ought to be at the core of communities of practice in work environments.

Building Organizational Capacity

While there is no one best “culture” for schools per se, working towards a positive, rather than a toxic culture considerably influences the institutional conditions
within which school personnel work. The concept of building organizational capacity comes out of systems/complexity theory and is particularly relevant to educators. In developing organizational capacity, educational change and teacher learning are viewed from a paradigm based on complexity theory which assumes that change is a nonlinear process that needs to be supported by a framework for long-term teacher learning. A systems thinking approach is required, not as a formula, but as a new mindset to help educational practitioners understand the nonlinear dynamics of educational change and teacher learning (Fullan, 2001). Out of enhanced organizational capacity comes a new framework of school-based systems wide dynamics that encompass a “community” of learners, communities of practice (Wenger 1998) and professional learning communities (Eaker et al., 2002; Hord, 2004; Roberts & Pruitt, 2003).

Hargreaves (2003) pointed out that disillusionment and social anomie characterizes much of contemporary western cultures. Social alienation has moved people in the wrong direction and although Boyt (1992) wrote that we need a new philosophy of laissez faire that will “hold fast to the ends of autonomy and freedom of choice” Hargreaves (2003) advised that new times demand new ways of approaching fragmented educational practices. Supporting school connections, rather than separations, developing team-ship, operating from systems thinking and building shared visions constitute the necessities in overcoming societal anomie. Mitchell and Sackney (2000) reflected on the importance of building organizational capacity by noting, “It implies that individuals feel confident in their own capacity, in the capacity of their colleagues, and in the capacity of the school to support professional development and educational improvement” (p. 78).
In order to provide high-quality learning, for teachers as well as students, the capacity of the school staff to work well as a unit must be developed. Hord (2004, p. 25) offered several strategies that principals needed to use to develop organizational capacity which included: (a) developing collegial relationships; (b) making opportunities for teachers to learn; (c) giving teachers time for reflection; (d) inviting teachers to participate in authentic schooling decisions; and, (e) nurturing new ways of operating. Building capacity at the organizational level implies a greater degree of teacher professionalism when teachers feel nurtured and affirmed by school administrators and colleagues, when teachers are able to initiate new ideas for improving teaching and learning and can expand their understanding of their professional responsibilities as teachers. Thus, shared visions and collegial schooling supports, in a leader-rich environment, are still rooted in communitarian thinking.

In schools, building organizational capacity accounts for learning just as much as does teaching or instruction. In schools, seeing that learning, working, innovating and knowledge constructing are interrelated, complementary and compatible requires a conceptual shift. Building organizational capacity requires that school leaders see their schools’ “communities” as necessary to accomplishing school goals. Mitchell and Sackney (2000, p. 134) contended that, “at the organizational level...tight control mechanisms, stressful school circumstances and weak or rigid leadership...do not open spaces.” Wenger (1998) believed that a community’s ability to learn depended on various levels of its capacity, a culture conducive to learning and an appropriate information infrastructure. Thus, educational theorists, focusing on communities of practice (Wenger 1998), professional learning communities (Wald & Castleberry, 2000)
and/or building capacity (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000) have developed a view of learning as socially constructed; building knowledge from specific contexts which hold meaning. Learners are able to construct their understanding from a wide range of social and physical circumstances, histories and social relations of the people involved.

Knowledge is a key source of advantage in the devolution of professional learning communities and building personal and interpersonal capacity since according to Hargreaves (2003) “the knowledge society requires nothing less.” The final section of this chapter examines the “gold” that opportunities to manage knowledge can be for teachers and their students.

Knowledge Management

Since the early 1980s, theorists in organizational learning have provided instructive information regarding the concepts of knowledge management (Holsapple, 2003; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Nonaka and Takeuchi talked about the critical importance of knowledge creation in successful organizations, specifically providing insight into the importance of acquiring, interpreting, distributing and enculturating knowledge to create and facilitate competitive distinction. They found that extensive use of collaborative structures and procedures were necessary in converting tacit knowledge, held by individuals, into shared knowledge. The primacy of collaborative social interaction in schools has been known for years and “numerous studies document the fact that collaborative work cultures at the school and district level are critical for the implementation of attempted reforms” (Fullan 2001, p. 74). Several scholars have also paid tribute to the role of reflection in educational environments and which has become a key requisite for teachers of the “new” professionalism persuasion. A
reflective practitioner "gives up the reward of unquestioned authority in exchange for more substantive knowledge, and enters into a continuing practice of self-education" (Schon, 1983, p. 299).

One dominant approach to knowledge management used by Holsapple (2003) is termed "personalization." Personalization has been applicable to current directions in teacher professionalization because "the personalization approach focuses specifically on the people and cultural issues in the establishment of virtual groups or knowledge communities" (p. 6). The interplay between organizational change, training and personal adaptation has been necessary for knowledge assimilation and ensuring that knowledge fits the organization. Various authors (Beck, 1999; Holsapple, 2003; Probst, Romhardt & Raub, 1999) outlined their interpretation of the knowledge management process from which Figure 2.4 has been adapted. The process of knowledge management involves:

- **Knowledge Acquisition**—in schools, knowledge is built around formal, informal, experiential, home-made and intuitive experiences.

- **Knowledge Transformation**—in schools, knowledge must be context specific and the essential components used to enhance abstract thought as well as pedagogical practices. Knowledge capture implies that one knows where, how, when and why to access necessary information and to transform it as necessary.

- **Knowledge Sharing**—in schools the knowledge acquired and transformed needs to be used in integrated ways so that sense-making benefits everyone. Very often, it is not the knowledge itself that is of most interest—it is the derivations that can be shared that are useful.
- Knowledge Evaluation—this step is required as proof of the usefulness of knowledge being created, captured and used. Concepts, relations and information are continuously being evaluated in order to refine the entire process of knowledge management. Teachers and their administrators must engage in this refinement until the envisaged activities are reached.

![Knowledge Management Processes Diagram]

*Figure 2.4. Knowledge Management Processes*

When discussing schools, researchers (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000; Kerchner et al., 1997) used the term *knowledge worker* to emphasize that individual employees bring a wealth of experiences, skills and knowledge with them to carry out their day-to-day activities which becomes added “value” to the institution. Ongoing reforms ought to work on foregrounding strategies to build organizational, interpersonal and personal capacity (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000) and to connect these with improved professional practices in the classroom. A century ago, workers were expected to execute work according to instructions and job descriptions (Kerchner et al., 1997). Workers are now required to think more independently and respond to daily work challenges in ways that serve the enterprise of the organization, its clients and themselves. Know-how and
expertise are still important, but so too is a form of critical and creative knowledge that provides workers with the appropriate foundations for being open to the ideas of others, being willing to share ideas, and maintaining a thirst for new knowledge. In essence, knowledge management in schools is not just acquiring, interpreting, and sharing information...it is also about the ways in which information becomes transmogrified or "transformed." Teachers must not only reflect on how to teach but how to teach in the knowledge society. Some scholars, however, have noted the adverse side of a knowledge-based society. Schools that have directed their efforts towards the "ends" of the knowledge economy may be in danger of ignoring their "means." Blackmore (2000) warned:

the other side of the knowledge society is the "high-risk society" which demands the resilience to deal with ambiguity, change and uncertainty. Education is thus not only about cognitive learning but also about developing a range of social and interpersonal capacities, including a sense of rights and responsibilities, the building of trust, identity and citizenship formation. (p. 383)

In essence, a transformative management of knowledge in schools requires deep engagement, incentive, investment, excitement and support. Teachers of the "old" professionalism model of professional development took part in workshops, conferences and/or short term courses with little follow-up or long term feedback. In keeping with the "new" professionalism, a kind of transformative knowledge management requires a reflective process involving knowing-why, knowing-how and knowing-whom (Arthur et al., 1995). Sachs (2003) suggested that transformative knowledge is about "changing people’s beliefs, perspectives and options regarding the
importance of teaching, the role of competency and [the role] of intelligent teachers” (p. 146).

Probst et al. (2000) referred to concepts of pull, push and point that are key to transformative knowledge in a learning community and relevant for teachers as knowledge workers:

- **Pull** refers to individuals going to a knowledge repository and transferring it to individual use
- **Push** refers to knowledge being sent as it becomes available
- **Point** refers to receiving information on where, and how, to find knowledge (p. 177).

In sum, the goal for introducing knowledge management both as a process and an outcome is to build capacity at the individual and school levels so that all involved act in a problem-solving capacity rather than a bureaucratic one. And while knowledge communities cannot be coerced by the state or mandated by policy planning, as a form of human investment, they can certainly be encouraged and facilitated. In the following segment of this chapter’s section on the development of professional learning communities, networking theory will be examined as it assumes that people’s thoughts and behaviours are partially dependent on the ties they establish with other like-minded professionals.

**Networks**

Networks are notable in their ability to build organization, interpersonal and personal capacity and are, thus, a good way for people in education to direct the agenda of teacher professionalism. Individuals are alerted to the importance of “networking” in
order to get things done; operating in a field of relationships that either bind them
together or constrain their actions. An essential tenet of network theory emphasizes the
"rational" nature of actors in networking nodes whose activities build identity. Wenger
(1998) termed such networks "learning architectures" (pp. 230-240). Nohria and Eccles
(1994) argued that the role of networking in organizational life is as much about helping
one’s friends as it is about establishing one’s own identity. They noted that members of
an organization decide who they can trust as coworkers and must be confident about the
organization’s loyalty to them if they are to engage in the continuous development of
skills crucial to the organization. Sergiovanni (2000) observed that schools are clearly
organized along lines of highly connected and linked networking processes and at the
core of a well networked school is a set of professional, interactive relationships forged
on the basis of trust, loyalty and cooperation. Networking theory has also given rise to
questions about team-oriented systems of knowledge and production since team-based
work has been seen by many as the leading component of the “postbureaucratic”
organization of professional work (Abbott, 1988). In keeping with transformative
practices in knowledge management, one dominant emphasis of this new
“postbureaucracy” era is the construction of professional self-understanding through
reflection, team-ship and collegial dialogue.

The notion of schools as knowledge creating organizations has been strongly
argued for by Hargreaves (2003) growing, as it has, from contemporary discourses
which acknowledge the skills, abilities and resources that employees bring with them to
their work environment. In teachers, new attributes are necessary as they move from a
paradigm of knowledge “control” to one of knowledge “facilitation.” In the old
professionalism, control over knowledge (and students) implied a set of problems to be individually solved in a context governed largely by sound scientific practices aimed at meeting the needs and interests of a specific group. In the current paradigm of network theory and with teachers being considered knowledge workers the “new” professionalism connotes a set of problems to be solved by networking with others and where knowledge discovery and utilization are embedded in a network of exchange strategies (Nohria & Eccles, 1994). In effect, the relevant contrast between the old and the new professionalism is that problem solving in schools was carried out following codes of practice relevant to a particular discipline and context while the new professionalism demands that problem solving be organized around a particular application. A necessary protocol in networking theory shifts knowledge away from the search for fundamental principles toward modes of enquiry based on network facilitation and mobilization (Sachs, 2003). In schools, authentic and efficient knowledge creation and sharing is deeply embedded in interpersonal, face-to-face contexts. Transformative management of knowledge must be jointly created, co-constructed, coordinated, codified and utilized. These strategies contribute, in turn, to the kind of positive school culture that sustains a professional learning community.

**Building Interpersonal Capacity**

Mitchell and Sackney (2000) suggested that in a learning community, the process of a well functioning team of people who work and learn together requires the development of interpersonal capacity. In communities of practice—the daily enactment of a unified set of values, vision and purpose in a learning community—people’s different historicities need to be acknowledged because a learning community has to
draw on all necessary resources made available by each and every individual involved. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) noted that “narratives”—social constructions produced by people in relationships to sustain, enhance or impede various actions—provide a glue for collective professional identity. Such authenticated self-narratives also provide an impetus for the “new” teacher professionalism.

The work of engagement and the work of imagination were core dimensions in Wenger’s (1998) notion of communities of practice. These dimensions could also provide the conditions necessary for building interpersonal capacity. As Mitchell and Sackney (2000) noted, “building interpersonal capacity is fundamentally about empowerment and self-change” (p. 58). Talbert and McLaughlin (1994) observed that teachers engaged in collective inquiry and learning, produced the kinds of changes necessary for increased student learning and school improvement. In their study, individual staff members felt they had indeed become more effective in their efforts to help students. Establishing the development of interpersonal capacity means that teachers recognize that change is difficult, but not bad. Hord (2004) acknowledged the importance of building interpersonal capacity when the teachers she studied began to “step out of their comfort zones and try new things, understanding that they were supported in risk-taking” (p. 55). Louis and Kruse (1995) indicated that stronger schools and communities were better linked, and interpersonal capacity enhanced, when the focus was on collaborative problem solving and continuous improvement. Thus, building interpersonal capacity requires multiple constituencies to work with, rather than against, each other in a cooperative, collaborative and safe environment with the intent to improve teaching and learning.
Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 2.5 outlines the essential components used to examine teachers’ sense of professionalism. Historical reform initiatives and sociological theories of professionalism have been intended to provide a backdrop to the underlying tenets of classical or “old” professionalism, however, the focus of this research study centers around the “new” professionalism in teaching practices. In Saskatchewan educational reformers have been emphasizing teacher professionalism, while keeping one eye on the notion of “community.” Thus, as has been outlined in this chapter, the concept of teacher professionalism connected to professional learning communities suggesting that such communities are marked by shared norms and values, reflective dialogue, active mentoring practices and mutual levels of trust and respect (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000; Morrissey, 2000; Roberts & Pruitt, 2003). School-based professional learning communities ought to be arenas of continuous inquiry and improvement where teacher professionalism and organizational capacity are fostered.

The concrete, day-to-day operationalization of PLCs inheres through communities of practice. The literature on communities of practice has provided evidence of what is possible at the individual level in building and sustaining new modes of employee professionalism (Hord, 2004; Louis & Kruse, 1995; Wenger, 1998). While working in communities of practice, teachers’ perceptions of their work environment provide insight into important facets of the “new” teacher professionalism. As has been outlined in the literature review, what practitioners do and how they talk about what they do is strongly correlated to the development of personal capacity (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000; Sachs, 2003).
It is also argued that knowledge management and the development of interpersonal capacity is, or is not, facilitated by an organization’s ability to acquire, share, evaluate and transform knowledge. Much of the literature in school-based knowledge management portrays teachers as “brokers” of knowledge who are, themselves, both generators and consumers of knowledge (Hargreaves, 2003; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). In Figure 2.5 the term used is “transformative” knowledge management because the extant paradigm in KM research is shifting from a
focus on the acquisition, transformation, sharing and evaluating of knowledge to a recognition that transformative knowledge management is also about making the collective information and experiences of an organization available to everyone, who are then responsible for using the knowledge wisely and "replenishing" the stock (Sveiby, 1999).

Summary

The literature on historical reform measures and theories of professionalism has outlined societal concerns with the professional status of teaching in particular, and the professions in general. This chapter traced the historical shifts in teacher professionalization—the process by which occupational activities coalesced into a "profession." Relevant works have been used at each of the three waves of educational reform to demonstrate the different notions about the structure, logic and periodical character of teacher professionalization.

After the first wave of reform in the mid 1800s, a significant number of authors were concerned with the functional characteristics of the professions and much less concerned with the dynamics inherent in the process of professionalization. This thinking led to relatively static conceptions for teacher professionalism, invoking a kind of "trait" theory that implied that if teachers acquired the essential traits embedded in notions of professionalism then professionals they would become. Teaching needed to become full-time; it then needed to fulfill particular functions and did so by entering into specific phases of training, thereby eventually acquiring an occupational monopoly. Ultimately, professional practice was granted only to those holding a mandatory licence (Clifford, 1986). Ideologically, gaining higher status and respect was considered
achievable by virtue of their expertise combined with a selfless service ethic, advancing knowledge and the common good. These functional and highly utilitarian characteristics resulted in what some scholars have termed “old professionalism” (Furlong et al., 2000; Sachs, 2003). In reality, of course, teachers and their organizations were seldom able to suppress the influence of the state. At the beginning of the 20th century, teachers lacked real political rights, power and influence and were seldom able to bring forth their own professional interests. As for many of the professions access to professional status was still defined and enforced by state regulations, regulations which continued to play a leading role in the lives of professionals. Furthermore, an understanding of what reality was like from the point of view of teachers themselves was seldom sought; an essential starting point in procuring favourable outcomes as a result of change attempts.

Opponents of functional trait theories devoted their attention to the dynamics of professionalization by emphasizing its political agenda and class formations. The spectre of teacher de-professionalization was raised as their work intensified, pedagogical practices were routinized and efficiency became a predominant focus in the provision of educational services (McNeil, 1988). In contra-distinction to the doom and gloom prophecies of the critical theories, reports from the Carnegie Forum on Education, the Education Commission of the States and the Holmes Group were united in their desire to improve education by improving the status and power of teachers and several recommendations were put forward to truly professionalize the occupation.

By focusing on the professions’ own social critique, and concomitant formulations of new social goals, contemporary theories of professionalization—the “new” professionalism—cast teacher professionalism as the development of highly
personal practices and strategies rather than viewing the process as the outcome of struggles among economic interests or as an agent of scientific and rational worldviews. The “new” attempts to respond to real social needs which have become ever more pressing as the knowledge society develops and changes recently introduced have been concerned to influence the nature of professional knowledge, skills and values that teachers are expected to have. Connected to this emphasis on personal capacity is the recognition that this cannot take place without also paying attention to the development of organizational and interpersonal capacity.

Many authors now contend that previous sociological models of professions are ahistorical and useless as a reference point in assessing the rise of the “new” professionalism (Moon et al., 2000; Furlong et al., 2000). In an ever-changing society, advocates of this “new” model of professionalism adhere to the concept that greater morality must be exercised amongst the professions and that a civic or moral sense of professionalization must begin to flourish. This kind of civic mentality derives from communitarian thought which promotes the development of “community,” requires transparent dialogue and the instituting of collaborative processes, while emphasizing the role of reflection for professional practitioners. To serve these ends, scholarship around the nature, role of communities of practice and professional learning communities has proliferated.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of Chapter Three is to describe the methods and procedures used to collect and analyze the data received from respondents who participated in this research project. This study focussed on identifying key elements of teacher professionalism in community schools. The five research questions used to analyze teacher professionalism asked teachers about the supports they felt were necessary to feel professional, the factors that helped and hindered their sense of professionalism in their day-to-day workplace, the opportunities teachers’ had to create, share and use knowledge in their schools, their sense of professional self-worth and their overall opinions about Saskatchewan’s community schools. Conceptually, the research questions have been related to the literature devoting attention to the ways in which learning communities evolve and develop organizational capacity, how individuals build personal capacity and work together in communities of practice and how networks and team-ship structure interpersonal relations and capacity.

Outlined in this chapter are two modes of inquiry which formed the basis for this study: a qualitative paradigm and a quantitative one. Also outlined are the research design, selection of respondents, data collection and ethical considerations. Crotty (1998) and Bogdan and Biklen (1998) suggested that one’s ideas be established in a research design by considering:
• relevant theories of knowledge informing the research (epistemology);
• the theoretical perspective that best anchors a particular methodology;
• the general logic and research paradigm that govern the choice and use of methods; and,
• specific methods appropriate to the research question.

In order to examine the factors influencing teachers' professionalism, the researcher relied on interpretivism as the most appropriate perspective for qualitatively understanding meaning-making during the interviews, and positivism for analyzing the quantitative portion of this research. These multiple methods were utilized in order to identify patterns and connections through the use of questionnaires and interviews. Critics of qualitative research have cited its lack of formality, claiming there is too little ability to generalize and too much potential to particularize. Researchers still “caught” in a positivist paradigm have claimed that statistics have developed new tools, prompting more stringent criteria and procedures in quantitative analysis—resulting in augmented nomothetic propositions. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) noted that “the past two decades have witnessed an increasing frustration with methodological purism and its attendant claims that a particular methodological choice is superior to others” (p. 491). In studying teachers' sense of professionalism the information gathered from the questionnaire yielded consistencies and regularities that were nomothetic in nature and were able to tell us something of the general nature of current issues in teacher professionalization. On the other hand, the interviews were designed to be concerned with the individual case or idiographic perceptions of teacher professionalism. This research project, therefore, relied on both quantitative and
qualitative methods in order to enhance data management, facilitate the orderly and accountable practice of analysis and extract the maximum from participants' information.

Making Paradigmatic Sense-Mixed Methods

The term *qualitative* refers to a research paradigm designed to address questions of meaning, interpretation and socially constructed realities. A *quantitative* approach, on the other hand, refers to a paradigm designed to address questions that hypothesize relationships among variables that are usually measured in numerical and objective ways. Researchers now conceptualize these two paradigms as complementary wherein the researcher should be able to utilize strategies and methods from both traditions in order to develop broader, deeper and multiple understandings of a particular phenomenon as well as predict, measure and generate theory. Creswell (2003) has promoted a mixed method research design in which measures are "close-ended" and observations are "open-ended" (p. 20). In this way, the researcher is able to base his or her inquiry "on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides an understanding of a research problem" (p. 21). Mixed methods add scope and breadth to a study, particularly if the data is integrated at several stages in the research process. Integration means that the researcher "mixes" the data which involves combining open-ended questions in an interview with close-ended questions from a questionnaire (p. 212).

For this study, descriptive statistical procedures formed the basis of analysis, backed up by the data from voluntary interviews with a dozen teachers, including three school administrators who were also assigned teaching duties.
Multiple research methods lend “strength” to the rigour of this research by establishing both reliability and validity in understanding the phenomena of teacher professionalism. The most important point in any research is to establish the project’s results as credible. In mixed-method research this is best accomplished by checking information that has been collected from different sources or by using different methods for consistency of evidence within and across sources of data—termed “triangulation.” Triangulation has been widely used in discussions of qualitative research to convey the idea that a research project can more readily establish its findings by relying on more than one source of information.

Triangulation

The idea of triangulation is that, with the help of different kinds of methods, it is possible to determine a phenomenon more systematically. Qualitative researchers advocate the use of multiple research methods to increase the credibility and validity of their findings. Different methods capture different interpretations and the idea of triangulation is that, with the help of different kinds of data gathering techniques, it is possible to not only determine better the unique peculiarities of a particular phenomenon, but its similarities as well. Thus, triangulation involves checking information that has been collected from different methods for consistency of evidence across sources of data (Mertens, 1998, p. 183). In this research project interviews and surveys were used. Since the interviews were voluntary, only some teachers from each community school were interviewed although all teachers were surveyed. Thus, the use of mixed methodologies, or triangulation, conveys the idea that the researcher has used more than one source of information to establish the
“facts.” Leininger (1994, p. 102) reported that combining methods has tended to complement one another and leads to exciting, new and different knowledge. Thus, use of not only a survey but interview data as well were complementary for member-checking purposes to generate a comprehensive and accurate description of the ways in which teachers’ sense of professionalism is enhanced and eroded. Lincoln and Guba (1985) no longer supported the construct of triangulation because it has implied that it is both desirable and possible to outline consistency across sources when, in fact, multivocal and rival explanations can always be had. Stake (1995, pp. 107-109), however, suggested that, in our search for accuracy, credibility and alternative explanations, we need procedures which have obligations to minimize misrepresentation and misunderstanding. Such protocols include:

- seeing if the phenomenon or case remains the same at other times, in other spaces;
- other researchers looking at the same scene or phenomenon;
- having like-minded investigators compare their data; and,
- the use of multiple approaches within a single study. (pp. 114-119)

Through the use of triangulation, the credibility of my data was enhanced by comparing the interview information against the information generated by the survey. In affirming the role of credibility in data collection, Kvale (1996) has looked at validity in terms of the “quality of craftsmanship” the researcher has exhibited as he or she makes defensible knowledge claims (pp. 242-243). Relying on triangulation to augment the research information requires carefully thinking through the appropriateness of one’s data collection instruments.

In addition to different methods of data collection, teachers from different schools were interviewed and although asked the same questions, their responses
reflected the issues, concerns and opinions they had which were unique to their school. In spite of different schools, located in various school divisions and in spite of different teachers in each school, the issues, concerns and opinions they raised were remarkably similar from school to school.

Thus, using multiple methods for data collection, involving multiple stakeholders (teachers from different schools) and combining quantitative and qualitative data analysis (mixed-methods) all improved the quality of information collected. The following section of this chapter outlines the methods used to collect the research data.

Data Collection Methods

In order to understand the key factors in teacher professionalism, this study relied on individual interviews and a survey. Essentially, the interviews were a means of providing further elaboration to information derived from the survey. Twelve community schools in Saskatchewan, ten in rural areas and two in an urban centre, were chosen for this research primarily due to geographical distance to get to each school, the directors who gave permission to approach the principals and the principals who granted permission to distribute surveys and interview their teachers. One school director and two principals declined to have their schools participate.

The Survey

Surveys are useful for gathering data from a large number of people. Some scholars (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) alleged that quantitative, closed-ended survey questionnaires simplify complex issues by reducing them to a limited number of question options in which categories are dictated by the
researcher, not the participants. Furthermore, they have pointed out, interpretations of data must be based on a thorough understanding of the “ethnographic culture” of the participants who produced them. Quantitative research methods, by their very nature, tend to decontextualize participant responses. However, other scholars (Creswell, 2003; Crotty, 1998; Mertens, 1998) reminded us that researchers rely on survey research because:

- survey research can be used to verify themes, which are then co-related to themes emerging from interview data;
- surveys can collect aggregate data that are not directly observable but still probe individuals for their experiences, feelings, concerns and attitudes;
- respondents can fill out questionnaires at their convenience;
- surveys are fairly anonymous;
- hegemony or coercion is reduced, people can skip questions or “rant and rave” in writing with little to no fear of reprisal;
- surveys can yield nomothetic generalizations; and,
- researcher’s relationship with participants is distant and detached and thus, non-biased.

In this study the survey method was selected because it allowed the researcher to collect, quantify and analyze a large number of responses to standardized questions from the study population about their education, demographics, perceptions, feelings and opinions. The survey method was also time efficient and allowed the researcher to include a larger number of participants than would have been possible through other data collection procedures. The survey questionnaire used in this study is shown in Appendix A.

The survey had 38 Likert-scale questions divided into five sections. These five sections were developed as a result of the theoretical literature on professionalization movements in education and previous studies on teachers’ work lives. At the beginning of the survey a few demographic questions asked teachers
about gender, educational attainment, teaching grade and years of teaching that served as a “warm-up” to the next part of the survey. The first portion of the questionnaire consisted of eight Likert questions asking teachers about their school support systems. What role did school administrators play in creating a professional workplace? What entities framed a supportive work environment? Did teachers still feel professional in an environment that they felt was not a very professional worksite? The second segment of the survey, relying on two open-ended questions and six Likert questions, asked teachers what factors eroded and enhanced their sense of professionalism. What did they like about their work in community schools and what aspects of their work did they dislike? The third section of the survey asked teachers about their opportunities to locate, exchange and use knowledge and information, as necessary. The fourth segment of the survey, relying on six Likert questions, asked teachers about their perceptions of professionalism and what being professional or unprofessional meant to them. How strong was their sense of professional self-worth? The fifth portion of the survey examined teachers’ opinions about the community school model and whether it was a good model for Saskatchewan’s at-risk children. An opportunity for participants to record any additional comments was included at the end of the questionnaire as well as a volunteer form if they were willing to be interviewed.

Pilot testing a questionnaire means that it must first be administered to a small sample, similar to one’s intended group of respondents (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Testing the initial survey is crucial for gaining insight as to the design and appropriateness of the questions being asked. Thus, the survey
instrument was piloted on two community schools north of Saskatoon. In total, 11 teachers filled out the questionnaire. When asked about order of questions, or changes to wording none of the teachers piloted had any comments or suggested any changes. Although the wording of survey question #28 “In this school, knowledge management is about developing social exchanges and transactions” appeared confusing to several teachers in the final sample size, any confusion about the meaning of this question did not emerge in the pilot test. No interviews were conducted with the 11 teachers in the initial pre-test because the questions in the interview guide were developed after the survey results were examined.

Upon completing the survey, at least one or two teachers from each school volunteered to be interviewed. I contacted the participants by telephone and arranged for a date and time. At the beginning of each interview a copy of the interview guide was explained, followed by time for participants to ask questions. Generally I had at least two teachers from each school agree to an interview but due to geographical distances and time constraints I only interviewed twelve teachers of whom three were principal-teachers.

Interviews

Approaching a research problem means being cognizant of the interplay between the problem, the researcher standpoint and how something ought to be studied. In examining teacher professionalism, periods of historical change have provided a useful backdrop for looking at the nature, causes and consequences of important but poorly understood changes in education. These educational changes have, consequently, given rise to changes in the way schools are organized and the
ways in which teaching and learning are configured. In the past, educational administrators selected textbooks and developed curriculum programs to bring about school improvement. Teachers were exhorted to be “more professional” with little thought given to what professionalism meant to teachers and what it might look like in schools. In this research individual interviews, therefore, provided the opportunity to examine the factors that best explained teachers’ sense of professionalism—according to teachers. Furthermore, individual interviews offered: (1) the flexibility to foreground significant factors that enhanced and eroded teachers’ professionalism; (2) an opportunity for teachers to reflect on their engagement in learning opportunities, and (3) a forum in which their experiences in community schools was discussed.

Tape-recorded interviews were conducted with teachers in their school after school hours and were semi-structured. Each interview took between sixty and one-hundred-and-twenty minutes. Numerous authors identify qualitative interviewing as a data collection method that best provides descriptive data to increase the understanding and knowledge of the respondent’s beliefs, values and perceptions in relation to a specific topic. In this study, the in-depth interview was selected to allow for teachers to expound on the factors that enhanced and eroded their sense of professionalism, to discuss the supports they needed for continuous professional development and to note any other issues they felt affected them while working in a community school. The interview guide is located in Appendix B.
Validity

Researchers all recognize the necessity of accuracy in conceptualizing data and its subsequent measurement. In quantitative testing methods part of the researcher’s responsibility is to provide a measure of validity which arises, in part, from the design and appropriateness of the questionnaire items. Mertens (1998, p. 292) has noted that “the conventional definition of the validity of an instrument is the extent to which it measures what it was intended to measure” and considers validity to be the most essential consideration in research evaluation. Messick (1989) has identified two major threats to validity:

1. Under-representation in which the assessment is too narrow and fails to include important dimensions or facets of the concept.

2. The assessment is too broad and contains excess variance because of intrusion of other constructs (as cited in Mertens, 1998, p. 292).

De Vaus (2002, pp. 24-31) noted that it is difficult to check that the right thing is being measured in social science analysis since relatively concrete measures are often used to measure abstract concepts. In developing my survey I reflected back to the purpose of the study to ensure that the questions on the survey instrument were applicable to this project. The 38 survey questions were assembled from the literature on professional learning communities, from communities of practice and from facets of knowledge management systems, and guided by the conceptual framework. The findings from the survey portion of this research were intended to document teachers own sense of their professional worth, describe general schooling conditions which enhanced and eroded teachers' professionalism.
and to determine what teachers needed to feel supported in pursuing their capacity to engage in professional learning. A few questions on teachers' opinions about Saskatchewan's community school initiative rounded out the survey instrument.

De Vaus (2002) noted that external validity refers to the extent to which results from a study can be generalized to a larger sample. External validity is not an issue in this research since the findings captured the perceptions of a specific group of participants, teachers working in rural community schools, and may not have indicated equivalent patterns for all teachers working in all community schools in Saskatchewan.

Evaluating the factors that influenced teacher professionalism in community schools implied that the researcher needed to be concerned with content validity. Content validity is concerned with how well the research instrument captures the different aspects of a concept as defined by the researcher. The content validity of this research was determined by piloting the survey and asking participants if they understood each question and whether they felt the questions reflected the important components of teacher professionalism. As a result of the feedback, a number of minor changes were made.

Construct validity refers to how well the results one obtains “fit” with theoretical expectations. In other words, did the various portions of my survey measure the attributes they were intended to measure. Frequently, construct validity is associated with internal consistency and Cronbach’s alpha provided an appropriate analysis for patterns of internal consistency—and thus of construct validity. In this research, a high Cronbach’s alpha score for each of the three factors
derived from factor analysis (factor one alpha = .90, factor two alpha = .91 and factor three alpha = .79) indicated a reliable set of items, thereby suggesting that the questionnaire had reliable construct validity. Furthermore, factor loadings were all greater than .5 and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin to test sampling adequacy measured .894 which clearly indicated that my distribution of values was appropriate for factor analysis. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity indicated a normal distribution for this population sample. Content and construct validity, resulting in a high Cronbach’s alpha, good factor loadings and an appropriate KMO test for sample adequacy were due to the helpful feedback offered by the various committee members who read the research proposal prior to the actual implementation of this project.

One way to establish the validity of educational research is to assess the results that one would expect from being cognizant of well-established theories grounded in a strong theoretical understanding and knowledge of the concepts the quantitative survey was designed to measure. In this research, construct validity and internal consistency were established. In naturalistic or qualitative inquiry, however, the notion of “validity” has been frequently replaced with the notion of trustworthiness—a concept to which we will now turn.

Trustworthiness

Using qualitative methods and conceptual frameworks, interpretive scholars consider every human situation to be novel, emergent and filled with multiple meanings, understandings and interpretations. Lived experience, the stuff of life and qualitative research, clearly demonstrates the interplay of humans’ affective and cognitive domain (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). This knowledge leads us, therefore, to
wonder how an inquirer can persuade one’s readers that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to. How do we, as researchers, ensure that our readers experience the “phenomenological nod”? The concept of trustworthiness has been used to persuade our audiences that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to and worth taking account of. In asking what criteria are invoked, what questions have been asked and what would persuasive argumentation on a particular issue look like, Lincoln and Guba (1985) considered naturalistic inquiry to be “trustworthy” when it meets specific criteria:

1. Credibility—as a result of prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation.
2. Peer Debriefing—exposing oneself to disinterested) peers in a manner paralleling an analytic session for the purpose of exploring various aspects of the inquiry.
3. Negative Case Analysis—which really means revising hypotheses with hindsight.
4. Member Checks—where the data and analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions are examined by the participants themselves. (pp. 301-316)

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggested that time, triangulation and researcher responsibility all contribute to data “trustworthiness.” In this research project time was a limiting factor in assessing the data trustworthiness as the only time spent with subjects who completed the survey was the one to one and a half hours allocated for their interview. The process of triangulation, however, was very
beneficial in establishing trustworthiness. The interview data reflected the results obtained from the surveys and I also spoke to several teachers, informally, who worked in community schools but were not part of the sample population. Informal conversations gave me a fuller understanding of the issues teachers faced while working in community schools. Finally, it is the researcher’s responsibility to understand his or her limitations and those of the research design at hand. As Glesne and Peshkin (1992) pointed out, “limitations are consistent with the always partial state of your knowing in social research” (p. 69).

Data Analysis

Qualitative methods are used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific practice, setting or phenomenon in which the focus emphasizes individualized outcomes to draw out the uniqueness of a situation. In this research, qualitative analysis was used primarily to corroborate the survey data. Quantitative methods rely on statistics which may be descriptive (describes characteristics of a sample and its correlations), or inferential (allows the researcher to make population inferences from a sample). This research project relied on descriptive analysis, frequently employing line graphs and histograms to interpret the correlations and data.

After the data were collected from the representative sample population, it was analyzed using the SPSS 10.0 student version. Out of a potential 176 teachers who could have responded, ultimately 124 surveys were returned for a 70% response rate. Confidence levels were set at p<.01 which implied that for any given survey item the researcher was 99% confident of the statistical accuracy of the data.
A five-point Likert scale for the dependent variable, *teacher professionalism*, meant that 3.0 represented the midpoint and scores below 3.0 were considered to be low scores. Two questions in the section on teachers’ work in community schools allowed respondents to check off more than one category. It was hypothesized that teachers’ sense of professionalism might be subject to change as a result of working in a community school. Community schools have high numbers of at-risk children who exhibit behavioural problems, poor hygiene, social dysfunctionalities and are generally lagging in appropriate grade level achievements.

Factor analysis (discussed in Chapter Three) established that the survey items had satisfactory psychometric properties. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations and Pearson correlations for all variables in the survey were used. Assessment for kurtosis and skewness identified potential irregularities, particularly for outliers. Outliers can exert an influence on the results of correlational and regression analysis but George and Mallery (2003) noted that outliers may change the strength of a result without changing the direction of a relationship. Thus outliers may be influential but do not necessarily need to be omitted from the variable list. It was anticipated, however, that some Likert items might need to be omitted from the original survey because of poor factor loadings or low alpha levels. One-way analysis of variance was used in order to ascertain whether there were significant differences among the dozen community schools and stepwise regression was also used to construct a regression equation to then group the dozen schools into three categories. The predictor variables from stepwise regression have been discussed in Chapter Four.
Interviews were used to corroborate the survey data and to provide an in-depth description of teachers' perceptions and beliefs about teacher professionalism in community schools. The interviews were not coded, but formed the basis for establishing triangulation and trustworthiness. In reviewing the interview data, I looked for comments that teachers made about their school principal and his or her leadership style. As per the recommendations from Gleshne and Peshkin (1992) I examined comments pertaining to teachers’ work environment and asked teachers to identify the factors in their workplace that affected their sense of professionalism. I also focused on opportunities to use, create and share knowledge in their school and to see what teachers thought about the schooling supports that gave rise, or not, to the development of a school-based learning organization. During the interview I paid special attention to the positive and negative comments that teachers made about their workplace and their relation to it.

Participants

In choosing a sample, the goal is to purposefully select a group of respondents who are able to shed light on the forces and processes under investigation. Since the principal concern in any research agenda is to maximize what we learn, we need to pick participants who are hospitable to our inquiry (Stake, 1995). Accordingly, the criteria for choosing participants for both the survey and interview portion of this study focussed only on teacher and teacher-principals working in elementary community schools who volunteered to be interviewed. Two schools combined middle and secondary years and had students from grades seven to twelve but only those teaching the grade seven and eight students were given
surveys. Interviews were held at the school, after hours in eight of the community schools involved in this research.

Ethics and Confidentiality

Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and they were able to opt out of the study at any time. All responses, individual names and schools remained strictly confidential and pseudonyms were used. The cover letter stated the purpose of the study and how it was to be carried out so that respondents clearly understood the nature of the study, the dangers and the obligations involved. The cover letter also stated what was to be done with the findings and provided a form for informed consent. Confidentiality was assured by the use of identification numbers on the survey portion of the data. (see Appendix C for U of S ethics approval and Appendix D for covering letters to Directors, Principals and Teachers).

Summary

In this chapter the research design was explicated and interviews and a survey instrument identified as the research methods best suited to examining teacher professionalism from the “insider’s” perspective. The questionnaire relied on eliciting teachers’ perceptions, beliefs and opinions about the nature of their work in community schools and the kind of school climate that influenced their day to day feelings of professionalism. The interview data was used to corroborate the information gained from the surveys and was not intended to generate further codes, patterns or themes. These were already set by the nature of the survey instrument. The sample included teachers working in rural community schools close to
Aboriginal reserves or schools with high numbers of at-risk students and ultimately 124 teachers responded to the questionnaire.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Analysis Overview

This chapter opens with a restatement of the purpose of the study and the research questions. I then briefly reiterate the procedures used for data collection, provide an overall description of the respondents and their schools followed by a statistical analysis of the data. In order to examine teacher professionalism in community schools, data analyses included descriptive statistics, factor analysis (for data reduction), correlation matrices, ANOVA and regression. The survey contained five demographic questions, two open-ended questions and 31 five-point Likert questions to examine teacher professionalism. As a result of factor loadings less than .500 and levels of Cronbach’s alpha less than .700, 11 items on the survey were “dropped” from factor analysis. Statistical analysis was conducted with an emphasis on the twenty five-point Likert survey items that remained. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure was .894 which was sufficient for factor analysis and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity (.0001) indicated the items in the survey were correlated sufficiently to proceed with factor analysis.

There were no control groups and sample sizes drawn from each of the twelve community schools were small and unequal. ANOVA showed significant differences among teachers’ responses to the survey items and post-hoc analysis (Levene Test) revealed which schools differed from each other on specific questions. Missing values were replaced by the sample mean. Stepwise regression
analysis on 21 survey items resulted in four predictor variables ($R^2=.69$) accounting for 69% of the variance on the dependent variable—teacher professionalism. A separate stepwise regression analysis, using only the survey’s five demographic questions, showed that 20% of the variance on the dependent variable—teacher professionalism—was explained by one predictor variable—school identity.

Re-statement of Purpose and Questions

In 2001 the provincial government of Saskatchewan endorsed a philosophy of School$^\text{Plus}$, designed to impact student achievement, build effective educational climates and strengthen the professionalism of teachers. The concept of School$^\text{Plus}$ involved promoting and enhancing the connections among schools, families and their communities and to this end, turning targeted schools into community schools has been a persistent goal of Saskatchewan Education for the past several years. The purpose of this study was to examine factors which best explained teachers’ sense of professionalism in community schools and so the principal question was “what factors best account for teachers’ sense of professionalism while working in community schools?” In answering the principal question, the researcher also posed five research questions to determine the factors that either enhanced or eroded teacher professionalism and how teachers, in fact, rated their own perceptions and feelings. The five research questions asked of teachers working in community schools were:

1. What schooling supports define a professional workplace?

2. What factors enhance and erode teachers’ professionalism?
3. Which aspects of a knowledge-based environment are crucial to teacher professionalism?

4. What are teachers' perceptions of their professional identity?

5. What are teachers' opinions regarding the community school initiative?

Data Collection Procedures

The data for this research project came from a sample of gender mixed teachers working in twelve community schools in the Pre-K to eighth grades in Saskatchewan. Information was gathered from participants via a survey instrument using a five-point Likert scale and semi-structured face-to-face interviews. The nature of a sample will influence either the accuracy of a statistical analysis or the definition of the population to whom the inferences are directed, so a simple random sample was used (Huck, 2004, p. 105). The random sample was meant to represent a sample of all elementary teachers working in Saskatchewan's community schools. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in a semi-structured format with an interview guide of five questions. Along with a consent form an interview protocol was also presented to participants just prior to the interview (see Appendix B). All interviews were conducted in the teacher's classroom and audio taped. Knowledge claims made by the researcher in this research emanated from the statistical data which demonstrated "patterns" in participant responses and from the interviews wherein "meaningfulness" of the interview data was directed towards the statistical patterns and, thus, verified the authenticity of the participant's responses.
Demographic Data

A total of 124 respondents, teaching in twelve community schools, participated in the data collection process. After contacting and gaining permission from the directors of education, the principals of each school were contacted and surveys distributed to the teachers, including resource teachers and principals who also had teaching duties. There were approximately 175 teachers eligible to complete the survey of whom 124 did complete it, resulting in a response rate was 70%. All respondents taught from Pre-K through to grade eight. Of the 124 participants, all had Bachelor of Education degrees, 12% had Master's degrees and none had a doctorate. Only 10% of the teachers in this study were taking additional post secondary courses. The majority of teachers (60%) had taught for more than ten years, while 40% had taught for fewer than ten years (see Table 4.1).

Of the dozen community schools in this study, ten were considered rural (R) and two urban (U) (see Table 4.1). All rural schools were located in communities north of Saskatoon with First Nation reserves near by. These community schools were considered “ideal” for this study as they all had similar numbers of at-risk students coming from low income families and although all schools received additional government funding because of their “community school” designation, eight of the schools had become so designated within the last seven years. Thus, the ten rural schools had a high number of teachers who taught in the school prior to its provincial designation. I asked five demographic-type questions in which gender, educational credentials and years of teaching were thought to be relevant to teacher professionalism.
As per the information from table 4.1 the sample population in this research project was over-represented by female teachers. All teachers held Bachelor of Education degrees and no teacher had achieved a Doctorate, although the female principal at school #11 was enrolled in a doctoral program.

Table 4.1
Demographic Characteristics of Sample on a School by School Basis (N=124)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>B.Ed</th>
<th>M.Ed</th>
<th>Years Teaching &gt;10</th>
<th>Years Teaching &lt;10</th>
<th># of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McDonald (R)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conway (R)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millard (R)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsway (R)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannard (R)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensway (R)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandria (R)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa Rio (U)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westway (U)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StoneyA (R)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viney Ridge (R)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StoneyB (R)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School sizes were fairly consistent with six schools having between 150 and 200 students. As well, the years of teaching were also consistent in each of the dozen community schools in this survey. For example, no school had a preponderance of teachers with only two or three years of experience, nor did any school have an entire teaching staff that had over 20 years of teaching experience.

The next portion of this discussion outlines the results from the factor analysis.
Factor Analysis

All items in the survey, except the demographic section and part four of the survey which asked teachers about their professional identity, were subjected to principal component analysis using SPSS. As outlined at the beginning of this chapter, the suitability of the data was assessed with Keiser-Myer-Olkin and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity values. As a result of low factor loadings and poor alpha levels, 11 items were ultimately excluded from the final factor analysis; leaving twenty items to be factored. Survey items with factor loadings less than |.50| were omitted. As Table 4.2 shows, three factors were derived from the data.

Table 4.2
Rotated Factor Loadings (20 items)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRINCIPAL</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRINCIPAL FOCUS</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALUING</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORTS</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONAL PLACE</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHARING</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REWARDS</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXCITING</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NETWORKING</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONGRUENT</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMITMENT</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TALENTS</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALUED</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENJOYABLE</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFECTIVE</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATING</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INVEST</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCES</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXCHANGING</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECTING</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 shows the three factors wherein the first factor (blue) has loadings from .85 to .50. The second factor (red) begins with a loading of .87 while factor three (green) begins its factor loading at .74. After an initial factor analysis using all 31 items in the survey instrument only those items with Eigenvalues greater than 1 and item factor loadings greater than .50 were retained. Alpha levels of .90 for Factor 1, .91 for Factor 2 and .79 for Factor 3 denoted internal consistency in the survey instrument.

Several criteria were considered in labeling each of the three factors. These included: (a) factor labels which reflected the substantive content of the underlying components, (b) factor labels that were conceptually distinct, and (c) factor labels that were closely aligned with the conceptual framework of the research. Thus, factor 1 was denoted Schooling Climate, factor 2 was termed Teachers’ Work Environment and factor 3 was called Knowledge-based Environment. The label School Climate was chosen once factor analysis showed that the items principal and principal focus, followed by the items valuing and supports were the top four components in terms of high factor loadings—components which have been linked to school leadership which is crucial in establishing a school-based learning community. The label Teachers’ Work Environment was chosen because the survey items commitment, talents, valued, enjoyable and effective also had high factor loadings and seemed to best describe work in healthy communities of practice—in short—the work of teachers in community schools. In schools, teachers have been, for some time, expected to be “knowledge-workers” by facilitating transformative learning as well as relying on direct transmission in teaching and schools as
knowledge-based environments have been increasingly linked to people's personal growth and learning and the "new" employee professionalism. Thus the third factor Knowledge-based Environment seemed to be appropriate.

From Table 4.3 one can see that 42% of the variance for the overall data set was explained by factor one, 13% of the data's variance was explained by factor two and only 7 percent of the variance was accounted for by factor three. Cumulatively, all three factors accounted for 62.60% of the total variance in the 20 survey items.

Table 4.3  
**Total Variance Explained**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>42.29</td>
<td>42.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.29</td>
<td>55.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>62.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4  
**The Five Research Questions and Three Factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What schooling supports define a professional workplace?</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What factors enhance and erode teacher professionalism?</td>
<td>two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Which aspects of knowledge management are important?</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What are teachers' perceptions of their professionalism?</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What are teachers' opinions about community schools?</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 outlines how the five research questions and three factors fit together. Research question #1 (part 1 from the survey) had eight survey items, of which seven items comprised factor one. Research question #2 (part 2 from the survey) had five items, of which all five formed the basis for factor two. The third research question had seven survey items, of which four became part of factor three and the three remaining items became part of factor one. Other than one survey item, none of the rest of the items in questions #4 and #5 met the parameters
necessary to be retained in factor analysis. Having only one of these survey items in factor analysis made sense in that research questions #4 and #5 were designed to assess “outcomes” of teacher professionalism, rather than “explanations” for teacher professionalism.

The next portion of this chapter outlines the results for each of the five research questions that dealt with various aspects of teacher professionalism. These research questions will be discussed in the same order as they appeared in Table 4.4.

**Research Question #1: What schooling supports define a professional workplace?**

Schools are social institutions where a need for connectedness and orchestration of relationships and functions are vital to achieve success in learning and teaching. Relationships and connectedness build interpersonal capacity, while feeling like one works in an exciting, invigorating and professional workplace is the result of successful organizational capacity. Survey questions #6 to #13 asked teachers how they would rate their school as a professional workplace, whether they felt supported and rewarded and whether or not they perceived their work environment positively. Table 4.5 showed that teachers were in no way neutral about the kinds of supports that best served them and whether or not they found their time worth while at their community school. The category “Disagree” encompasses the teachers’ responses to the survey “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree” and the category “Agree” encompasses both “Strongly Agree” and “Agree.”
Table 4.5
Schooling Supports, Rewards and Work Environment (N=124)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions from Survey Instrument</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. As a “professional” workplace, I would rate this school as very professional.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I would rate this school as an exciting/invigorating place to work.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I would rate this school as a place which supports professional excellence.</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. In my development as an educator, I am clearly supported by my principal</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My principal works hard at creating a focus on “community” in this school.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. This workplace rewards my accomplishments.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. In this school, I have considerable opportunity to “invest” in my career</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The knowledge I have “fits” with this school’s way of doing things.</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this study, the majority of the teachers felt they worked in supportive, professional workplaces, experienced ample opportunities to develop personal capacity linked to continuous intellectual improvement and were appropriately rewarded for doing so. Considerable research has shown that defensiveness, frustration and isolation leads to negative behaviours in teacher professionalism. During the interview one teacher indicated that “cycles of negative interactions have been broken around here, once we figured out how much we were all contributing to the pattern.” Survey questions #6 to #13 focused on external schooling conditions that gave rise to building productive organizational capacity.

Figure 4.1 showed that teachers working in schools with strong, supportive leadership (Queensway to StoneyB) were more likely to rate their school as a professional workplace. In the interviews one teacher viewed the principal as “one of the wisest guys I’ve ever met.” Another teacher reflected that her principal was
“awesome.” When asked about the support she received from the principal a third teacher replied that, “Reg is always there for all of us.” Respondents also indicated, “things are particularly related to our leadership,” or “he tries to deal with the parents with dignity and put everyone at ease.” Many respondents revealed that support from one’s principal was a key aspect of positive school climate. The principal was perceived in a very positive way if he or she exhibited a high commitment to improving the school’s academic performance and incorporated a systems-wide communication perspective while establishing a culture focused on staff’s teaching and learning.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 4.1.** Feeling Supported and Defining the School as a Professional Place

The term rewards in question #11 of the survey, “this workplace rewards my accomplishments” was ambiguous which may partially explain the low correlation
coefficient \((r = .47)\) when paired with the item “professional place” \((proplace)\). In the interview data one teacher suggested that, for her, rewards not only implied monetary compensation but also the opportunity to envision pedagogical possibilities in conjunction with other colleagues. Another noted, “things around here were bad last year but this fall I feel things are very different and I think we are reaping the benefits of last year’s efforts. It’s a really rewarding feeling to know you’ve been able to move ahead on difficult issues.” The increased job satisfaction and transformation of the school climate were rewards enough for her. Another teacher said that the principal’s recognition of her achievements and several opportunities for out of school training sessions gave her a sense of job satisfaction. She felt “intellectually” rewarded. One of the principals indicated that building a school climate is individually developed and then collectively shared by all his staff. An intrinsic reward system, he suggested, is a process but not an endpoint. One teacher felt that recognizing teachers’ accomplishments in the school was just as important as paying tribute to student’s accomplishments. Things like teacher of the month or coach of the month awards were an important part of building and maintaining staff morale.

Survey question #12 asked teachers about opportunities to “invest” in their careers which was then linked to how highly, or not, the teachers rated their school as a professional workplace. Figure 4.2 showed the relationship between teacher’s perceptions about opportunities to invest in their career and whether they viewed their school as a professional workplace. Many teachers remarked that opportunities to grow professionally gave them an intrinsic satisfaction. When asked, one teacher
noted that a handful of her colleagues “are not committed, like they aren’t involved in the school—they work from 8:30 to 4:00 and then they’re gone ‘til tomorrow—no extra mile—no nothing.”

The difference between the heights of the two bars for each of the first three schools in Figure 4.2 displayed considerable differences in the representation of teachers’ opportunities to invest in their career and how they rated their school as a professional workplace. As one moved along the X axis, the differences between the two bars became less noticeable. From Kingsway to Casa Rio, teachers rated their school as a professional place and a place which supported career investment and, thus, the difference between the two items, invest and proplace, was minimal. The discrepancy between the heights of the two items again widened from Westway through to StoneyB and perhaps the discrepancies can be explained in terms of capacity building. In comparing the item invest with the item proplace the first three schools showed no clear-cut pattern. From the interviews it seemed that these schools had little focus on building interpersonal or personal capacity and therefore lacked organizational capacity as well. The next five schools showed considerable consistency between the two items and appeared to be schools that focused equally on developing both organizational capacity for the school and personal capacity for the employees. The bars for the last four schools again demonstrated some discrepancy between the items invest and proplace and this may have been due to a greater focus on building organizational capacity rather than personal capacity. Although the teachers somewhat agreed or strongly agreed they had an opportunity
to “invest” in their careers, their rating of the school as a professional place to work exceeded their beliefs about career investment in these last four schools.

While not admitting he had lost his motivation and commitment to teaching, one of the teachers working at Cannard mentioned that since he had switched school divisions and was now working in a small, rural community school he didn’t feel teaching was challenging. He had few opportunities to attend professional conferences and school in-services done “on the cheap” meant they were extremely routinized. He felt frustrated by his lack of professional growth. Another teacher also suggested that she couldn’t find the time for professional growth because the school took up so much of her time and energy. She said, “at the end of the day I’m zapped, I’m just too tired to go home and read. Last night I worked on Easter bunny templates and boiled up eggs so the kids would have something for Easter. Where do I find time for myself?” In essence, the teachers who felt they had few opportunities to invest in their career seemed to echo a need for more intellectual challenges, perhaps tailored more to aligning their needs with school goals. A non-learning environment can be extremely un-motivating, resulting in stagnation and a decrease in perceptions of professionalism. The teachers that responded negatively to the question “I have considerable opportunity to invest in my career” were primarily located in the three schools with poor ratings on many of the study’s questions. Lackluster leadership in these schools undoubtedly exerted considerable influence on the teachers’ responses.
Figure 4.2. Career Investment and Rating the School as a Professional Workplace

The researcher had originally thought that the survey item congruency (question 13) would likely be strongly related to whether or not teachers believed their school to be a professional workplace and to their perceptions of the principal and his or her supportive environment. Teachers’ feelings of congruency between their way of doing things and the school’s way of doing things showed only a modest correlation of .44 when paired with the item professionalplace (Table 4.6). Perhaps, under current conditions of change, uncertainty and continuous educational change, teachers implicitly felt that their way of doing things fit in with the schools’ simply because there was actually little variation in teaching strategies from community school to community school and, by and large, how teachers go about accomplishing their job often “drive” how the school and its administrators go about
accomplishing theirs. In other words, teachers did not necessarily feel that the degree of congruency between their way of doing things and the school’s necessarily resulted in a "professional" work place.

The highest correlations in Table 4.6 occurred on items where teachers felt supported by their school environment and then rated the school as an exciting and professional place to work. For all matrix correlations in this study, the researcher chose $r = .50$ as the cutoff point since an item with $r = .50$ correlation really only explains 25% of the variance of a single item on the dependent variable ($r$ must be squared—$R^2$—to ascertain the variance of the survey’s items), and thus a correlation of .45, for example, only accounts for 20% of the variance between the two survey items (.45 squared is .20). An examination of the correlation coefficients, using only the demographic data for the survey questions #6 to #13, revealed no correlations due to gender, educational level, grade level taught or number of years at the job (Appendix E).

Table 4.6
**Bivariate Correlation Matrix for Questions 6-13 (N=124)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prof. Place</th>
<th>Exciting</th>
<th>Supports</th>
<th>Principal Focus</th>
<th>Principal Reward</th>
<th>Invest Congruent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Place</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exciting</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>.70**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.61**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congruent</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.58**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**
Research Question #2: What factors enhance and erode teachers' sense of professionalism?

Survey questions #14 and #15 were left open-ended and teachers were asked to check any number of applicable boxes. Questions #14 and #15 asked teachers to point out important aspects that would "make or break" their professional workplace. Question #14 (Table 4.7) asked teachers about the factors that enhanced their feelings of professionalism. A frequency of 93% of all respondents (N=124) on the factor "my work" as seen in Table 4.7 affirmed that most of the teachers in this research felt positive about their worksite, were happy with their career experiences (77%) and enjoyed opportunities for continuous learning (77%). Colleagues (90%), students (87%) and the principal (71%) were also rated as important factors in enhancing teachers' professionalism.

The last five items offered in question #14 (parents, community, policies, community perceptions and district-level support) scored somewhat lower than the previous items likely because these items were not viewed as direct enhancements to teacher professionalism. These other factors were more remote from teachers' everyday work. One further explanation for the poorer ratings of these last five items could be because these are things over which teachers lacked control—in essence, factors which could not easily be changed. In terms of enhancing professional identity, relations with people of close social distance in the school were rated highly, including teachers' colleagues, their principal and of course, the students.
Table 4.7
*Overall Responses to Open-Ended Question #14 – Factors which Enhance Professionalism*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors which Enhance Professionalism</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My colleagues</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My principal</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My career experiences</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My opportunities to continue learning</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school’s expectations of my work</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My students</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parents</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The community</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school’s policies</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My community’s perceptions of my work</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school district’s support</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of schooling factors which erode teachers’ sense of professionalism, Table 4.8 showed that teachers’ professionalism was primarily influenced by student behaviour. If community schools are intended to improve social behaviour, encourage healthy youth development, enhance school and community climate and better family functioning, the data in Table 4.8 demonstrated the frustrations teachers faced working in community schools. Student behaviour, passivity, academic expectations, discipline issues and indifference were frequently cited as problems in community schools that many teachers felt did not exist to the same extent in non-community schools. The researcher hypothesized that community school teachers might find the high number of paraprofessionals to be an additional burden on their time and energy, especially since most community schools have as many paraprofessionals in the school as there are teachers. The data in Table 4.8, however, showed this hypothesis to be incorrect. Teachers welcomed the role their paraprofessionals played in the school, as commented upon by a number of respondents during their interview. The item *workplace conditions* was ambiguous
since most of the teachers who checked this item worked in very old schools and were likely thinking of the physical conditions of their school rather than the emotional conditions of their workplace.

**Table 4.8**
*Overall Responses to Open-Ended Question #15 -- Factors which Erode Professionalism*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors which Erode Professionalism</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student passivity</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School bureaucracy</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School policies</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My gender</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations with colleagues</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace conditions</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline problems</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student indifferece</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative indifference</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s academic expectations</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student behaviour</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraprofessionals</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Along with the open-ended questions, five Likert questions were included in the survey to establish other important facets of teachers’ work environment that influenced their sense of professionalism. These questions were meant to assess the affective dimension of teachers’ work. Did the teachers in this survey feel valued, and committed to their profession; did they find their workplace enjoyable and were their skills and talents well utilized? Table 4.9 outlined the data for questions #16 to #21 in the survey instrument.

Since the dependent variable for this study—teacher professionalism—was the variable to be examined, question #16 was designed to assess teachers’ sense of professionalism and became, in essence, the dependent variable. A dependent variable is a characteristic of a group that (1) is of interest to the researcher; (2) is
not possessed to an equal degree by all participants; and (3) serves as the target of the researcher’s data collection efforts (Huck, 2004, p. 8). The dependent variable for this study—*teacher professionalism*—was the variable to be explained or predicted in regression. The researcher asked question 16 to see if teachers had, in fact, experienced an alteration of their sense of professionalism as a result of working in a community school and the majority had not.

**Table 4.9**  
*Feeling Valued, Committed, having Skills Utilized and Experiencing a Positive Workplace (N=124)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions from Survey Instrument</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I feel more professional.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I feel more valued.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I feel my talents/skills are better utilized.</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I feel a stronger commitment to the profession of teaching.</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I find my workplace more enjoyable.</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I am now a more effective teacher.</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9 shows that almost one-quarter of the survey’s respondents disagreed with feeling valued in their school, did not feel their skills were being adequately utilized and did not feel a stronger commitment to their profession. While working in a school located within a very poor, transient neighbourhood, one teacher felt that school morale “has been at an all time low” and her colleague suggested that the school “focuses too much on cultural affirmation and sports, which leaves the academic side of things out of the picture.” These two teachers found it difficult to feel their extensive talents and skills were either valued or being
appropriately used. On the other hand, 40% or more of the teachers in this survey felt valued, experienced a stronger commitment to the teaching profession, rated their workplace as enjoyable and felt their talents and skills were well utilized.

Question #18 of the survey asked teachers whether they felt their talents and skills were better utilized in a community school. Of the total sample (N=124) one-quarter of the teachers responded neutrally (25%) or positively (53%) whereas when asked question #19 regarding how valued teachers felt working in their school only 39% agreed that they felt valued, compared to 35% who were neutral. Teachers tended to think about skills in terms of knowledge of curriculum, instructional practices and child development whereas talents were related to artistic and/or creative endeavours. One teacher noted that, “yeah, the music teacher’s got voice, her voice is just beautiful and she does our Christmas concert. Her major was in music, so it’s really good for our musical kids” while another teacher indicated that “I know what I want to do here from the time I get here until I leave at the end of the day. I know what I want my kids to accomplish and I spend my evenings tinkering with lesson plans so the kids feel positive about learning and being challenged.” Skills were deemed to be competency-based and much more under one’s personal control than were one’s talents. Teachers who felt valued in their school also felt their skills and abilities were being well utilized (r = .66, Table 4.10). In asking teachers what school conditions enhanced their sense of professionalism, many noted that being valued, being recognized, being part of a team and being given the opportunity to use their skills and talents to better the lives of their students were important components. As one teacher noted, “it isn’t my job description that jives
with the specifics of my work, I do.” She felt, as did many of the teachers working in community schools, that her non-traditional approaches were of value to the school and to her students and her opportunities to envision and act upon different pedagogical practices exposed the utility of her skills and abilities. One of the principals interviewed felt that the community school philosophy gave him the chance to develop more fully a professional culture among his teachers as a means of creating a more effective community school. He was willing to endorse unorthodox teaching practices, provided they were academically oriented and promoted student learning. Although the sample size was small, all nine of the teachers in his school rated highly their sense of being valued and having their talents and skills utilized.

Several of the schools had principals who focused considerable energy on improving the academic success of their students and workshops and professional development days were geared to guiding teachers through new ways of teaching the curriculum. These schools showed a close alignment between having their skills and talents recognized and feeling valued in the school. Schools with considerable differences between the height of the bars, in Figure 4.3, had principals who focused on developing personal capacity but, in some way or another, did not make teachers feel as valued. For example, the principal at Cannard focused on athletics as a way of keeping his students in school and promoted the athletic talents and capabilities of his teachers. This tended to ostracize a group of teachers who did not possess athletic skills, thereby making them feel less “valuable” as team players.
Figure 4.3. Feeling Valued and Having One’s Talents Utilized

Figure 4.3 showed the degree of congruence in teachers’ responses between feeling valued and having teacher’s talents utilized and how this varied from school to school. For the teachers in this study, feeling valued mediated the relationship between school climate and having one’s skills and abilities utilized. As Figure 4.3 depicted, there was considerable congruence in some of the schools between teachers who felt their talents and skills were being validated in their school and how valued they subsequently felt.

Feeling valued, not only by one’s principal, but also by one’s peers was also important to the teachers in my study. One teacher felt that there was too much stereotyping going on in his school by some of his colleagues. He was a talented coach and although his talents were being well utilized by the school, he felt undervalued by some of the other teachers in the school. Some of them made him feel like a “dumb jock.”
Figure 4.4 demonstrated a weak connection between teachers’ perceptions of principal support and their sense of commitment to teaching (r = .20). This situation did not concur with the literature which has pointed out that teachers’ commitment to the organization is high when teachers have input into decision making procedures and believe their concerns are being considered and supported by school administration. Information from the interviews showed that teachers’ commitment to the school was related to student behaviour and their ability to effect good hard learning within their classrooms. Many of the students were at-risk students and hard to reach but when interviewing individual teachers in each school, all twelve participants noted the hard work and commitment that many of their colleagues exhibited on a day to day basis. One teacher indicated that her grade three class learned best when she “kept after them, repeating the same lessons for several days until they get it.” Another teacher noted that, “the things that drew me into teaching fifteen years ago are the things that keep me committed to the job now.” One teacher was very clear that in her grade six classroom “perseverance pays off.” She meant for herself, as well as her students.

There were, of course, numerous examples cited by those interviewed that showed teachers were, for the most part, highly committed to their job. During the interviews many teachers noted theirs and others’ perseverance, motivation and commitment in trying to meet the needs of their students in “making a difference.” Their sense of professional identity has developed over time by seeing the exciting ways in which they have, indeed, made a difference to the lives of their students. Although Figure 4.4 showed a weak correlation (r = .20) between the leadership of
the principal and their commitment to the profession, many teachers cited the principal as the person most responsible for creating organizational capacity and contributing to the professionalization of his or her teachers. Perhaps the low correlation could be explained in terms of espoused theory and theory-in-use (Argyris & Schon, 1978). Teachers were committed to teaching, but in those schools where teachers gave their professional work site a low or mediocre (McDonald School through to Casa Rio School) rating the gap between the items principal and commitment was the greatest—indicating that their inability to count on good principal leadership, so vital to a learning community, caused teachers to feel less committed to the teaching profession. One of the teachers interviewed, working in a school with poor leadership, asked, “how can I feel committed to this school when the principal and one other teacher have been away on stress leave for the past six months?” Another teacher, again working in a leadership-poor environment felt committed to his students, but not to his school administration. Thus, one explanation for the poor correlation of .14 between school leadership and teacher commitment may have been due to teachers feeling committed to their profession’s goals and values but not their school’s.
Survey questions #20 and #21 (Table 4.9) asked teachers if their workplace was an enjoyable one and if they felt they had the opportunity to become a more effective teacher. With a correlation of $r = .74$ (Table 4.10) the connection between feeling effective and experiencing an enjoyable worksite was apparent (Figure 4.5). There are, of course, many ways to understand teacher effectiveness and how it affects student learning. Experiencing an enjoyable workplace wherein one could operate effectively implied that a school’s work environment played a role in the professional culture of teachers and, in turn, significantly influenced teacher effectiveness. Effective teachers were ones who understood student needs and were quick to identify potential difficulties in order to redirect student learning before moving on to the next concept. In one of the larger urban community schools a
teacher indicated that she “met with students one-on-one during detention times to do extra math with the ones that are struggling to understand fractions.” She recognized that her students required a good understanding of fractions before they could move into the mathematics unit on decimals. One teacher offered her wisdom by noting that, “there is no one right way to teach, nor is there ever only one right answer to one’s questions.” A willingness to remain flexible and adapt to one’s work environment seemed to be useful strategies in building organizational capacity and helping teachers feel effective. One of the teachers observed that in an enjoyable workplace “teachers need to feel effective, otherwise their day is upset, they are upset and the students will be upset.”

Teachers felt that the “mindset” of a community school was important in making them feel effective and the school enjoyable and Figure 4.5 showed a positive correlation between teachers’ feelings of effectiveness and rating their school as an enjoyable workplace. Table 4.10 indicated the strength of the relationship between feeling effective and rating the school as enjoyable (r. = .74). One teacher noted, “yeah, the funding is good here but it’s the mindset of a community school more so than it is the funding. I want to make sure I’m providing the best possible education I can for these kids. I believe that’s what a community school is. That’s the way I measure effectiveness.” While she found the resources to be adequate it was her opportunity to effect positive change with her students that made her day enjoyable. In a school-based learning community, being effective results from the ways in which organizational capacity builds personal capacity which works in tandem with a leader’s ability to build a positive school climate.
Figure 4.5. Feeling Effective and Rating Workplace as Enjoyable

The correlation matrix (Table 4.10) for the survey instrument question’s #16 to #21 showed reasonable strength of relationships among all survey items. The items valued \((R^2 = .59)\) and commitment \((R^2 = .54)\) explained more than one-half of the variance on the dependent variable—teacher professionalism—while the survey’s items talents \((R^2 = .38)\), enjoyable \((R^2 = .45)\) and effective \((R^2 = .42)\) explained slightly more than one-third of the variance. All five survey items were strongly correlated to the dependent variable, teacher professionalism, implying appropriate internal validity for the survey questions. In factor analysis all five of the items in Table 4.10 showed up in Factor Two—Teachers’ Work Environment.
Table 4.10
Bivariate Correlation Matrix for Questions 16-21 (N=124)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Valued</th>
<th>Talents</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Enjoyable</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Tchrprof</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valued</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talents</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commit.</td>
<td>.77**</td>
<td>.77**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyable</td>
<td>.61**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>.58**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tchrprof</td>
<td>.77**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

In the demographic data, no significant correlation existed between gender, education level, years of teaching and teaching grade to questions 16-21. None of these demographic constructs should, by theory, have been related to teachers’ work in community schools and their sense of professionalism, and they were not (Appendix E). Nothing in the literature on teacher professionalism suggests that years of teaching experience, gender or additional graduate degrees exerts much influence on how well one feels valued, recognized and effective. School leadership, support and being part of a valuing, exciting workplace exert much more influence on teachers’ affective responses to their work environment (Hord, 2004; Rosenholtz, 1989).

In sum, the items related to teachers feeling valued, having their talents and skills utilized, being effective and able to commit to the professional in an enjoyable workplace were also the items that comprised Factor Two—Teachers’ Work Environment.

In the following section, the third research question pertains to teachers’ special knowledge about teaching and learning and the synergy necessary to build an effective learning community.
Research Question #3: Which Aspects of a School’s Knowledge-based Environment are Important to Teacher Professionalism?

One of the dominant themes in looking at teacher professionalism is derived from knowledge management theory. An organization builds knowledge through the activities and experiences of its employees. Thus, the third segment of the survey asked teachers about key areas of their knowledge-based institutions. On the survey, questions #22 to #28 asked teachers about their opportunities to locate, exchange and share their knowledge and how well schools’ valued their teachers’ knowledge base. Table 4.11 summarized this information.

Most community schools appeared to value the knowledge base of their teachers and offered their employees the opportunity to use pragmatic and flexible approaches to teaching and assessment in trying to meet the individual needs of their students. Clearly, however, not every teacher felt supported and “in tune” with their school. The principals of two schools in particular were rated as being indifferent and/or overly bureaucratic. The teachers that were interviewed in these two schools felt isolated and marginalized. Fresh ideas and different professional experiences were not always welcomed. Indeed one teacher in Millard said that, “he was new to the school and his ideas on reading circles were not well received.” Although his preference was to introduce students to critical and creative thinking he mused that many of the teachers taught in very traditional classrooms and seemed to prefer it that way.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions from Survey Instrument</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. I have the opportunity to locate relevant knowledge as I need it.</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. My work provides an exciting environment for exchanging knowledge.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. My work connects me to people with relevant interests and skills.</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. In this school I am able to take advantage of sharing the knowledge that I have.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. This school values its teacher’s knowledge base.</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. While working in this school, I have been able to develop new ways of thinking about teaching and learning.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. In this school, knowledge management is about developing social exchanges and transactions.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schools, like other organizations, do not always manage their own knowledge effectively, however, the data in the survey’s questions #22 to #28 suggested that most teachers in this study say they tried to take responsibility for sharing, exchanging and locating information as needed. The interview data also demonstrated that teachers wanted to challenge, negotiate and learn from others. Many teachers welcomed the opportunity to select and exchange their knowledge and information with each other to solve problems and as one teacher put it “to create value for this school.” Another teacher found, in his school, that the principal’s transparent management style enabled teachers to network and exchange on a weekly basis. In his school, the administration understood the role knowledge management played in learning based organizations and this principal was quick to endorse an effective framework for teacher networking.

Numerous barriers to exchanging, locating and sharing information were mentioned by teachers being interviewed. The principal barrier was a lack of time
and connecting and exchanging information in the course of a busy, hectic day was generally done on an *ad hoc* basis with no formal time actually set aside for collegial exchanges. Once a week, Queensway and Alexandria schools designated an early morning time period for teachers to network and share necessary information, but teachers on yard and bus supervision were unable to attend. These two schools also put aside an hour or so each week so that division teachers could network with the other same-level division teachers. The principals in StoneyA and StoneyB mentioned that they “encouraged teachers to attend each other’s classes, particularly the teachers in Division One teachers and Division Four.” However the majority of the school administrators did not allocate time to move tacit and explicit knowledge through their school in any kind of formalized structure or context.

The other barrier frequently mentioned centered on the different organizational divisions that exist in the schools in Saskatchewan. Depending on the grade they were teaching, the teachers in the community schools in this study were divided into “primary years,” “elementary years” and “middle years” teachers. Particularly in terms of curriculum, some of the “primary years” teachers felt they should know what their colleagues in other divisions were doing but found it difficult to forge connections to, for example, the “middle years” teachers. These teachers were not sure if a common perspective existed among the teachers in each of the three divisions in their school and if not, did a lack of common perspective hamper students as they moved from grade to grade. These teachers understood that connections to *all* their colleagues influenced the quality of their work. One teacher noted that, “when Ms. P and I work on solving something together the task gets
done faster and the solution is sound. We work well together...I guess we think alike. Now Mr. D and I is a different story...no help, no collaboration...just closed doors for that guy.” What she was suggesting is that some teachers lacked the motivation to make connections to knowledge—both accessing and contributing—a routine step in their everyday work. Not all teachers wanted to work and interact with shared norms, expectations and a common purpose. For these teachers, forging the necessary connections in a knowledge management system simply implied more “useless” meetings and time spent away from their classroom work. A few teachers also mentioned that they really didn’t know who funded the community school coordinator nor did they know exactly what the coordinator’s duties entailed. In these schools collaborative structures were poorly organized and some of the teachers found it easier to “bury their head in the sand” than ask questions they thought might upset management.

As for question #27 on the survey instrument, almost 90% of the teachers sampled felt that community schools offered them new ways to think about teaching and learning and this item (newways) turned out to be a predictor variable for teacher professionalism for the overall data analysis. The interview data also indicated that many teachers have developed innovative and creative strategies to make the curriculum interesting for productive student engagement. One grade 3-4 teacher lamented that although many of her students had undergone Pre-K, Kindergarten and a transition year in the school they were still reading below grade level. She personally purchased 23 tape recorders so she could tape her students’ reading and listen to the tapes on her way home from work. With the help of
parents and a teacher assistant she could then “catch” the weaker readers and work with them more closely. This teacher, as did many others, recognized that meaningful face-to-face interaction was just simply impossible to achieve throughout the entire school day, especially with students who most needed such interaction. With a high number of “lates” and absences, several teachers found that it made more sense to adjust their traditional classroom strategies in order to accommodate students who were frequently in and out of the school system. In the interviews, community school teachers expressed a desire to have their students attend regularly, get promoted to the next grade and graduate to high school and thus these teachers struggled with the challenges, as one teacher said, “of reaching and teaching these kids.” Almost 90% of the teachers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to develop new ways around teaching and learning for their students (Table 4.11).

Regression analysis, at the end of this chapter, showed that the item newways (Question #27 from the survey) comprised one of the four predictor variables for teacher professionalism. Although the survey item newways appeared in regression as an important factor in explaining teacher professionalism it was omitted from factor analysis (Table. 4.2) because this item loaded equally on all three factors. Thus, the item newways was an important component of all three factors: school climate, teacher’s work environment and a knowledge-based environment but did not load on any one factor well enough to meet the [.500] parameter for keeping this item in any of the three factors.
From the survey, question #28 "knowledge management is about developing social exchanges and transactions" was poorly understood and several people put question marks on their survey to indicate their lack of understanding. The question was imprecise which is why, perhaps, many respondents checked the category "neutral." In-depth interviews did, however, amplify the nature of the question and during the interview one teacher acknowledged that an interchange of ideas with other colleagues in different fields of professional activity was important for his sense of professionalism. Another noted that, "we meet regularly every second Thursday because the people in here are always willing to open their doors to each other and to the community and it's the people in the community who make this school a community school." One teacher noted that her school emphasized teams of teachers in each division, working together so everyone was not only collectively responsible for the success of the students, but they were more valued as a team with each teacher contributing his or her talents to the collective pool. One of the teachers, nearing retirement said, "I'm a foundational person...you still need the bricks and the bricklayers to make the wall...and well...that's fine with my administration."

There were a few teachers, however, who did not welcome the collaborative environment that their principal was attempting to establish. An older teacher remarked that there were too many meetings and "fuzzy" feelings floating around and she didn’t feel she had the time for dealing with her colleagues’ problems in addition to her students'.
As can be seen in Table 4.12 the survey's items *connecting* and *exchanging* showed a reasonably high correlation ($r = .57$). The survey item *connecting* also correlated significantly with the item *sharing* ($r = .52$). The items *exchanging* and *sharing* were also significantly correlated ($r = .62$) When asked about the opportunities to locate knowledge, the item *locating* had a correlation of .33 to the item *connecting* and a correlation of .40 with the item *exchanging*. Thus teachers felt less able to locate knowledge, a necessary component in a knowledge-based environment if one is to connect and exchange with one's peers. With only two urban schools in the sample, the researcher was not able to comment on whether geographical setting was a plausible explanation for why teachers felt much better about the opportunities to exchange knowledge and connect to people with relevant skills and interests, but did not feel they had the opportunity to locate relevant knowledge that they needed. In terms of attending professional development seminars located in larger urban areas, several teachers from these more remote rural areas noted that weather, distance and time constrained their chances for attending several of the teacher workshops offered each year.

Table 4.12

*Bivariate Correlation Matrix for Questions 22-28 (N=124)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Locating</th>
<th>Exchanging</th>
<th>Connecting</th>
<th>Sharing</th>
<th>Valuing</th>
<th>Newways</th>
<th>Networking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locating</td>
<td></td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanging</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newways</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**
From Table 4.12 it appeared that locating, exchanging and sharing information was not highly correlated with either new ways of thinking about teaching and learning or with school networking relations. The opportunity to exchange ideas, tricks of the trade and communicate to each other about students was, however, reasonably well correlated with the opportunities to connect and share information. An analysis of the demographic data from the survey revealed no correlations of gender, educational level achieved, grade level or years of teaching to survey questions #22 to #28 (Appendix E).

In sum, in community schools exchanging, connecting and sharing information and knowledge and having one’s knowledge base valued appeared to be crucial aspects of a knowledge-based environment. Networking with like-minded people also influenced teacher professionalism. In the interview data some teachers indicated that school structural conditions mitigated being able to negotiate information freely. For example, in one school the library was noisy, as was the staff room, and a quiet area in the school simply did not exist for careful reflection and the exchange of important information and ideas. As a precious commodity in community schools, knowledge itself may be sought continuously but its acquisition, use and dissemination can only be sustained if teachers work in an environment which supports collaborative arrangements. Teachers’ opportunities to exchange, connect and share information clearly answers research question #3 “which aspects of a knowledge management system are important to teachers’ work?”
Research Question #4: What are teachers’ perceptions of their professionalism?

Professionalism is as much an outcome as it is a set of pathways formulated to achieve occupational status. From the survey, responses to question #29 and question #34 indicated that teachers experienced a strong sense of professionalism (Table 4.13). In response to question #29, “I have a strong sense of my worth as a professional,” 86% of the teachers in this study agreed, as did 99% of the teachers to question #34, “I view myself as a professional.” The findings suggested that, overall, teachers in these dozen schools enjoyed their professional lives and found their occupation to be professionally and intellectually rewarding. Question #32 and #33 asked teachers whether they agreed that teaching had seldom been either a professional enterprise or an intellectual one. The data in Table 4.13 also showed that 99% of the teachers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they viewed themselves as professional workers.

Table 4.13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions from Survey Instrument</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29. I have a strong sense of my worth as a professional.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I think male teachers are seen as more professional than female teachers.</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I am disillusioned with my professional life.</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. For me, teaching has seldom been a professional enterprise.</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. For me, teaching has seldom been an intellectual enterprise.</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. I view myself as a professional.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With means of 1.72, for the survey questions #32 and #33, the histograms in Figures 4.6 and 4.7 showed that teachers appeared satisfied with their occupation both intellectually and professionally. One of the teachers noted that teaching was a
professional enterprise because it required that one adopt a professional attitude and this, she felt, was no different from the professional attitude that a doctor or nurse would convey in their interpersonal relations at work.

Figure 4.6. Teaching as an intellectual enterprise

Figure 4.7. Teaching as a professional enterprise

In the interviews, several teachers noted that being a team player, trustworthiness, accountability, continual improvement and doing what is right were key ingredients of teacher professionalism. One grade five teacher observed,
however, that, “getting people to take charge of their personal development requires considerable encouragement.” A grade seven teacher, connecting teachers’ accountability to professionalism remarked “accountability ought to demystify our professional work.” Accountability was also mentioned in several interviews and it appeared that teachers in this study clearly recognized that teacher accountability was crucial to the school’s students, community and administration.

A few teachers exhibited surprise at being asked during the interview if they felt “professional.” This question was asked because there is a perception among some teachers working in non-community schools that those who work in community schools are somehow less-than-professional or cannot find jobs elsewhere. Informal conversations with non-community school teachers, done in the course of this research, revealed that some educators looked upon community schools as “dummy” schools. Indeed, the survey data pointed to a handful of teachers who did not have a strong sense of professional worth, were disillusioned with their professional life and did not view their career as a professional enterprise while only a few teachers checked off that they were “neutral” about their occupation being intellectually and professionally satisfying. In their interviews, several teachers mentioned being rejuvenated by working in a community school because they felt so needed. One teacher had taken a few years off to raise her own children and when she returned to teaching the occupation had become so much more stressful, hectic and demanding. She stayed at the school for four years feeling demoralized, unhappy and distinctly unprofessional. Only when a friend talked her into moving over to Queensway did she begin to reflect on what was important to
her. Following reflection, came a mental search for new foundations out of which a
new sense of purpose and meaning then took shape.

Figure 4.8 outlined teachers’ occupational disillusionment. When asked
about occupational disillusionment, a mean of 2.0 indicated that few teachers agreed
with the statement, “I am disillusioned with my professional life.” The majority of
the teachers in this survey (70%) were not disillusioned with their professional life
and many teachers indicated in their interview that teaching, especially in
community schools, had remained intellectually rewarding as well as challenging
for them.

![Figure 4.8. Teachers’ Feelings of Disillusionment](image)

From the survey, question #30, “I think male teachers are seen as more
professional than female teachers” was included in the survey to see if any gender
differences existed in response to this question. With a mean of 2.2 it appeared that
65% of the respondents did not agree with this question. Males’ response had a
mean of 1.8 while females’ had a mean of 2.3 (Figure 4.9). No statistical
significance existed between men’s and women’s responses.
Figure 4.9. Males seen as More Professional than Females

Thus, Figures 4.6 to 4.9 indicated that teachers in this survey responded consistently to all four questions and were confident that their feelings of professionalism were intact. The majority of teachers were neither disillusioned with their occupation nor did they find it intellectually and professionally unsatisfying.

One teacher noted that a current emphasis on professionalism in teaching has been continuously encouraged in her school by workshops, educational reform reports such as the SchoolPlus document and the presence of specialists in educational psychology who have helped teachers link pedagogical practice to children’s developmental stages. Several other teachers also noted that in-services and the like helped focus teachers’ struggles to work on both their internal and external dimensions of professionalism.

A correlation matrix (Table 4.14) composed of the items for questions #29 to #34 showed only two significant correlations. The correlation between the item worth (question #29) and the survey item selfview (question #34) was .50 and the
correlation between the survey item *professionalenterprise* (question #32) and the item *intellectualenterprise* (question #33) was .64. Question #29 was concerned with the external dimension of teacher professionalism; what view did teachers have about their worth to the *occupation* of teaching as a profession? Question #34, on the other hand, was concerned with the internalized, normative dimension of teacher professionalism. What view did teachers have about their own sense of self worth as a teacher who *ought* to be a professional? The correlation between question #32 and #33 showed a congruency between teaching being viewed as both a professional and an intellectual endeavour for most teachers. The other correlations were too low to be statistically significant. The negative signs in front of the items *disillusionment* and *selfview* and *professionalenterprise* and *selfview* indicated that teachers had a good sense of professional self worth and were *not* disillusioned with their career as a professional and intellectual enterprise, thus the negative direction for the correlations.

Table 4.14

*Bivariate Correlation Matrix for Questions 29-34 (N=124)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Worth</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Disillusionment</th>
<th>Professional Enterprise</th>
<th>Intellectual Enterprise</th>
<th>Selfview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worth</td>
<td>- .09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disill.</td>
<td>- .37**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof.Ent.</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int.Ent.</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selfview</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

An examination of the correlation coefficients, using only the demographic data for questions #29 to #34, revealed no significant correlations due to gender, educational level, grade level taught or number of years at the job (Appendix E).
In sum, teachers' perceptions of their professionalism appeared embedded in a strong foundation of intellectual and professional enterprises in which the teachers in this study have seldom been disillusioned by their professional life. Teachers appeared to identify strongly with the profession of teaching and their self-esteem as professional workers reinforced their occupational identity.

Research Question #5: What are Teachers' Opinions Regarding the Community School Initiative?

The fifth and final segment of the survey instrument questioned teachers' opinions about Saskatchewan’s community school initiative. The emergence of a knowledge-based society requires educators to rethink traditional approaches to schooling practices and the vision of SchoolPlus calls for educational responsiveness and relevance to strengthen schools.

Table 4.15 showed a similarity between teachers' responses to question #35 and #36. While between 36% to 38% of the teachers surveyed agreed that their perceptions of teacher professionalism had changed, as had their sense of professional “renewal,” an almost equal percentage disagreed that their perceptions or feelings of “renewal” had been altered. And, an almost equal percentage of teachers were neutral about either item. The twelve teachers I interviewed admitted feeling “renewed” and mentioned that being needed, being able to make a difference or having a principal who cared were key facets of their professional “renewal.” One teacher said, “I taught with Allan at B__ and then he transferred to Queensway. I stayed at B__ for a couple of years and the new principal was just awful so I asked for a transfer to Queensway. Allan is very professional, he's always there for us and encourages all of us to expand our horizons.” A few teachers
indicated they worked with colleagues who acted "less professional" because they were able to get away with things knowing the students' parents wouldn't complain. In every school, at least one teacher commented on a colleague who "never covered the curriculum"—a tactic that was considered unprofessional. Analysis of the interview data pointed out that for some teachers, working in a community school had altered their perceptions of teacher professionalism because they observed other teachers being gossipy, disrespectful, yelling a lot at students and being unprepared for lessons. Teachers who rated some of their colleagues as less professional viewed them as poor role models who did not know how to go about teaching.

Table 4.15

Table 4.15 Teachers Perceptions Regarding the Community School Initiative (N=124)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions from Survey Instrument</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35. Working in a community school has altered my perceptions of teacher professionalism.</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. As a result of working in a community school I have a renewed sense of professionalism.</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. In my school there have been adequate resources to support the implementation of the community school model.</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. The community school model is working well for our students.</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.10 displayed teachers' responses to the question about adequate resources for their community school; responses that varied considerably. This variation was likely due to funding formulae, geographical location, board members and the degree to which the principal was able to advocate for money. These are factors beyond the purview of the teachers and the issue of adequate funding constitutes another whole topic in itself. The purpose of this question was simply to get teachers' opinions about the adequacy of funding in their schools since there is a public perception, at least among other public school teachers, that community
schools "get money thrown at them." The whole issue of appropriate funding is, of course, a thorny one in any school. In spite of the variation in teachers' responses to funding, 70% of the teachers in this survey indicated that the community school model was working well. The survey item *goodmodel* was perceived by teachers to be an amalgam of leadership, resources and school governance that allowed them to utilize new ways to approach teaching, offered the teachers flexibility in program delivery and provided a supportive environment for the school's at-risk students.

![Graph](image)

*Figure 4.10. Perceptions of Adequate Resources and Community School Initiative as a Good Model*

Teachers in the first four schools were neutral about both the adequacy of resources for their community school and whether this model of schooling was useful for at-risk students. Teachers in Casa Rio and Westway Community Schools,
the only two urban schools in this research, indicated that their resources were not adequate in spite of agreeing that the community school model was a good one.

Table 4.16 showed low correlations for the responses to questions #35 to #38. Low correlations in this table are likely due to the items in this section of the survey being "outcomes" of teacher professionalism rather than predictors. An analysis of the demographic data from the survey revealed no correlations of gender, educational level achieved, grade level or years of teaching to the survey questions #35 to #38 (Appendix E).

Table 4.16
Bivariate Correlation Matrix for Questions 35-38(N=124)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Goodmodel</th>
<th>Renewed</th>
<th>Unaltered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodmodel</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewed</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaltered</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

In sum, under the established criterion, no items from part five of the survey (questions 35-38), answering the fifth research question "what are teachers' opinions of the community school initiative," remained in the final factor analysis except for the survey item resources which found a home in Factor Three—Knowledge-based Environment. As with the item newways (question #27) the item goodmodel (survey question #38) loaded equally onto all three factors in factor analysis; indicating that teachers felt the community school model was a good model but only in schools with positive school climates, enjoyable work environments and moving progressively towards the goal of effective management of knowledge. Overall, however, teachers appeared positive about current reforms to move specific schools in specific neighbourhoods to community schools, even
though not all schools received adequate funding for this initiative. From Table 4.15 it was seen that by and large there were as many teachers who did not experience a renewed sense of professionalism (35%) as there were teachers who did (36%) and an equal number of teachers whose perceptions and sense of teacher professionalism remained unchanged (30%).

The following section discusses the analysis of the 31 items on the survey using regression to “flush out” the predictor variables that best explain the criterion variable (in other words, the dependent variable)—teacherprofessionalism.

Regression Analysis

Bivariate correlations are frequently used in quantitative analysis to describe the relationship between two variables and thus, a topic closely related to correlation is regression analysis. Regression analysis is concerned with relationships among variables either through the use of prediction or explanation. Stepwise regression is typically the test of choice when one is interested in prediction (Huck, 2004). Stepwise regression is a heuristic which answers “what is the smallest number of variables making the biggest contribution to the dependent variable?” In this study simple multiple regression (stepwise) was used to determine which of the survey’s items best predicted the significant facets of teacher professionalism. Regression was run several times, ending up with a list of 22 items that, when the coefficient of determination ($R^2$) was adjusted, showed a substantial correlation between the predictor variables and the criterion variable—teacherprofessionalism. In other words, regression was repeated several times in order to achieve the greatest amount of variance in the data set explained by the least number of predictors.
Stepwise regression tests and removes the independent variables (survey items) at each step until an established criterion holds. In this analysis the criterion \( \text{Probability-of-F-to-Enter} \leq .05 \) was used to enter a variable into the model and the condition \( \text{Probability-of-F-to-Remove} \geq .10 \) was used to remove a variable from the model. SPSS also provided an ANOVA and an analysis of the coefficients for each of the four predictor variables (Appendix F).

Stepwise regression offers a heuristic for prediction but because of the nature of stepwise regression it must be noted that the predictor variables, when being used for interpretation, yield an overestimation of the "true" relationship of the predictor variables to the dependent variable—teacher professionalism. The results of the regression equation, in this research, were supported in the literature and the interview data.

A multiple regression procedure was used to predict the major variables that best explained teachers’ sense of professionalism. For the overall data items, stepwise regression came up with four predictor variables; valued, effectiv, comitmnt and newways. With a correlation coefficient of \( r = .84 \) almost 70% of the variance of the criterion variable, teacherprofessionalism, was explained by the four predictor variables (adjusted \( R^2 = .69 \)). Sums of squares in the resultant ANOVA table showed that, cumulatively, each regression explained more than the residual. F ratios resulted in significance levels of \( p<.0001 \) thereby showing that the ratio of explained variance (regression) to unexplained variance (residual) was statistically significant. Thus, the results of this regression analysis were not due to chance.
Table 4.17
*Summary of Regression Analysis on Overall Data Predicting Teacher Professionalism (N=124)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valued</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>153.78</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>104.31</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newways</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>60.14</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>51.84</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.17 outlines the four predictor variables obtained from the regression analysis. The relationship between the criterion variable teacher professionalism, called `tchrprof` in this equation, and the predictor variables was described by:

$$TCHRPROF = \beta_1 \times \text{VALUED} + \beta_2 \times \text{EFFECTIV} + \beta_3 \times \text{NEWWAYS} + \beta_4 \times \text{COMITMNT}$$

This equation was based on the assumption of a linear relationship between the criterion variable and the predictor variables. The assumption of linearity was easily examined in Figure 4.11 with a scatterplot of residuals (standardized) on the Y-axis against predicted values (standardized) on the X-axis and also against each of the individual variables. Any curvilinear pattern in the residuals would indicate a non linear relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables and thus, would call for a nonlinear regression model to be used. Constant variability across all values on the independent variables was supported by the scatterplot and no evidence existed to question the linearity assumption.
Collinearity can have harmful effects on multiple regression, both in the interpretation of the results and how they were obtained in stepwise regression. When using several variables as predictors in the teacher professionalism regression model, an assessment of collinearity was necessary. Collinearity ensures that one independent variable is not a linear function of the others—in other words a high tolerance value (near 1) is most desirable. Tolerance values approaching 0 indicate that a specific predictor variable is highly collinear with one other. The excluded-variable output from regression showed no evidence of collinearity.

The aggregate data, in which all dozen schools were combined for analytic purposes, clearly showed strong relationships among numerous variables, linearity, statistical significance and scale reliability. However, when the data's survey items were analyzed school by school in order to assess differences among schools regarding key aspects of teacher professionalism, homogeneity of variance was violated and one-way ANOVA was not recommended. A one-way ANOVA would
have permitted the researcher to use the data for each of the 12 schools for the purpose of making inferences concerning the means of the study’s population but sample sizes were too small to be useful. Levene’s test of homogeneity was used to show that the variances on several items in the questionnaire varied significantly from school to school. Figure 4.12 showed the results of the regression equation in which McDonald to Kingsway scored poorly on many of the survey’s items, Cannard to Casa Rio scored better, and Westway to StoneyB were schools in which almost all teachers felt a strong sense of professionalism, rated their school as an effective and professional workplace and felt valued working there.

For the overall data, using 21 items from the survey, the regression equation, \[ TCHRPROF = \beta_1 \times \text{VALUED} + \beta_2 \times \text{EFFECTIV} + \beta_3 \times \text{NEWWAYS} + \beta_4 \times \text{COMITMNT}, \] was used to divide the dozen community schools into three groups. The resultant histogram (Figure 4.12) depicted means for the 21 survey items used to generate the regression equation. Thus, for comparative purposes, schools that scored a mean of 2.8 or lower on all 21 items were categorized as group one, while group two was comprised of schools that had means between 2.8 and 3.6 and five schools fell into this group. A mean score higher than 3.6 made up the schools in category three.
Figure 4.12. Regression Equation Applied to Overall Data Items

Table 4.18 outlined the relevant regression summary data for the three school groups. The $R^2$ value indicated the percentage of the criterion variable (dependent variable) explained by the predictor variable(s) and $B$ varied between -1 to +1, indicating the influence and direction of the “slope” of the relationship. The p-value, derived from statistical $F$ denoted a likelihood that the predictor variable’s ratio of variance was merely due to chance. The lower the p-value, the less likelihood of a prediction due merely to chance. Viewing Table 4.18 one can see that the survey item commitment ($R^2 = .39$) accounted for 39% of the variance on the dependent variable—teacher professionalism—in group one schools, while the items valued ($R^2 = .69$) commitment ($R^2 = .74$) and enjoyable ($R^2 = .76$) predicted 76% of the dependent variable in group two schools. Only one predictor variable—
valued—emerged from the regression for group three schools and that variable \( R^2 = .44 \) accounted for 44\% of teacher professionalism.

**Table 4.18**  
*Summary of Regression Analysis on School Groups Predicting Teacher Professionalism*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group One</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Group Two</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Group Three</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( R^2 )</td>
<td>( \beta )</td>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>( R^2 )</td>
<td>( \beta )</td>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>( R^2 )</td>
<td>( \beta )</td>
<td>p-value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valued</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyabilt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( N = 124 \)

The predictor variable—*commitment*—appeared in two of the three school groups. Research indicates that commitment to the teaching profession has been found to correlate with teacher efficacy (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996; Hord 2004). These authors indicated that teachers who have a sense of being able to influence their students in positive ways rate their work satisfaction more highly than teachers who do not feel the same high degree of influence. Most of the teachers in this survey have taught in non-community schools and although their sense of professionalism has not changed by working in a community school, many other aspects of their job have. As these teachers became more informed about their workplace they began to formulate important impressions about work in community schools. With a mean of 3.30 it appeared that, for most teachers, their commitment to the profession changed very little as a result of relocating to a community school.
When analyzing just the demographic data to examine key predictors of teacher professionalism, stepwise regression pointed out that school identity (the teacher’s school) emerged as the only predictor item. This was not surprising, given the significant differences in teachers’ responses school by school. School identity accounted for 20% of the variance of the dependent variable. Neither gender nor years of teaching added to the prediction of teacher professionalism after school identity was controlled for.

Schools are complex organizations and although each school’s administration makes decisions about the best way to allocate resources, to fulfill the school’s mission and to satisfy its various stakeholders, some schools are more successful in meeting the needs of their constituencies than are other schools. The final discussion in this chapter focuses on a synopsis of the three school groups and relates the findings to the overall research question “what factors best explain teachers’ sense of professionalism while working in community schools?”

The School Groups

Stoll and Fink’s (1996) work addressed the issue of school improvement by focusing on what makes a “good” school rather than what makes a school “good.” As per their typology (cited in Preedy, Glatter & Wise, 2003, p. 100) “struggling” schools are ineffective, “strolling” schools are moving towards some kind of school improvement and “cruising” schools are perceived to be effective by both the community and the school staff. The histograms, bar charts and figures generated from the survey items in this study revealed considerable differences among schools. As per Table 4.12 schools who scored a regression mean of 2.8 or less on
the 21 survey items were deemed “struggling” schools. This first group of schools was composed of McDonald, Conway and Millard Community Schools. The next five schools, Kingsway through to Casa Rio Community schools, with means from 2.9 to 3.5 were labelled “strolling” schools. Westway, the two Stoney Schools and Viney Ridge all had means higher than 3.6 on the survey’s 21 items and were termed “cruising” schools (see Stoll & Fink’s typology, 1996).

There were, of course, considerable differences from school to school on individual survey items. For example, Conway Community School (group one) had a mean of 3.6 when asked about rating their school as a professional work place. McDonald School (group one), on the other hand, had a mean of 2.5 for the item proplace. Cannard teachers scored a mean of 3.7 when rating their school as an enjoyable work environment, and while the data showed that the teachers at Alexandria School felt more professional than did the Cannard teachers, the Alexandria teachers only scored a mean of 2.8 when rating their school as enjoyable. Thus, to understand better the important factors in teacher professionalism, aggregating the data and then dividing the twelve schools into three distinct groups rendered a clearer picture of the overall school conditions that contributed to teachers’ feelings of professionalism.

Teachers working in “struggling” schools were not able to rate their school as a professional place to work. Figure 4.13 showed a mean of 3.3 for struggling schools on the survey item professionalplace compared to the “cruising” schools’ mean of 4.3. The teachers in these group one schools were not able to experience the development of organizational capacity as an every-day endeavour, did not believe
they had adequate access to the accoutrements, such as leadership, valuation of their knowledge or time to invest in their career, all of which were needed to develop personal capacity. The interviews with teachers working in struggling schools showed innumerable problems that, although many teachers deemed “petty,” nonetheless cumulatively resulted in an erosion of teacher professionalism. Behaviours that impacted their worksite satisfaction included the principal’s failure to communicate effectively with teachers and staff, an inability to follow through consistently on decisions and a failure to truly listen to what others had to say.

Figure 4.13 shows that almost 50% of the teachers working in struggling schools were either neutral, or disagreed that their school was a professional place compared to Figure 4.14, in which only two teachers, working in cruising schools, were neutral about rating their school as a professional place.

![Figure 4.13](image-url)

*Figure 4.13. Rating their School as a Professional Place in Struggling Schools*
Figure 4.13 pointed out that the majority of the teachers in struggling schools did not share a unified response about their workplace being an enjoyable environment or not. On the other hand, almost all the teachers located in cruising schools agreed about the enjoyable nature of their workplace. One of the teachers working in a struggling school noted that, "a professional workplace is really about timing...how well are we doing at this moment, how well does the community perceive us at this moment, what is our student literacy rate now." She recognized that things could change fairly quickly in a school, particularly under the leadership of an effective principal. A teacher in one of the cruising schools said he worked in a professional workplace because the principal worked hard at engendering goodwill, respect and continuously challenged the teachers to work on "quality performance."
Figure 4.15 Rating their School as an Enjoyable Place in Struggling Schools

In struggling schools, Figure 4.15 showed a mean of 2.6 on rating one's school as enjoyable or not, vs. a mean of 3.9 for cruising schools (Figure 4.16). Teachers in struggling schools were quite neutral about their worksites being either professional or enjoyable. This researcher assumed that teachers who experienced positive feelings of validation, affirmation and schooling supports would also find their work place more enjoyable. For example, the teachers from Cannard (group two) rated their school as an enjoyable workplace (mean = 3.6) compared to Alexandria School (group two) with a mean of 3.0.
Figure 4.16. Rating their School as an Enjoyable Place in Cruising Schools

To reiterate, the four key predictor variables from regression analysis were:

- able to commit (commitment) to the profession
- feeling valued (valued)
- feeling effective (effective) and
- finding new ways (newways) to teach.

Table 4.19
Summary of Means and Standard Deviations for Each School Group for Four Key Predictors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group One</th>
<th></th>
<th>Group Two</th>
<th></th>
<th>Group Three</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valued</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newways</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 4.19 showed considerable differences in means on the 21 survey items among the three school groups which demonstrated that group one schools were not yet oriented towards the development of a school-based learning community, while the schools in group two were well on their way and the schools
in group three have experienced school leadership which promotes and facilitates an active professional learning community.

Summary of Chapter Four

From the results of regression analysis on the overall data it can be concluded that feeling valued, effective and having the opportunity to bring new ways of teaching and learning are important factors in teacher professionalism. Being able to commit to one’s occupational identity was also a key facet of teacher professionalism. Furthermore, in the demographic data, the school itself emerged as the principal predictor of teacher professionalism. Teachers were more apt to report lower levels of feeling professional in schools they did not rate highly as professional work places. The teachers’ perceptions, feelings and opinions varied widely in the dozen community schools in this study, particularly in terms of feeling professional, being able to commit to the occupation, finding their workplace enjoyable and professional and having opportunities to manage school information and knowledge to not only improve their own professional growth but to improve the lives of their students. In keeping with a review of the literature, the three factors—School Climate, Teachers’ Work Environment and Knowledge-based Environment will be discussed in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF STUDY'S FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

The material in this chapter outlines the results from the research questions posed in Chapter One and the researcher discusses these results in relation to teacher professionalism and school-based professional learning communities, communities of practice and strategies for effective knowledge management practices. The findings in this chapter are also related to the concept of capacity building for improving teacher professionalism. A re-conceptualization of relevant factors enhancing teacher professionalism is followed by implications for theory, practice and future research and the chapter then ends with some concluding comments.

Summary of Study

The purpose of this study was to answer the principal research question “what factors best explain teachers’ sense of professionalism while working in community schools?” These factors were ascertained by the use of five questions:

1. In community schools, what schooling supports define a professional workplace for teachers?
2. In community schools, what factors enhance and erode teachers’ sense of professionalism?
3. In community schools, which aspects of a knowledge management system are most important to teachers’ work?
4. What are teachers’ perceptions of their professionalism?
5. Overall, what are teachers’ opinions of Saskatchewan’s community school initiative?

The findings in this chapter were generated from surveys distributed to twelve community schools of which ten were located in rural areas near First Nation reserves and two were located in a large urban area. Of the 124 teachers who completed the survey, twelve were interviewed and of these twelve teachers interviewed, three were teacher-principals.

Summary of Findings and Discussion

Findings and discussion are connected to the first research question which asked what schooling supports defined a professional workplace for teachers while the second question asked teachers about the factors which enhanced and eroded their sense of professionalism. The important aspects of knowledge management in community schools, teachers’ perceptions of their professionalism and their opinions about Saskatchewan’s community school initiative have also been discussed.

Question 1. What Schooling Supports Define a Professional Workplace?

In this study, the principal and his or her leadership, along with building a focus on “community,” was key to teacher professionalism and poor school leadership led teachers to experience a lowered sense of professionalism. Successful schools’ research (Eaker, DuFour & DuFour, 2002; Hord 2004) has indicated that elements such as collaborative leadership, open communication and an organizational environment that supports instruction and teaching have a positive impact on school climate. A healthy school climate correlates with increased teacher productivity and satisfaction and leads to increased student achievement. Deal and Peterson (1998) found that school leaders
need to develop and articulate a sense of purpose and create a positive "ethos of place" where all feel safe and appreciated; leaders can inspire and challenge people; leaders can "nourish the competence of staff and students, their thinking and their daily lives" (p. 139). Principals and colleagues who projected an encouraging and motivating attitude were ones who fostered a supportive learning environment for everyone. Several teachers from the group three schools (crusing schools) raised important questions about leadership and educational change, recognizing that good leadership was crucial to managing change. As Lindstrom and Speck (2004) noted "given what we know about high-quality professional development practices, the school and the principal as a collaborative professional development leader have the capacity to create the professional learning community that will produce the results" (p. 134). However, teachers not only needed support from the principal, but also from their peers.

Peers are a critical source of academic and professional support (Dryfoos & Maguire, 2002). Teachers certainly feel there is value in listening to what each other has to say although the nature of conversation and degree of quality are also important aspects in the provision of professional growth. In the workplace, sharing knowledge and networking in professional association with others symbolizes a long-term investment that supports knowledge creation at the school level. The opportunity to share and network was crucial to whether or not respondents rated their school as a professional workplace. In Figure 5.1 the importance of a shared, networked environment has been shown whereupon teachers then rated their school as a professional place in which to work. Sachs (2003, p.151), Hargreaves (2003, p. 174)
and Hord (2004, p. 151) all indicated that working in a networked, sharing environment improved the ways in which professional teachers worked together.

Figure 5.1. Networking, Sharing and Rating their School as a Professional Work-Site

Within a school the sharing of information, teaching strategies, tips and just plain “venting” should not be confined solely to individual and idiosyncratic networking and dialogue. Efficacious networking brings an end to teacher isolation. Networks can be the crucial feature of insightful and informative communication and exchanges on which professional knowledge, creation, dissemination and use so heavily depend (Moon, Butcher & Bird, 2000, p. 238). However, not all teachers enjoyed working in collaborative environments. As Fullan (2001) noted, some teachers guard their solitude because it gives them a territory to call their own, provides them with an opportunity to get work done and shields them from unwanted scrutiny. One teacher didn’t feel the principal really took her concerns seriously, had two years left to
retirement and in essence had “given up” trying to have her voice heard. When asked, she still felt the school was a somewhat professional place, in spite of the principal’s interactions with her. Hargreaves (1994) cautioned about “contrived collegiality” when administrators imposed superficial forms of collaboration upon a school climate that is still isolationist at heart.

The role of trust was also mentioned during interviews with teachers in several of the community schools. Teachers must feel they can trust their school administration, and vice versa. Fukuyama (1995) wrote,

> If people who have to work together in an enterprise trust one another because they are all operating to a common set of ethical norms, doing business costs less. Such a society will be better able to innovate organizationally, since the high degree of trust will permit a wide variety of social relationships to emerge. By contrast, people who do not trust one another will end up cooperating only under a system of formal rules and regulations, which have to be negotiated, agreed to, litigated and enforced, sometimes by coercive means. (p.27)

Although not specifically addressed in the survey, the issue of trust emerged from the interview portion of this research. Trust functions as a way of reducing uncertainty and regulates the interdependence of social relations. Relationships in schools are dependent upon trust to accomplish necessary goals. Recently, trust has been viewed as a critical component in healthy organizations in order to promote cooperative, cohesive and well-managed operations (Lieberman, 1990; Louis & Kruse, 1995). According to several teachers, schooling supports and trust went hand in hand. In essence positive administrative and collegial support enhanced trust, which then enhanced school climate. Trust incorporated accountability for decisions that the schools’ administration and teachers made. Louis and Kruse (1995) also found that joint deliberation in schooling decisions nurtured trust in schools. One teacher
commented, “we all work together here...like we trust each other. That didn’t happen at my previous school. It’s kinda nice.” Two teachers interviewed, each in a different community school, faced somewhat “distrustful” relations between teachers who were athleticism oriented and those who were not. The one teacher said that, “athletics dominate this school big time...if you’re not a jock, you’re not in. The jocks don’t think much of us and we don’t think much of them.” He was also a teacher who felt disillusioned and because of his school’s emphasis on athletics, teaching no longer held intellectual enjoyment. In this school, a climate of distrust prevailed. Mitchell and Sackney (2000) noted that “when distrust pervades a school culture, it is unlikely that the school will be an energetic, motivating place” (p. 49).

The findings in this research indicated that perceiving a congruency between the teachers’ ways of thinking and doing things and the school administration’s ways of thinking and doing things contributed to teachers’ feelings of professionalism. Approximately 86% of the teachers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge “fit” with their school’s. As Mitchell and Sackney (2000) pointed out “the structures in a learning community [should] allow for coherence and congruency to develop in the school and they locate the people more closely in relationship with one another” (p. 91). Other scholars (Dove, 2003; Moon et al, 2000) have noted that “organizational capacity” involves considering employee’s perceptions of organizational worthiness and whether they feel they are receiving an “equitable” return on their work, especially in light of differing value systems between employees and administrators. Figure 5.2 offers a heuristic schema outlining how a school’s goals can
be highly congruent or highly mismatched if management and teacher’s goals are not aligned.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 5.2**. Alignment of management and teacher’s goals

When organizational goals are congruent with what the employees think and believe, employee morale and performance is not compromised. Experiencing congruency in a school means that the goals, objectives and the breadth of actions necessary for carrying out the school’s mission are a function of the learning capacity of the school (Sachs, 2003). Along with a sense of congruency, however, this research showed that teachers working in community schools also needed to have their professional abilities validated and a belief that the occupation’s rewards would be appropriate for their needs.

Having their knowledge, skills and abilities affirmed and validated by their principal created a positive sense of professionalism for many teachers. Leadership involves not only inspiring and motivating people but is also connected to communicating values, affirming a job well done and “satisficing.” Mitchell and Sackney (2000, pp. 94-99) noted the importance of leadership for a learning community since leadership operates in and through the entire system. The kind of school leadership that values it’s followers and “shares” power through membership affirmation and validation stems from communitarian values and democratic ideals. In two of the group one schools (struggling schools), the teachers interviewed discussed
the authority of their principal in paradoxical terms. Both principals were very competent and capable, making it difficult for them to see much need for professional development. Although the principals were described as “good guys” the teachers felt the competence of their principal made it hard for them to recognize and affirm the potential of their school staff. Hord (2004) referred to this situation as “omnicompetence.” Competent and all-wise principals are entrapped by a sense of omnicompetence, making staff’s contributions or expressions of divergent views seem unimportant.

Feeling needed, truly able to make a difference and being involved in school-wide initiatives to improve academic measures highlighted teachers’ sense of professionalism. Bascia (1998) believed that employees with prolonged unfulfilled needs would become fixated on monetary rewards to counterbalance their psychological distress. To improve the situation, Bascia and Hargreaves (2000) recommended that organizations foster reward opportunities that allow employees a certain degree of independence from supervisory control, to engage with other employees and to utilize their full abilities in their work. Other researchers (Britzman, 1991; Fullan, 2001) have argued that providing better salaries to employees would not improve their job satisfaction nearly as much as would feeling recognized and being able to advance intellectually. In this study, the teachers working in schools that were rated poorly as professional workplaces were also schools that did not set aside school time during the week for teachers to dialogue with one another in “communities of practice” (Wenger, 1998) and who felt tethered to bureaucratic processes that gave them less control over schooling decisions than some of their colleagues in other schools.
Figure 5.3. Valued, Congruency, Rewards and Defining the School as a Professional Place

Figure 5.3 shows that teachers who felt their knowledge was valued by the school, who experienced high levels of congruency and felt rewarded also rated their work site as highly professional.

In the dozen community schools in this study a number of factors influenced teachers' sense of professionalism, many of them related to school leadership and school climate. In "cruising" schools, for example, teachers indicated that working in a supportive environment, and having their leadership focus on community, collaboration and communication were leaders who also modeled democratic principles and fostered trust. The findings in the first research question of this study go hand in hand with the literature noting that school climate is developed by supportive schooling conditions which facilitate the building of organizational capacity so that a shared philosophical
base exists and people work in a relationship of trust with one another (Deal & Peterson, 1998; Mitchell & Sackney, 2000).

Figure 5.4. Elements of Teacher Professionalism for Question One

Figure 5.4 summarizes the important schooling supports which best explain teachers' sense of professionalism while working in community schools. The findings from this research study showed that school leadership shaped school climate by focusing on a congruent and supportive environment where open dialogue was encouraged and teachers were able to experience the intrinsic rewards that frequently come with teaching. Schools who were able to enhance teachers' sense of professionalism were ones who worked on building organizational capacity where
rewards, supports, open dialogue and congruency contributed to the development of a school-based professional learning community.

**Question Two. What Factors Enhance and Erode Teacher Professionalism**

The findings of this study showed that “people” and “place” exerted considerable influence on teachers’ sense of professionalism, and school policies much less so. Table 5.1 displays the data for the open-ended survey questions on teacher professionalism.

Table 5.1
*Factors which Enhance Teachers’ Sense of Professionalism*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students (1)</td>
<td>Teacher’s work (3)</td>
<td>School’s expectations (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues (2)</td>
<td>Career expectations (4)</td>
<td>School district supports (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal (6)</td>
<td>Learning opportunities (5)</td>
<td>School policies (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents (7)</td>
<td>The community (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community perceptions of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher’s work (12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers were asked to check off the items they felt enhanced their sense of professionalism and the number in parenthesis for the items in Table 5.1 represented a ranking for each of the twelve items. In Table 5.1 the notion of “place” played a key role in enhancing teacher professionalism. The concept of “place” included such items as teacher’s work, their career expectations, opportunities for intellectual growth and the community in which they worked. Frazer and Lacy (1993) defined “community” as a group of like-minded people operating in a specific place with common interests, ongoing discussions, caring for each other and sharing established histories, rituals and norms. Teachers in community schools appear to share this vision of “place.” It is well established that when parents and members of the school community work hand in hand
to achieve a common goal, student achievement increases—leaving teachers with enhanced feelings of professionalism.

In communities of practice, policies often reflect a group's espoused ideas. How does a group want to act, how do they see themselves and what is important to them? Argyris and Schon (1978) offered the concept of theories-in-use related to what the group actually does. In a school setting, aligned groups are often consistent, flexible and tend to be less bureaucratic. Alignment of people, their place and the policies they stand on work together to shape teachers' work environment. When communication is limited, defensive routines are the order of the day and the school has inconsistent expectations of its membership, neither the institution nor the people in it experience the opportunity to enhance organizational capacity or teacher professionalism.

The information in Table 5.2 summarizes the factors that teachers felt eroded their sense of professionalism and other than a lack of time, which appeared to be an endemic problem in schools, the teachers in this survey overwhelmingly felt that student “problems” were a continual source of frustration. Many teachers noted the high rates of absenteeism, movement in and out of the school and “lates” as being extremely problematic for community school teachers. These problems were reflected in student passivity, indifference and behaviour.

Teachers felt there wasn't enough time to adequately attend to classroom discipline, student indifference and low academic achievement as well as tackle inept social skills, dysfunctional familial influences and poor hygiene. Comments such as, “I don't know how much more I can do in a day,” or “I've started to ask like....what's to
be gained by this,” pointed to a kind of psychological battering that underscored teacher professionalism.

Table 5.2
_Factors which Erode Teachers’ Sense of Professionalism_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student discipline (1)</td>
<td>Lack of time (2)</td>
<td>Workplace conditions (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student passivity (3)</td>
<td>School bureaucracy (7)</td>
<td>School policies (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student indifference (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student behaviour (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student academic expectations (6)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Colleagues (9)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraprofessionals (11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative indifference (12)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Several teachers noted frustrating aspects of working in a community school which at times, they indicated, did temporarily erode their sense of professionalism. Frequently mentioned during the in-depth interviews were student “lates,” apathy, indifference, discipline and lowered academic expectations. These teachers were trying to create a positive and meaningful learning environment for students who often experienced poor attendance, health problems, poverty and dysfunctional homes. Teachers who expressed dissatisfaction with their work environment felt overwhelmed by the demands of the job and the high needs of the students. Constant experiences with frustration and failure led some teachers to see their work as meaningless to the real needs of their students, resulting in a lowered sense of commitment to the teaching profession. It seemed that the few teachers in this study who felt overwhelmed by the work place demands placed upon them felt the non-academic activities detracted from their “real” work. One teacher noted, “I’m not interested in dealing with head lice on a day to day basis” while another teacher, in the same school, felt she was constantly
giving up part of her lunch hour to ensure that each one of her students had something to eat at noon. She often made sandwiches or asked other students to donate food items they did not want to eat that day. Thus, the nature of these teachers’ workload, coupled with time spent in non-academic activities altered their feelings of professionalism.

In addition to a lack of time to deal adequately with student behaviour, teacher professionalism was also related to reflection and the opportunity to consult with other professionals about problems and how to solve them. These activities took time and teachers working in community schools viewed time as a very precious commodity.

Administrative policies have considerable overlap in the ways they can supplant or erode teachers’ work environment. In this study, school policies appeared to be of little concern to the lives of teachers and neither particularly enhanced nor eroded teachers’ sense of professionalism even though school policies are often considered a “loci of authority,” reflecting the legitimizing authoritative structures of educational governance.

The information in Figure 5.5 shows that feeling valued and effective contributed to teachers’ feelings of commitment to their occupation, thereby enhancing their sense of professionalism. Feeling like a valuable and effective team player also resulted in teachers’ rating their school as an enjoyable work environment.
According to Wenger (1998), communities of practice are collegial, negotiated and promote flexible ways of thinking about work practices. When teachers are able to formulate and act on new ways of teaching and feel valued for their expertise and skills, they are then able to negotiate their experiences through participation and reification. In turn, a commitment to the profession is sustained. In education, teacher commitment is viewed as a form of loyalty. Lieberman (1990) indicated that a committed teacher should identify closely with the school and district and be heavily involved in the affairs of the organization—meaning that the extent of teacher commitment goes beyond mere personal interests. Louis and Kruse (1995) offered further insight into teacher commitment, indicating that it consists of four dimensions. These dimensions include a commitment to the school, to the academic goals of the school, a commitment to the students and a commitment to the body of professional knowledge needed to carry out effective teaching (p. 4). In this study, when teachers had the opportunity and support of
the principal to innovate and experiment with different kinds of teaching and assessment strategies, they rated their school as an enjoyable place to work. They also felt an enhanced sense of efficacy. Effective utilization of teachers' skills, abilities and talents led teachers to define their school as an enjoyable work-site and enhanced feelings of commitment to the profession. Table 5.6 showed that teachers working in community schools agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed opportunities to work on new and innovative ways of teaching their students.

![Graph](image)

**Figure 5.6. Opportunities to Explore New Ways in Teaching**

Alongside the recent clamour for academic competency and extensive knowledge of subject, a call for increased opportunities to exercise discretionary judgment over curriculum delivery has also been essential to the "new" teacher professionalism.
The icons provided in Figure 5.7 outline the necessary factors that led to enhanced professionalism. In this study teachers indicated that a work environment offering opportunities to feel committed, valued, effective and having the chance to explore new ways of teaching all worked together to create an enjoyable workplace. These factors enhanced teachers' sense of professionalism, whereas negative student behaviours frustrated many teachers. Student apathy, being late and arriving unprepared for class made teachers not only feel like they were "failing" their students but also made teachers feel their professional expertise was being undermined.

Figure 5.7. Elements of Teacher Professionalism for Question Two
Feeling valued, effective and being able to commit to one’s occupation were consistent with the research on professionalism and community (Louis & Kruse, 1995) and communities of practice (Wenger 1998). However, the item newways, defined as unique and individualized approaches to classroom instruction, has not yet been well mapped out in other research. Much of the educational literature studying teacher’s work lives has claimed that changing teachers’ perspectives often takes longer than changing their work practices (DuFour et al., 2004; Fullan, 2001), but the findings from the interviews in this study indicated that many of the teachers working in community schools were quite amenable to embarking on creative and different ways to teach. In community schools “pedagogical heterogeneity” enables teachers to break free from traditional ways of teaching.

**Question Three: Important Aspects of a Knowledge Management System**

The findings from this research showed that locating, exchanging and connecting were all important factors in managing knowledge in community schools. Teachers who associated with one another and shared common values indicated that connections to their students, colleagues and other school staff was an essential ingredient for creating schools that work. A century ago, teachers were expected to execute work according to supervisory demands, a job description and tacit instruction. Teaching has changed, however, and Apple (1986) noted that contemporary teachers, as knowledge workers, need to use educational knowledge to learn about existing ideas, produce new ones and continuously challenge themselves and their students. Utilizing existing knowledge with their students and other educators builds upon one’s personal understanding of the teaching/learning process in tandem with creating new knowledge.
which maximizes the school’s ability to leverage what is known to be effective and innovative. The community school leaders, in this study, who accommodated team planning and structured explicit opportunities for collegial interaction empowered teachers to connect, locate and exchange information and resources to learn from one another. Working in a knowledge-based environment gave teachers the chance to emphasize norms of professional collaboration and collusion and to build interpersonal capacity.

The distribution of the lines in Figure 5.8 shows a close alignment between teachers who perceived their school to be a place which connected them to other like-minded people in which necessary information could be located and exchanged, and their perception of the school being a professional work place.

Figure 5.8. Exchanging, Connecting, Locating and Regarding the School as a Professional Place
The important components of a school-based knowledge management system were ones that acted as "levers" to give teachers a sense of intellectual renewal and growth. The data in Figure 5.8 showed that teacher professionalism was enhanced when teachers had opportunities to locate and exchange information and knowledge and to connect with other professionals in an on-going dialogue. Connecting professional development to meaningful pedagogical content and practical classroom strategies made teachers feel more engaged and successful in their classrooms. Lindstrom and Speck (2004, pp. 74-81) also noted that skills associated with continuous collegial interactions were requisite for ongoing development and that a community of learners in networks reduced teacher isolation. School administrators that supported nested opportunities for professional discourse and learning operated in schools that were rated by their staff as professional work environments.

In communities of practice professional renewal can emerge from a variety of sources, a significant source being the learning that occurs during social interactions. Of course, the breadth and depth of these interactions depends on the degree of interdependence members in a school share. Covey (1989) said that, "interdependence opens up worlds of possibilities for deep, rich, meaningful associations, for geometrically increased productivity, for serving, for contributing, for learning, for growing" (p. 187). The opportunities to locate, connect and exchange information and build "knowledge capital" certainly augmented teachers’ interpersonal capacity for commitment to long-term school improvements.

One important finding in examining teacher professionalism, related to locating and exchanging knowledge, was the opportunity to "invest" in one’s career. Figure 5.9
demonstrated that teachers working in a supportive environment, who were able to rely on knowledgeable colleagues for ideas and advice, felt more encouraged to invest in their own professional learning. Teachers who rated their school as a professional workplace were teachers who were able to "invest" in the on-going development of their career. Arthur, Claman and DeFillippi (1998) distinguished three ways of knowing that underlie career behaviour; knowing-why, knowing-how and knowing-who.

1. knowing-why reflects individual motivation, values and the construction of personal and career identity. An individual's know-why reflects their career choices, adaptability and commitment to personal growth.

2. knowing-how involves explicit and tacit knowledge that is applied to one's work. Knowing-how also provides a platform for on-the-job training and professional growth.

3. knowing-who includes the relationships that support a person’s unfolding career. These relationships provide information, social and emotional support and serve as a repository for career investment (pp. 9-14).

Thus, knowing-why, how and who provide a dynamic picture of an individual's overall career investment and intellectual growth. Without opportunities to exchange, connect and dialogue in particular ways with like-minded others, one's sense of career investment is undoubtedly constrained. Communities of practice that do not reflect a sense of shared mission or purpose underpinning a community's activities do not likely "engage" employees. Disengaged employees are not likely to feel effective, valued or able to commit to their profession.
Darling-Hammond (1999) noted that "increasing teachers' expertise and effectiveness is critical to the success of ongoing efforts to reform our nation's schools. Only very knowledgeable and skilled teachers who are able to respond appropriately to student's needs can enable today's diverse learners to succeed at their learning goals" (p. 254). Darling-Hammond (1999) also observed that recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers relied on supportive procedures in the early years of teaching and opportunities for teachers to "work on improving their subject-matter knowledge" (p. 257). In short, to invest in the development of their teaching career.

![Graph](image)

*Figure 5.9. Being Able to Invest in One's Career and Rating School as a Professional Workplace*

The information in Figure 5.10 outlines the important elements of teacher professionalism in a knowledge-based work environment. An appropriate school-based knowledge management system was important for teacher professionalism because it
allowed teachers to locate, exchange and share knowledge which builds interpersonal capacity.

If knowledge was not different from data or information, there would be nothing new or interesting about knowledge management, but it is different. Knowledge is dynamic; created in social interaction among people working together. Knowledge is related to human reflection, action and thought (Argyris, 1993). The creation, use and dissemination of knowledge (a KM system) realizes school objectives, essentializes learning and builds a school's capital. Developing interpersonal capacity is a key ingredient in a school-based KM system because opportunities to locate, exchange and connect people to knowledge utilization form the basis for developing organizational learning. The learning of an individual in a KM system has many similarities with that of the organization. It isn't organizations, *per se*, that learn—it is individuals in the organization that do the learning. “Old” knowledge has little organizational value.

In counteracting the discourses around school privatization, economization and globalization, the notion of building capacity within a school, both personal and interpersonal, signals the “conditions of possibility” which can become venues for teacher professionalism and increased effectiveness. Thus, teachers engaged in building capacity can work as an empowered and synergistic group, working towards the betterment of the entire school.
Figure 5.10. Elements of Teacher Professionalism from Question Three

In a teacher’s work environment, opportunities to locate and exchange knowledge and connect with others creates interdependence. A viable KM system in a school encourages teachers to invest in their on-going intellectual development; to join the ranks of the “new” professionalism and to embrace connection at the expense of autonomy. In this study, the findings showed that opportunities to locate and exchange knowledge and search for ways to assume personal accomplishment provided teachers with dynamic patterns to utilize for their overall career investment. To date, very little literature links KM theories to the development of professional learning communities.
nor has the literature examined KM as a vehicle for teacher professionalism. Thus the utility of knowledge management is important for teacher professionalism but the role that KM can play in educational contexts is only recently beginning to emerge (e.g. Hargreaves, 2003; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).

**Question Four: What are Teachers' Perceptions of their Professionalism?**

For the most part, teachers were neither disillusioned with their professional life, nor did they find their occupation to be unrewarding—either professionally or intellectually. Analysis of the interview data showed that the majority of teachers were proud of their practical knowledge and their ability to draw from experiences in order to offer a sound pedagogical foundation to the school’s students. In this research study, teachers identified positively with their occupation because their everyday work was closely tied to the kind of professionalism teachers understood professionalism as being. One teacher noted that, “if I make decisions that are consistent with what I believe and with the school’s purpose, then I’ll continue to be positive around here, but if I’m not treated professionally and with respect—I’ll move on.” This teacher was implying that she was not willing to have her professionalism eroded. If events in the school were going to distance her from being treated professionally she would switch to a different school. Teachers appeared highly motivated to identify with, and connect to, their schools. Several teachers mentioned feeling a renewed sense of purpose by switching to a community school. They felt really needed.

Thus, the teachers in this research study had a strong sense of their professional self-worth, were not disillusioned with their professional occupation and felt their careers had been both professional and intellectual enterprises. These affirmations of
self-worth were clearly articulated, which was timely since it is, after all, teachers who are essential to the success of the community school initiative. The findings here do not concur with the literature that claims teachers are disillusioned with their professional lives due to successive waves of reform, standardization and being hijacked by systems of control which have tended to erode the professionalism of the occupation (Gitlin, 2001; Hargreaves, 1994). In this research teachers’ sense of professionalism appeared to be centered in multiple and overlapping dimensions. Their sense of professionalism was cognitive/affective AND social/personal.

**Question Five: What are Teachers’ Opinions of Community Schools?**

Some ambiguity existed around whether or not the Saskatchewan community school initiative was working well for at-risk students. This ambiguity was likely due, in part, to differing teachers’ perceptions about accountability. Some teachers felt that too much of the curriculum was being devoted to non-academic subjects when it was recognized that the community’s at-risk students really needed to be exposed to an academically oriented curriculum and some of the teachers interviewed from the group one schools, “struggling” schools, felt their school was not being accountable to the appropriate intellectual development of their students. Community schools varied in their funding requirements and the funding they received, influencing teachers’ perceptions about the adequacy of resources which, in turn, influenced their perceptions of the community school initiative.

The work of Hord (2004) and Sachs (2003) uncovered several key dimensions to professionalism in schools: 1) intensity of collegial relations among teachers; 2) schools structures which supported personal and professional growth; and 3) a shared focus and
sense of purpose. Weak professional communities were places in which strong norms of privacy and autonomy persisted and teachers were individually responsible for their own learning. The findings of this study show that teachers who work in rural and remote community schools often have little time to engage in collegial interaction, have poor access to external sources of expertise and work in communities where parameters are vague around the necessary coordinating services for children. Under these conditions, how well do teachers feel the community school initiative is working?

Figure 5.11 showed the wide range of responses from the survey data that teachers offered when asked if the community school model was working well for their at-risk students. The majority of teachers felt the community school model was working well. Those that were positive in their rating of the community school model felt they had opportunities to take on new and challenging tasks, meet different people and enjoyed being part of a “team.” In essence, the “one-stop collaborative institution” (Dryfoos, 1994) worked very well for these teachers although the majority of the teachers interviewed noted that they didn’t have the time to do the things they’d like to do or found it frustrating doing the things they liked to do and having the strategies not work! Teachers who rated the community school initiative a success did so, in part, because of the “cumulative impact of a package of interventions that result in changes to life scripts” (Dryfoos, 1994, p. 12). Only a very few teachers interviewed appeared willing to talk about the multiple obstacles to learning that their students faced on a daily basis and wondered aloud if the community school model would be able to tackle these.
Figure 5.11. Teachers’ Opinions about Community Schools

As the line “unaltered” shows in Figure 5.11, most teachers working in community schools were neutral about experiencing a renewed sense of professionalism and indicated that working in a community school had not really altered their feelings of professionalism. During the interviews many teachers related that working in a community school involved working differently but that their personal identity, as a professional teacher, remained unchanged.

Findings from the interview data revealed that several teachers felt that too much attention was focused on obstacles to education achievement that existed outside of the school but recognized that in-school conditions didn’t help student achievement either. Constant disruptions were cited as chronic problems to teachers’ work in community schools. One teacher noted, “people are always knocking on my door,
wanting to give X his lunch, or to remind Y not to take the school bus home. There are far too many distractions around here.” On the other hand, several teachers recognized that an important part of their students’ lives stemmed from cultural affirmation both for the student and the community. Food was frequently used as a source of “bribery” to entice parents to attend parent-teacher interviews and a considerable number of the community school teachers could be found flipping hamburgers or making pizza as part of their school day. They claimed they enjoyed the “outreach” to their student’s parents and other family members and tried to look upon all families in the school as an asset.

In terms of funding, many teachers wanted higher levels of funding in order to offer a greater variety of programs to the community’s families. One teacher observed that, “community school initiatives will not make up for the stresses and risk factors experienced by a lot of our students.” Dryfoos and Maguire (2000) noted the impact of community schools on student learning:

The next several years represent a critical juncture for community schools... In this era of high stakes testing and accountability... the community school movement must continually demonstrate how a community school approach impacts student learning and help to create the conditions for learning. (p. 182)

Implicit in the quote above is the concept of adequate funding that would allow community schools to offer programs that might not “make up” for the multiple risk factors that students face, but might very well assist students in “overcoming” such factors.

Thus, the majority of the teachers surveyed revealed that although resources were not adequate, the community school model worked fairly well for their at-risk students and that working in a community school neither altered their perceptions of
teacher professionalism nor did the majority of teachers experience a renewed sense of professionalism.

Conclusion

As mentioned in the literature review of chapter two, the past two decades have seen significant efforts made to operationalize and optimize learning communities. Enhancing various organizational levels of capacity (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000), creating communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) and promoting school effectiveness (Sergiovanni, 2000) through:

- knowledge management
- skill development
- reflective practice
- administrative competencies, and
- collaborative work processes

have all served as the building blocks for learning experiences that result in long-term consequences for academic and professional development. In building organizational capacity, teacher’s behaviours are targeted through an array of professional development activities designed to encourage educators to reflect and learn in more collegial settings. Organizational capacity is central to the concept of the school as an “agile” institution (Dove, 2003) which:

- develops information networks that are congruent with both administrative and teachers’ worldviews,
- supports front-line workers
- values and respects the ideas of everyone
- recognizes the value of intrinsic rewards, and
- connects the right knowledge to the right person at the right time (pp. 312-328).

In essence, promoting organizational capacity involves building the community school from the inside, out. Thus, building organizational capacity is not only about
how an institution responds to change, but also about having the capabilities and procedures in place to respond quickly to change. Community schools are the jump-start in life for at-risk students and change is an enduring part of teachers’ work in these schools. What many of the teachers wrote on their surveys or said in the interviews, assessed on a meta level of schooling complexity, pointed to organizational capacity as:

- quick but appropriate responses to continuously changing contexts, and
- taking advantage of the changes to learn how to do things better.

Facilitating learning communities requires supportive conditions. These include physical and socio-structural conditions that build organizational, interpersonal and personal capacity in specific ways and under specific conditions. In this study, school leadership was an important component in the development of a school-based learning organization. The principal needed to build a foundation of trust, communicate to teachers that their work was valued, and give teachers the freedom to experiment and take risks with their own teaching and learning. Thus, teachers’ sense of professionalism appeared to be largely determined by the school’s capacity to enhance teaching and learning. Furthermore, their sense of professionalism was guided by their school’s leadership as well as teachers’ relations with their colleagues.

Teachers working in struggling schools believed the principal to be more focused on managing than on leading while teachers in cruising schools clearly viewed the principal as a school leader. The literature is clear about the importance of the principal in the success of school improvement efforts and this study reflects research that has examined the development of professional learning communities in schools. In my study, teachers working in cruising schools have been provided with the necessary
leadership, strategies, structures and supports to engage in successful school-based learning organizations. Teachers in struggling schools, on the other hand, did not have a satisfying work environment, were provided with few opportunities to manage knowledge the way they wanted. In short, these teachers were not able to experience a school climate conducive to teacher learning and professional growth. The teachers in struggling schools lacked an organizational climate of trust in which to build interpersonal and personal capacity.

A Re-conceptualization of Teacher Professionalism

Based on the three factors that emerged from analysis of the data in this research study, in Figure 5.12 a re-conceptualization of the factors that best explain teachers' sense of professionalism while working in community schools has been offered. The items connected with the first factor—school climate—pointed to important aspects for teacher professionalism. Feeling rewarded, being supported, experiencing congruent worldviews and building strong networks all influenced how highly teachers rated their school as a professional place to work. Building organizational capacity is related to school climate.

The data from Factor Two—Teachers’ Work Environment—showed that developing personal capacity could be done best when teachers felt valued, effective, had opportunities to integrate new ways of teaching and were able to commit to their professional occupation. These aspects of teacher professionalism tend to build up a school’s “people value.” This shifts a school’s frame of reference from an organization employing its people, to an organization being deserving of them and influences whether or not teachers rate their workplace as an enjoyable one.
The data connected with Factor Three—Knowledge-based Environment—showed that teachers who enjoyed opportunities to locate, to exchange and to apply new ideas and information to problem solving felt confident about their ability to create new learning conditions for their students. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) suggested that an amalgam of tacit and explicit knowledge and the interactions thereof are an integral part of knowledge management in a competitive business environment. Higher levels of public education, technological access to information and a growing distrust of schooling practices means that teacher professionalism, more than ever, needs to be linked to learning organizations that rely on knowledge creation, use, dissemination and redefinition.

Complexities of implementation, half-hearted management support and difficulties measuring success have been used to explain lackluster organizational improvements. Building interpersonal capacity requires that school administrators remain cognizant that organizational needs be aligned with individual ones and aligning organizational and personal goals by emphasizing an integrated approach to school improvement. The opportunities for knowledge management in community schools, including being able to invest in one’s career, are actual day-to-day practices that ultimately determine the success of the school. In this study, “cruising” schools were ones that had teachers who posited themselves as learners, ready to connect with professional development ideas, locate knowledge, exchange it and engage in on-going intellectual mastery.
Figure 5.12. Key Aspects of Teacher Professionalism Re-conceptualized
A school-based professional learning organization, or community, is one that builds bridges connecting positive school climates to effective and rewarding work environments that focus on both teachers and students as learners requiring legitimate access to communication, information and knowledge management systems. In the “new” teacher professionalism schools are not only expected to offer education, but to ensure that high-quality education is offered wherein everyone grows intellectually and strives to achieve the benefits of a professional school-based learning community.

The data presented in this research project has implications for practice, theory and research and it is to these implications that we will now turn.

Implications for Theory

As a result of this inquiry, implications for teacher professionalism point to the role teachers and their professional associations must take on to enhance their professional image. Currently, the status of teacher professionalism is in a state of flux. The epithet “those who can’t, teach; those who can, do” compared to slogans such as “teachers touch the future” clearly characterize the public’s dichotomous perception of teaching. If teachers are born, not made then attempts to “train” teachers to develop intellectually and psychosocially will be ineffective. Teachers who are seen as teaching well do not often associate their effective practices with the hard work of intellectual endeavours, persistence and the capacity to change, as levers for their professionalism. Folkloric stories about teachers who single-handedly changed a person’s life can lead to a failure to recognize the need for continuing personal development and personal mastery.
Furthermore, a public perception endures that teachers work 10 months in a year with short days. This perception contributes to beliefs that teachers’ work is “not hard” work and that teaching is, therefore, not hard work either. Thus, teachers and their professional unions need to promote a “new” professionalism and construct a more contemporary image of teaching. Metaphors such as “banking” (Friere, 1970) or “spoon-feeding” place the occupation in a role that is seen as passive and benign. In the “new” teacher professionalism we need to use professional learning theories to define and describe teachers’ work in ways that are clear, vivid, valuable and reflect the work teachers actually do (Hord, 2004, pp. 155-157). The “new” teacher professionalism, in drawing from organizational theory and PLC literature needs to fundamentally change the traditional approaches to teaching that too many teachers still follow. The “new” professionalism needs an outward, communitarian and nomothetic focus rather than an inward and idiographic focus that currently characterizes teachers’ work lives. Teachers have become accustomed to enjoying individualism and classroom autonomy. School leaders have been accustomed to letting them do so. Schools need to be seen as organizations too, not just as schools.

The implications of this research also point to the necessity of having principals understand the theoretical connections among communities of practice, organizational learning and PLCs. This study showed that school improvement efforts need to be aligned with professional development goals related to the needs of teachers working in community schools. In cruising schools, continuous learning was embedded in the school’s climate, supported by school administrators and incorporated by teachers. The results of this study also showed significant differences in schools, even though many of
them were located in the same school division. Thus, although an individual school context is important, literature on school effectiveness, school improvement and professional learning communities all point to the primacy of school leadership in establishing a school’s climate and work environment. More research is needed to pin down theoretical frameworks in understanding inter-related aspects of communities of practice, learning organizations and school-based professional learning communities.

Implications for Practice

The research questions that guided this study represented an effort and a desire to identify and understand key components that influenced teachers’ sense of professionalism while working in community schools. The results have been consistent with school improvement literature that seeks to improve schools by focusing on building organizational, personal and interpersonal capacity which then offers a firm foundation on which to construct a school-based professional learning community.

This study of teacher professionalism has practical implications for educational administrators. The survey instrument could be used to assess teachers’ sense of professionalism in, for example, a school division. Following analysis of the results, schools with a low sense of teacher professionalism could then contract consultants, who possess a good understanding of PLC development, to come in and assist the school.

Just as school reform efforts are intended to provide appropriate learning environments for students, so too should teachers feel supported and excited about working in an environment that values their work, their risk-taking endeavours and the promotion of intellectual growth. The 124 teachers in this study experienced varying
levels of support from principals and colleagues, varying levels of involvement in schooling decisions and a sense of "community" that ranged from low to high. Professional learning community research has shown that low-performing schools can overcome barriers and challenges when a school's administration and staff are committed to the school's mission, when there is a sense of shared purpose and when everyone works in tandem to fulfill these. The implications of this research on teacher professionalism point to the key role principals play in promoting the school's capabilities, developing personal capacity and thereby, augmenting teachers' sense of professionalism. In practical terms, principals need to understand the crucial importance of:

a) developing collegial relations; let no teacher fall behind;

b) encouraging teachers to develop to the best of their potential;

c) developing school-wide systems of decision-making which involve teachers;

d) making these systems function effectively; avoid contrived collegiality and omnicompetence;

e) inviting teachers to take risks;

f) acknowledging and affirming that teachers can, and will, change; change is hard but change is not bad; and,

g) building the school's capacity to become the kind of professionalized worksite everyone envisions.

In this research project, the implications for teacher professionalism point to a "new" professionalism in which teachers must embrace innovative solutions for pedagogical practices that enhance the learning of students in community schools. Teachers'
collaborative work must be grounded in reflective dialogue and inquiry wherein staff and administration not only have conversations about teaching and learning, but also when certain issues are identified and where new ideas create new conditions for students. People move to becoming a PLC when they understand that each and every individual is responsible for maintaining and supporting a collegial environment that fosters a strong commitment to the teaching profession. From that commitment, teachers can then continue to seek new ways to make their schools better (Hord, 2004, p. 44).

This research on teacher professionalism also has implications for teachers’ role in their own personal mastery of knowledge management practices. In schools, the management of information and knowledge is still handled in individualistic ways. Teachers learn the necessary information to teach the curriculum and construct lesson-plan knowledge that meets proscribed specifications. Day-to-day school knowledge is focused on getting the right answer and there is little to no time for reflection, refueling, clarifying or heading down new paths. In the “new” professionalism, knowledge management is not just about gathering, networking, disseminating and using information—it is also about teachers transforming this knowledge to see broader vistas and horizons and to better understand one’s own values and how these fit with the purposes of schooling and to “think meaning, not facts.” In examining teacher professionalism the researcher found that the four schools in group three (cruising schools) and one school in group two (strolling schools) put aside time for team work and reflective work. As an educator, time to think, ponder, imagine, dream and then discuss all promote self-growth.
Teachers, themselves, need to understand the necessity of operating from a shared purpose and offer psychological support to one another, especially in community schools where student behaviour and academic achievement may be below par. For a school-based learning organization to emerge, thrive and survive, school teachers need to see themselves as continuous learners who truly see teaching as a profession—not just a job. Figures 5.13 and 5.14 outlined the implications of an augmented teacher professionalism in schools. Figure 5.13 showed that teachers in struggling schools feel less-than committed to their occupation while Figure 5.14 showed teachers working in cruising schools have been able to develop a deep commitment to the teaching profession. Which teacher would you rather have?

![Graphs showing Commitment](image)

**Figure 5.13 & 5.14.** Struggling Schools vs. Cruising Schools ratings for Commitment to Career

**Item: Commitment**

Implications for Further Research

Although many of the origins of various school reforms emphasize teachers' professionalism, few researchers have investigated key aspects that define both a teacher's sense of professionalism and a professional workplace. The present study was
designed to explore some key factors that explain teacher professionalism in community schools but this research collected data within proscribed parameters. As a result, while this study provided statistical analyses to examine teacher professionalism, the factors that enhanced and eroded it and the role of schooling supports, the data were specific to the local contexts of the schools studied, and may not be generalized to all teachers working in all community schools. Many other facets of teacher professionalism still need to be explored.

The data for this research were based on self-reported perceptions of teacher professionalism, their work environment and their definitions of a professional workplace. Future research should, however, focus on observational analysis as well as data collected from school administrators to determine the extent to which perceptions of professionalism are related to professional practice.

The comparative method is frequently used in the humanities and social sciences and additional research utilizing a comparative approach would be useful for providing greater depth in understanding the conditions necessary for building a particular kind of "professional" capacity within a learning organization. Future research should examine differences and similarities between urban-based community school teachers and rural community school teachers. As well, the researcher’s experiences during this research project pointed to a considerable “adjustment” that both teachers and school administrators faced when a school was initially designated a community school. Having parents, grandparents, high numbers of paraprofessionals and a corpus of social service personnel all in the school with other staff, teachers and school administrators can make a community school a hectic workplace. In this survey many of the
community schools became so designated only within the past five years or so and learning to reach out to the community, involve the parents and working with students who have diverse intellectual abilities has implied, at least for some teachers, different ways of doing things. Perhaps future research could explore whether there are, in fact, any qualitative differences between new-start community schools and ones that have been established worksites for many years.

Comparative research could also provide a deeper understanding of the extent to which non-community school teachers differ from community school teachers. Would factor analysis and regression produce the same results if the survey were administered to public or Catholic school teachers working in large urban contexts where access to better professional development, as well as educational consultants, would be useful for teacher professionalism. One further aspect of comparative research on teacher professionalism and the factors that enhance and erode it is also necessary. As Aboriginal populations increase, and more teachers of native heritage move into the profession of teaching, are there quantitative and/or qualitative differences in teachers' sense of professionalism while working on reserve schools, compared to off reserve schools. Furthermore, no data currently exists which compares teacher professionalism in band-controlled schools located in very northern regions versus reserve schools in southern areas.

Concluding Comments

Under current conditions of change, uncertainty and continuous educational restructuring, moving towards the “new” teacher professionalism is vital to the development of school-based learning communities and school improvement. The new
teacher professionalism embraces professionalism as a collaborative enterprise with an open flow of ideas enabling teachers to be fully informed. The new teacher professionalism exhorts faith that collective capacity, rather than individual capacity, creates possibilities for problem solving. The new professionalism operates in communities of practice where various degrees of expertise are located, exchanged and shared as a set of professional resources available to everyone. The new professionalism engages leaders capable of providing the structural and affective conditions in which the role of the teacher is recognized and legitimated and in which innovation and new ways of doing things are nourished. Building interpersonal, personal and organizational capacity means teachers must integrate new professional identities for new times.

Learning transforms who we are and what we do. On-going intellectual growth, professional development and personal mastery of knowledge go hand in hand with establishing a new teacher professionalism which, in turns, underpins the ways in which people work in teams but belong to longer-lived communities of practice for maintaining their expertise.
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Regina, SK: Author.


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Appendix A – The Survey Instrument
Community Schools and Teacher Professionalism

(Please check only one )

1. Gender
   □ Male
   □ Female

2. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   □ B. Ed
   □ P.G.D.
   □ Masters degree
   □ Doctorate
   □ Other, please specify: ______________________

3. Are you currently taking any post-secondary courses?
   □ Yes
   □ No

4. What grade are you currently teaching?
   □ Kindergarten
   □ 1-2
   □ 3-4
   □ 5-6
   □ 7-8
   □ Other ______

5. How many years have you been teaching? ________________

Part 1: Schooling Supports
This section asks about the degree of support you have with opportunities to grow and develop intellectually.

6. As a “professional” workplace, I would rate this school as very professional:

   Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree
7. I would rate this school as an exciting/invigorating place to work:

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neutral | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |

8. I would rate this school as a place which supports professional excellence:

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neutral | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |

9. In my development as a professional educator, I am clearly supported by my principal:

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neutral | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |

10. My principal works hard at creating a focus on “community” in this school:

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neutral | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |

11. This workplace rewards my accomplishments:

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neutral | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |

12. In this school, I have considerable opportunity to “invest” in my career:

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neutral | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |

13. The knowledge I have “fits” with this school’s way of doing things:

| Strongly Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neutral | Somewhat Agree | Strongly Agree |

---

**Part 2: Teachers' Work in Community Schools**

This section asks about the factors that enhance and erode your sense of professionalism.

Feel free to check off **more than one box.**

14. My sense of professionalism is enhanced by:

- [ ] my colleagues
- [ ] my principal
my work
my career experiences
my opportunities to continue learning
my school’s expectations of my work
my students
the parents
the community
my school’s policies
my community’s perceptions of my work
my school district’s support

anything else?

15. In this school, my sense of professionalism is undermined by:

- student passivity
- school bureaucracy
- school policies
- my gender
- relations with my colleagues
- workplace conditions
- discipline problems
- student indifference
- administrative indifference
- students’ academic expectations
- a lack of time
- student behaviour
- paraprofessionals

anything else?

16. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I feel more professional:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

17. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I feel more valued:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

18. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I feel my talents/skills are better utilized:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree
19. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I feel a stronger commitment to the profession of teaching:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

20. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I find my workplace more enjoyable:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

21. As a result of our school becoming a community school, I am now a more effective teacher:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

Part 3: Knowledge Management
This section asks about your opportunity to exercise the kinds of knowledge teachers now need to accomplish their everyday work.

22. I have the opportunity to locate relevant knowledge as I need it:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

23. My work provides an exciting environment for exchanging knowledge:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

24. My work connects me to people with relevant interests and skills:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

25. In this school I am able to take advantage of sharing the knowledge that I have:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree

26. This school values its teacher’s knowledge base:

Strongly Disagree  Somewhat Disagree  Neutral  Somewhat Agree  Strongly Agree
While working in this school, I have been able to develop new ways of thinking about teaching and learning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

In this school, knowledge management is about developing social exchanges and transactions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Part 4: Perceptions of Professional Identity
This part of the questionnaire asks about your *experiences* and *feelings* of professionalism.

I have a strong sense of my worth as a professional:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I think male teachers are seen as more professional than female teachers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I am disillusioned with my professional life:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

For me, teaching has seldom been a *professional* enterprise:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

For me, teaching has seldom been an *intellectual* enterprise:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I view myself as a professional:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Part 5: Experiences with Community School Initiative
This section asks about your opinions regarding Saskatchewan’s community school initiative.

35. Working in a community school has altered my perceptions of teacher professionalism:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

36. As a result of working in a community school, I have a renewed sense of professionalism:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

37. In my school there have been adequate resources to support the implementation of the community school model:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

38. The community school model is working well for our students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Are there any other comments you would like to add?

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire!!
Appendix B – The Interview Guide
1. In community schools, what schooling supports define a professional workplace for teachers?

2. In community schools, what factors enhance and erode teachers’ sense of professionalism?

3. In community schools, which aspects of a knowledge management system are most important to teachers’ work?

4. What are teachers’ perceptions of their professionalism?

5. Overall, what are teachers’ opinions of Saskatchewan’s community school initiative?
APPENDIX C - APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH from U of S
1. **Title of Study**

Teacher Professionalism and Knowledge Management in Community Schools

2. **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which community schools are altering, or not, teachers' sense of professionalism and the implications these changes are exerting on teacher professionalization. Historically, shifts for teaching to be acknowledged as a professional endeavour have been overwhelmed with dilemmas. A review of the literature reveals that successive waves of educational change have targeted the enhancement of teachers' professional roles. While administrators, politicians, academics and researchers have participated in the debate about how to reform teaching, teachers' own perceptions of their professionalism and strategies to enhance it have not been incorporated.

Saskatchewan is currently turning many public schools into community schools. Through surveys and interviews this researcher will examine teachers' own perceptions of their professionalism, the schooling supports they feel are necessary to enhance this and the role that current practices in knowledge management might play in developing a stronger sense of professional identity. The following research questions have been designed to guide this study.

1. In community schools, what schooling supports define a professional workplace?
2. In community schools, what factors enhance and erode a teacher's sense of professionalism?
3. In community schools, which aspects of a knowledge management system are important?
4. What are teachers' perceptions of their professionalism?
5. What are teachers' opinions of Saskatchewan's community school initiative?

3. **Funding**

The graduate researcher will fund the project.

4. **Participants**

Teachers working in community schools in community schools in and around Saskatoon. The principal will be asked to distribute the surveys to his/her respective teachers and to provide the necessary information regarding the purpose and nature of this study. Attached to the surveys will be an "Interview Form" for teachers who are interested in being interviewed. A drop box for the questionnaires will be provided to each school secretary so that completed surveys can be placed in the envelopes that come with each survey and then placed in the drop box. The researcher will be setting
up a specified time to pick the surveys up in person. Teachers who have indicated a willingness to participate in an interview will be contacted to set up an appropriate time. All interviews will be conducted on site, at the school, in order to not inconvenience the participants.

5. **Consent**

Informed consent will be obtained from each teacher being interviewed. Each participant will be contacted and given a covering letter outlining the purpose of the study, the interview questions, a letter of formal consent to sign, an explanation that their participation is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Participants will have the opportunity to review the interview and make necessary changes. For the survey portion of this research, completion and return of the survey indicates a willingness to participate.

6. **Methods/Procedures**

This study will utilize two instruments used in data collection: questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Contact will be made with the Director of Education or Research Officer followed by contact with the principal of each school chosen for this research project. The surveys ask teachers about their work in community schools, their experiences with schooling supports, opportunities to exercise the kinds of knowledge teachers now need and their perceptions regarding community school initiatives. The interview schedule is designed to provide face-to-face discourse in order to gain a greater understanding of teachers’ personal sense of professionalism and the ways in which current educational changes may be altering this.

7. **Storage of Data**

During the study, all data will be securely stored and retained by Dr. Larry Sackney (Department of Educational Administration) and upon completion of this research, all data will be retained for a minimum of five years in accordance with the University of Saskatchewan guidelines.

8. **Dissemination of Results**

The results of this research will be shared with the faculty of Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan. The information gathered will be used to complete the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy degree in the area of Educational Administration. The results may be presented at seminars and conferences. Transcriptions of the interviews will be provided to participants for review and a summary of findings available to those individuals who request it.

9. **Risk or Deception**
There is no anticipated risk or deception in the study. Participants will be made aware of the purpose of the study and why they have been chosen. Participants are free to withdraw at any time without further consequences. If an individual chooses to withdraw, the tape recordings and data from their contributions will not be used.

10. **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. Confidentiality will be maintained by using pseudonyms for the real names of the participants on the transcripts, analysis and any document that results from this study. The researcher will also use pseudonyms for specific schools.

11. **Data/Transcript Release**

Data/transcript release forms will be utilized for those participating in the interviews and focus groups. Each form will be signed after the participant has had the opportunity to read, clarify, add to or revise the transcript so it will accurately represent them and their intellectual property.
APPENDIX D - CONSENT FORMS
Letter of Permission for Directors
Letter of Permission for Principals
Covering Letter to Teachers
Request for Permission to Conduct a Study from Director of Education

To:

Date:

The University of Saskatchewan ethics board approved my Ph.D. proposal on May 15th, 2004.

I am interested in asking teachers about key aspects of their professionalism while working in community schools.

My research involves two parts—surveying the teachers and talking to any of the teachers who, at the end of the school day, would be willing to participate in an interview. The interview questions ask:

1. In community schools, what schooling supports define a professional workplace?
2. In community schools, what factors enhance and erode a teacher's sense of professionalism?
3. In community schools, which aspects of a knowledge management system are important?
4. What are teachers' perceptions of their professionalism?
5. What are teachers' opinions of Saskatchewan’s community school initiative?

I will be leaving the questionnaires with the school principal or secretary. I am providing a drop-box for completed questionnaires. Interviews will take place at the school after school hours. Questionnaires will be picked up approximately two weeks after the principal has distributed them to the appropriate teachers.

If you wish, I can send you a copy of the survey and I have enclosed a Director of Education Sheet for your signature. This can be faxed or returned to:

Elaine Hulse - Department of Educational Administration
College of Education - 28 Campus Drive,
Saskatoon S7N 0X1
Phone: (306) 966-7613 Fax: (306) 966-7020

If you have any questions call me at 966-7613 (work) or 253-4416 (home) or contact my supervisor Larry Sackney at 966-7626 (work). The Department of Educational Administration’s fax number is 1-306 - 966-7020.

Thank you very much for giving this proposal your consideration...

Elaine Hulse
Ph.D. (candidate)
Request for Permission to Conduct a Study from School Principal

Topic: Teacher Professionalism and Community Schools

Date:
To:

This is a request for your teachers to participate in a research project I am conducting as part of the requirements for the completion of a doctoral degree in Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan. My research is about teacher professionalism and the ways in which it is, or is not, altered through teachers’ work in community schools. Specifically I am looking at:

- teachers’ perceptions of their professionalism
- the things that enhance and erode teacher professionalism
- the kinds of administrative support that teachers themselves feel is essential to cultivating a professional identity
- opportunities teachers’ feel are available to manage knowledge & information in their schools
- teachers’ opinions regarding how well the community school model is working.

My plan is to survey all teachers at the school, including the principal, special education teachers, resource room teachers and teacher-librarians. The last page of the questionnaire asks if a teacher is also interested in being interviewed. If so, I will contact the teacher and arrange for an interview at the school. I am requesting that you distribute the surveys and everyone will have approximately ten days to return them to the office. A drop off box will be provided. The surveys take about 30 minutes to complete.

Thank you very much for your interest and participation in this study.

Elaine Hulse
elh130@mail.usask.ca
1-306-966-7613
To the teacher:

Hi...I am asking you to fill out this survey because I am interested in finding out whether or not Saskatchewan’s current community school initiative is affecting teachers’ feelings of professionalism. Has working in a community school altered your professional identity in any way? In your school, what conditions promote your sense of being a professional individual? What factors enhance your professional commitment?

As well as examining your identification with the profession of teaching, I am also interested in the opportunities you have in your school to exchange professional knowledge and ideas. Does your school allow for capacity building and collegial professional discussion?

I sincerely hope you will take the time to fill out my survey and leave it in the drop box by the secretary’s desk. I will be collecting the surveys by the end of January. If you are interested in being interviewed please indicate so on the Teacher Participation Form so that I have the opportunity to hear “first hand” what sorts of things teachers deal with while working in a community school.

By the end of my research project I hope to be much better informed about teachers’ collective struggles for better professional lives! In advance, thank you very much for your time and I really hope you enjoy filling out the survey. I also hope that you will find this topic interesting enough to be involved in an interview!

Sincerely...

Elaine Hulse (Ph.D. candidate)
Phone: 253-4416 (home)
966-7613 (office)
E-mail: elh130@mail.usask.ca
APPENDIX E - CORRELATION MATRICES BETWEEN SURVEY DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS AND SURVEY QUESTIONS
### Correlation Matrix for Demographics and Questions 6-13

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* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Correlation Matrix for Demographics and Questions 17-21

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* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
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* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Correlation Matrix for Demographics and Questions 29-34

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* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
APPENDIX F – ANOVA OUTPUT
FOR THE FOUR
PREDICTOR VARIABLES
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a. Predictors: (Constant), VALUED

b. Predictors: (Constant), VALUED, EFFECTIV

c. Predictors: (Constant), VALUED, EFFECTIV, COMITMNT

d. Predictors: (Constant), VALUED, EFFECTIV, COMITMNT, NEWWAYS

e. Dependent Variable: TCHRPROF

## Coefficients

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a. Dependent Variable: TCHRPROF