Realistically Evaluating Small Scale SFD Programmes

Professionalisation and Praxis

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Nottingham Trent University and Southampton Solent University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Within the last decade a lack of evidence discourse (Nichols et al, 2010) has emerged raising issues around limited Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) practice and capacity of Sport For Development (SFD) programmes to elicit change. Critics (Coalter, 2013; Harris and Adams, 2016) have argued that a deeper understanding of what works for whom and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) is required when evaluating SFD interventions. This thesis explored practitioner involvement in M and E, and drew upon a realist participatory M and E framework (delivered in two phases), developed to train student sport development practitioners (SSDPs) to make sense of how and why their SFD interventions worked.

The framework was evaluated at each phase, utilizing Realist Evaluation (RE) to ascertain if, how, and why the framework worked for SSDPs. The evaluation at phase one (involving interviews, blogs, and questionnaires) led to a series of context mechanism and outcome (CMO) configurations explaining how and why the framework worked for SSDPs. This led to refinements of the framework at phase two embedding Schula et al’s (2016) collaborative principles of evaluation. Evaluation of phase two embedded Q factor analysis (Watts and Stenner, 2012), interviews and reflective blogs.

Findings emerged surrounding the value of RE for SSDPs. Schula et al’s (2016) principles enabled practical and transformational characteristics to unfold for SSDPs within the framework. Four sub groups of practitioners emerged depicting how the framework worked. These sub groups were made up of ‘travelling far in M and E competency’, ‘polished problem solvers’, ‘passive passengers’, and ‘proficient yet skeptical practitioners’. These were underpinned by holistic narratives demonstrating subjective views about the framework. A new compilation of CMO configurations informing refinements to the framework followed. In conclusion, participatory approaches of M and E can work with practitioners and should be embedded to enable application of RE.
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<td>Context – Mechanism – Outcome</td>
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Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The following chapter attempts to provide a context and rationale for this thesis. To begin, the context surrounding SFD will be discussed. This context will subsequently lead to the underlying rationale and research question underpinning this thesis. Following on from this, the chapter will clearly articulate the methodology and methods that will be mobilised to meet the aims and objectives in accordance with this thesis. In addition to acknowledging ethical procedures, the chapter will conclude with a succinct synopsis of each chapter making up this thesis.

1.1 Sport as a solution to social ills

The SFD landscape has seen major growth in policy intervening programmes globally using sport based interventions as tools to address social issues (Levermore, 2011). For example in the global south an abundance of SFD programmes (Edusport, Matare Youth Sport Association) exist; and within the UK, programmes such as Street Games and Kickz have been mainstays within the sport for change spotlight. Whilst recognizing their contextual distinctions and differences, all these programmes share common characteristics of using sport as a tool and or as a site for development. Whilst the term ‘development’ requires further conceptualizing (Girginov, 2008), development within the context of these programmes often pertains to using sports based interventions to for example empower the marginalized (Mwaanga, 2011), promote self esteem, tackle health issues, build community cohesion (Adams, 2008) and tackle anti social behaviour (Crabbe, 2007). According to Kidd (2010) under the right circumstances and with astute leadership sport can become a favourable ground for change.

The last fifteen years has seen the proliferation of SFD orientated movements across the world (Coalter, 2010; Harris and Adams, 2016). Within the U.K in particular the move to austerity in 2010 under the coalition government and focus upon legacy (in connection with the 2012 Olympics) has seen sport policy focus primarily upon sport for sport sake goals of increasing participation in sport (Collins, 2010a). This has manifested itself through government strategies such as Creating a Sporting Habit for Life (DCMS, 2012) and Sport England strategies of ‘Grow Sustain Excell’ (2008) whereby much of exchequer and lottery funding has made its way into National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) challenged with increasing participation.

However, despite this primary focus on sport for sport sake (Collins, 2010a) the SFD field within the U.K has continued to exist. This existence has been maintained through the likes of organisations such as Street Games, Catch 22 (formerly Crime Concern), football in the community schemes and Higher Education (H.E) provision. In addition, at the time of writing the most recent government strategy published in late 2015 (‘A sporting Future’) has indicated a significant move towards a SFD focus whereby sport and health should combine to address the wide range of social issues facing society such as obesity. Indeed, this is by no means new given that before 2010 the New Labour administration focused a number of their strategies; eg: ‘Sporting Future for All (2000), and ‘Game Plan’ (2002) around the symbiotic relationship between sport and health. Nevertheless, the contemporary climate would certainly indicate a strong focus on SFD and as such a large variety of practitioners working across different domains and organisations in this field.

This thesis is particularly interested in the role of HE and the contribution it is currently making through the student resource it holds. According to Bruening et al (2015) service learning based provision in HE (whereby students gain experience through volunteering and delivering community
provision) is on the increase. As such, a large volume of HE institutions particularly within the UK are currently mobilising students as practitioners to contribute towards SFD and community development goals in their communities.

1.2 Questioning the evidence base

Despite the perceived power of sport it has been expressed explicitly the caution one must tread in presuming that sport has the power to address society’s ills (Jarvie, 2014; Coalter, 2007; Kidd, 2010). This has not stopped governments from utilizing sport in this evangelist sense. As Kay (2009) highlights “contemporary rhetoric and policy have raised the profile of sport in these roles often expressing very high expectations of the instrumental role sport may play” (pg: 1178). What has emerged is a field defined by its claims opposed to its results. A significant level of scholarly critique has done much to puncture early optimism. Sceptics question the anecdotal claims, poor evaluation techniques and the ‘given’ assumption that sport can solve a multitude of problems (Coalter, 2007; 2010; Kay, 2009; Levermore, 2011; Smith and Leach, 2010; Harris and Adams, 2016) which Nicholls et al (2010) summarise pejoratively as the ‘lack of evidence discourse’. Consequently, the emerging profession of Sport and Development Practitioners (SDPs) arguably find themselves with no clear professional praxis and, indeed, little compelling evidence that their profession has significant impacts on the problems it purports to relieve. This is particularly evident within what has been a vibrant discourse of evidence based policy over the last decade (Sullivan, 2011; Nutley et al, 2012).

SFD has found itself under the spotlight concerning the limitations of its impact and size of evidence base. These limitations are currently embroiled in a lack of evidence discourse (Nichols et al, 2010). This discourse has focused upon the limited evidence base, weak M and E process and level of competence (Coalter, 2007; Hylton and Hartley, 2011). Others have called for a greater need for practitioner involvement in M and E (Adams and Harris, 2014; Nichols et al, 2011; Harris and Adams, 2016) given the increasing role of externally funded M and E (the full paper’s relating to Adams and Harris 2014 and Harris and Adams, 2016 can be located in appendix 8.1 and 8.2). Power dynamics in evidence and different approaches employed to legitimise the evidence base (Lindsey and Gratton, 2012; Kay, 2009; Levermore, 2011; Harris and Adams, 2016) have all been critically examined. Jeanes and Lindsey (2014) and Lindsey and Culbertson (2013) highlight a key issue within the SFD field that the recent calls for evidence do little to move the field forward. This is because these calls promote legitimacy of SFD’s worth and proof that these types of programmes are positive and work. This is aligned with literature within other fields pointing out that evidence based policy is flawed (Whyte, 2013) and often superseded by ideology. Lindsey and Culbertson’s conclusion is simple. It is not about developing evidence to prove that sport works. Instead more openness is required to be more open and develop an evidence base of understanding how and why sport might work or not.

1.3 Why and how might programmes work?

Coalter (2007) was perhaps the first within SFD to approach the issues of understanding how and why programmes work. Highlighting the myphopec and evangelic nature of SFD, he has drawn specific attention to its limitations and weak evidence base perpetuating ill defined programmes with hard to follow outcomes (Coalter, 2010). In essence his view resonates with Pawson and Tilley (1997) expressing that sport may work for some in certain circumstances often combined with other interventions and resources (2010). His general thesis pertains to the view that sport might provide the context for positive development, yet the social process is key to understanding what is happening (Coalter, 2012). Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) realistic approach of developing programme theories (assumptions of how and why social programmes work) involves developing programme
theories via context mechanism outcome configurations (CMOs), then testing them via the following questions of what works for whom, in what circumstances and why. This generative approach to causality is premised within a realist epistemology of viewing causality in terms of mechanisms of change. In this sense according to Westhorp (2014) mechanisms are best explained as the reaction of participants to the resources provided within a programme. In many cases these mechanisms are not directly observable, yet they are key for explaining how and why programmes work. This theory driven epistemology concerning causality has been at the heart of Coalter’s suggestion for moving the field of SFD forward (2012, 2013) because it may be able to enhance learning and understanding based upon how and why programmes may work. Yet, whilst there is application of theory driven evaluation principles in his work (Coalter, 2013) there is no distinct application of the key characteristic at the heart of Pawson and Tilley’s methodology. Away from Coalter, apart from (Nichols, 2007) and (Richards et al, 2012) there has been limited application of realist programme theory derivation and testing of this within M and E in SFD. Furthermore, there has been no evidence or literature published within the field of SFD that has involved practitioners directly in employing Pawson and Tilley’s realistic methodology. Moreover, there is also limited research (Nichols et al, 2010) and understanding of sport development practitioners and their engagement with M and E (Adams and Harris, 2014).

1.4 Developing teachable M and E techniques to benefit practitioners

This thesis aims to contribute to this gap by exploring the role of practitioners in M and E work, drawing upon how they may be able to grasp an understanding of it, particularly around understanding how and why programmes may work, or not. In accordance with Harris and Adams (2016) and Nichols et al (2010), this thesis explores the role that SFD practitioners play within evidence generation. Although there is a clear argument (Shufflebeam, 1994) that evaluation work should be external and objective to avoid bias (thus, not carried out by practitioners within programmes), there is also an argument to involve practitioners in the process (Fetterman, 2005; Schula et al, 2016). The benefits here may be associated with the knowledge they may have about their programmes and how this may inform learning and progression (Nichols et al, 2010).

Linking in with Adams and Harris, (2014) and Nichols et al (2010), this thesis moves away from conventional methods and externalisation of evaluation (Greenwood and Levin, 2007) to collaborative (Schula et al, 2016) and more participatory based approaches involving and embedding the practitioner in the process. As Schula et al (2016) and Fetterman (2005) assert, practitioners are crucial players in the generation of evidence because they are at the coalface of programme delivery and knowledge generation. Therefore, it can be suggested that M and E skills and competencies should be at the heart of their professional practice. This is where participatory and collaborative forms of evaluation may hold potential because they position programme stakeholders (eg staff) at the heart of the process whilst linking them with external evaluation ‘experts’ or trainers (Fetterman, 2005). Whilst recognising that participatory approaches to M and E in SFD are not new (Levermore, 2011) there is limited understanding around how these approaches may work with practitioners, and indeed mobilise conceptual approaches to M and E such as realist methodologies. Thus, with such close attention afforded to the practitioner, this thesis seeks to make a novel contribution to knowledge in answering the following research questions:

1. What approaches to monitoring and evaluation may be best suited to SFD practice?
2. How may these approaches be adopted by SDPs?
To answer these questions this study draws upon the testing of a newly formed participatory based M and E framework which embeds realist (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) and participatory based approaches to M and E. The key premise for mobilising realist approaches is because they hold value in opening and demystifying the black box of social change programmes (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). However, it is also important to acknowledge the conceptual complexity that realist evaluation bares. Pawson and Manzano-Santaeilla (2012) for example highlighted a number of evaluations that claimed to be realist but failed to show full characteristics of the approach. This highlights the importance for those conducting the evaluation to be competent in carrying it out. Therefore, providing a collaborative and participatory dimension to building practitioner capacity and competency in realist evaluation may be an appropriate starting point for progressing the field.

1.5 Introducing the M and E framework and sample

To be clear, the M and E framework was constructed with the intention to enable practitioners delivering small scale SFD projects to be able to independently carry out M and E of these programmes. With a focus on HE service based learning provision, the framework consisted of building this capacity with Student SFD Practitioners (SSDPs) within a participatory environment. SSDPs were selected because of the significant contribution they make to SFD goals, and also because they may be seen as future practitioners occupying industry. Specifically, the framework attempted to train SSDPs to be able to carry out a ‘Realist Evaluation’ (RE) of their own small scale projects named ‘Coaching Innovation Projects’ (CIPS). CIPs are implemented by SSDPs (usually groups of four) as part of their curriculum and involve researching the needs of a community then developing and delivering a SFD project in partnership with additional practitioners in the city of Southampton. These projects last between eight and twenty weeks but must address issues of sustainability where in many respects they are continued either through passing projects on to industry practitioners or back to new cohorts of SSDPs coming through. The participatory dimension of the framework involved providing workshops and action learning sets (separate from the curriculum) to support M and E competency in addition to the provision of specific models to foster use.

1.6 Mobilisation and transition of framework through the thesis

To mobilise and test the framework, this was done in two distinct phases in line with the curriculum. Phase one involved testing the framework on a small sample of CIPs who were given the option to take part in the framework. These CIPs were classified within the ‘Edumove’ approach which involves increasing physical literacy, enjoyment and learning through key stages one to four in education. The participatory dimension of the framework in particular drew upon Fetterman’s (2005) Empowerment Evaluation (EE) principles which aim to enable practitioners to take control and accountability in M and E. The second phase of the framework involved refining the framework (in line with the methodology) and testing it again on another sample of CIPs who could opt in. In phase two the CIPs were broader and more diverse in their focus whereby some focused on educational settings with others focusing on diverse community development environments. In line with the refinements to the framework, the second phase also involved dispensing EE as the participatory dimension and instead mobilised Schula et al’s (2016) collaborative approaches to evaluation which focus on the practical and transformational aspects of M and E.

1.7 Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the thesis are outlined below.
Aims:

1. To develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) framework enabling deeper understanding of SFD programmes for Sport Development Practitioners (SDPs)
2. To test and refine framework according to practitioner praxis
3. To synthesise and evaluate professional practice in light of aim 2

Objectives:

1. Review a range of approaches to M and E to develop criteria for a practice based framework
2. Create M and E framework synthesising participatory principles and realist evaluation methodology
3. Within framework test realist evaluation’s capability for Coaching Innovation Programme (CIP) practitioners to evaluate and understand their SFD programme
4. Test collaborative / participatory principles underpinning framework for building capacity for CIP practitioners
5. Refine framework in accordance with research findings
6. Having refined framework repeat objectives three four and five upon broader CIPs
7. Draw conclusions concerning the utility of combining realist evaluation and collaborative / participatory principles for enhancing M and E use and competency

It is crucial to make clear that the purpose of the thesis is to not establish whether SFD works, but regardless of sports success investigate the ways it can be evaluated, how practitioners can learn and improve, and how the profession may develop on evidence based lines. This, again reiterates the contribution to knowledge asserted above.

1.8 Methodology and methods

In order to test the framework it is important to firstly establish that this constituted ‘evaluation’ opposed to that of ‘research’. This is because in line with the spirit of evaluation practice – which is to assess the merit or worth of something (Scriven, 1991) this was at the heart of the methodology for this thesis. In similar respects to the evaluation approach followed by the SSDPs within the framework a realistic methodology (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) was implemented to make sense of what aspects of the framework worked for whom in what circumstances and why. The evaluation and testing of the framework were constituted by two distinct studies in accordance with the phases of the framework’s mobilisation.

The first study attempted to assess the merit and worth of the framework in order to evoke learning and insight for refining the framework for further testing. In line with realistic approaches mixed methods were used. These were made up of interviews and questionnaires carried out with the SSDPs across three Edumove (movement based education) CIPs and the examination of an online blog produced by the students that reflected upon their M and E practice. The data analysis sought to uncover a variety of key findings in accordance with the aims and objectives of the study. Firstly, to establish the degree and mechanisms of engagement with the realistic evaluation principles of
the framework. Secondly, to establish the degree of engagement and reaction to the empowerment (Fetterman, 2005) characteristics of the framework, and finally the overall competency and praxis of those receiving the training.

1.9 Methodological transition and refinement

The second phase / study of the thesis involved refining the framework for further testing based on the findings from study one. This again was mobilised in the form of RE. However, crucially, this stage represented key changes in the application of a different methodological approach. This approach drew upon Q methodology. Q, which focuses on subjectivity (Watts and Stenner, 2012) was mobilized to understand the subjective viewpoints of the SSDPs across five diverse CIPs involved in the framework. For Watts and Stenner (2012) Q asks its participants to decide what is ‘meaningful’ and hence what does (and what does not) have value and significance from their perspective (Watts and Stenner, 2005). This was mobilized alongside realist interviews and blogs.

There are a number of key arguments for this change in methodological affordance to Q. Firstly, whilst recognizing philosophical nuances within any methodological approach, Q shared a number of alliances with a realist approach to evaluation. In line with realist thinking, Q provided a useful way to understand not simply individual view points of individuals, but collective and shared viewpoints synthesizing multiple subjective accounts of reality (Watts and Stenner, 2012). Through the Q sorting exercise, embedded in Q the qualitative interpretation of data enables the evaluator to employ the logic of abduction as a tool (building theory) to unearth the retroductive understanding of the hidden causal mechanisms at play in social programmes. This is in strong synergy with realist approaches to evaluation that seek to do these very things. Moreover, the implementation of Q symbolized the methodological advancement and development of the thesis over time evidencing growth, wider reading and competent scholarship. Embedding Q represented an opportune time to mobilise an approach rarely before synthesized with RE.

Q’s alignment with RE in this thesis firstly involved the carrying out of a Q sorting exercise where each SSDP would rank their subjective viewpoints pertaining to the M and E framework. Factor analysis, which enabled the compilation of shared viewpoints uncovered provisional holistic narratives (Watts and Stenner, 2012) depicting the journey of each SSDP, which then enabled the identification of in what circumstances, and for whom did the framework work. As a means of clarification, realist blogs and interviews were employed to make sense of the holistic narratives leading to a clear understanding of the varying ways in which different groups of practitioners engaged with the framework. This, then led to further refinements and recommendations for the framework and any future testing.

Overall, these key evaluation phases of the framework were carried out by the researcher independently in line with the aims and objectives. Whilst there exists key arguments pertaining to the view that evaluation work should be carried out value free, and objectively to mitigate against bias (Shufflebeam, 1994), in similar respect to the way that the SSDPs were evaluating their own CIPs, this was the strategy chosen within this thesis. In line with Fetterman (2005) this enabled a closer level of depth and engagement with understanding the framework. To mitigate against any accusations of bias against the researcher who held a position of power as course leader, Q methodology in particular and its’ robust quantitative rigor of factor analysis enabled a more accountable and reliable compilation of findings. To be clear Q moved beyond face to face
qualitative research methods where the research participants were able to convey their subjective viewpoints about the framework through the Q sort process.

1.10 Ethics

It is important to recognize and state the ethical position of the researcher within this thesis. First and foremost, the researcher occupied the position of course leader and unit leader within the respective curriculum where the M and E framework was mobilized. This bares ethical implications in relation to the perceived dangers of the evaluation influencing the SSDPs based on their relationship with the researcher, and how reliable their responses may be. To address these potential limitations a number of key steps were put into place. These involved firstly making the M and E framework optional for SSDPs to enroll in. Whilst the involvement in the framework may have led to positive or negative outcomes in the curriculum, this was separate from the respective units it was associated with. Secondly, it was ensured that the researcher would not be involved in any assessment of the work students produced resulting from this.

Ethics for both research / evaluation phases was applied for through Southampton Solent University in line with the Ethics Policy (2011) of the institution. For both studies SSDPs were provided participant information briefing sheets and consent forms which were returned and filed in a safe space. Anonymity was also maintained (see appendix 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 for ethical documents).

1.11 Thesis structure

The following provides a succinct overview of each chapter making up this thesis. The thesis has been structured in such a way to demonstrate the journey and path of the thesis. In essence, the chapters articulate the way in which the framework was developed, refined and retested.

Chapter 2: Conceptualising SFD within the context of evidence

In this opening chapter, two key aims are addressed. Firstly, SFD is conceptualized to provide an understanding of what constitutes the field. On this backdrop, within the context of evidence SFD is then discussed highlighting issues and tensions within the literature surrounding M and E practice and unanswered questions. Essentially, the chapter calls for more work to address the lack of evidence discourse and where practitioners may be placed to address this.

Chapter 3: Reviewing approaches to evidence and arguing for a realistic approach to M and E

Having highlighted the issues and concerns surrounding M and E and the lack of evidence in SFD, this chapter reviews examples of current approaches to M and E and attempts to distinguish what M and E is. Given that limited understanding associated with how and why programmes work, the chapter then goes on to review theory driven approaches to evaluation that may assert value for moving the SFD field forward. Specifically RE is argued as an appropriate evaluation methodology for the SFD field. This is then followed by a review of some participatory approaches to evaluation. It is argued that participatory approaches to evaluation may be key vehicles to enable practitioners to mobilise RE.

Chapter 4: Conceptualising the sport development practitioner

This chapter attempts to define the Sport Development Practitioner (SDP) within the context of sport development. Given the diversity of the SDP role key attention is placed upon the UK context given that the focus of this thesis is upon a UK case study. The chapter also recognizes that it is not possible to define a SDP purely within SFD roles mainly because SDPs transcend sport for sport sake
and SFD practices. Having defined the SDP, the chapter attempts to problematise the field; in particular it draws upon key questions surrounding the profession and key gaps. This is then followed by the introduction of H.E and more specifically the role of the SSDP and the contribution they make to the field.

Chapter 5: Introducing a Realistic participatory based M and E framework

This chapter introduces the M and E framework proposed for testing at phase one. In particular this chapter argues for a realistic participatory based framework drawing upon Fetterman’s (2005) Empowerment Evaluation. Within the chapter, the case study used to test the framework (The Coaching Innovation Programme) is introduced and key models underpinning the framework are presented and discussed.

Chapter 6: Methodology (stage one and two)

The methodology chapter is split up and presented in two distinct parts. This is because, although the realist philosophical underpinnings of RE were consistent across both studies, each study entailed different samples and methods as part of the testing and development of the M and E framework. Therefore, study one opens with an in depth discussion of the philosophical dimensions of the thesis. This is then followed by an explicit and reflexive overview of the methodology and methods adopted as well as data analysis in study one. The chapter then moves on to the next phase of testing (study two) and explains key distinguishing characteristics between it and study one. This section explains how and why Q methodology was applied and synthesized with realist evaluation, and in turn data analysis is discussed.

Chapter 7: Study 1 findings

This chapter draws upon and critically discusses the findings from study one. Furthermore, the chapter goes on to suggest potential improvements and refinements to the M and E framework to be further tested within study two. Part of this analysis, and within accordance with RE involves the articulation of a new compilation of context mechanism and outcome configurations. This leads to the refinement of a new programme theory for testing in phase two.

Chapter 8: Refinement of framework and transition

Within this chapter the findings from study one are firmly evaluated in respect of informing the refinements to the framework. Crucially, significant consideration and critique is afforded to the deposing and retaining of certain elements underpinning the M and E framework. Through the support of current literature on participatory evaluation being explored the chapter then proposes a new set of principles for collaborative evaluation by Schula et al (2016). In essence the chapter demonstrates the key refinements of framework for further testing at study two.

Chapter 9: Study 2 results

Given that Q methodology was adopted in study two, this chapter presents the results of the holistic qualitative narratives produced through the RE. Holistic narratives as a result of the factor analysis and in depth qualitative interpretation are displayed alongside a compilation of context mechanism outcome (CMOs) configurations explaining how and why the M and E framework impacted on the SSDPs. These CMO configurations constitute and inform the new programme theory and refinements to the M and E framework.
Chapter 10: Discussion

Chapter 10 draws upon the results presented in chapter 9 and critically discusses the implications of the findings. The chapter is structured in line with each respective factor that emanated from the Q and realist methodology employed within study two. Specifically each factor discussion evaluates the key mechanisms explaining how and why the framework impacted upon the practitioners with key focus upon the collaborative principles of evaluation tested. This then leads to the discussion of key concluding refinements to the framework for future mobilization and testing.

Chapter 11: Conclusion and contribution to knowledge

The final chapter captures and summarises the key findings across each study and illustrates the journey of the framework. This chapter discussed the potential of the framework to be mobilized in wider fields of SFD and other sectors. The contribution to knowledge of the thesis is asserted alongside reflexive recognition of any limitations linking to the thesis.

1.12 Chapter summary

This chapter has attempted to set the scene for the research underpinning this thesis. Having problematized sport for social change in its limitations to evidence how and why programmes may work, a rationale has been put forward for developing teachable M and E techniques for practitioners working within the field. The M and E framework underpinning this thesis has been succinctly introduced alongside the methodological realist evaluation framework that will put it to test. Given that the thesis spans across two evaluation studies, these and their methodological transition from study one to two have been discussed. The aims and objectives have also set out a clear strategy for the thesis.
Conceptualising SFD within the context of evidence

The aim of this chapter is to conceptualise (SFD) within the context of evidence. This is a pivotal chapter for positioning the thesis aims and objectives within a contextual understanding of what constitutes the SFD field. As a nebulus concept sports development has found itself open to varying interpretations and framings (as discussed below). The chapter begins with reviewing the various definitions of what SFD is. Having conceptualized SFD, this is then positioned within the context of evidence and issues in M and E. Following this, the current industry approaches pertaining to M and E in SFD are firmly critiqued. The chapter concludes by drawing attention to positive developments supporting the SFD field and then implications for progressing the field. At the heart of this progression is the firm argument of involving practitioners more closely in evidence based approaches, which underpin the aims and objectives of this thesis.

2.1 Emergence of (SFD)

Sport development is a contested term that is often used simplistically to indicate the application of both policy and practice in encouraging, increasing and possibly sustaining participation in sport (Hylton and Bramham, 2008; Houlihan and Green, 2011). There are a number of varying conceptualisations of sport development (SD) which presents a dichotomy in how SD is conceived of and implemented within programmes (Adams and Harris, 2014). Within UK practice and its historical origins, development of sport and development through sport (Houlihan and White 2002) have gained recognition as the two broader categories underpinning sport development practice. The former, now also known by the alias of sport for sport sake (Collins, 2010) and sport plus (Coalter, 2007), tends to leverage sport participation, in the first instance, for the benefit of those participating (Adams and Harris, 2014). Development through sport, plus sport (Coalter, 2007), sport development and peace (Guillianotti 2011; Sugden, 2010) and SFD on the other hand tend to use sport as a vehicle to address a range of wider social issues emanating from the social problems industry (Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011) such as improving health, reducing crime and tackling obesity (Houlihan and White 2002). In defining SFD Lyras and Welty Peachey (2011) assert that it is “the use of sport to exert a positive influence on public health, the socialisation of children, youths and adults, the social inclusion of the disadvantaged, the economic development of regions and states, and on fostering intercultural exchange and conflict resolution. (pg: 311)

It is important to conceptualise what SFD is, because the question of what is SFD and how it is driven is pertinent for understanding how it is used in society. As a starting point SFD as a conceptual hub is not distinctive in its own right because there are similar terms that have been derived which may mean the same thing. For example, Houlihan and White’s (2002) ‘development through sport’ and Coalter’s (2007) sport plus and plus sport are arguably synonymous terms. Nevertheless, to conceptualise, the SFD concept takes into consideration the role that sport can play in addressing a plethora of social issues omnipresent within society. The foundation of SFD is positioned within a discourse that suggests sport can do good, and can make a positive contribution to society.

SFD has been leveraged as a tool for particular purposes and outcomes in mind. SFD in essence involves exploring the many roles that sport may play in addressing society’s ills. Its emergence dates back as far as DeCoubertin’s Olympic movement surrounding peace and understanding, and indeed was rooted in the Olympic values (Green, 2009) that underpinned London 2012 and the many Olympics previous. The civilising of young men and the vision of sport building character and muscular christianity within the public schools in the 1800’s through to the 19th century (Macalloon, 1981) reflects the growth of a concept framed within functionalism (Hylton and Bramham, 2008). To
be clear Hylton and Bramham (2008) interpret functionalism on the basis that society is based on broad agreement whereby the social system regulates and reflects balance between differing interests. For them, functionalism and sport development intersect in that sport development addresses gaps in provision distributing social justice applying “the glue to bind diverse strands into an integrated whole” (pg: 65). This functionalist framing of SFD has unsurprisingly been politically and ideologically driven (Houlihan, 2011) as a resource for the social problems industry (Pitter and Andrews, 1997) with governments investing heavily in sporting programmes to address social issues. As Kay (2009) states “contemporary rhetoric and policy have raised the profile of sport in these roles often expressing very high expectations of the instrumental role sport may play” (pg: 1178). Indeed, as Guilianotti (2011) states the SFD expansion has been driven in part by the United Nations, which dedicated 2005 to be its International Year of Sport and Physical Education.

The growth and expansion of SFD programmes now saturates the global world. The landscape has seen major growth in policy intervening programmes globally, using sport based interventions as tools to address social issues (Levermore, 2011; Guilianotti, 2011). The international context according to Mwaanga (2013) has specifically adopted this neo liberal, westernised functionalist application of SFD. Thus, this SFD movement is now operationalized by practitioners at various levels using the good of sport to frame an equal society. Within this conceptual hub questions emerge surrounding what development actually is and that it is impossible to define in a universal way (see Girginov, 2008). However, quite clearly within the context of SFD we are referring to a process of social change that reaches community empowerment and individual development (Harris and Adams, 2016).

To date, an abundance of SFD programmes exist and have run their course. These programmes have an international global presence. For example, in the global south which represents countries of Africa, Latin America and developing Asia, organisations (eg: Edusport and the Matawe Youth Sport Association) exist. Within these programmes, there has been a strong emphasis on empowering individuals and communities to take more control over their lives, be it in tackling poverty or utilizing sport as a tool to confront issues surrounding HIV and AIDS (Mwaanga, 2013). Additionally, the likes of Sugden (2008) have been instrumental in exploring the utility of sport for peace within Israel to tackle violence and conflict. Community cohesion and social capital have thus been central focuses for alleviating such tensions (Coalter, 2007b).

Meanwhile, within the UK, the SFD movement has long been in existence. On a policy and programme scale, under the guise of ‘development through sport’ (Houlihan and White, 2002) UK governments have experimented with SFD programmes. Under the new right Thatcher administration ‘Action Sport’ was mobilized in the 1980s to tackle disfunction and encourage community empowerment as a result of the London riots (Collins, 2010b). It was also during the 1980’s that ‘football in the community schemes’ emerged as charitable departments and sections connected with clubs to use football to create a greater relationship with their communities in the face of hooliganism (Houlihan and White, 2002). Following this SFD centred programmes have been at the forefront of Sport England and government policy (Sporting Future For All, 2000; Postive Futures, Crabbe, 2007) and subsequently central to local authority and school delivery (Smith and Leach, 2010) over the last twenty years. Street Games and Kickz (deployed through professional football club community schemes) have also been mainstays within the SFD spotlight, characterising features of the many programmes occupying policy space prior to them. Despite a slight shrinkage in the UK since preparations for London 2012 Olympics (Grow, Sustain, Excell, 2008; Creating a Sporting Habit for Life, 2012; Collins, 2010b) SFD has continued to stake its presence over the last
eight years. Moreover, at the time of writing, under the new government strategy (A Sporting Future, 2016) a much closer symbiosis between sport and public health has been desired, which may indeed lead to an increased focus on the role of SFD programmes.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to provide a comprehensive review of all of the SFD programmes that have come under existence given that this is not at the heart of the aims and objectives of this thesis. The purpose here is to draw attention to the wider context that constitutes SFD practice across the world. Whilst recognising their contextual distinctions and differences, all these programmes, whether UK based, global south or middle east, share common characteristics of using sport, and or physical activity as a site for development. Whilst the term ‘development’ requires further conceptualizing (Girginov, 2008), development within the context of these programmes often pertains to using sports based interventions to empower the marginalized (Mwaanga, 2013), promote self esteem, tackle health issues, build community cohesion (Adams, 2008) and tackle anti social behaviour (Crabbe, 2007). According to Kidd (2010), under the right circumstances, and with astute leadership, sport can become a favourable ground for change. Significant to note also is Green’s (2009) statement that it is not sport per se that is responsible for certain outcomes, but the way it is implemented. Indeed, as Coalter (2007) suggests, it is also how it is combined with other interventions that may truly indicate the contribution it can make.

By way of theorising SFD and strengthening its application Lyras and Welty Peachy (2011) recently developed a theoretical framework breaking down what constitutes SFD as ‘SFD Theory’ (SFDT). According to them, in similar respects to the preceding authors they assert that by blending sport with cultural enrichment and education can provide a foundation for addressing social issues. Moreover, in developing a more robust theoretical insight into SFDT the authors suggest that SFD interventions should encompass and take into account key components comprising impact assessment, organisational contexts, sport and physical activity, education and cultural enrichment. Their presentation of ‘impacts assessment’ suggest that micro, meso and macro levels of change should come under close scrutiny by way of evaluation. For example infrastructures would be a key area for investigation (macro) whereas social networks, social capital and cohesion would be investigated at the meso level. On a micro level, this pertains to individual and psychological impacts in line with individual empowerment (Mwaanga, 2013).

The remaining four components stated above according to Bruening et al (2015, pg: 72) comprise the “processes, mechanisms, structures and conditions of SFD interventions”. On an organisational level Lyras and Welty Peachy (2011) highlight the importance of all stakeholders being involved in shaping SFD interventions across all levels. This is crucial given that it takes into consideration the role of volunteers, cultural intermediaries and programme staff. The physical activity element for them highlights the importance to make SFD interventions accessible and open to participants given that the competitive nature of sport itself may by its very nature deter people from participating. Within a UK context at present this issue has come to light given that the focus on participation through National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and their competitive connotations (Collins, 2010a) may be a factor for why so many of these bodies have failed to achieve participation targets. From an education perspective Lyras and Welty Peachy state the potential for synthesising educational processes with sport, given the transferable skills that can be achieved. Their final component; cultural enrichment seeks to highlight the importance of socialising participants involved in SFD interventions with new environments, experiences and social capital development.
Whilst it may appear that this framework provides a robust set of dimensions, it can be asserted that a key omission is made surrounding the crucial role context plays in the formulation of programmes. Although organizational contexts are referred to, there is limited focus on the cultural contexts which shape and influence the successful (or not) mobilization of programmes. Within a realist orientation, it could be argued that context (the circumstances that surround the programme on organizational, environmental, social, individual, psychological, macro and micro levels (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) is crucial. According to Westhorp (2014), these contextual variables will influence the ways in which participants’ reason against the resources (mechanisms) provided in the programmes. Thus, the programme outcomes will be determined by these mechanisms. It is suggested that the framework put forward by the above authors would benefit from a deeper appreciation of these contexts.

Of the limited frameworks available, Lyras and Welty Peacheys’s (2011) SFDT may provide a useful framework and guidance for good practice in the SFD field. Firstly, its strengths lie within its robust appreciation of the key dimensions set forth in the previous narrative. These dimensions of impact assessment, organizational contexts, sport and physical activity, education and cultural enrichment are all crucial considerations applicable to SFD programmes. The authors recognizing the importance of organizational staff in designing programmes, not over conflating the role of sport, and recognizing sports capabilities are not independent or exclusive to its relationship with other educational environments and processes (Coalter, 2007). With the addition of the contextual dimension discussed above it is suggested that this framework can hold considerable value in helping one to conceptualise what SFD is. Thus, for the purpose of this thesis such a conceptualization of SFD will provide a foundation for the following discussions pertaining to evidence.

Furthermore, with an increasing global focus on SFD, the field has regularly been required to demonstrate accountability for investment made by funders via robust and systematic approaches to evidence that centre upon proving the place of sport within development (Kay, 2012). Whilst accepting differences in global contexts, it is clear that similarities persist in the dominance of accountability and efficiency. Globally the march to modernisation has ensured that neoliberal disciplines have dominated the contexts and frameworks within which SFD has operated (Coakley, 2011, Sam, 2009). Consequently, modernisation has ensured an acceptance that public institutions and public services must change in accordance with the rational and scientific processes of managerialism, evidence-based policy, measurement, audit and technologies of accountability (Newman, 2001, original emphasis; Adams and Harris, 2014). SFD has been affected by this in that the programmes and interventions that fall under it are duly obliged to demonstrate robust, efficient and accountable ways of how they demonstrate impact and change.

2.2 SFD reservations and the lack of evidence discourse

Within this proliferation of SFD, a discourse of curiosity and analysis has begun to cast its gaze over the field. As a starting point Kay (2009) has highlighted the danger in placing too high an expectation on sport for achieving wider development goals, as eluded to above. Naturally flowing from these expectations have been the development of and requirement of evidence based approaches to policy on the varying levels of sporting provision, particularly within the U.K and under Blair’s Labour third way ideological framework. Specifically, it was under the Blair leadership where significant investment was placed upon SFD, and school sport (A Sporting Future for All, 2000) to address social issues such as in activity in and around school sport, health, crime prevention and physical activity. The step into sport programme via PESSCL (physical education, school sport and club links); (DCMS,
DFE, 2002) that attempted to increase the number of volunteers and social capital of those involved, and Positive Futures (a home office funded nationwide social inclusion programme to tackle crime through sport) are prime examples. Consequently, government departments were, and continue to be keen to see evidence of these issues being addressed. As a consequence, it can be suggested that much of the evidence required has been focused towards establishing an answer to the question of whether these SFD programmes work or not.

This climate and impact of modernisation has unsurprisingly unearthed some key questions about the SFD field and what it attempts to achieve. The last decade has witnessed significant scholarly critique, questioning the anecdotal claims, poor evaluation techniques and the ‘given’ assumption that sport can solve a multitude of problems (Coalter, 2007, 2010, Kay, 2009, Levermore, 2011, Smith and Leach, 2010). The following section will review these scholarly critiques in more detail within the context of the aims and objectives of this thesis.

2.3 Problematising the meaning and power of sport

Fred Coalter has been at the heart of the scholarly critique focusing on SFD. His book ‘A Wider Social Role for Sport’ (2007) was one of the first academic contributions that began to raise questions about sport and the perceived impacts it may have on participants. He presents severe reservations about the assumptions programmes make particularly around what sport (as a collective noun) actually means within programmes, and its causal powers to generalise evangelical outcomes for those involved. Sport, on political and practical levels, has subsequently been perceived as a magic box (Coalter, 2007, 2013), yet Coalter has highlighted that there are major limitations over ‘sport’s’ powers to elicit change given the complexity of the social issues they attempt to overcome and the diversity of participants in programmes. In line with this critique, Hartman and Kwauk (2011) assert the need to deconstruct SFD as a collective entity that can explain and account for social change. Like Coalter, they suggest that a problem with SFD interventions is the over emphasis placed upon sport. Instead they suggest that the power of a SFD intervention and any positive outcomes that it fosters should be considered in light of how it engages with non sport elements. Like Lyras and Welty Peachy (2011) for SFD to be successful, additional development characteristics concerning education and cultural enrichment must be embodied in the process. Thus, understanding the impact of SFD would require a consideration of how the constituent parts of the intervention (eg, sport, educational aspects and wider development applications) intertwine.

In essence, the critique applied by the likes of Coalter, Hartman and Kwauk, (2011) and Lyras and Welty Peachy (2011) resonates with Pawson and Tilley (1997), expressing that sport may work for some in certain circumstances often combined with other interventions and resources (2010). This general thesis highlights the view that sport might provide the context for positive development, yet one must be concerned with understanding how social processes (Coalter, 2012) and the dimensions asserted by Lyras and Welty Peachy (2011) combine to explain SFD’s contribution. Coalter (2007) has advocated the need to tread caution about the assumptions sport programmes make about participants, stating the importance of researching their needs. To date, much of the culpability in the ‘magic bullet’ issue of sport lies with government agencies and the manifestos they produce. Some clear examples are a Sporting Future for All (2000), Game Plan, A strategy for Sport (2000) and Sport England’s Grow Sustain Excell (2008) amongst others where SFD’s contribution has not been sufficiently thought out or resourced. Further, gaining more of an understanding of the processes and how and why a programme may impact on a participant is central to Coalter’s (2007, 2013) argument. Unsurprisingly, Coalter has not been alone in highlighting these tensions. Kay, (2007),

To highlight this challenge further, Coalter (2010) and Kay (2012) point out that the varying funders or donors of these programmes are often insistent of addressing goals that are unrealistic and may not fit the context or local issues that the programs should address. In summary, both funders and practitioners are likely to develop over optimistic projects, coupled with inadequate evaluation processes, resulting in confused and unverified claims because they are trapped within the view that sport works, thus they have to prove that it works. This, to a large degree, perpetuates a profession based around what can be funded rather than what may be effective. Jeanes and Lindsay (2014) and Lindsey and Culbertson (2013) also highlight a key issue within the SFD field that the recent calls for evidence do little to move the field forward. This is because these calls promote legitimacy of SFD’s worth and proof that these types of programmes are positive and work. This is aligned with literature within other fields pointing out that evidence based policy is flawed (Whyte, 2013) often superseded by ideology. This prioritizing of ideology over evidence is explained by power interests (eg: governments and interest groups) prioritizing their manifestos, visions and ideas over evidence that may well contradict them. As a result evidence bares no impact on practice or strategy (Houlihan, 2011).

2.4 Emerging approaches and resourcing Monitoring and Evaluation

In light of the issues raised above, the SFD field is currently involved in a significant level of M and E work. Whilst there is evidence of this in the UK through online monitoring and evaluation tools and commissioned work, it is particularly prevalent in international contexts (Levermore, 2011). This is mainly in response to the perceived evidence gap within the field and has particularly picked up momentum in the last ten years. An abundance of technocratic processes underpinning evidence which focuses on performance, efficiency, and cost effectiveness which resonate well with new public management (Choinald, 2013). An immediate interpretation may look upon this in a positive light as a way of addressing the gaps in knowledge and the evidence base. However, despite the positives emerging from this expansion in M and E work and interest, the following arguments draw attention to some of the cautions associated with this.

Within this contemporary context, Levermore’s (2011) small scale audit of M and E practice within the field of SFD is a useful source for illuminating what constitutes M and E work. Levermore’s starting point is one that recognizes the limitations and questions surrounding the meaning and power and sport. He goes on to summarise two key and most prevalent approaches to evaluation practice in development assistance – namely the logical framework approach (using logic models and top down matrices to quantify findings through inputs to outputs and outcomes) and the participatory approach (involving stakeholders within the design and process of the evaluation). (These are discussed in more depth in chapter 3). Levermore immediately provides a critique of these two approaches wherein the former can be perceived as too rigid and not conducive for community development settings (Lindsey and Gratton, 2012). For participatory approaches, he points out that whilst they may involve practitioners and stakeholders within the process there are dangers surrounding subjectivity, bias and the influence of the evaluation being overly top down orientated.

This audit mainly accounted for SFD organizations internationally such as FIFA’s football for hope, Fight for peace, Goal, Grassroots soccer and Magic Bus. However, Positive Futures (a UK programme) was also represented. His audit focused upon to what extent within these organisations
M and E was undertaken, the methods used and whether the findings were made public. Levermore’s findings were interesting on the basis that eleven of the fourteen organisations targeted had evidence of M and E practice. The main characteristics of these M and E approaches were focused around the use of the log frame and participatory approaches either used separately, or combined to improve credibility. Many utilized the use of monitoring reporting systems, surveys and online systems. What was also interesting was the increasing involvement of external consultants in the process.

This useful exercise by Levermore unearths a series of critiques. Firstly, the exposure of the log frame approach in itself commonly used across these programmes raises issues around its compatibility with community development settings of SFD. Lindsey and Gratton (2012) have joined this critique emphasizing this potential incompatibility, also concerning how it may alienate practitioners and stakeholders from the process due to its’ over technical and linear representation. Secondly, Levermore refers to key limitations of the participatory dimension in these M and E approaches adopted in that they may follow overly top down westernized approaches whereby the decision making lies with the donor or the external evaluator at the mercy of the local stakeholders mobilizing the programmes (Cracknell, 2000 cited in Levermore, 2011). As Kay (2009) and Nichols et al (2010) have pointed out, the crucial questions to ask in light of this are who decides on these approaches to evaluation and who enforces them? Levermore’s final conclusion centres upon the overt pressure for “easy empirical generalization” (pg: 352) that fail to fully recognize cultural nuances.

A key focus of this critique stems from the very philosophical foundations underpinning the approaches to M and E being mobilized within the SFD field asserted by Lindsey and Culbertson (2013). The question of ‘does sport work’ is firmly rooted in this foundation. Clearly funders and politicians who invest money and resource into SFD want to see results and impact. Thus, it is of little surprise to identify that the point of departure for any approach to M and E is to find evidence to support positive outcomes or show proof (Harris and Adams, 2016) that these programmes work. This is hugely problematic because it is sport may give rise to positive or negative outcomes (Coalter, 2010). Moreover, social change orientated programmes operate in the social world, they cannot be controlled and they will produce diverse outcomes for all involved (Westhorp, 2014). SFD programmes are no different which means that it is practically impossible to demonstrate positive outcomes for everyone. The framing of M and E around proof and accountability leads to clear tensions. These tensions are illustrated through those leading on evaluation implicitly and explicitly encouraged to illuminate positive outcomes (Adams and Harris, 2014; Harris and Adams, 2016). For practitioners themselves this may be in fear of having funding revoked (Smith and Leach, 2010). For academics this may be associated with funding being received from the donor or funder commissioning the M and E. Therefore, the reflexive, and open reporting of evidence that captures the disparity of outcomes in programmes may be lost.

Leading on, there is an abundance of M and E approaches and frameworks at the disposal of those interested in exploring the merit and worth of a programme (not just limited to SFD). An extensive literature review (see chapter 3) unearths a plethora of these approaches ranging from impact, process, formative to experimental design, and participatory empowerment evaluation. To add theory driven, theory based, theory of change, programme theory (Donaldson and Lipsey, 2006) as well as participatory /log frame approaches (Levermore, 2011), and lastly realistic (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) to the mix represents the sheer scale of choice open to practitioners, donors and academics (these approaches are discussed in more depth within chapter 3). However, despite the diversity of options these approaches provide, very few of these are actually carried out and
implemented by practitioners. In fact, in most cases, many of these techniques are carried out either by academics independently (Kay, 2012) or within participatory frameworks (Levermore, 2011) as discussed above, that may involve SDPs. This is of little surprise given that the enactment of such methods requires skill and a high level of competency; which in many respects SDPs may not possess (Hylton and Hartley, 2011; Coalter, 2012; Harris and Adams, 2016) because limited CPD or training around such approaches are provided (see chapter 4). This proposes significant implications around the extent to which the findings of any M and E work are recognized by those on the ground or inform programme improvement. Furthermore, Harris and Adams (2016) assert that an evaluation process that does not embed practitioners input or knowledge may have negative consequences. This is because, firstly, it may fail to recognize the strengths and limitations of what can be achieved, and secondly may limit the practitioners in regards to learning about and improving their programmes. As a result, an evidence based community of practice may be out of reach (Harris and Adams, 2016).

This sets up the third point of caution emanating from the literature. In most cases the decisions concerning M and E are made by funders or donors via the influence of academics and policy makers (Kay, 2009) with little input from practitioners on the ground (Nichols et al 2010). As a result, programmes in receipt of funding are expected to follow approaches regardless of the competence of programme staff to do this. For example, in relation to the participatory evaluations, in most cases these approaches are imposed upon practitioners on the ground and tied towards funding streams which mobilise external academics as consultants to build capacity with practitioners (Lindsey and Gratton, 2012), regardless of the cultural implications and differences. In many cases, organisations in receipt of funding are increasingly buying in support for evaluation and Levermore’s (2011) audit is evidence of this. It is important to highlight here that there is nothing wrong or immoral in principle for commissioning evaluation work. However, the issue according to the likes of Kay (2009), Harris and Adams, (2016) and Nicholls et al, (2010) concerns the passive nature and unheard voices of practitioners in deciding on M and E approaches and bringing to life the real dynamics of the programs. Nichols et al (2010) in particular, point out that these approaches require or are carried out by academics and either downplay or call into question the knowledge, reliability and integrity of practitioners who may possess knowledge and understanding of their programme which undoubtedly may inform the evidence.

The preceding narrative has developed an emergent picture of a rather significant gap between practice and academia. This is a major dichotomy not independent to M and E practice, but to the overall contemporary status of SFD research. A recent empirical study by Welty Peachy and Cohen (2015) goes someway to illuminate this dichotomy even further. Their in depth qualitative research study with eight well positioned scholars in the field of SFD explored what scholars felt were the main challenges moving forward for SFD. In particular, attention was drawn towards the view that industry based practitioners are reluctant to work with academics. This may be based on power dynamics (Harris and Adams, 2016), and the poor perceptions of practice held by academics who may be seen to look negatively upon SFD programmes. Furthermore, another issue asserted from their research concerned the differing agendas facing academics compared to those in industry mainly due to the constraints and pressures imposed by higher education to gain publications and secure tenure. From their research Welty Peachy and Cohen’s convey a set of recommendations for research and M and E to improve and progress. Firstly, developing trust and greater relationships with those in the field is strongly suggested. This suggestion is by no means novel given that Lyndsey and Gratton, (2012), Nichols et al (2010) and Harris and Adams (2016) have called for closer bridges between academics and practitioners. Welty Peachy and Cohen also firmly advocate the need to de
theorise academia (simplify) into terms that are more transferable to on the ground practice opposed to only being confined to journals and academic conferences. Whilst theory may have a significant role to play in enabling greater understanding of SFD, unless it is explained and applied in a clear way, it may only intimidate and alienate industry.

The final argument presented here concerns the way M and E is perceived and implemented in programmes. Whilst monitoring tracks changes in programmes, and evaluation assesses merit and worth (Scriven, 1991) this approach does not necessarily manifest itself in practice. Firstly, the technocratic (Choinard, 2013) results based focus on numbers and figures has lead to monitoring taking precedence, often over evaluation practice. Tracking participation levels and ticking boxes in accordance with performance indicators (Smith and Leach, 2010) in connection with funding is now common place in SFD practice. This fascination with monitoring over evaluation, and / or monitoring as evaluation can also be connected with confusion, misinterpretation and competence on practitioner level of what constitutes the two forms (Adams and Harris, 2014). As a result, the meeting of targets becomes more of a measure of success for a practitioner opposed to understanding how and why their programme has worked. This does little to develop learning and understanding surrounding SFD programmes (Harris and Adams, 2016). It is thus no surprise that within policy spaces the wheel continues to be reinvented concerning what SFD is mobilised to tackle.

2.5 Optimism for the field

It is fundamental to acknowledge that despite the critical assertions place upon the SFD field, in no way should SFD as a movement be under played. At the time of writing there does exist a wide body of literature and research purporting to optimism and positivity surrounding its status. It is important at this stage of the chapter to recognize this body of literature for two reasons. Firstly, because it enables one to appreciate and identify the characteristics of the interventions that led to positive outcomes and methods for identifying them. Secondly, identifying examples of good practice and evidence provides an optimistic and constructive platform for progressing the field.

Literature casting a positive assertion upon SFD is by no means scarce. As a starting point the concept of social capital is one quite often under examination in SFD research. Whilst it is acknowledged that questions still remain (Adams, 2008) regarding its application and evidence in sport contexts a growing evidence base is emerging surrounding its positive combination with sport. Edwards (2015) highlights the ways in which sport has the potential to reflect community values leading to shared community spirit. Bruening et al (2015) through their examination of a service based learning initiative in education were able to identify key characteristics of social capital concerning bonding and bridging elements. Qualitative and quantitative research methods uncovered that the students involved with volunteering in a local SFD initiative were able to provide many examples of how they were able to feel more closely connected with their fellow peers and the community surrounding them. However, it was not purely the experience of volunteering in a sport intervention that was the key factor fostering social capital. Bruening et al also referred to the design of the service learning course being a key factor in how it facilitated and enabled the students to experience social capital. This aligns well with the work of Hartman and Kwauk (2011) and Lyras and Welty Peachy (2011) that it is not sport alone that is responsible for fostering positive or negative outcomes. Indeed, within a similar education theme Bradbury and Kay (2008) also demonstrated evidence of social capital manifesting itself within the formally known UK based ‘step into sport’ programme where young people at ‘Key Stages’ two and three volunteered in after school settings, and within local sport club environments. Finally, Schulenkorf, (2012) also firmly
articulates how sports programmes can be seen as a way to foster communication by activating people and removing barriers within groups. Here, the key attributable positive factors according to Schulenkorf (2012) and with the support of Thomas and Dyall (1999) lie within the importance of building programmes from a bottom up perspective.

Evidence of positive outcomes associated with SFD interventions also relate to issues concerning longstanding racial and ethnic barriers (Burnett, 2001) which may also lead to social capital gains. The key premise underpinning these approaches according to Tonts (2005) is that sport is quite often the primary social connection in many communities. This was particularly the case within their analysis of competitive sport in rural Australia where the environment of sport provided a space for relationships to develop. On an even deeper level concerning religion, Sugden (1991) was able to demonstrate cohesiveness amongst team mates of catholic and protestant backgrounds through the Belfast Utd initiative in Northern Island. Sugden identifies how sport provided a bridge for social interaction, yet it was the processes underpinning the relationship building amongst the participants that was key. In particular, identifying key stakeholders to engage communities was pivotal. Tim Crabbe’s (2007) analysis of the Positive Futures programme in the UK is a similar example of a SFD intervention requiring access to sensitive issues within community. In many respects Crabbe’s report would identify characteristics and outcomes associated with the programme in its power to divert young people from crime and take more control over their lives. However, as is the theme for explaining these positive outcomes, it was not the entity of football sessions being provided for young people that explained these outcomes. Moreover, Crabbe, in similar respect to Sugden identified the importance of cultural intermediaries as key players. By cultural intermediaries, Crabbe was referring to the youth workers and sessional staff who had a similar background to the participants and were thus able to engage to a greater extent (Perez et al, 2009).

Overall, the examples above provide a set of examples of SFD case studies that demonstrate optimism for its implementation. Although these may be more social capital orientated, at the heart of these examples lies not sport itself as a key mechanism facilitating change, but deeper insight into the wider characteristics of the programmes and how they were embedded with additional development aspects such as peers, leaders and education. Indeed, in accordance with Lyra and Welty Peachey’s SFDT, Hayhurst and Frisby (2010) state that SFD objectives can only be met within a joined up collaborative process with governmental, educational and social service based organisations. These are all crucial aspects to explore when assessing the merit and worth of SFD interventions.

Essentially, this section of the chapter enables one to think positively about the potential open to SFD in terms of exploration and M and E work. In essence, despite the lack of evidence discourse, there are examples of SFD programmes that have and are providing positive contributions to the varying stakeholders accessing them (Edwards, 2015). Of those examples available, those conducting the research and M and E have gone some way to identify that it is not sport alone accountable for such outcomes. Such investigations nevertheless requires a deep, skilled and committed analytical lens to identify the inner working of SFD interventions given that they are complex and operate in open systems. Furthermore, although progress is being made, Sherry et al (2015) argues that scholars have still failed to critically analyse the management processes underpinning SFD interventions. In particular, Sherry et al makes specific reference to the need for evaluation to be more specific in its design and delivery. Furthermore, it may also be fair to suggest that much of this research and M and E work only goes some way to open up the black box of SFD interventions for articulating how and why programmes may work. Moreover, in accordance with Harris and Adams (2016) and Welty Peachey and Cohen (2015) there are limited examples of practitioners’ co creating
this knowledge. This leads nicely onto the next part of the chapter which will discuss implications and ways forward for building bridges between academia and practice.

2.6 Moving and progressing the field: Understanding the practitioner within the context of M and E

The previous narratives have alluded to the role that SDPs play within the M and E of SFD programmes. In addition to the limited voices practitioners may have within M and E work (Nichols et al, 2010; Adams and Harris, 2014; Harris and Adams, 2016) a number of observations have been made about the limited training in M and E for practitioners in the field (Hylton and Hartley, 2011; Coalter, 2007) despite many coming from higher educational backgrounds. This may reflect poor continual professional development in a career that has felt the impact of modernist practices (Adams and Harris, 2014), as well as courses within education that may not prepare students for industry. Secondly, Levermore (2011) highlights that time and resources within SFD programs are key factors contributing to the problem with M and E. The short life cycle of programmes and limited resources at the hands of practitioners leaves them with significant challenges of carrying out effective M and E.

It is necessary, and the purpose of this section of the chapter, to recognise the value and diversity of the SDP in relation to how they engage with M and E. The contribution they make towards M and E and the learning they receive from such practice according to Nichols et al (2010), Kay (2012), and Adams and Harris (2014) should form a key area of focus for any evaluation research. At present, with the exception of some attention given towards SDPs (eg: Bloyce et al 2008; Bloyce and Smith, 2011; Hylton and Hartley 2011; Houlihan, 2011; Piggie et al, 2009) the world of the sport development practitioner is an unknown terrain particularly with the U.K; and how they engage with evidence.

Of the literature that does exist about practitioners, a limited number of studies have been publicized. Firstly Nichols et al (2010) explored SDPs engagement with evidence and their perspectives. This research, which was carried out in the global south, has gone some way to bring to life the power dynamics and issues underpinning the unheard voices of the SFD practitioner. To summarise, Nichols et al identified how practitioners felt alienated and subjugated throughout the M and E process. Despite possessing insightful knowledge and understanding that would directly inform the evidence base underpinning their initiatives, the technocratic approaches and knowledge sequestered with academic disciplines was favoured. This supports claims made by Kay (2009) concerning academic expertise and knowledge taking precedence over those on the ground. The findings of this research would indicate that practitioners not only have a role to play in the M and E process, but they also have a desire to be involved.

Similarly, Lindsey and Gratton (2012) (also within the global south) uncovered insightful findings around the limitations of certain approaches to evidence being imposed on practitioners in light of the cultural disparities (eg: cultural norms and ways of delivering the programme). Lindsey and Gratton illuminated an interesting critique on the use of theory of change logic model approach so often championed by Coalter, (2007; 2010). In depth qualitative interviews with practitioners identified how they felt their local knowledge, stories and testimonies relating to their projects was side lined in the face of an over linear scientific approach that did not meet the contextual needs of their interventions. Additionally, Smith and Leach’s (2010) investigations into M and E practice within school sport partnerships with practitioners also uncovered a general lack of engagement with the technocratic (Chouinard, 2013) characteristics of M and E. This led to significant negative outcomes in addition to disengagement regarding limitations and credibility of what was reported.
These examples demonstrate the issues concerning practitioner involvement with M and E in the field. They also build upon Welty Peachy and Cohen’s (2015) research findings emphasizing the clear gap between practitioners and academics.

Other than this, much of the literature on the SDP has mainly focused upon generic engagement and experiences with roles (Bloyce and Smith 2008, 2011) and effectiveness of programmes (Crabbe, 2007). In addition, Macintosh (2011) recently carried out a study into SDPs within the North West of England which uncovered interesting views of SDPs in response to their experiences of evidence gathering, professional identity and roles as well as the changing nature of local authority sport development. Nevertheless, despite these examples, it is apparent that limited intrinsic insight exists about understanding what it means to be a SDP and their experiences, feelings and thoughts about the various challenges in their ‘profession’, and in particular that of evidence. At present with the exception of the valuable contributions of those authors mentioned here the main types of literature and research that involves practitioners is produced mainly within the context of critiquing programmes or their implementation. Whilst these literatures are valuable contributions to the field they do not necessarily favour the practitioner as the main focus of research. Instead, the practitioner operates as a tool to inform key arguments and conclusions at the expense of these practitioners’ contributions or views which may represent knowledge gaps, or weakness in their practice.

In accordance with Harris and Adams (2016), Kay (2009), Welty Peachy and Cohen (2015), and Nichols et al (2010), these circumstances surrounding M and E demonstrates that closer collaboration is needed with SDPs to involve them far more closer with M and E practice. In order to progress the field Sherry et al (2015, pg: 4) states that:

“the important researcher-practitioner link will only be strengthened through reciprocal engagement and the sharing of lessons from the field. This, in turn, should constantly challenge, develop and enhance research methodology and sport for social change scholarship overall.”

This quote is entirely relevant to M and E given its focus on bridging academic and practitioner knowledge. Edwards (2015) agrees with these sentiments by stating that such a bridge may manifest itself through participatory action research approaches (PAR) amongst practitioners, researchers and participants. To be clear, this may involve collaborative approaches to engagement where practitioner knowledge, informed by sufficient needs analysis of the participants informs any approach to research of M and E. In addition to closer collaboration between academia and industry practice, Edwards (2015) advocates a need for a more reflexive learning culture within SFD where scholars, but more so practitioners, develop a deeper and critical insight into their programmes (Harris and Adams, 2016). At present the scope for this is limited given the arguments already presented within this chapter concerning the quest for proof and consensual technocratic approaches to M and E being followed by SDPs (Harris and Adams, 2016). Nevertheless, this learning culture should be intertwined and embedded in innovative and inclusive training and education programmes for practitioners where their capacity for M and E can be increased (see chapter 4). Specifically, this M and E practice should focus on understanding how and why interventions work (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Coalter, 2007) through which a deeper appreciation of causality can be realised. By gaining a deeper insight into what works for whom in what circumstances and why, a greater learning culture can be fostered. This methodology is discussed in more depth within chapter 3. Moreover, Edwards (2015) and Welty Peachy and Cohen (2015) argue that this reflexive learning culture should start in earnest and become embedded in academic contexts such as sport management curricula. Given the proliferation of service learning based courses in education
whereby students gain experience in SFD in connection with their studies (Bruening et al, 2015) it would seem sensible to develop this reflexivity here where students can develop closer engagement with research and field work (Welty Peachy and Cohen, 2015), thus developing key skills for industry. Such a statement is suitably apt given the focus of this thesis which has an educational foundation of training emerging SDPs within M and E. The M and E framework underpinning the training of the students involved in the curriculum attempts to provide more insight into how approaches to M and E may support, and, or enable practitioners to make sense of their SFD interventions.

2.7 Chapter summary

To conclude, this chapter has attempted to conceptualise SFD within the context of evidence. Firstly, SFD was conceptualised and problematized in order to make sense of what it constitutes. In essence, it is clearly a nebulous concept open to interpretation and application in the diversity of contexts where it is applied. Lyras and Welty Peachy’s (2011) theoretical conceptualisation of SFD was then applied to frame a closer understanding of how it can be applied effectively. This conceptualisation has led to a deeper interpretation of SFD within the domain of evidence and M and E. As evidenced throughout, there are clearly a plethora of critical questions embroiling the SFD industry. These questions focus upon the over emphasis placed upon the power of sport and the limited evidence base supporting its existence. Much of this limited evidence base is explained by SFD interventions being encouraged to show proof of impact and positive outcomes opposed to articulating reflexively how and why positive or negative outcomes emerge. This is exacerbated by the weak connections between academia and industry which in essence leads to the practitioners in the industry community becoming devalued and subjugated (Nichols et al, 2010) by technocratic (Choinard, 2013) approaches mainly associated with monitoring. This devaluing sits within a lack of evidence discourse (Nichols et al, 2010) that over theorises M and E practice and favours academic knowledge (Harris and Adams, 2016).

Consequently, within the context of a SFD field that is able (to a degree) to evidence aspects of positive outcomes and good practice in the field, this chapter asserts the need to focus more closely with practitioners within M and E practice whereby a culture of learning, reflexivity, analysis and understanding is fostered. More focus on educational capacity and collaborative capacity building is therefore advocated. As such, this provides a sound platform for the next chapter to discuss what approaches to M and E may be available to practitioners, and within capacity building settings.
Chapter 3

Conceptualising and reviewing approaches to evaluation

Having conceptualised SFD and opened up the debates surrounding the lack of evidence discourse in SFD, this chapter will take into consideration what approaches to M and E may be best suited to practitioners on the ground delivering small scale SFD programmes. In light of time and space it is not possible to cover every aspect of evaluation practice. Instead, a compelling case is made for theory driven approaches to evaluation in SFD (Coalter, 2007, 2013; Bell, 2010; Nichols, 2007; Richards et al, 2012; Harris and Adams, 2016). These will be duly examined in this section. Given the participatory nature of this study which involves designing evaluation techniques with and for practitioners (Greenwood and Levin, 2007), the participatory realm of evaluation also cannot be ignored. Firstly, however, evaluation in itself is conceptualised and placed within the contemporary climate.

3.1 The meaning of evaluation – defining monitoring and evaluation

The need for evaluation is associated with the the desire to build a sound evidence base for understanding the effects of an intervention, programme goals and reduce uncertainty in decision making (Raphael, 2000). As an evaluator, one’s role is to provide a professional level of evidence concerning the claims made by initiators of policy or initiatives to then inform their future direction. Perhaps the most common definition of evaluation in place is put forward by Scriven (1991, pg: 1) who states that “evaluation is about the process of determining the merit value and worth of things”. Patton (1990, pg: 2) similarly suggests that “when one examines and judges accomplishments and effectiveness, one is engaged in evaluation”. Key words of ‘effectiveness’, ‘merit’, ‘worth’, and ‘examine’ stand out across these definitions and may , or may not be at the heart of evaluation methodology. These are crucial words because as Scriven and Patton advocate, it is essential to understand and make sense of whether or not any practice, intervention or policy is having, or has had a desired effect.

To provide a very brief history Patton (1994) states that evaluation practice came into existence within a context of government funded social change projects in the 1960’s (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Donaldson and Lipsey, 2006). Within these projects Patton highlights the fundamental gold standard processes which would be followed consisting of assessing needs, targeting populations, procuring resources, implementing programs and evaluating results. Given the disparity and in many cases short failings of this being adhered to, Patton states that this is where evaluation as a profession started to emerge. Patton and Scriven have since been at the centre of evaluation over the last thirty to forty years. In particular, Patton (1994) states that the first types of evaluations to emerge were those of formative and summative. In short, summative would assess merit and worth of a programme and the degree to which outcomes were met, and formative would provide insight to programme processes leading to and affecting programme goals.

In accordance with its inception, evaluation has been required by governments to show accountability for tax payer’s money for programmes and strategies focusing on social change. Thus, a large volume of evaluation approaches have emerged beyond just simply summative and formative approaches. As such, evaluation has come to be interpreted by different people in different ways varying applications of outcome, theory of change, experimental, impact and process evaluations. Palfrey et al (2012) state that it is best to use interpretation in making sense of evaluation rather than definition because by defining it we are stating one universal definition. It is
not the purpose of this chapter to provide a comprehensive review of all these different interpretations given every evaluation approach has distinct ontological and epistemological foundations. As already alluded to, this chapter will review the relevant approaches in accordance with what currently represents key issues and gaps within evaluation practice in SFD.

Although there is an abundance of literature pertaining to evaluation, there has been limited attempts over time to articulate where the term ‘monitoring’ fits within evaluation practice (Adams and Harris, 2014; Harris and Adams, 2016). What is more concerning is the way in which monitoring and evaluation terms (M and E) can be conflated with one another. This can invariably have implications in that not only may one find it hard to distinguish between the two terms, but secondly perceive them as meaning the same thing. Consequently, it is crucial to distinguish between the two. Where evaluation assesses merit and worth of a programme or initiative (Scriven, 1991) monitoring tracks changes in programmes. According to Bartle (2011) monitoring involves the recording and observation of activities taking place in a programme, where information on the programme can be routinely gathered. Furthermore, monitoring is crucial because information gleaned from the monitoring process can facilitate robust evaluation procedures. In sum it could be suggested that monitoring gathers and provides all the relevant information which then, any given evaluation will deconstruct and assess merit and worth at a deeper level. This is a particularly pertinent issue within SFD where a wide variety of M and E platforms exist. However, to what extent these M and E platforms constitute both M and E is open to debate.

Having succinctly defined evaluation and problematised monitoring’s role within the M and E process, it is also important to distinguish between research and evaluation. Patton (1990, pg: 2) demonstrates the connection between research and evaluation; “When this examination of effectiveness is conducted systematically and empirically through careful data collection and thoughtful analysis, one is engaged in evaluation research”. However, given the premise that evaluation involves a range of research processes and techniques it is important to distinguish between the two (Welty Peachey and Cohen, 2015). It is important to distinguish because according to Patton (1991) the purpose of evaluation is to produce useful information for programme improvements and decision making to tight time frames whereas the purpose of research is to produce knowledge about the way the world works with longer time frames for producing evidence. In most cases according to him social science does not seek evaluative conclusions. On a further level Mathison (2008) states that whilst evaluation requires research methods it requires more than just facts about an evaluand; “it requires the synthesis of facts and values within the determination of merit and value” (pg: 191). The dichotomy of research versus evaluation cannot be ignored and in terms of contextualising the issue with social policy and sport for social change in particular there are a number of implications. It could be argued for example that a major problem with the way that evaluation work is commissioned is that it is designed and commissioned as research opposed to as within a clear evaluation framework. For example much evaluation work is carried out within academic institutions so there would be little surprise in the two being confused. Welty Peachey and Cohen’s (2015) review with scholars illuminates this issue within the context of SFD given that there needs to be closer distinction as to what is developed as research and what constitutes M and E.

3.2 Contextualising evidence within policy

What constitutes evidence, and to what extent this evidence is even required has created tensions within the fields of social policy. Over time various governments have held disparate attitudes towards what constitutes credible evidence. New Labour’s administration from 1997 onwards developed a specific interest in evidence based policy whereby policy outcomes were supposedly
supported by social research (Sullivan, 2011) and performance indicators. Nutley, et al (2012) state that the ‘what works’ question was a central concern for policy makers (the Blair government in particular) to establish evidence that confirmed the truth of what works (Sullivan, 2011). This clearly had implications for evaluation practice which was expected to demonstrate truth, accountability and whether or not something worked. This was particularly evident through social programmes such as new deal for communities (NDC) (Sullivan, 2011; Kisby, 2011). Sport was also subjected to this accountability (Green, 2009; Kay, 2009) despite much of this evidence being ignored by government (Green, 2009; Houlihan, 2012; Sullivan, 2011).

Within the U.K, under a new coalition administration, (and now conservative leadership) funding cuts, austerity and the big society have resulted in substantial deregulation of public services and funding (relied upon by SFD programmes). The supremacy of neo liberal management principles therefore exist, and impact on evaluation processes. To be clear, according to Larner (2006), neo liberalism can be associated with the minimalist state, “where markets provide a better way for organizing economic activity” (pg: 199). In this sense, these markets align well with competition and economic efficiency (Larner, 2006). This has impacted on evaluation practice, in that many of the programmes and initiatives that require evaluation are already created within a competitive and commissioning based environment built around efficiency and economics. This, consequently means that evaluation work often follows this competition and efficiency focus (Choinard, 2013). What this has led to is the design of technocratic M and E practices (Choinard, 2013) that are mobilized to show efficiency, accountability and economic viability (Choinard, 2013). This resonates with the SFD field whereby performance indicators, target driven processes and cost benefit accountabilities are common place (Harris and Adams, 2016). As referred to in the previous chapter, easy empirical generalisations are required (Levermore, 2011) which is problematic for a field that does not provide a context for such generalization given that these programmes display varying intended and unintended outcomes.

Having defined evaluation within the current policy context, (as mentioned in chapter 2) an abundance of evaluation approaches and methodologies are available to practitioners as they seek to assess the merit and worth of programmes under investigation. Table 1 concisely summarises these. These evaluation approaches are not explored in great depth here because in addition to time and space limitations, many are utilised and embedded within the theory driven approaches sections of the chapter that are discussed next. As Levermore points out above, many of the approaches within the table are often combined with others but their use should depend upon what type of evaluation questions are being asked (Donaldson and Lipsey, 2006). Within the field of SFD there has been a growth in calls for more formative and process orientated approaches to evaluation (Coalter, 2007, 2014) which involve examining key activities and resources provided within the programmes. This may help to illuminate and demystify the black box of SFD programmes, and enable a deeper insight into how and why SFD interventions may work.
**Table 1: Types of evaluation (University of Minnesota, 2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Type</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
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| **Formative**   | • Evaluates a programme during development in order to make early improvements  
• Helps to refine or improve programme | • When starting a new programme  
• To assist in the early phases of programme development | • How well is the programme being delivered?  
• What strategies can we use to improve this programme? |
| **Summative**   | • Provides information on program effectiveness  
• Conducted after the completion of the program design | • To help decide whether to continue or end a program  
• To help determine whether a program should be expanded to other locations | • Should this program continue to be funded?  
• Should we expand these services to all other after-school programs in the community? |
| **Process**     | • Determines if specific program strategies were implemented as planned  
• Focuses on program implementation | • Determines if specific program strategies were implemented as planned  
• Focuses on program implementation | • Did your program meet its goals for recruitment of program participants?  
• Did participants receive the specified number of service hours? |
### Outputs

- Determines and quantifies numbers
- Focuses on measurement and numbers associated with programs

- To decide whether program achieved its intended targets
- To assess whether performance indicators were met
- To aid monitoring

- How many people attended your program?
- How often did they attend your programme?
- Were your performance indicators met (e.g. x amount of users to use the gym over length of the programme)
- Monitoring

### Outcome

- Focuses on the changes in comprehension, attitudes, behaviors, and practices that result from programme’s activities
- Can include both short and long term results

- To decide whether program/activity affect participants outcomes
- To establish and measure clear benefits of the program

- Did your participants report the desired changes after completing a program cycle?
- What are the short or long term results observed among (or reported by) participants?

### Impact

- Focuses on long term, sustained changes as a result of the program activities, both positive/negative and intended/unintended

- To influence policy
- To see impact in longitudinal studies with comparison groups

- What changes in your program participants’ behaviors are attributable to your program?
- What effects would program participants miss out on without this program?

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3.3 **Positioning suitable approaches to the SFD field**

As discussed in previous sections the SFD field has embraced a wide range of evaluation approaches (some methods are referred to within the table above). The next stage of this chapter is to evaluate and review which approaches that be best suited to SFD interventions. To provide focus, ‘Theory Driven Evaluation’ (TDE) will be given specific attention in this chapter for the following reasons.
Firstly, TDE has been afforded significant attention (and in some cases application) within the SFD field (Richards et al, 2012; Bell, 2010 and Nichols 2007). This is because authors such as those highlighted here have seen the capacity of TDE to open up key questions concerning what it is about SFD interventions that produce positive and negative outcomes. At the heart of theory driven approaches is the quest to unearth how and why programmes may achieve certain outcomes. As asserted in the previous chapter, these are some of the key issues occupying the lack of evidence discourse. To justify this argument even further, other sectors exploring social change and analogous with SFD (eg, health, crime, nursing, community development) have a strong record of advocating theory driven approaches (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Abhayanker, 2013; Funnell and Rogers, 2011). These will be discussed below.

3.4 Respecting, but omitting experimental techniques

However, before the TDE literature is explored it is important to evaluate the experimental techniques and why they may not be suitable for SFD interventions. Experimentalism’s dominance within the field of evaluation practice has been associated with the view that the use of observation to guide and understand change is at the heart of evaluation (Picciotto, 2012). With its observational underpinning Levermore (2011) explains the experimental method as an approach which compares and contrasts separate groups within controlled and non controlled environments. Certain interventions are prescribed to the treatment group with none being prescribed to the control group enabling comparison and conclusions to be drawn. A valid measure of what results would have been observed had the intervention not taken place is then inferred (Picciotto, 2012). This is referred to as the orthodox view (Tilley, 2000). The supremacy of this approach is of little surprise given its claimed capacity to explain cause and effect relationships throughout the physical and social sciences. Emanating from the physical and medical sciences the experimental approach has been extremely effective (Marchal et al, 2012). Randomised control trials are now common place within academic institutions and pharmaceutical organisations to establish whether or not a certain drug, treatment or measure has the desired cause and affect which can be compared to those who did not receive the treatment. The results driven methodology underpinning this approach is clearly attractive to privately funded aid givers such as governments and funding agencies who want to see the results which are reliable and able to inform future direction. Within the realm of social science programmes it is unsurprising to see a rationale for experimental evaluation methods because such an approach may be able to test whether an intervention works by engaging control or non control groups within them. However, within the context of social sciences a strong argument presents itself for avoiding such an approach in evaluation that now follows.

The limitations of experimentalism have mainly centred on its use within social programs and its inability to uncover how and why a programme may be affective or ineffective. At the forefront of this critique lie Pawson and Tilley (1997; 2000) whose main rationale for their realistic approach (discussed in section 3.7) is rooted as a response to the problems of experimentalism. They are doubtful of experimentalism as a method for finding out which programmes do and do not produce intended and unintended consequences (Tilley, 2000). This is firmly rooted within their excellently crafted exposition of context which takes into consideration the variable conditions which are required for certain outcome patterns to unfold. For example, it is not possible, and highly unlikely that a social change programme (that perhaps takes place in Devon UK) would induce exactly the same outcomes if it were to be replicated in the north of the UK. This is because the conditions and the circumstances surrounding the environment in which the programme is provided will be
different (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). The key question for Pawson and Tilley (1997) concerns how and why programmes work which they believe is beyond the scope of experimentalism. Blamey and Mackenzie (2007) are critical of experimental designs in the sense that such methods claim that contexts are things that can be controlled. This is not possible within open and social systems which are subject to a plethora of variables. Given that SFD programmes operate in these social systems they cannot be controlled, because of context.

The points presented here surrounding context are significantly pertinent for the CIPs (coaching innovation Projects which address social issues through the use of sport or physical activity) and the underlying aims of this thesis. To provide examples, these CIPs are varying whereby they reach out varying target groups (see appendix 2.8). For example some work closely with single mothers in deprived areas of the city to create social capital through physical activity. Others may work closely with young people in school environments using sport as a vehicle to ease transition. Whilst every CIP operates within the area of Southampton, every area is different and each and every CIP’s success is context dependent. The assumption of homogeneity associated with experimentalism that an intervention in one area will work similarly in another is therefore limited and not suitable for the CIPs or SFD. Another key limitation of experimental designs is their lack of ability or suitability to explain how change occurs in social programmes (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Marchal et al 2012; Nichols, 2007). Nichols (2007) in similar respect to Pawson and Tilley states the negatives about the deterministic approach to causation in experimental designs that do not take into account the agency surrounding human interaction and the multitude of varying dynamics taking place and ultimately shaping social change. In essence the experimental method does not provide the evaluator with a handle on how things happen and why they happen. Taking a generic SFD programme as a case study would be a suitable lens for illustrating such limits. For example a programme that aimed to use fishing and football as a tool to get more young men into employment may have been successful for a number of reasons such as the instructor, or quality of football coaching received. It may also have been successful because of the positive relationships built with the instructors. Taking the same programme to another environment or place would not necessarily produce the same outcomes because the young men may not have the same positive relationships with the instructors, there may not be suitable facilities, and the quality of delivery may not be in tune with what the young men expect. Such findings leading to change would not be possible within an experimental design because the findings would only go as far as attributing the football and fishing as the causes of employment. This again is a key factor within this thesis given that every CIP has a social change focus meaning that any evaluation approach would require an understanding of agency and human interaction. This is central to the underlying philosophy of the evaluation approach to this thesis which is understanding how and why the CIPs work. Consequently, if one were to accept the experimental method the underlying assumptions would be sufficiently distant from what is being studied in the thesis.

Another argument for why the experimental method is not suitable for this thesis and SFD concerns the open access nature of some of SFD interventions. Whilst some of the CIPs are targeted there are also those which are open access and operate within social environments that are constantly subject to change. This is common within SFD programmes (Nichols, 2007) making them hard to ‘control’ in an experimental sense. With this in mind, Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman (2005) recognise the “continually changing decision-making milieu of social programs” (pg: 22) as a key challenge for evaluators. They argue that researcher flexibility is a key requirement because “social programs are not research laboratories, and evaluators must expect to be buffeted about by forces and events
beyond their control” (pg: 23). Again, the characteristics of the CIPs resonate strongly with this as small scale programmes which operate within ever changing decision making environments and unstable contexts.

Overall, this section has sought to respect and recognize the prevalence of experimentalism within evaluation practice. It may work well within the physical and medical sciences because these are contexts that can be controlled and the empirical results rule. This is different within social programmes where evaluators require a grasp on how and why things happen (Pawson, 2003). Whilst all social programmes and indeed CIPs can be viewed as social experiments, they are not experiments in the same sense as a laboratory experiment. Thus, within the arena of social change programmes, and the CIPs in particular, a case presents itself for avoiding experimental outcome orientated evaluation designs. The key problem for evaluation research is to find out how and under what conditions a given measure will produce its impacts (Tilley, 2000).

3.5 Theory Driven Evaluation (TDE)

The application of TDE approaches in evaluation practice has grown to prominence over the last 20 years. For example Sullivan (2011) highlights the period of New Labour’s modernisation and new public management agenda where such theory driven approaches started to emerge. This was particularly evident through the ‘New Deal for Communities’ programme in England that saw the application of TDE in the form of ‘theory of change’. In addition TDE approaches have also been afforded considerable application within the fields of social programmes and SFD (Coalter, 2007; Vogel, 2012; Armour et al, 2012; Bell, 2010; Nicholls, 2007).

The best starting point for conceptualising TDE lies within a consideration of ‘theory’. In contrast to psychological and sociological perspectives (Green and Mcallister, 2002), theory, according to Weiss (1997) is a set of beliefs or assumptions that underlie action. In relation to social programmes she suggests that theories are hypotheses for the way people build and articulate their programmes which are then depicted through programme theories. As (Pawson, 2003) asserts, programmes are theories incarnate (in that they are formed on a wide range of assumptions as to why they may work). In essence theory provides a frame of reference that helps humans to understand their world and function within it (Chen, 1990). Thus within the environment of social change the articulation of theory enables practitioners and policy makers to make explicit how and why a programme intends to unfold with the underlying assumptions made clear. This is especially crucial for social programmes given the complexity of actors, agency, contextual factors and dynamics that may influence the programme (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Coalter, 2007). Green and Mcallister (2002) specifically state that theory based approaches offer comprehensive ways to capture the comprehensive nature of the programme such as the programme goals, services offered and assumptions about how the programme will lead to certain outcomes. Within evaluation practice, TDE approaches become useful when they help us to identify what to evaluate and ask questions about how and why programs work as opposed to experimentalist and outcome approaches, which only focus on what programmes produce, opposed to why (Weiss, 1997). Whilst there are clear distinguishing features between theory based approaches in most cases they rely on developing a theory of change, a logical model for an intervention (logic model) or a results chain depicting how certain outcomes will be reached (Mayne, 2012). Ultimately Pawson (2003, pg: 472) provides a clear and above all simple exposition of the logic behind TDE:
“evaluation seeks to discover whether programmes work; programmes are theories. Therefore it follows that evaluation is theory-testing”

The implementation of theory driven programme development procedures within the SFD field is not new. Much of the lack of evidence discourse has pointed towards theory driven approaches that may enable the deeper understanding and examination of programme processes (Coalter, 2012) and offer more insights on how and why impacts occur (Weiss, 1997). As examples Coalter (2012) has been heavily involved with Comic Relief in the global south working with SFD organisations such as the Matare youth organisation in theory of change approaches (mainly around logic models). A key strength of programme theory is the way in which theory building (assumptions about how and why a programme may work) can then lead in to the testing of that theory Abhyanker (2013). However, it remains to be seen as to what extent practitioners are fully liberated, trained and involved in implementing such techniques. In most cases much of this work is led by academics and positioned in academia (Levermore, 2011; Kay 2012; Harris and Adams, 2016).

Furthermore, there are different aspects of programme theory (Westhorp, 2012) which need to be considered and distinguished. For example, theory of change (Coalter, 2012; Vogel, 2012), and realistic approaches (Nichols, 2007; Pawson and Tilley, 1997) have been implemented and advocated for their strength in outlining and clarifying how and why programmes should work to achieve specific outcomes, which as a result, has led to an increase in evaluation practice (Vogel, 2012) within SFD programmes.

What now follows is an examination of two key areas from the school of TDE: the Theory of Change (TOC) and the Realistic Evaluation (RE). These two features of the TDE school will be examined because both have been implemented widely within the social programming field (Abhyanker, 2013; Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Blamey and Mackenzie, 2007) and in some respects the sport and social change environment (Vogel, 2012; Coalter, 2012; Nichols, 2007). Another rationale for examination of these two approaches concerns the dichotomy of their interchanging use in the field (Blamey and Mckenzie, 2007) which require clarification if they are to be implemented in this study. For example, Coalter across his various plethora of publications advocates a theory of change approach and makes significant reference to Pawson and Tilley (1997).

3.6 TOC approaches

TOC approaches to programme development and evaluation have been a constant place in social programming over the last 20 years. Emanating from the work of Connel et al (1995), the TOC approach proposes that programmes are iterative sequences of theories that require specific interaction with stakeholders to fully articulate these sequences (Pawson, 2003). These iterative sequences of theories are captured in the logic that if ‘A’ is implemented then this should achieve a certain intervention goal which would then lead to a desired output resulting in a desired outcome. This stepping stone approach (Pawson, 2003) to programme development has been a main stay within the social programming community, particularly in America where it emerged from the Aspen institute. Another adequate and concise exposition of TOC is provided by Sullivan (2011) who states that “it begins by examining the needs and resources of a local community, identifying long-term goals that will meet these needs, specifying a range of interventions (activities, processes, projects) that will lead to these goals, articulating the rationale and related assumptions supporting each of these interventions and then prospectively specifying short-,medium- and long-term milestones on the way” (pg: 503). This again highlights the increased focus and attention afforded to programme development and planning which is crucial in any social change programme involving a range of
stakeholders. Having articulated a sufficient TOC, evaluation can then unfold in the form of theory testing whereby “a microscope is placed to each stage, making process observations to see if the theories conform to actuality” (Pawson, 2003, pg: 473). In most cases these will involve a range of research methods deemed suitable to gain an answer to certain aspects of the theory of change and underpinning programme theories within it. There is of course never a universal definition or absolute method for depicting a TOC. However, Vogel (2012) importantly states that not only is a TOC about mapping inputs to outcomes but also about reflecting values and world views of those impacting upon the programme in question. This is what Blamey and Mckenzie (2007, pg: 455) refer to as the combination and integration of programme and implementation theory – programme theory being “the links between mechanisms and outcomes (e.g. concerns over self-image for young women or the health of their unborn child for pregnant women) and implementation being the translation of objectives into service delivery and programme operation”. This is an important aspect of TOC which distinguishes it from being just an implementational model or design of how a programme works to one which takes into consideration context.

Within the field of social programming and sport for social change, TOC approaches have, and are, being used widely. For example Sullivan (2011) highlighted the prominence of TOC under New Labour’s investment into the NDC programme in the early 2000’s. In addition, since Fred Coalter’s call for more evidence in (2007), an increase of theory driven approaches within the field of SFD has followed. Coalter’s contribution to the lack of evidence discourse at present is represented by his claims of programmes representing ill defined interventions with hard to follow outcomes (2010). In addition, he has highlighted the problems with outcome based evaluations which provide very little insight about the programmes in question. Calling for a closer understanding and examination of context and process, it is of no surprise that Coalter began to strongly advocate a case for more theory driven approaches to understand the inner workings of programmes. From this it is not uncommon for many TOC approaches to draw upon the usage of logic models to map out the mechanics of a programme which are usually depicted by inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts (Coalter, 2007; Levermore 2011; Lindsey and Gratton, 2012). For Coalter in particular, the logic model has become an integral part of his point of departure for theory based enquiry (2014). This has led to him taking such an approach across the globe to such places as Africa and now firmly entrenched within donor approaches to M and E – Comic Relief being a prime example. Utilising such an approach enables evaluators, donors and stakeholders involved in programmes to clearly map out inputs to outcomes stepping stones. In most cases this involves working back from the outcomes to address the relative stepping stones in causal terms (as in what caused ‘x’ to happen and why) which then enables evaluation to focus on key parts of the programme depicted by the logic model.

Following this, the logic model approach is not necessarily a sufficient requirement for carrying out TOC approaches. Vogel (2012) for example warns against the linearity of logic models as being too abstract from the TOC itself and overly focused towards outputs over outcomes. Outcomes and outputs are referred to here because like M and E they are often confused and conflated (Harris and Adams, 2016). As Vogel states, outputs which are more associated with quantifiable and measurable targets (eg ‘x’ amount of sessions, ‘x’ amount of trained leaders) become easier to identify than outcomes which represent more about distant travelled and require more depth of analysis to make sense of what they are (eg improved self esteem, or better community cohesion). Lindsey and Gratton (2012) also warn that the use of logic models may be too linear and rigid. Thus, they may fail to capture the complex multi directional relationships within context of activities,
outcomes and impacts. These points highlight a number of issues with TOC approaches. Firstly, it is apparent that in many cases TOC and logic models are used interchangeably to depict programme theory (ies) yet confusion is a clear possibility if this is the case. It is not clear whether a logic model is a TOC or an additional resource to help depict a TOC.

Additional issues surround that of programme theory within TOC. The scope for implementation theory and programme theory being embedded in TOC approaches has already been emphasised above but literature (Fulbright-Anderson et al, 1998; Marchal et al 2012) has highlighted that in most cases this is rarely carried out in TOC applications. Weiss (1997) calls these two aspects the programme theories of change. Indeed, Pawson (2003) states that programmes are theories and Weiss (1997) states that programmes depict more than one theory. Nevertheless clarity surrounding what ‘theory’ is whether implementational or descriptive (Chen, 1990) requires further clarification for stakeholders and evaluators on the ground. Distinguishing between the two and agreement for common terms is crucial otherwise confusion will continue to manifest itself. (See Blamey and Mckenzie (2007).

3.7 Realist Evaluation (RE)

Within these variable approaches to programme theory driven evaluation, Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) Realistic Evaluation (RE) emanating from realism offers crucial insight that aims to make sense of what works for whom, why and in what circumstances within programmes. Realism according to Westhorp (2014) sits between positivism (direct and observable facts) and constructivism (through human senses it is not possible to know the true nature of reality). For Westhorp, she presents five key assertions of where realism sits. Firstly, the social and material worlds are real, and may produce positive and negative effects. Secondly, the human brain is crucial wherein enquiry and observation are shaped and filtered through it. Whilst there is no such thing as final truth Westhorp states that it is possible to work towards a closer understanding of reality. Thirdly, all social systems are open systems which interact and effect one another. Over time they change and will never be static. Penultimately, realism asserts that causation works through unobservable processes, called mechanisms. For causality, this is conceptualized as the behavioural triggers and mechanisms that a programme may bring about (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). Within a realist sense, causality is not something that is successionist (a=b); instead it is generative and places emphasis on how reasoning, attitudes and behaviours of participants intersect with the resources of a programme. This is what Pawson and Tilley refer to as the programme mechanism. This helps to explain how resources are provided in social systems and reasoned against by individuals (Dalkin et al, 2015). Finally, Westhorp highlights context and its imperative existence for enabling mechanisms to operate in social space. This, strikes a chord with the previous discussion in this chapter around experimentalism.

A key reason for positioning the discussion within realism is because within the context of this thesis SFD programmes are social programmes that operate in social reality. Thus in all social change programmes the major concern is ‘change’ (Pawson, 2003). Within the context of SFD this is important to recognise given the challenge facing such programmes. For example, in realist terms, Abhyanker et al (2013, pg: 13) point out that “programmes are social systems where there is a constant interplay between human agency (people’s capacity to act freely and shape their lives) and social structures (the environment or circumstances they work in) such that any change is a result of an interaction between individuals and the systems they work in”. SFD is no different to this. It
operates in social systems within structures that are stratified, embedded and open, which cannot be easily controlled.

The introduction of realism above provokes thought and has implications for SFD and how programmes are monitored and evaluated. For example, the “traditional outcome-focused approaches are sometimes not appropriate for evaluations of complex programmes as they often fall short of explaining how and why they do or do not work”. (Abhayanker et al, 2013, pg: 112). The ‘Realistic’ approach to evaluation pioneered by Pawson and Tilley (1997) encourages the evaluator to understand causality in terms of the underlying causal mechanisms generating regularities which may often be hidden (Pawson and Tilley 1997; Tilley, 2000).

A distinguishing feature of RE against other forms of TDE is the focus on generative causation whereas TOC centre more focus upon the implementational aspects of programme theory (Blamey and Mckenzie, 2007; Marchal et al, 2012; Pawson, 2003). Another clear distinction of RE is that of context in that potential mechanisms leading to outcomes will only be activated if certain conditions are right. Making clear the realistic interpretation of mechanism (generative) is crucial here as compared to other TDE approaches more implementational aspects are referred to in regards to mechanisms. Within the realistic approach mechanisms are more attributable to human agency opposed to the mechanics of a programme. As Duffy et al (2013) suggest, programmes only work if people choose to make them work and “sustained investigation is needed into the operation of choices under the inducement of programme resources” (Pawson, 2006 pg: 24). To reiterate the terms of mechanism and context above, Marchal et al (2012) state that realistic evaluators (RE) believe causality to be generative in the sense that actors have the potential for change by their very nature (agency). As for context, potential mechanisms leading to outcomes will only be activated if certain conditions are right. Thus an understanding of context and its fluidity of change are central to RE to understand what works for whom, in what circumstances and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). To seek an understanding / answer to these questions in social programmes Pawson and Tilley suggest the following CMO framework which is depicted as follows:

-C= what conditions are needed for a measure to trigger mechanisms to produce outcome patterns?
-M= what is it about a measure that may lead it to have a particular outcome pattern in a given context (for example how do resources intersect with participants beliefs, reasoning, attitudes, ideas and opportunities?)
-O= what are the practical effects produced by causal mechanisms being triggered in a given context?

In short and concise terms there is no universal defined and agreed approach for carrying out RE (Marchal et al, 2012; Evans and Killoran 2000; Pawson and Tilley, 1997). However, a clear consensus surrounds the importance of developing programme theory, usually via the formulation of the CMO which draws upon data gathered about the programme in hand via key stakeholders. These CMOs (also referred to as conjectures) are then usually tested via various qualitative and quantitative mixed methods which may be observation, questionnaires, focus groups or interviews. Key questions are framed around what worked for whom, in what circumstances and why? The final stage, having analysed the data and tested the CMOs then consists of refining the programme theory which then leads to further testing (Rycroft-Malone et al, 2010). In most simplistic terms a RE answers the four W’s within the research strategy of developing programme theory, conjecturing CMOs then refining the programme theory through a range of mixed methods. A key feature of RE, is that it is impossible to evaluate and examine all aspects of a social programme. Pawson (2003)
particularly highlights that we should not feel compelled to cover everything and that “we should steady our fire” (pg: 487). For SFD this is a key message to recognise because programmes have a range of theories that are being implemented. With this in mind resources and time available are at a premium to carry out any type of evaluation especially if SDPs are involved.

Against this backdrop, various applications of this approach have been adopted within the social change field. Marchal et al’s (2012) review of empirical published studies for example uncovered ninety nine up to the date of publication. More interestingly however, within the field of SFD REs have been sparse compared to other applications of TDE. Nevertheless, an example of some of the limited applications would be Nicholls (2007) RE of two sport for social change programmes. Based on the conceptualisation of RE above, Nichols captured the realistic application well by referring to generative causality as a combination of human agency and its reaction to new opportunities and resources. In addition his testing of mechanisms was applied within the generative sense by examining how the participants within the programme in question changed perceptions of their own capabilities to take advantage of new opportunities. Thus for example ‘long term pro social personal development’ was one of a number of mechanisms tested within the CMO configurations in his RE. As a result, he seems to capture Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) conceptualisation of RE well and in his conclusions he states that this research strategy enabled him to usefully evaluate the two micro level programmes in question. However, Nichols emphasises an issue with RE in the sense of “at what point do we say the outcomes are sufficient to support the hypothesised position, and how much change is required to support the configuration?” (pg: 37). However, going back to Pawson (2003) perhaps his response would resonate with the ‘steady your fire’ claim and emphasis on programme learning. The key within any approach taken with RE is to evaluate to what extent the approach has uncovered new insight into what works for whom in what circumstances and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997), be it even at a minimal level. This is simply not sufficiently done enough in SFD, particularly in a way that enables knowledge transfer to industry.

On a more macro level, RE has been utilised within the sport for social change field demonstrating that it can be applied on large scale as well as small scale programmes. For example Richards et al (2012) carried out a RE of the international community coach education systems project which was delivered on a large scale across Africa. Focusing on the five ‘Ws’ of Pawson and Tilley, the authors developed programme theories with stakeholders and conjectured CMO frameworks to uncover an improved and adapted framework. For them it was crucial to gain an empirical understanding of the relationship between the context in which the framework had been applied, the mechanisms by which it had worked and the outcomes which had emerged (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). This evaluation clearly resonated with the realist approach of developing programme theory; testing CMOs and then retesting and refining programme theory. As a result, they were able to articulate which mechanisms fired appropriately or inappropriately within certain contexts, and were able to refine the programme theory.

Overall, the preceding case studies of theory driven enquiry have emphasised the utility of approaches within the context of social programmes. Both realistic and theory of change approaches share significant similarities with one another but also bare characteristics which distinguish their positions, mainly within the realms of causality and application of programme theory. Blamey and Mackenzie (2007) for example express TOC’s focus on overall programme outcomes and the synergies between various strands of an intervention which uncover theories mainly at the implemenational level although some proponents of TOC advocate the big ‘T’ of programme theory
(Blamey and Mackenzie, 2007). They then go on to state that RE on the other hand is concerned with the more promising CMO configurations which may enable programme learning. Both approaches are suitable for evaluation practice in that they can meet key goals for evaluators and stakeholders to not only understand outcomes, but to also appreciate the mechanisms by which such outcomes come about (Nichols, 2007). Therefore, pigeon holing such approaches within outcome, process or formative evaluations is not advisable given their dynamic application. Theory driven enquiry as a whole is of value because it enables evaluation at a number of differing points of an evaluation, be it beginning, middle, or end (Pawson and Tilley, 1997).

3.8 TDE for industry?

However, despite the underlying scope and strength these approaches may hold for SFD, there are key issues that require recognition. Firstly, like many other approaches to M and E in the field (Adams and Harris, 2014; Levermore, 2011) these approaches are generally carried out by academics and external evaluators (Marchal et al, 2012). Not one of the sources above involved practitioners themselves in carrying out the said methodologies. This indicates that a certain degree of understanding and expertise is required for their use and this has significant training implications if it were to be applied by practitioners. This is particularly pertinent within the key focus of this thesis which argues for practitioners being embedded in the monitoring and evaluation process within their programmes. Furthermore, in addition to these limited examples of RE in SFD, there are also limited examples of RE in general being implemented by practitioners on the front line. These issues raise a key question concerning the current existence of RE regarding to what extent it has been prepared and framed as a useable resource for those working in industry. Immediately the academic framing of these approaches and the scientific language they use present potential obstacles when engaging practitioners in the field. If the language underpinning and approach cannot be understood then there is little possibility of the approach itself being understood either.

In addition, another key problem that immediately surfaces with, for example, RE, is lack of rule setting or strict method for carrying it out (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). Whilst this may be liberating for evaluators, it may also bring about differing interpretations and methodological application by evaluators which may miss the realistic purpose. For example, Pawson and Manzano Santaella (2012) indicate a number of studies that do not fully capture the realistic methodology. Moreover, Marchal et al’s (2012) empirical review uncovered many issues around what constituted a mechanism in the studies under examination. Within some cases mechanisms were in line with the generative means of causality, whereas in others they were more successionist or implementational in nature. Many terms were also used interchangeably, such as TOC and programme theory, indicating the same things. Furthermore, many of their observations of the studies under question demonstrated more of the characteristics leaning towards process rather than realistic evaluation. Whilst the realistic approach examines elements of process, what distinguishes it is the search for the deeper explanation of change manifested through human agency (Marchal et al, 2012). The discussion of these underlying issues residing within TDE bears a number of implications for the practice of evaluation. If these problems are being identified at academic / publishable level then what hope does that give practitioners and trainers on the ground? How may we expect students to distinguish between a mechanism and an outcome, and how may we deal with the resource intensive requirements of theory driven approaches? (Marchal et al, 2012; Blamey and Mackenzie, 2007 among others).
Nevertheless, despite these potential limitations illustrated above it does not mean that RE does not hold value for progressing the field. In fact within the aims and objectives of this thesis and what was discussed in the previous chapter, RE is an entirely suitable approach for SFD. A key message emanating from the field for improving M and E practice involves encouraging and developing more reflexivity amongst practitioners in the field (Edwards, 2015; Harris and Adams, 2016). This reflexivity should also be mobilized through closer collaboration amongst academics and practitioners (Welty Peachey and Cohen, 2015). This involves taking theory and deconstructing it with practitioners so they can make sense of it within a practical context. In essence, RE holds great potential for the practitioner for making sense of the inner mechanisms at play within SFD interventions. Providing the dangers surrounding language and theory are mitigated against and translated in a way that foster reflexivity, there is no reason why it should not be more common place within the field. As such, this is a suitable time to move into the participatory realm of evaluation, which may well provide an avenue for enabling this to happen.

3.9 The Participatory Research Paradigm (PRP) as a context

A potential way for addressing some of the issues that the conceptual obstacles of evaluation methodologies present is through the participatory research paradigm which may provide potential for viewing practitioners as ‘participants’ opposed to ‘objects’ in evaluation. The ‘Participatory Research Paradigm’ (PRP) (Heron and Reason, 2001) has offered a significant contribution to field of research and has found its way into evaluation practice (Greenwood and Levin, 2007). In essence, PRP advocates the involvement of research stakeholders in the research process (Collinson et al, 2005) whereby researchers conduct research with people, not on them. For Heron and Reason (2001) the key characteristics of their paradigm can be associated with social transformation, empowerment and co-operative inquiry that blurs the boundaries between researcher and researched (Lincoln, 2001). Collinson et al (2005, pg: 50) state that “researchers working within the participatory paradigm are committed to seeking an understanding of the social world from the perspective of the social actors who inhabit that world, through their own subjective meanings and experiences”. In practice, participatory and action orientated (Greenwood and Levin, 2007) distinguishes itself from other traditional forms of research “based on who defines the research problems, and who generates, analyses, represents, owns and acts upon the information that is sought” (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995, pg: 1668). Consequently, the PRP movement has made its way into evaluation practice where, increasingly, programme staff and participants become more involved in the design and implementation of evaluation (Choinard, 2013). The following section attempts to introduce the concept of participatory evaluation (PE) firstly highlighting its distinction from conventional approaches. It then draws upon three examples in the field – developmental evaluation (Patton, 1994), empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 2005) and Schula et al’s (2016) ‘collaborative principles of evaluation’. These have been selected based on their contemporary use within the field at present and more importantly their linkage to the aims and objectives to the study in hand, and wider context of SFD concerning the perceived alienation of practitioners within the M and E process (Nichols et al, 2010). In relation to the aims and objectives of this thesis they have been reviewed on the basis of informing the design of the framework for study one. Given that this research spans several years, naturally the chapter consisting of refining the framework from study one findings reflexively takes into account these PE approaches that may inform the framework for testing in study two. They will be discussed there opposed to here and also demonstrate how the reviewing of literature has spanned the whole thesis.

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3.10 Participatory Evaluation

According to Greenwood and Levin (2007), participatory evaluation (PE) emerged in response to a plethora of issues concerning traditional approaches to evaluation. These issues encompassed the implementation of conventional evaluations that were written in a way that were hard to understand for practitioners. In addition, tension surrounding the externalisation of evaluation and outside expert dichotomy (House, 1993) has emerged based on the limitations that external evaluators may have to make sense of the complexity surrounding programmes. Greenwood and Levin (2007) argue that “if evaluation is to focus on things that matter to stakeholders then the only way to conduct it is to examine the internal dynamics as understood within the programme” (pg: 185). Thus, capturing local views and culturally relevant perspectives (Choinard, 2013), involving practitioners and stakeholders may be an appropriate way to do this. PE according to Greenwood and Levin (2007), rejects the neutral and objective judgements of evaluation and converts evaluation into organisational development processes (Patton, 2008). Central to PE is the transition from “the court of accountability to the engaged value based commitment to programme development” (Greenwood and Levin, 2007, pg: 187). In simplest terms, this approach involves practitioners, participants and trained evaluators all being involved in the process.

There is no overall method or evaluation methodology itself for participatory approaches or PE. More accurately a participatory approach enables more of an open framework to work with stakeholders to carry out a range of different evaluation approaches within such as experimental, outcome, process or theory driven approaches. Quite often, theory driven approaches involve stakeholder engagement within the defining of programme theory (Vogel, 2012; Green and Mcalister, 2002; Pawson and Tilley, 1997). In the context of sport and social change Levermore (2011) has highlighted many cases where evaluators have developed log frames / logic models with practitioners in certain programmes. Ultimately PE involves a growing number of evaluation approaches whereby evaluators work with stakeholders to determine what is to be evaluated and how it will be evaluated (Cousins and Whitmore, 1998). In essence PE is applied social research wherein evaluators train key programme staff to work with them in the evaluation. Specifically it is also of use to consider Cousins and Whitmore’s (1998) conceptualization of participatory evaluation. They position it in two forms – transformational participatory evaluation (TPE) which may be about relocating power and promoting social change. The second form – practical participatory evaluation (PPE) may involve practical approaches to conducting evaluation which may involve the broadening of decision making and problem solving. Cousins and Whitmore (1998) recognize that these conceptualisations are not necessarily exclusive or distinct as they may cross over.

Chouinard (2013) in particular has highlighted the key standpoints that participatory forms of evaluation occupy against what she refers to as the traditional gold standard ‘technocratic approaches’. In accordance with Adams and Harris’ (2014) neo liberal modernisation analogy to SFD, Chouinard highlights that evaluation at present is valued for the way it can legitimize government activities, enhance management decision making and ensure cost effectiveness. PE conversely addresses diverse programme needs across a broad range of local and cultural contexts often advocating local ownership, empowerment and organisational learning (Cousins and Chouinard, 2012). For Chouinard (2013), central to the distinction between PE and gold standard forms of evaluation is the tension surrounding democratic and technocratic conceptions of accountability. Accountability in a democratic and PE sense pertains to shared ownership and responsibility,
whereas accountability in a technocratic sense points more towards control regulation and compliance (Chouinard, 2013).

This discussion and acknowledgement of the tensions is important for two key reasons. Firstly, it highlights and questions (regardless of its value) the extent to which participatory forms of evaluation can gain recognition by policy makers, practitioners and the academic community. Secondly, it also raises another tension concerning the philosophical relational and practical differences of conventional versus PE and what they seek to achieve. This is key within the field of social change and in particular SFD. This is because in order for the field to move forward one could reasonably argue that a compromise needs to be made between the two if evaluation can strike a balance of informing practice and gaining credible acknowledgement. This points quite nicely to the aims of the thesis.

3.11 PE in the field

The following section will now acknowledge the varying approaches to PE in the field focusing specifically on ‘developmental evaluation’, ‘empowerment evaluation’ and ‘collaborative principles of evaluation’.

3.12 Developmental Evaluation

Developmental Evaluation (DE), also known as Utilisation Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2008) is a form of PE that has drawn significant attention and practice. DE’s starting point is one that is based upon the limitations of traditional rational planning, standardization of inputs and causality of links when carrying out evaluation (Gamble, 2008; Choinard, 2013). Opposed to rigid, structural and prescribed methods of evaluation, Patton’s (2011) experiences of evaluation practice and tensions accruing from such approaches led him to a new approach towards evaluation. DE draws upon many of the characteristics advocated within the utilisation focused evaluation approach which encourages utility and actual use of evaluation findings by intended users. According to Patton (2002), “evaluators should facilitate the evaluation process and design any evaluation with careful consideration of how everything that is done, from beginning to end, will affect use” (pg: 1). On the basis that no evaluation can be value free, Patton strongly promotes the importance of recognising the values of those who may frame the evaluation so that the stakeholders or, as he calls them (2011) ‘innovators’, are embedded and involved in the process. In this way, evaluation findings and improvements are far more likely to be addressed because findings represent all involved. Therefore, intended users must be involved. DE within this sense is very much about innovation and improvement within a context of uncertainty (Gamble, 2008). Gamble points out that DE draws together the critical thinking of evaluation with the creative thinking of development whereby the evaluator employed to facilitate the DE brings evaluative thinking into the process of development and intentional change. It is not about working to defined goals, but more about working towards improvement and adaptation in dynamic, complicated and ever changing contexts of uncertainty.

In terms of practice, there is no specific framework or structure in place for DE. As Patton (2011) highlights, no defined methods to evaluation are prescribed. At the heart of DE is that of capacity building with practitioners so that evaluation and subsequent evidence production is tied towards continuous organisational development. Within a critical lens, questions do emerge surrounding the potential limitations of this participatory approach. For example, issues arise concerning the training
needs of stakeholders to carry out the evaluation methodologies that DE may use. Secondly, whilst the organic and evolving approach to developing an evaluation framework within an organisation aligns neatly with the ontological roots of PE, one may question within the context of time and resources how feasible that is. Finally, it is not entirely clear how significant a role the external evaluator may play within the DE, in terms of their involvement in evaluation activity itself.

3.13 Empowerment Evaluation

Similarly, ‘Empowerment Evaluation’ (EE) (Fetterman, 1994; Fetterman, 2005; Wandersman et al, 2005) has also been widely implemented as a form of PE. According to Fetterman (2005), EE is about capacity building whereby stakeholders take control of the conducting of their own evaluations and where they remain in charge. In its most specific definition Fetterman (1994) has conceptualised EE as the use of evaluation techniques and concepts to foster improvement and self determination. A significant rationale for EE lends itself to the intolerance of the role of the outside expert (Green and Frankish, 1995), whereby in the EE sense, the aim of encouraging stakeholders to take more control over their own practices is key. EE generally consists of an empowerment evaluator coming into an organisation to work with stakeholders to develop evaluation and monitoring approaches. This empowerment evaluator’s role is one of facilitation to train the community to be the sole drivers behind the evaluation (Fetterman, 2005). The theory behind this leads to greater ownership and use of results given the communities' involvement in the process. Whilst sitting comfortably within the participatory realm, EE distinguishes itself significantly from the more traditional forms of PE. The most significant distinction being that PE is focused on evaluators working with the practitioners to carry out the evaluation, whereas in EE the community specifically take responsibility themselves. Where the concept of ‘empowerment’ is fundamental to EE, it is not a sole aim in PE (Fetterman, 2005). EE generally consists of an empowerment evaluator coming into an organisation to work with stakeholders to develop evaluation and monitoring approaches. This empowerment evaluator’s role is one of facilitation to train the community to be the sole drivers behind the evaluation (Fetterman, 2005). At the heart of this are Wandersman et al (2005) ten core principles of EE which are summarised in the table below.

Table 2 – Empowerment Evaluation principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EE Principle’s (Wandersman et al, 2005)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community ownership: Empowerment evaluation places the primary responsibility and ownership for building the organisation’s evaluation capacity and evaluating the organisation’s strategies with the organisation and not the empowerment evaluator. An empowerment evaluator is just one voice among many. The empowerment evaluator initially provides expertise, coaching, training, tools, and technical assistance to the organisation as it evaluates one or more of its strategies and builds its evaluation capacity. Eventually, organisational stakeholders have the capacity to conduct their own evaluations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Inclusion: Empowerment evaluation involves the representation and participation of key stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Democratic participation: Empowerment evaluation is a highly collaborative process. Stakeholders are given the opportunity to voice questions, concerns, and values throughout the evaluation process. Every stakeholder’s voice is to be heard and valued equally.

4. Community knowledge: Empowerment evaluation values and promotes the knowledge present within organisations and the communities within which they work. Organisational and community stakeholders, not evaluators, are considered to be in the best position to understand the community’s problems and to generate solutions to those problems.

5. Evidence-based strategies: Empowerment evaluation promotes the use of strategies with high-quality (i.e. research) evidence of their strategies effectiveness so that organizations can use their resources to select, implement, and evaluate strategies. Evidence-based strategies are often complemented by community knowledge to ensure that a strategy is compatible with the community context.

6. Accountability: Empowerment evaluation provides data that can be used to determine whether a strategy has achieved its goals. Negative results are not punished; rather, they are used to inform changes in a strategy or the selection of a new strategy for the purpose of producing better outcomes.

7. Improvement: Empowerment evaluation helps organisations to improve their strategies so that they are more likely to achieve their stated goals and outcomes through activities such as needs assessments, assessments of the strategy’s design, process evaluation and outcome evaluation (Rossi et al., 1999).

8. Organisational learning: Empowerment evaluation fosters a culture of learning within organisations. Stakeholders come to view positive learning and negative evaluation results as valuable information that guides strategy improvement and to believe that every strategy can be improved.

9. Social justice: Empowerment evaluation increases an organisation’s evaluation capacity to implement strategies that work to reduce health disparities that affect groups marginalized by discrimination, persecution, prejudice, and intolerance.

10. Capacity building: Empowerment evaluation builds individual and organisational evaluation capacity so that stakeholders are better able to conduct their own evaluations, understand results, and use them to continuously improve their strategies and their organisation.

These core principles highlight the importance of placing responsibility and accountability upon the practitioner carrying out the evaluation. Interestingly, in line with Choinard’s (2013) above critique, there is some clear cross over with democratic and technocratic forms of accountability which may make it a valuable approach. However, to what extent each and every principle of Fettersman’s concept are adhered to could be held to debate. Wandersman et al (2005) highlight that with the recognition of the varying degrees of their application, all principles should be present. However, Miller and Campbell’s (2006) review share this reservation. Of forty seven EE case studies they found
that many of them failed to meet the ten principles. To what extent this means that as a result they were not EE is open to debate, but it again highlights that every principle may not be completely adhered to. For example one of the principles of EE, community ownership (Fetterman et al, 2005) places key significance on stakeholders and practitioners owning evaluation design from the very outset because they are more likely to make use of findings. This brings into the spotlight the view that participatory evaluation, and that of empowerment evaluation should be solely designed by practitioners. To what extent it is organically possible to build evaluation frameworks with participants is open to debate as in addition to the length of time it may take to organically build an evaluation from scratch, there may always be a requirement of guidance and knowledge around evaluation practice.

The term ‘empowerment’ may also be brought into question whereby (Cousins, 2005) has questioned how empowerment is defined and how it is measured given its emancipatory nature and to what extent it really does manifest control, liberation and illumination. Specifically, the involvement of an outside agent (such as an empowerment evaluator) may bring into question the concept of empowerment within recognition of structure and agency. More importantly, it may be that varying structure and guidance is required in line with the limited time and resources available in programmes. The criticism of EE has mainly stemmed from the likes of Shufflebeam, Scriven, Patton and Cousins. The early forms of criticism has made reference to the validity of findings coming from EE. For example, Patton (1997) expressed concerns about practitioner bias and accountability. Shufflebeam (1994) asserts that evaluation should be value free and objective. In conclusion, Cousins (2005) suggested that EE attempts to do too many things by implying use as well as liberation and empowerment. The title of his chapter within (ironically) Fetterman et al (2005) was ‘will the real empowerment evaluation please stand up’ (Cousins, 2005). Consequently, only empirical research in itself can explore to what extent these issues are apparent, or not.

3.14 Principles for collaborative inquiry in evaluation

At the time of writing there is currently a strong debate between the likes of Cousins, Whitmore and Schula against Fetterman, Wandersman and Snell – Johns concerning what constitutes participatory evaluation and how it should be conceptualized. Up until 2013 the dialogue between the two camps has been mainly constructive. The publication of Cousins (2005) critique of EE within Fetterman et al (2005) was evidence of this. However, there now is clear distinction in stand points. Fetterman et al (2014) have made attempts to compartmentalize participatory evaluation into the distinctive forms of collaborative (evaluators in charge), participatory (jointly shared control) and empowerment (stakeholders in control) approaches to evaluation. They assert that such distinctions enable and enhance conceptual clarity. Cousins et al (2013) on the other hand put forward the need to rethink compartmentalization for three key reasons. Firstly, because of the confusion such compartmentalization may bring to the field, and secondly because it is unlikely in any participatory evaluation climate that a specific approach in isolation (eg collaborative, participatory or empowerment) will be implemented. Instead, they suggest that due to contextual needs and circumstances these approaches may well be combined or intertwined which resonates with their position on TPE and PPE coming together.

In terms of advancement and progression Cousins et al (2013) state that collaborative enquiry should be the broader umbrella term that embraces participatory evaluation. From this, any participatory evaluation may draw upon for example empowerment or collaborative aspects dependent upon the context of the case in hand. Cousins et al (2013) place a firm case for the need to develop a common set of empirically tested evidence based principles underpinning collaborative inquiry in evaluation. In a letter of response to Fetterman et al (2014), Cousins et al (2014) express that the key rationale for having such a set of evidence based principles is because it enables evaluators “to make adaptations to program contexts and evolving client needs without feeling
constrained by the tenets and prescriptions of any given approach” (pg: 150). This strategy may be suitable because it is adaptable and flexible in light of the context. For example, such a strategy takes into account and is able to respond to programme needs, gaps and aspirations (Cousins et al, 2013) which might not be possible with off the shelf approaches.

Schula et al’s (2016) collaborative set of principles (as presented in table 3 below) attempt to transcend the practical and transformational aspects of participatory evaluation. Whilst they recognize the uniqueness and use of evaluation models they point out that context will always define how useful they will be. They state that purpose, context, needs and capacities of stakeholders guide the evaluation.

Table 3 – Collaborative principles for evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Contributing factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Clarify Motivation For Collaboration       | 1. Evaluation purpose  
|                                               | 2. Evaluator and client expectations  
|                                               | 3. Information and process needs  
|                                               |  
|                                               | From the narrative:  
|                                               | A Need to establish meaning early of what constitutes a collaborative approach  
|                                               | Is there consensus and understanding of what is needed in relation to evaluation design?  
|                                               | -Encourages the development of a thorough understanding of the justification for a collaborative approach.  |
| 2. Foster Meaningful Inter-Professional Relationships | 1. Respect, trust and transparency  
|                                               | 2. Structured and sustained interactivity  
|                                               | 3. Cultural competency  
|                                               |  
|                                               | From the narrative:  
|                                               | “The principle inspires the conscious development of quality working relationships between evaluators and program stakeholders and among stakeholders, including open and frequent communication” (Cousins et al 2015, pg: 2).  |
3. Develop a Shared Understanding of the Program

1. Program logic
2. Organizational context

*From the narrative:*

This addresses whether the programme is commonly understood. For example, mutual understanding is key for understanding how a programme is supposed to work on the part of the programme deliverers and evaluation supporters.

4. Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes

1. Diversity of stakeholders
2. Depth of participation
3. Control of decision making

*From the narrative:*

This principle draws upon the form that the collaborative process will take in relation to the roles and responsibilities of the range of stakeholders involved (Cousins et al, 2015).

Who will participate, how will they participate and who will have control?

A Need for clear expectations of what is required of stakeholders in terms of participation.

5. Monitor and Respond to Resource Availability

1. Time
2. Budget
3. Personnel

*From the narrative:*

This principle considers to what extent the stakeholders in the collaborative process have sufficient time and resources to carry out any evaluation. Of consideration is also the degree of competency and skill for eliciting such roles.
2. Data Collection  

*From the narrative:*  
This principle highlights the crucial focus needed towards data quality and assurance to enable professional standards of evaluation practice.  
Highlight problems in the stakeholders data collection accuracy which comes back to practitioner competency. |
| 7. Promote Evaluative Thinking | 1. Inquiry Orientation  
2. Focus on learning  

*From the narrative:*  
This principle seeks to nurture a culture of inquiry amongst individuals and organisations. Education is important. Stakeholders may become defensive because they do not understand evaluation.  
Refers to Archibald (2013) that evaluative thinking encompasses learning and inquisitiveness. Preskill and Torres (1999) also suggest that evaluative thinking requires dialogue, reflection, asking questions and identifying values, knowledge and beliefs. |
| 8. Follow through to realize use | 1. Practical outcomes  
2. Transformative outcomes  

*From the narrative / paper*  
This principle considers “to what extent the evaluation is a valuable learning experience for stakeholders” (Cousins et al, 2015, pg: 3).  
Practical outcomes are seen through changes in disposition toward the program or evaluation and new skills gained.  
Transformative outcomes are more associated to power and control. How individuals view the construction of knowledge and their evaluation processes and findings are pertinent. |
An argument for the adoption of these principles concerns the rigorous empirical testing of them which spanned research (surveys, interviews, focus groups) with practitioners, academics and theorists (Schula et al, 2015). The projects they consulted consisted of successful and unsuccessful case studies of participatory approaches. Thus, this learning and evidence base has provided justification for the principles which they wish to be tested rigorously in the field.

However, in similar respect to the discussions focusing on DE and EE, the collaborative principles also do not draw upon, or consider the implications of which conceptual evaluation techniques to follow. The empirical data collected does not specifically highlight what kinds of evaluations (eg formative, process, summative, theory driven) were indicators of the success of failure of such approaches. More clarity is needed in evaluation practice concerning the strength of certain conceptual methodologies being mobilized in participatory forms.

With the context of structure and guidance, this opens up a key debate concerning the conceptual nature of the evaluations that are put to use, across all forms of participatory evaluation. For example, whilst democracy and stakeholder engagement are of importance within these approaches, there is limited discussion of what evaluation techniques or concepts they may use. This in accordance with Scarinci et al (2009) who highlight that a weakness associated to participatory forms of evaluations lies within their failure to put to use conceptual evaluation methods, which may affect the validity and integrity of the evaluation. This is exacerbated by the danger of practitioner bias which Shufflebeam (1994) highlights as a key problem in participatory forms of evaluation. For him evaluation should be value free and as objective as possible. Although Patton himself states that evaluation should not be value free, he has asserted the pitfalls of accountability given practitioners (who may be untrained) are behind the evaluation results. There is every possibility that findings may be presented in a way that support the work that is being evaluated, especially if future funding is at stake.

3.15 PE in SFD

Within the context of SFD, the participatory framework has picked up considerable momentum in the last decade; particularly within the global south (Levermore, 2011; Kay, 2009 and Nichols et al 2010) where some of the above characteristics of PE have been implemented. As discussed within the previous sections, much of this has consisted of evaluators flown or ‘parachuted’ in to work with practitioners on the ground to develop evaluation models and practice, quite often tied to funding and in some cases late in the process. Much of this practice has been characterised by theory driven approaches involving stakeholder engagement, which has involved defining and / or building programme theory (Vogel, 2012; Green and Mcallister, 2002; Pawson and Tilley, 1997). More recently, Levermore (2011) has highlighted many cases where evaluators have developed log frames / logic models with practitioners in certain programmes which set out a clear understanding of how a programme will work, which then in turn operates as an evaluation aid (Coalter, 2013).

However, whilst the intention is strong in terms of building capacity with stakeholders around their ability to carry out the M and E, there are clear problems surrounding this. Firstly, the imposing of certain approaches or methodologies that may not meet the needs of the practitioners, nor take into account the cultural disparity of the environments where they are deemed to be implemented (Lindsey and Gratton, 2012, Nichols et al, 2010) are striking. Secondly, the training and support available for programme staff is only provided for a limited time which raises questions around
facilitation and support. Having reviewed the literature it is quite clear that the participatory nature of evaluation has not been fully implemented or captured enough within SFD. Its loose application is evident in programmes that fail to specify what type of PE approach is being employed or at the very least what characterises its conceptual foundation (Scarinci et al, 2009). For example, there is limited evidence and / or reference to empowerment, developmental or collaborative forms of evaluation in the field. The broader ‘participatory’ term is used in most cases to add perceived openness, diplomacy and democracy to funders and programme stakeholders. However, to what extent these evaluations are ‘participatory’ is open to debate. These are all important issues to be aware of in employing participatory approaches.

These observations may go some way to explain why the SFD field finds itself in the current dichotomy of weak relationships between academia and industry. It could be suggested that if practitioners and those within industry were more embedded in participatory approaches, the negative findings (of weak relationships) would not be so apparent, as indicated in Welty Peachy and Cohen’s (2015) empirical study. Given that closer collaboration between practitioners and academics is needed (Welty Peachy and Cohen, 2015) this may lead to greater reflexivity to foster an environment of learning (Edwards, 2015). There is thus a strong rationale to trial such approaches and develop them further within educational curricula settings (Sherry et al, 2015; Edwards, 2015). As Edwards and Sherry et al state these environments are where future practitioners emerge and evolve, and in particularly where many service based learning courses run which involve students interacting as practitioners in their local communities (Bruening et al, 2015).

3.16 Moving the SFD field forward

This review has highlighted some of the key issues relating to M and E within the field of SFD. In addition to unpacking these issues within SFD, it has become apparent that in broader terms tensions exist across the wider social and political contexts (Green and Levin, 2007; Choinard, 2013) concerning participatory and technocratic forms of evaluation practice. Quite clearly, within the current climate, the technocratic gold standard of evaluation has maintained dominance. However, the literature is clear on the limitations of these approaches for enabling the very people on the ground to improve their programmes and understand how and why their programmes may work.

Regardless of the limitations concerning the PE approaches reviewed in this chapter, there is a compelling case (Fetterman, 2005; Greenwood and Levin, 2007; Choinard, 2013) for their mobilisation in industry. A space presents itself to explore how participatory and conventional / academic approaches can be combined and implemented. Regardless of these tensions and lack of empirical case studies, there is a strong case for this thesis to explore whether RE can be embedded within participatory environments.

Within the context of SFD and the issues surrounding evidence, there is scope to explore whether certain evaluation techniques can be practiced by practitioners. The programme theory approach of RE has been strongly advocated within this chapter given its capacity to make sense of how and why SFD may work. Perhaps, a wider application of this methodology in SFD and within an educational environment may start to uncover a more sufficient evidence base for the industry. Furthermore, if practitioners (Nichols et al, 2010; Harris and Adams, 2016) are also embedded in such as approach, this can only strengthen the field and break down academic and over theorized agendas that prevent such approaches from making their way into practice (Welty Peachy and Cohen, 2015).
Given that the case study for this research is an educational setting involving students delivering their own independent CIPs, a chord is struck with the sentiments of Sherry (2015) and Edwards (2015). To be clear they advocate the importance of educational environments and students becoming more reflexive in research and evaluation.

3.17 Chapter summary

To conclude, this chapter has attempted to build towards the key aims of the thesis which is to develop an appropriate M and E framework to mobilize with practitioners. Within this chapter, it was not an intention to carry out an extensive systematic review into a typology of evaluation. As guided by the literature, the starting point was to review the theory driven approaches of TOC and RE. Furthermore, given that the aims of this thesis focus on the capacity building of practitioners to mobilize M and E practice the participatory forms of DE, EE and collaborative principles were reviewed. In sum, the preceding narratives have provided a strong case for the framework of this thesis to adopt a RE orientation mobilized within participatory forms. It is anticipated that RE focus of the framework will enable the practitioners to make sense of how and why their CIPs are working. The participatory dimensions of the framework as discussed in chapter 5 will provide capacity building and support to enable this process to take place.
Chapter 4

Conceptualising the SFD Practitioner

A key focus of this thesis draws upon the role of the Sport Development Practitioner (SDP). Aside from the contributions of Nesti (2001), Nichols et al (2010), Bloyce et al (2008), Pitchford and Collins (2010), Hylton and Hartely (2011), Smith and Leach (2010) there exists limited literature pertaining to the SDP; particularly around their engagement with M and E, perception of their roles, or how they are prepared for the industry. As already asserted within chapter 2, the SDP is a significant player and factor in these narratives yet their very existence and position within all of this is not sufficiently understood (Adams and Harris, 2014; Harris and Adams, 2016). SDPs do indeed form the sample for many of the debates concerning SFD, yet in most cases they are used as a lens to expose limitations in programmes (Adams and Harris, 2014) opposed to fully analysing their position. Thus, it is crucial within this chapter to unpack the role of the practitioner in more depth so that deeper critique and insight can be gained surrounding their role. Therefore, this chapter focuses on three key aims. Firstly, to define what a SDP is, secondly to problematize the SDP role within the context of the industry, and thirdly to draw attention to role of the Student Sport Development Practitioner (SSDP). This third aim is particularly essential given that the key focus of this thesis centres upon building capacity with SSDPs through the development and testing of the M and E framework. Nevertheless, to achieve aim three the preceding aims need to be adhered to in order to provide a context for their emergence and how the field can move forward.

It is important however at the beginning to highlight the key challenges this chapter faces in meeting these aims. First and foremost the first question to be posed concerns what type of SDP is being defined and what are the boundaries for this definition. To be clear, sport development practices are prevalent across the entire world, and as such mobilise SDPs within diverse and culturally orientated environments. In addition to the proliferation of practice in the U.K, the global south (Mwaanga, 2013) has grown significantly in SFD practice. To add to this, the United States, New Zealand, Japan, China and scandinavian countries are also mobilising significant SFD movements. Within this movement, practitioners are not universally defined as a ‘sport development practitioner’. Indeed, practitioners take on many roles such as peer leaders, sports development officers, sport programme managers and so on. These roles span across varying organisational terrains from local authorities to charities, professional organisations and educational environments. Moreover, further complication is cast given that many of those within these roles carry out work that spans SFD and sport for sport sake responsibilities. Thus, it could be argued that because of the nebulous condition of the field, there cannot be a universal definition. This thesis and subsequent chapter fully recognises this and the globalisation of the field, yet at the same time also acknowledges that it is not possible within the scope of this chapter and thesis to capture and conceptualise across all domains. Instead, this chapter seeks to conceptualise the SDP within the three aims via the U.K landscape. The U.K landscape has been chosen because the context of this study resides within the U.K climate of sport development. This does not necessarily mean that comparisons will not be drawn within the international SFD movement because (whilst one does recognise the obvious nuances and differences in context) similarities do exist.

4.1 Defining the SDP

Firstly, how a SDP is defined must be done within the context of what is meant by sport development. Chapter 2 has already conceptualised SFD within the context of evidence based policy, however it is useful to briefly raise this again because how ‘development’ as a concept is positioned will clearly influence a practitioner’s role. The concept of development can be interpreted in many
different ways. In some respects it may indicate a process of change (Eady, 1993) or a positive means of progression. Such a progression may be associated with sport performance, participation, community relations, health, self confidence or crime reduction amongst many other things. Mwaanga (2013) refers to development as a social construction that reflects western ideals. Furthermore, Girginov (2008) asserts that development can serve as a constructor particularly within the face of power relations and political movements. These definitions of development clearly cross over SFD and sport for sport sake orientations. Moreover, Houlihan (2011, pg: 2) refers to the structural conditions of policy acting as a key influencer in how development work is carried out. Problematically, he states that “policy makers are prone to play rather fast and loose with meaning and vaguely over aspire and that any definition of sport development will reflect the associated set of power relations particularly within the role of the state” (pg: 2). Essentially, it is within this nebulous and policy influenced landscaped where a practitioner working within sport development resides.

To fully understand the growth and emergence of SDPs one needs to firstly appreciate the growth and emergence of the sport development field as a whole. Within the U.K, whilst the 1970’s saw an increasing number of facilities produced it was not until the 1980’s and 90’s that a field / collective of people with a development remit emerged (Collins, 2010b). Nesti (2001) has highlighted that it is problematic to trace the exact beginnings of development work in the UK. However, to draw assertions towards its emergence it can be argued that the expansion of leisure facilities in the 1970’s began to create an environment and context for sport development (Torkildsen, 1999; Hylton and Hartley, 2011). It was then in the 80’s (ironically) under the new right government of Thatcher that sports council campaigns led to emergence of a field / collective of people with a development remit (Nesti, 2001; Hylton and Hartley, 2011). This was according to (Hylton and Hartley, 2011) mainly as a result of this facility expansion and sport council campaigns. As an example, the action sport programme in the 1980’s was seen as a forerunner for a number of sport development workers emerging (Collins, 2010b) within a SFD orientation. In most cases many of these paid roles resided within leisure and recreation portfolios within local authorities. Within a context of sports utility as a political resource, additional political campaigns throughout the 90’s and early 2000’s followed. For example, policy documents such as sport raising the game and a sporting future for all created a string of resources enabling and requiring recruitment of practitioners within a range of environments to increase participation and address society’s ills through sport. This was of course coupled with authorities on a local level recognising their duty of care and the value and importance of sport. These environments would consist of local authorities, through to national governing bodies, educational establishments and charities. This resulted in a range of practitioners spanning sport for sport sake and SFD roles in accordance with funding targets and ideological aspirations (Houlihan, 2011).

The last 14 years in particular has witnessed significant growth within sport development. This growth as highlighted above has been engineered within the face of political attention. New Labour’s third way approach was a key driver where the school sport arena received billions of pounds worth of injection (Smith and Leach, 2010) and resulted in new positions created to develop sport and SFD outcomes in schools. This ideological approach of widening participation, health, physical activity, sport for all, crime prevention, elite/performance sport, social capital and of course the Olympic legacy encouraged and required many local authorities and charities to also recognise sport’s role. Although since the austerity of 2010 the profession has declined in numbers due to limited budgets and withdrawal of funding as a discretionary service, there still remains a diverse population of practitioners. This diversity creates complications concerning the conceptual definition of what constitutes a sport development practitioner because no one role is entirely the same, and
each role resides within differing contexts and cross cutting agendas (Nesti, 2001; Pitchford and Collins, 2010; Harris and Adams, 2016). For example, this is extremely complicated for defining the role because this diversity of role does not only apply within a macro sense across the world, but also on meso and micro levels accordingly. A practitioner may also naturally operate within SFD and sport for sport sake roles in turn.

Within such a sparse degree of literature available the table (see below) provided by Pitchford and Collins (2011) emphasises the very scale of practitioner roles spanning sport development. Their mapping exercise in 2011 provided clear indication of the level of practice constituting the UK landscape.

Table 4: Job titles in sports development (Pitchford and Collins, 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job title</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports Development Manager (La, NC2)</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Development Officer (including Youth, Community)</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports-specific Development Officer (e.g. Netball)</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Sports Development Officer</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport or Leisure Officer</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Sports Coach</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Activity Coordinator</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Leisure Officer</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Manager</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football in the Community Officer</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Sport Coordinator</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Development Manager</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Officer</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Development Officer/Coordinator</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Promotion Officer/Worker</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Leader/Worker</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Leader/Worker</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Coach/Leader</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Worker</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper/Assistant</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/Tutor/Lecturer</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Support Worker</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, whilst this mapping goes some way to distinguish job titles the table does not indicate how such roles may adhere to or cross over with one another in terms of roles and responsibilities. For example, football in the community officers are listed but it could be argued that they share very similar characteristics (particularly at present) with a generic SDP. With this in mind, table two below summarises what currently constitutes roles pertaining to development in the U.K at this present time. Indeed, some of these are still in existence where as others due to evolution and funding constraints have run their cause.
Table 5: Brief clarification of sport development roles pertaining to the U.K

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport Development Practitioner</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Generic Sport Development Practitioner | -Increasing participation, supporting club development, funding and best practice, running programmes. In addition may also focus upon SFD objectives. May involve managing staff. 
-Management reporting and M and E responsibilities. 
-Involves networking with a range of partners across SFD and sport for sport sake remits. Some of these partners may not be sport focused. 
-These positions may involve coaching delivery | Local authorities 
Educational establishments 
Not for profit organisations 
Charities (In particular football in the community schemes) 
Housing Associations. |
| Sport Specific Sport Development Practitioner | -As above but more specific to a sport. 
-May cut across mass participation, and elite participation 
-May involve SFD objectives but will reside within one exclusive area. 
-May involve managing staff. 
-Management reporting and M and E responsibilities / accountable to funders. 
-Involves networking with a range of partners across SFD and sport for sport sake remits. Some of these partners may not be sport focused. 
-These positions may involve coaching delivery | National Governing Bodies 
Not for profit organisations 
Educational establishments. |
| Partnership Development Manager / School sport coordinator | -Significant and widespread from 2002-2010 working within schools and colleges.  
-Roles span/ned participation, running programmes, competition as well as SFD outcomes around social capital and leadership. Given the reduction in funding from 2010 some of these roles are no longer supported. However, deregulation has led to some SDPs sustaining their roles within the education system.  
-Management reporting and M and E responsibilities / accountable to funders.  
-Involves networking with a range of partners across SFD and sport for sport sake remits. Some of these partners may not be sport focused. | 2002-2010: Designation within schools and colleges (compulsory positions in accordance with government).  
2010 onwards: Designation in some schools but diversification represented by trusts, higher education institutions and not for profit organisations. |
| Health / physical activity workers | -Involves clear focus of using physical activity / sport to address health outcomes.  
-These positions have been in emergence within a context of public health crises, and associated funding. SFD orientated.  
-Involves strong working in public health environments linking in with generic and sport specific development practitioners. | -Local authorities  
-Health bodies (formerly Primary Care Trusts)  
-Charities  
-Not for profit enterprise / organisations |

In relation to what an individual must possess to fulfil these varying roles there is limited research available that currently maps or conceptualises the professional competencies required. This is partly due to the disparity of the role and how it may transcend various sectors. For example, there is no over arching qualification required for becoming a practitioner. However, based on the nature of role there may be the requirement to possess a specific qualification in perhaps ‘youth work’ if working with young people or in ‘coaching’ if the role requires direct delivery in a specific sporting landscape. However, since the 80’s and 90’s the education sector has seen an explosive growth of educational focus around sport development. Within the study of sport in further education sport development is afforded considerable attention at BTEC as well as AS levels. In addition, on a Higher Education level Hylton and Hartley (2011) point out that there were 210 courses offered in 2011 that had sport development in their title. Such growth highlights the impact and popularity of such a field. As a result, in the last decade we have seen a large increase in a number of sport development graduates seeking employment in the sector. Nevertheless, in line with the lack of consistency regarding professional standards of entry there are few pre requisites where working in the field requires a degree. Conversely many sport development practitioners do not hold a degree.
qualification and have gained employment based on experience and previous background. This is in no way asserts that practitioners within the field should possess such qualifications; yet it does highlight again limited insights around professional practice. This raises key questions around professionalism and standards which are returned to later in this chapter.

4.2 What does it mean to be a SDP?

Whilst there has been a wide breadth of research critiquing the field (in particular the growth of the lack of evidence discourse; Coalter 2007, Nicholls et al 2011, Sugden 2010 to mention a few) limited research has been produced and very little is understood about the terrain of the SDP. This is interesting given that it is quite often these people who are tasked with the role of policy implementer and delivery of the varying sport development programmes that surround us. Consequently, very little empirical evidence is available to answer just some of the following questions of ‘how does it feel to be a sport development practitioner?’; ‘what is their main rationale for being a sport development practitioner?’; ‘what does it mean to be a sport development practitioner?’ The absence of a solid interpretation of these questions presents major challenges for moving the field forward. To support this view some well established academics from the academy have begun to call for more research and closer collaboration and understanding of sport development practitioners voices in terms of informing policy (Houlihan, 2011; Kay, 2009; Nicholls et al 2011). With specific focus in this thesis the likes of Harris and Adams, (2016), Lindsey and Gratton (2012) and Nichols et al (2011) have been vocal about understanding practitioner perspectives in relation to their engagement with evidence (as discussed in chapter 2).

Before and during these calls for closer investigation a limited pool of literature that has emerged. For example, Crabbe (2009) through close examination of the positive futures programme conducted some interesting research with positive futures workers as to establish the key factors for success in making the programme work. Whilst this uncovered some insight into their characteristics, skills biographies and approaches to engagement, much of the findings related to programme development and engaging with young people in disadvantaged areas.

Bloyce and Smith (2008 and 2011) have produced research focusing on the SDP from local authorities concerning their outlook on sport development which they term ‘views and experiences’ as being a neglected area. Their main focus of analysis was to provide an insight into the “reality of doing sport development” (pg: 477). Insight was established whereby nearly all of SDPs sampled viewed sport development as being about sport for sport sake. This is interesting given the widening disparity of the sport development role and how it crosses over so many different areas of development. Particularly, at the time of the research there was a strong symbiotic relationship between sport and health which some of these practitioners appeared to resist in terms of the policy intentions and impact on their work. Bloyce and Smith extend this discussion in light of the deeper philosophical outlooks of these practitioners. It became clear from almost all sampled that their intention to become an SDP related to either positive experiences of sport and / or a successful career in sport as a participant which is captured well in the following quote taken from their chapter:

“their biographies, and particularly their early and profound attachments to sport appeared to have developed a typical orientation towards sport development for enjoyment and particularly competitive sport” (pg: 480).

Therefore there is clearly a philosophical position emerging here that some of those working in such a field see the positive overriding factors of their work and the domain of sport as acting as a tool
which Bloyce and Smith (2011) refer directly to as habituses and ideologies. Quoting from them again “what people value tends to be shaped by what they have experience of as well as competence in” (pg: 481). This raises an interesting question as to what extent this ontological outlook permeates, screens, misinforms or guides their work in different ways. For example what type of impact does this outlook have upon their approaches to work implementation and evidence?

4.3 Problematising the professional field

The preceding discussion has attempted to define and highlight some of the limited literature that currently exists around the SDP. This definition has provided a context to move into some key critical debates concerning the validity, professionalism and scope of the SDP role. It is within this context that major questions have been raised around regulation, status and the profession of SDPs (Hylton and Hartley, 2011). Despite the creation of the Chartered Institute for Sport Management and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) that serves to act as a professional body, there are still no regulatory procedures, practices, licensing, or codes of conduct for SDPs to follow. This is coupled with major knowledge gaps among practitioners within certain areas such as M and E (Hylton and Hartley, 2011). As Hylton and Hartley point out “at this moment in time sport development is not a profession due to its lack of definition of the field, lack of unified body, no enforceable entry criteria and no powers of exclusion or restrictions to practice” (pg: 12). This results in the access to sport development being very open (Houlihan, 2011) and problematic for one to be able to clearly define who a SDP is. This immediately calls into scrutiny to what extent a practitioner maintains and fulfils a professional status which makes the distinction of the role a huge challenge.

However, before any critique surrounding professionalism is to be accepted, it is crucial to unpack in more detail what professionalism actually means for the SDP. Whilst Hylton and Hartley’s critique may be valid, they like others fail to fully capture any of the boundaries for what constitutes professionalism. As a starting point Taylor and McEwan (2012) go some way to define the boundaries of professionalism. Although they provide a case study of coaching there are clear similarities across SDPs and especially those working within a SFD environment. First and foremost Taylor and McEwan conceptualise professionalism into three respective entities; multi professionalism, interprofessionalism, and transprofessionalism. For multiprofessionalism this may be “premised on the idea that individuals and groups work with the same issue but in individual siloed relationships” (pg: 40) which results in the joining of professionals in a linear sense. Interprofessionalism on the other hand may involve individuals and organisations working together in concert within their respective areas of expertise but to meet shared collective goals. This aspect of professionalism involves more of a joined up approach where gaps in provision are reduced (Taylor and Mcewan, 2012). Finally, transprofessionalism draws upon the principles of interprofessionalism but highlights the importance of occupational hybridity (Hulme, Cracknell and Owens, 2009) whereby various partners working across each profession are aware of each others roles and can cross over to them if necessary. In essence, this is manifested in the idea of holistic management whereby sensitivity and awareness towards others will lead to better outcomes (Taylor and McEwan, 2012). With this in mind, Taylor and McEwan apply this neatly to the coaching profession whereby in a transprofessionalist sense they highlight the challenges for coaches being required to operate over and transcend different occupational terrains which they may not occupy enough knowledge in. They illustrate this well through the example of qualified coaches being required (in a Bourdieuan sense) through instrumental power relations to occupy spaces associated with social issues, health and crime prevention. As such they draw reservations towards this because practitioners in a Bourdieusian sense may lack ‘capital’ (eg knowledge, connections, experience or qualifications) to step into these roles, which in turn may lead to examples of insecurities and self
protectionism. Where limited training or capacity building has been offered, this leads to a more aspirational outlook opposed to an achievable one.

The backdrop provided above illustrates the issues of professionalism referred to by the likes of Hylton and Hartley (2011). In a transprofessionalist sense, there are many comparisons that can be drawn within the SDP particularly in reference to the SFD environment. For example, in most cases SDPs operating in a SFD orientation are required to step into areas of social change that they may not know enough, or know very little about. This may revolve around youth work, health and social care, physical activity and behaviour change to mention a few. SDPs may find themselves occupying terrains that require them to elicit their expertise in sport, but within additional occupational environments that require deeper knowledge and accountability. Like Taylor and McEwan (2012), Hylton and Hartley (2011) and Harris and Adams (2016) assert the issue of limited training and CPD being provided to practitioners to thus increase their capacity. M and E and the lack of it within SFD (Coalter, 2007; 2013) is just one specific area that resonates strongly with this contention around the need for more training. For example, having a clear understanding of the social change field is a key prerequisite if any sufficient M and E work is to be carried out. Unlike the professions of teaching, nursing and business there is no clear or transparent framework of training or competency for practitioners to gain employment within the field. Despite the advancement of HE provision and sport development degrees (Hylton and Hartley, 2011) it is not necessarily a pre requisite to hold a Bachelor of Arts or Science qualification. Nesti (2001) for example highlighted that in 1995 40% of SDPs were graduates. Indeed, there exists many practitioners who have maintained a career in the field based on prior experience gained from other professions, voluntary roles or being in the prime position of cultural intermediary (Crabbe, 2007). This is similar to the global south and the access to SFD roles for peer leaders and SDPs (Mwaanga, 2013). It is not the intent here to criticize the ways practitioners access the industry. However, given the issues highlighted, such a wide and open access route (Houlihan, 2011) to the industry could be one of the factors accountable for the limitations surrounding SFD programs. For example there has been no specific training framework in place to build capacity of practitioners.

What has not helped to mitigate these questions of regulation and professionalism is the lack of a consistent body to represent the SDP field. Since the inception of the SDP into working practices there has rarely been a defined body with any sufficient status to provide regulation and continual professional development (CPD). Over the last thirty years the sport and recreation industry within the U.K has seen various organisations come and go such as the Institute for Leisure and Amenity Management, the Institute for Sport and Recreation Management, the Institute for Sport Parks and Leisure and National Association for Sport Development. Although these organisations at the time provided CPD, a comprehensive list of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and boasted large membership numbers, their failure to sustain themselves was attributed to lack of government support, and again issues with disparity of role across the sport and recreation sector. Thus, any enforcement of criteria was extremely limited.

To address this, the last two years has seen the creation of the new chartered institute for sport (CIMSPA) which embraces the whole sport and recreation as well as development industry. CIMSPA believes that it has recognised the issues of fragmentation across the field by trying to grow its membership base. This has been done via a huge consultation exercise with employers across the sector to understand what a professional body should do to represent its members effectively. A key finding associated with this consultation exercise focused on the need to address skills gaps of those working within the industry and more being needed to define roles. As a consequence work is in progress regarding the creation of a new professional development framework that standardises the
skills behaviours and competencies that should inform career development (Gittus, 2014). It is anticipated that this framework will provide endorsed training, and awarding organisations with accredited qualifications. In addition CIMSPA have also been quick to create closer links with Higher Education given that career paths of many into the industry come from such pathways. These links have been evidenced through degree endorsed awards and course design. Finally, offering different bands of membership from student affiliate through to member, chartered member and chartered fellow demonstrate the developments within the organisation.

At the time of writing, the most recent government strategy (A Sporting Future, 2016) prioritises CIMSPA as the key organisation for driving these agendas forward. Whilst this is positive for the organisation, the sheer scope of these tasks and to what extent they can be achieved is open to debate. For example, a recent HE forum event in October 2015 highlighted that in the midst of reorganisation over 13,500 members were lost and there is much to do to grow the membership base. Whilst recognising that CIMSPA offers a HEI accredited scheme to sport development, currently only six of the many institutions offering sport development degrees have this accreditation. Given its infancy it is by no means clear how the accreditations are likely to develop. Indeed, there is little clarity or depth as to how such a scheme can enable greater collectivism and membership for this body, and indeed enhanced CPD. One of these issues concerns the triangulation of disconnection the body has with HEIs and industry organisations. In order to address some of these issues, a starting point may most definitely involve deeper and more coherent working relationships and partnerships with HEIs. To expand upon and develop the current endorsement programme for HEIs it could be suggested that recognising and focusing more upon upcoming practitioners from these environments can do a lot to move the professionalisation of the field forward. This may then lead to increased membership and accountability to a body.

It is on this backdrop where a case firmly emerges to discuss the role of students within HE environments to make sense of where they contribute to the SD field and the attention they should be afforded. The next section of this chapter will now discuss this.

4.4 The emerging practitioner in Higher Education

This section of the chapter will now focuses specifically upon the HE environment and the conceptualisation of the Student Sport Development Practitioner (SSDP). The preceding discussions have highlighted some of the issues focusing upon the SDP and reference has been made to the HE environment. It is thus firmly argued here in light of the main aims of this thesis that the role of the SSDP is crucial for resourcing and developing the field.

It has already been highlighted in reference to Hylton and Hartley (2011) that the volume of HE based courses have increased significantly within the UK. This context is crucial because it is here where the seeds are planted for the education of future practitioners. In addition, this context within the face of austerity, political encouragement and limited resources already mobilises students in SFD roles as part of their capacity building for real world learning and employability (Storen and Aamodt, 2010; Holdsworth and Quinn, 2010). As a result a huge pool of the student workforce are engaged in sport development activity either through the curriculum and / or in addition to their studies (Harris and Mwaanga, 2011; De Souza, 2004; Collins, 2010b). As a result, and across the HE sector, huge pools of the student workforce are engaged in volunteering or service learning (Bringle and Hatcher, 1996) based roles and have been as far back as 1914 (Brewis, 2010).
This expansion of service learning orientated activity is by no means limited to the U.K, and as such, this pedagogical approach to teaching and learning has become increasingly recognised (Bruening et al, 2015) across the globe. For example Bruening et al (2015, pg: 72) state that; “service learning provides benefits to students, faculty, educational institutions, communities and society as a whole”. In addition, Bringle and Hatcher (1996) define service learning as course based and credit bearing, meeting identified targets whilst gaining a sense of civic responsibility. Furthermore, the National Service Learning Clearing House (2015) stated that over 25% of all HE institutions in the US have service level programmes embedded in their provision. To evaluate the credibility of service learning based approaches several authors have articulated the benefits of this type of provision. Bringle and Hatcher (2002) advocated the benefits associated to meeting community needs, civic engagement and scholarly opportunities. Peters (2011) highlighted the enriching of academic experience and critical thinking, as did Dario (2009). Within a sports based context (whereby service learning programmes focused in sport environments) many of these service learning programmes focus on basic volunteering provision and placements. This is common place where students support sports clubs, voluntary organisations and schools. Moreover, placement and work based learning opportunities that require students to develop and run their own programmes are on the increase. The case study central to this thesis is a pertinent example. To continue the positive assertions associated with these programmes Mumford and Kane (2006) and Bruening et al (2010, 2015) all reported positive outcomes in relation to social cohesion, and students interacting and understanding diverse populations. Some insight also exists into the positive contributions such endeavours can make towards empowering students (Harris and Mwaanga, 2011) and positively contributing to community development (De Souza, 2005). In essence these examples clearly resonate with Jarvie (2014) who points out that universities and their students should be resources of hope and leading players in the communities and societies they are part of. It would be fair to suggest therefore that student practitioners are crucial resources and contributors to SFD and physical activity provision because without them there would be huge gaps in how such provision is mobilised.

However, despite this increased practice and resourcing being provided through student workforce (not withstanding the research already referenced) there has been little discussion nor research afforded to the HE student as a practitioner. This is surprising and a major issue given that in many respects these individuals constitute a workforce contributing to SFD in the same capacity as paid SDPs. The only difference between the two it could be argued are that of salary where the former does not receive money and the latter does for their service. Much of what is relied upon in community development and physical activity circles is dependent upon how competently student practitioners carry out these roles. Thus, there is clearly a solid rationale that presents itself for the identification of a SSDP. Nevertheless, whilst the advocacy for such a practitioner may hold significant potential, this of course has implications because how they are prepared for such roles in community settings is fundamental and strikes a chord with the many issues raised previously.

Furthermore, despite the enthusiasm and positivity that may surround this valuable resource, this new evolution of SSDPs is in danger of the same pitfalls that currently underpin the lack of evidence discourse and other issues surrounding the field. There are key dangers for these future practitioners to fall into concerning limited knowledge and practice in project delivery, and M and E capacity. Their limited experience and danger to fall into the pitfalls of sports evangelism is pertinent in this respect (Simpson, 2013). It could be argued that a clear opportunity presents itself within these training institutions to attempt to address some of these issues surrounding for example M and E (Harris and Adams, 2016) and sustainability (Lindsey, 2008). In line with Coalter (2007) these educational environments may present opportunities for progress in educating practitioners more
within the sociological aspects of society and the limitations of sport as a magic box. In addition, Welty Peachy and Cohen’s (2015) research with academics in the SFD identified H.E as a key environment accountable for the issues of over theorised curriculums and considerable gulls between practitioner communities and academia. Their research firmly asserted that more focus is needed to involve students more within SFD research and field work as well as bridging the gap between academia and practice. In similar respects Edward’s (2015) recommendations draw a key focus on the need to apply SFD principles more clearly through sport management based curricula. To do this he positions service based learning approaches as a good way to provide deeper consciousness for students and also provide closer links to practitioners working in industry. With this in mind practitioners may be more prepared for the transprofessional nature of industry when they move into it because firstly, they have been taught the theories and concepts, and secondly, as SSDPs they have been able to apply these theories and concepts in service learning orientated settings. In essence, the call for closer attention to HE provision is compelling, and this argument holds significant mileage to support and improve the field moving forward. What now follows is a concise exposition of how practitioners can be prepared to navigate the transprofessional complexity of SFD. This section is crucial because what is presented advocates what key skills and accountabilities practitioners require to work more effectively within SFD.

4.5 Reflexive practitioners

As a starting point for any form of capacity building SSDPs may be encouraged to maintain a reflective and reflexive position within their work. Reflection in this context refers to the ways new and emerging practitioners may learn and think (Moon, 2004) about the field of SFD. Bolton (2014) refers to reflection as learning and developing through examining what happened opening ones practice to scrutiny. In simplistic terms Moon (2004) refers to reflective practice as an activity which is applied to complex issues “whereby it occupies a process of reorganising knowledge and emotional orientations in order to achieve further insights” (pg: 82). To distinguish reflexivity Bolton (2014) refers to this as a way of finding approaches to question pre existing attitudes, thought processes and values in order to make sense of one’s complex role in relation to others. Interestingly reflexivity according to Bolton (2014) is crucial because it encourages people to consider how involved they are in creating social and / or professional structures within the context of their own values. In essence reflection and reflexivity require experience if they are to be fostered whereby they occupy states of mind and an ongoing practice (Bolton, 2014) which pervade curriculums (Fanghanel, 2004) and techniques. To what extent this degree of reflexivity and reflection occupies the SFD practitioner field is open to debate and it is by no means an unfair suggestion to say that it is not entirely strong. To support this view Gould (2004) states that it is only usually within learning environments via the support of facilitation that reflection takes hold, mainly because in top down environments organisational visons are imposed. If the SFD field and SDPs underpinning it is to move forward deeper levels of reflection and reflexivity are required so that practitioners may question the ‘how’, ‘what’ and ‘why’ aspects of their practice in more depth opposed to operating in subjugated forms (Nichols et al, 2010).

Therefore the practice of reflection should strongly be mobilised with up and coming SSDPs in order to stimulate key thinking around scrutinising SFD practices, and questioning pre existing discourses that guide practice. This may involve SSDPs critiquing and questioning current practice, their own delivery models and approaches to evidence and sustainability that centres around SFD. As already discussed in chapters 2 and 3 the SFD field finds itself in the current predicament of limited knowledge and evidence informing future practice where as a result programmes continue to be recycled and re introduced. It is firmly argued here that emerging practitioners should be encouraged to not be influenced by sports evangelist characteristics (Coalter, 2007; Simpson, 2013) and should attempt to distinguish their positive attitudes and habitus towards sport (Bloyce and Smith, 2011) from the programmes they seek to deliver. Being reflexive of the limitations that
surround such interventions (Coalter, 2010) enables SSDPs to appreciate the complexity and non-simplistic richness of SFD interventions. This reflective practitioner guise may enable them to appreciate the limitations of their philosophical position, in that their value of sport as an evangelical entity may not necessarily be received in the same way as those they seek to influence (Simpson, 2013).

Overall, SSDPs who are encouraged to practice SFD in reflexive and reflective ways may possess the capacity in line with Freire’s (1972) critical awareness / consciousness to challenge practice, and assert control in environments, social relationships and structures that may influence what they do in their lives (Harris and Mwaanga, 2011). For example, within the context of M and E and in line this thesis, encouraging practitioners to deconstruct and question existing M and E approaches, and mobilising their own would be a fine way to realise this. Indeed, one could easily claim this argument to be naïve and over emancipatory in itself, given the challenges and power dynamics (Harris and Adams, 2016) embroiling the field, specifically around approaches to evidence. However, in the event of focusing this debate early with SSDPs there is no reason (as Harris and Mwaanga 2011 evidenced) that deeper manifestations of control can be realised. HE environments and the critical discourses that they occupy are ideal spaces for fostering this. Freire (1970) suggested that in order to be fully human one needs to reflect critically on the objective reality and take action based on that reflection in order to transform his or her world. This resonates clearly with the SFD field and given the significant role a SDP or SSDP plays, this should embody their approach to practice in the real world.

4.6 Developing programmes

A significant limitation exposed via research and scholarly critique has focused upon the inability of many SFD programmes to define realistic and clear objectives (Coalter, 2010). Coalter (2010) in his aforementioned paper refers to this as limited focus programmes and broad gauge problems that represent over inflated policy goals (Kay, 2009; Houlihan, 2011). This naturally has implications for practitioners given the sheer challenge faced to achieve targets, and in turn provide sufficient evidence. Instead, there is strong support (Coalter, 2010; Harris and Adams, 2016) behind the argument to focus more carefully on what programmes set out to achieve and why they set out to achieve certain outcomes. It is without doubt that such an approach to programme development would require an environment of reflexivity and critical awareness so that practitioners may think carefully around what is required. Capacity building and training focusing on programme development is a crucial area for new and emerging practitioners so that negative characteristics underpinning the current discourse is mitigated against.

Therefore it is suggested that SSDPs receive training to produce coordinated and well thought out approaches to programme development. As a starting point this would promote the consideration of community and organisational needs and involve developing a critical understanding / awareness of what already exists. What would then follow is a careful articulation of programme goals concerning how and why they may be met and delivered. This way of thinking resonates strongly with programme theory although it is not an assertion here that practitioners must only focus in this way. Nevertheless, because of the focus of this thesis and the need for examples, programme theory may be a good tool to use in building capacity. There have been significant contributions to the SFD field concerning the value of programme theory to articulate how and why any said programme may work (Coalter, 2007; Sugden, 2010; Adams and Harris, 2014). Programme theory which can also be referred to as theory driven enquiry and theory of change (Vogel, 2012; Prinsen and Nijhof, 2015) may be useful to enable the demystifying of the black boxes of social change programmes to
understand the inner workings (Weiss, 1997; Donaldson and Lipsey, 2006) of why certain outcomes are met.

This would involve practitioners gaining an appreciation of the wider context associated with programmes to inform their work whilst understanding ways to identify and appreciate the intrinsic reasoning of participants. Given that SFD seeks to develop and change behaviours of participants there needs to be sufficient understanding on a practitioner level of what may constitute that change and how to explain it. It is against this backdrop that Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) realist methodology (commonly implemented within health contexts) holds potential. In basic terms this methodology involves the construction of programme theories that depict what it may be about an intervention (Pawson, 2014) that will lead to certain outcomes (see chapter 3). This is then followed by evaluation that attempts to understand what works for whom in what circumstances and why to test to theory. Pawson and Tilley (1997) and Pawson (2014) assert that at the heart of social change interventions are latent and hidden mechanisms which explain how a participant has reasoned against resources in programmes (Westhorp, 2014). Given that these mechanisms are not directly observable (Abhyanker, 2013) and hard to identify specific time is needed to theorise with practitioners how they see these mechanisms and explanations of their programmes unfolding, before the programme has commenced. Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) context - mechanism and outcome (CMO) configuration may offer a way to enable this as an appreciation of what may work for whom (context) will indicate ways in which participants in programmes may reason against resources (mechanisms) to meet certain outcomes. The key point to assert here is that specific training in these areas is required so that SSDPs can develop SFD interventions. It is important to highlight again that there is absolutely no evidence within the SFD field of practitioners being introduced to this methodology of theory of change. The development of more carefully constructed programme theories that adopt a realist approach may lead to better SFD interventions and this could start with SSDPs within educational environments. However, notwithstanding the potential of this approach, its application and grasping is complex (Weiss, 1997; Prinsen and Nijhof, 2015).

Within SFD to date, its mobilisation has mainly been stimulated by academic and funding circles (Coalter 2013) because its momentum is mainly positioned there. Understanding how and why an intervention may work sounds simple, and it may appeal to many, but in reality articulating and theorising this is problematic and complex.

4.7 Building capacity in M and E

Within M and E a number of observations have been made about the limited training within this area for existing and upcoming SDPs in the field (Hylton and Hartley, 2011; Coalter, 2007, Simpson, 2014, Harris and Adams, 2016). This may reflect poor continual professional development in roles that have felt the impact of neo liberal modernist practices (Adams and Harris, 2014), as well as courses within HE that may not adequately prepare students for industry. Of course, the broader question concerning whether practitioners should even be responsible and involved in M and E work presents itself here given the view that evaluation is a skill and should not be left to subjective and biased interpretation (Shufflebeam, 1994) (see chapter 3). However, as others (Fetterman, 2005; Adams and Harris, 2014; Nichols et al, 2010) have argued, there is no reason why practitioners should not be more closely embedded in M and E work either independently or cooperatively. Whilst it is recognized that there exists participatory examples of this kind (Levermore, 2011) in many cases much of the work that exists may pacify the role of the SDP and subjugate their involvement (Nichols, 2010). Therefore, it is suggested that more robust capacity building and training is required to position SDPs more closely within the M and E discourse (Harris and Adams, 2016). The HE environment presents an excellent opportunity to foster this development and can begin with the SSDP.
Having engaged the SSDP within reflexive thinking and the ability to theorise how and why they may see their programme running, the next point of departure concerns how they may be trained to test / M and E programme theories. As highlighted previously, aside from Long (2008), Coalter (2013) and Simpson (2013) there is limited literature within the field regarding the ways in which M and E can specifically be carried out in practice. To what extent M and E is also embedded in curriculum delivery is also an unknown entity. This is a major issue given that no training afforded to this for SSDP will lead them to carry the same approach into practice. As Jeanes and Lindsey (2013) highlight, the ‘what works’ discourse dominates the SFD industry. Instead a deeper reflexive insight into how and why programmes work may be a valid suggestion.

Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) realist evaluation is an example of an approach that holds particular value for conducting M and E and unearthing programme understanding. Realist evaluation involves the testing of these CMOs through qualitative and quantitative mixed methods to ascertain what works for whom in what circumstances and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). Key to this and in accordance with realist philosophy is the assertion that there is no absolute truth (Westhorp, 2014) and that no one intervention may work the same in other circumstances / contexts. This holds potential because it is firmly positioned within the reflexivity of the SSDP to appreciate that their programme may unearth intended and unintended outcomes (Pawson, 2014) because it is not programmes that make people change, it is the very people themselves (Pawson, 2014). Such a methodology holds great value so that SSDPs are able to appreciate the said reflexivity and unearth the causal mechanisms at play within their programmes.

Training SSDPs in approaches such as these bare significant fruit for the industry but what is also required is for them to also be able to enact such approaches. It is anticipated here that if SSDPs are introduced to and encouraged to elicit such techniques in their existing initiatives, then such capacity will be carried through to their long term role in this industry. This is by no means a simple endeavour given that the complexity around specific approaches may be hard to grasp. In order to address this, collaborative and participatory approaches may be encouraged to build the capacity of practitioners to mobilize M and E practically (Fetterman, 2005; Cousins and Choinard, 2013; Schula et al 2016). Educational environments are prime opportunities for this work to be carried out as there exists the symbiosis of academia and industry mobilisation. Capacity building and support is enabled especially when such endeavours are built into the curriculum. Another benefit of this involves the impact of this M and E work on the surrounding community and existing partnerships. Involving stakeholders from existing partnerships and organisations in the M and E process leads to knowledge transfer and the opportunities for partners to gain understanding of such approaches. It may also offer crucial insight and evidence to the sector which may already have a series of limitations for generating and understanding evidence (Adams and Harris, 2014) within the context of technocratic practices of M and E (Choinard, 2013). This is even more pertinent whereby limited evaluation is carried out (Simpson, 2013). What this leaves is a potential discontinuity of practice whereby in addition to existing SDPs educating SSDPs, SSDPs by their very nature also educate.

4.8 Chapter summary

At the very beginning of this chapter, recognition was given towards the key challenges presented for analysing the practitioner within SFD. This was very much associated with the diversification of the role spanning ‘for development’ and ‘development through’ orientations. This of course is in addition to the complexity and disparity of positions across the globe. Despite this, the chapter has attempted to define the SD practitioner specifically in light of the UK context. The evolution of the role has been discussed and the limited literature that surrounds the practitioner has been
recognised. This contextual understanding of what constitutes the SDP role then enabled deeper analysis into the key questions surrounding the role. This focused on key questions surrounding professionalism, training and representation. Given the proliferation of H.E based courses focusing on SD, this became a key focus for asserting key arguments towards closer recognition of the SSDP. These arguments promoted the importance of the student practitioner in the sense that they now operate as key players in the SFD environment, and thus require sufficient training to prepare them for this work presently and for the future. In particular in the spirit of this thesis, reflexivity, programme development and M and E were focused on. However, it is important to state that this does not exclude other key training principles around for example sustainability and management principles.

At the time of writing it is apparent that limited insight currently exists surrounding practitioners working within the sport development field in general. This spans across various levels including what it means to be a practitioner, their perception of the role and how they navigate challenging areas such as those concerned with evidence. To date (as referred to in chapter 2) only a limited number of empirical case studies and conceptual discussions exist surrounding these crucial players. This chapter calls for the expansion of empirical research into the practitioner role. In particular and within the context of this thesis there is a need to explore and understand practitioners’ perspectives towards M and E. Given that the SSDP has been introduced, a starting point may involve carrying out research with them concerning the degree to which the education they receive informs their practice as future practitioners. For example, where they are trained to develop and test programme theories to what extent are they able to grasp and enact such concepts for practice?
Chapter 5
Presenting the M and E framework

Having explored the likes of realistic evaluation and theory of change within chapter 3 as well as empowerment evaluation, developmental evaluation and the collaborative principles, the chapter concluded with the proposal of combining theory driven and participatory approaches.

A key objective of the thesis was to develop a suitable M and E framework that could be used for student sport development practitioners SSDPs to understand and learn from the strengths and weaknesses of their SFD projects. Thus, the following chapter builds upon the aforementioned approaches discussed in the literature review and presents the provisional M and E framework that was constructed and subsequently tested on the SSDPs in study one.

It is absolutely crucial to make clear at this point that this thesis entails two methodological dynamics. First of all there is the methodological orientation of the M and E framework itself which was designed as a programme theory to enable the SSDPs to M and E their CIPs. Secondly, there is the methodological orientation of the research that ‘I’ the researcher am carrying out to test the framework. In relation to the latter, this is rigorously discussed in more detail within the methodology chapter. However, it is important to illustrate that this was made up of two key stages. Stage one involved testing the framework and refining it (study one); and stage two involved testing the refined framework (study two).

This chapter presents the key philosophical foundations of the framework and its components that were tested in study one. Naturally, chapter (8) discusses the refinements to the framework as a result of the testing, and in light of the findings from study one.

5.1 A realist orientation of the framework

When choosing an M and E approach it is crucial to ensure that it is fit for purpose in relation to the context of the programme that is being assessed. For example it was briefly discussed within the literature reviews why approaches rooted in experimentalism may not be suited to programmes (like SFD) that operate in open social systems (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) and are mainly concerned with change (Pawson, 2003). Instead approaches that take into consideration the complexity and interplay of human agency so inherent within SFD are crucial. This is why the M and E framework of the model adopted for this study was developed in line with realism. Realism in essence recognises that people have the capacity to act freely and shape their lives within social structures (Abhyanker, 2013). Consequently, any change “is a result of an interaction between individuals and the systems they work in” (Abhyanker et al 2013, pg: 13). In relation to the lack of evidence discourse, a realist lens would certainly question the over inflated claims and perceived generalizability of SFD programmes in the outcomes they seek to achieve (Coalter, 2013).

Realism places significant emphasis upon causality and context because it is crucial to appreciate how and under what circumstances events in social reality unfold. For causality, this is conceptualized as the ‘generative’ behavioural triggers and mechanisms that a programme may bring about (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) and places emphasis on how reasoning, attitudes and behaviours of participants intersect with the resources of a programme. Second, context is critical because the contexts and conditions within which programs operate change frequently (Wong et al, 2013) and make a difference to the outcomes they achieve. In addition, they also influence whether and how mechanisms occur.
5.2 Making a case for realistic approaches in evaluation

There is a strong argument for SFD programmes implementing the realist ‘Realistic’ approach to evaluation (see chapter 3) pioneered by Pawson and Tilley (1997). For Pawson and Tilley, the realist evaluator understands causality in terms of underlying causal mechanisms generating regularities which may often be hidden (Pawson and Tilley 1997; Tilley, 2000). An understanding of context and its fluidity of change are central to RE to understand what works for whom, in what circumstances and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). This and its foundations of realism are key reasons for adopting the RE methodology. This is opposed to additional theory of change approaches because the big ‘T’ (articulation of change) of theory (Weiss, 1995) is captured within the boundaries of context and human agency, which helps to demystify the illusive black box. To seek an understanding / answer to the questions raised in social programmes Pawson and Tilley suggest the following CMO framework which is depicted as follows:

-C= what conditions are in place / are needed for a measure to trigger mechanisms to produce outcome patterns?
-M= what is it about a measure that may lead it to have a particular outcome pattern in a given context (for example how do resources intersect with participants beliefs, reasoning, attitudes, ideas and opportunities?)
-O= what are the practical effects produced by causal mechanisms being triggered in a given context?

In essence, RE is about identifying and uncovering how and why programmes work which again is a central issue within SFD. Opposed to demonstrating proof of sports evangelical powers (Coalter, 2013) the outlook of this approach helps to move away from the lack of understanding underpinning so many SFD programmes (Harris and Adams, 2016). RE holds great potential for the field because in addition to understanding outcomes, it can also explain the mechanisms and contexts by which such outcomes come about (Nichols, 2007). There are an abundance of examples (Marchal et al 2012) where it has been used at the beginning middle or end (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) of a programme which also demonstrates its versatility.

5.3 Fusing realistic and participatory approaches

Despite the contextual relevance of realistic evaluation to SFD programmes, chapter 3 highlighted some of the limitations surrounding the approach. For example, Marchal et al (2012) raised the issues concerning the indentification of mechanisms. Additionally the scope for mobilising the approach with industry practitioners was also tentatively recognised. On this very basis, there is currently limited literature to date (particularly within SFD) demonstrating how RE is being used with practitioners within the field. In most cases such an approach is mainly carried out within academia.

A potential way of addressing this gap and bringing to life such an approach with practitioners lies within the participatory research paradigm. In essence, PRP advocates the involvement of research stakeholders in the research process (Collinson et al, 2005) whereby researchers conduct research with people, not on them. For Heron and Reason (2001) the key characteristics of their paradigm can be associated with social transformation, empowerment and co-operative inquiry. Collinson et al (2005, pg: 50) state that “researchers working within the participatory paradigm are committed to seeking an understanding of the social world from the perspective of the social actors who inhabit that world, through their own subjective meanings and experiences”.

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It is important at this stage to draw attention to the philosophical compatibility of participatory dimensions and RE. Whilst the above illustration of PRP may be interpreted as emancipatory and perhaps incompatible with realist principles, this is not the case. In no way is it at odds with realist principles because realism provides the tools and approaches (through RE) for the SSDPs to M and E their CIPs. Their capacity as realist evaluators is increased by cooperative and collaborative approaches taken to train them and involve them in the process. It is strongly asserted here that only through a participatory framework is it achievable to enable the practitioners to competently M and E their interventions. This thesis fully recognises the philosophical distinctions between the participatory and realist approaches. Yet any incompatibility thesis bares no issue with the focus of the framework because the framework within the spirit of the thesis seeks to develop an appropriate approach to M and E suitable for practitioners in SFD.

Having made its way into evaluation practice as ‘participatory forms of evaluation’ (Greenwood and Levin, 2007; Choinard, 2013), the participatory framework in this sense advocates the involvement of stakeholders and evaluators in the evaluation promoting active engagement and participation (Fetterman, 2005). Ultimately PE involves a growing number of evaluation approaches whereby evaluators work with stakeholders to determine what is to be evaluated and how it will be evaluated (Cousins and Whitmore, 1998). Within the context of SFD and the lack of evidence discourse, a strong rationale emerges to attempt to experiment with realistic techniques within a participatory lens. For example, as referred to in recent chapters there is a lack of understanding of how and why programmes work (Coalter, 2013), and also limited cases of practitioners being pro actively and co-operatively involved in evaluation practice (Adams and Harris, 2014; Harris and Adams, 2016). Thus, the participatory paradigm offers a suitable opportunity to attempt to transfer the academic and scientific principles of RE to those working within the field.

5.4 Structure and agency

Importantly, the literature relating to participatory forms of evaluation is by no means limited. Fetterman (2005, Wandersman, 2005, Cousins and Whitmore, 1998; Choinard, 2013, Patton, 1998) are just a small number of the many contributions to the field. One of the key points of departure regarding participatory research and likewise participatory evaluation involves the context and environment provided to support the learning and action of participants (structure) and the degree of freedom and liberation to guide and form process (agency). For example Greenwood and Levin (2007) point out that within action forms of research the researcher and the stakeholders define the problems to be examined, generate knowledge, learn and execute research techniques and take action. This is analogous and at the heart of the participatory evaluation approaches (Patton’s developmental) and (Fetterman’s empowerment) discussed in chapter 3. These approaches suggest that practitioners / programme stakeholders should be involved within the design of any evaluation and its application, and indeed its decision making. For example, Fetterman, (2005) goes as far to suggest the term ‘empowerment’, whereby the stakeholders take control over the whole evaluation process with the support of an empowerment evaluator.

However, within any form of participatory evaluation it is important to make clear and strike a balance between how much of a structure is provided alongside how much agency may be afforded to make any ‘participatory’ evaluation work. Questions loom for example over what structure and evaluation techniques to follow and promote on behalf of the trainer, opposed to the evaluation in its entirety being an organic process built from complete scratch. On any action or participatory continuum the classical and purist case of any form of participatory evaluation would point towards
the later. In light of table 6 below this would fit with the ‘collective action’ realm (Cornwall, 1996; and Truman and Raine, 2001).

Table 6: Participatory continuum: (Adapted from Cornwall (1996) and Truman and Raine (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Participation</th>
<th>Nature of User Involvement</th>
<th>Relationship between research and users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-option</td>
<td>Token; representatives are chosen, but no real action</td>
<td>On</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Tasks are assigned, with incentives; researchers decide agenda and direct the process</td>
<td>For</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Users’ opinions asked, researchers analyse and decide on a course of action</td>
<td>For/With</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-operation</td>
<td>Users work together with researchers to determine priorities; responsibility remains with researchers for directing the process</td>
<td>With</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-learning</td>
<td>Users and researchers share their knowledge to create new understanding and work together to form action plans with research facilitation</td>
<td>With/By</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Action</td>
<td>Users set their own agenda and mobilize to carry it out, in the absence of outside researchers or facilitators</td>
<td>By</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nevertheless, in attempting to answer and address these issues surrounding structure and agency it is crucial to appreciate the context (Hay, 2002) of the research, the evaluation, resources and time available and the competencies of those involved in the process. Within SFD time and resources will be a key issue limiting the scope to organically build an evaluation approach. Likewise, given some of
the limitations of M and E competency surrounding practitioners, it could be argued that some form of structure and ‘expert’ training exchange would need be at the heart of any participatory evaluation. On this basis, in order for RE to be mobilised accordingly with practitioners, careful consideration is needed if it is to be woven into their practice. More importantly, in accordance with table 6, agreement within a co – learning environment should be sought to agree on the balance and degree of structure and expert support provided.

It is here where the underlying principles (see table 7) of empowerment evaluation (EE) (Fetterman, 2005) may offer a useful participatory framework for this being achieved. According to Fetterman (2005) EE (see also chapter 3) is about capacity building whereby stakeholders take control of the conducting of their own evaluations and where they remain in charge. However, whilst the key responsibility lies with stakeholders to carry out the evaluation, key attention is given towards capacity building and training, where evaluation techniques and concepts are employed to foster improvement and self determination (Fetterman, 1994). It is here where RE may be mobilised for and with practitioners within an environment that strikes a balance between the relational aspects of structure of agency (Hay, 2002). This is discussed in more detail within the case study below and training programme.

Table 7: Empowerment Evaluation principles: (Wandersman et al, 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empowerment Evaluation Principle’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community ownership: Empowerment evaluation places the primary responsibility and ownership for building the organization’s evaluation capacity and evaluating the organization’s strategies with the organization and not the empowerment evaluator. An empowerment evaluator is just one voice among many. The empowerment evaluator initially provides expertise, coaching, training, tools, and technical assistance to the organization as it evaluates one or more of its strategies and builds its evaluation capacity. Eventually, organizational stakeholders have the capacity to conduct their own evaluations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Inclusion: Empowerment evaluation involves the representation and participation of key stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Democratic participation: Empowerment evaluation is a highly collaborative process. Stakeholders are given the opportunity to voice questions, concerns, and values throughout the evaluation process. Every stakeholder’s voice is to be heard and valued equally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Community knowledge: Empowerment evaluation values and promotes the knowledge present within organizations and the communities within which they work. Organizational and community stakeholders, not evaluators, are considered to be in the best position to understand the community’s problems and to generate solutions to those problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Evidence-based strategies: Empowerment evaluation promotes the use of strategies with high-quality (i.e., research) evidence of their strategies effectiveness so that organizations can use their resources to select, implement, and evaluate strategies. Evidence-based strategies are often complemented by community knowledge to ensure that a strategy is compatible with the community context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Accountability: Empowerment evaluation provides data that can be used to determine whether a strategy has achieved its goals. Negative results are not punished; rather, they are used to inform changes in a strategy or the selection of a new strategy for the purpose of producing better outcomes.

7. Improvement: Empowerment evaluation helps organizations to improve their strategies so that they are more likely to achieve their stated goals and outcomes through activities such as needs assessments, assessments of the strategy’s design, process evaluation and outcome evaluation (Rossi et al., 1999).

8. Organizational learning: Empowerment evaluation fosters a culture of learning within organizations. Stakeholders come to view positive learning and negative evaluation results as valuable information that guides strategy improvement and to believe that every strategy can be improved.

9. Social justice: Empowerment evaluation increases an organization’s evaluation capacity to implement strategies that work to reduce health disparities that affect groups marginalized by discrimination, persecution, prejudice, and intolerance.

10. Capacity building: Empowerment evaluation builds individual and organizational evaluation capacity so that stakeholders are better able to conduct their own evaluations, understand results, and use them to continuously improve their strategies and their organization.

5.5 Positioning the case study - Introducing the Coaching Innovation Programme (CIP) and Student Sport Development Practitioner (SSDP)

With specific focus at SSU, the institution has attempted to develop its curriculums with a clear focus on employability and vocational learning. Within the BA Hons Sport Coaching and Development degree the Coaching Innovation Programme (CIP) is a curriculum orientated movement that requires undergraduate students to develop, and deliver Coaching Innovation Projects (CIPs) that seek to address a social issue through the medium of sport/coaching/physical activity. These CIPs clearly meet the characteristics of traditional SFD interventions and mobilise students as practitioners in the same way any other SFD programme would. For example, the SSDPs are required to engage with a social issue, and develop an initiative that seeks to address that social issue. These social issues stem from obesity, gender, education, literacy, integration and gender (see appendix 2.1 for an in-depth overview of the CIPs).

Across the CIPs there is a strong focus on programme development which draws upon Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) realist orientation of programme theory. In general terms the projects are designed and developed over one entire academic year (eight months). This design and development involves engaging with partners, communities and in many cases pilot delivery. This process reflects the development and building of a realist programme theory. The delivery of the CIP (usually the following academic year) lasts between ten and fifteen weeks although a number do continue through hand over to other practitioners and new CIPs. On this basis, and in line with the scepticism associated with social change and SFD (Coalter, 2012), the outcomes developed for these projects have to be realistic and recognize the limitations of the time frames in which they operate.
As part of this development the SSDPs are strongly encouraged to develop partnerships with sport development and wider practitioners in the industry. Whilst the focus draws upon the SSDPs maintaining responsibility and autonomy for delivering the projects, these partners are initially seen as experts (alongside course tutors). This is evident through identifying niche areas for development and complement the work of the practitioners as well as the wider strategic objectives within a real world learning setting. A key focus is placed upon training students on the awareness of program development and needs assessment of the communities for where their interventions take place. Currently, thirty CIPs are being delivered across the city in differing communities, schools and leisure facilities and another 40 are in development for the next three years which reach out to 400 participants. This now represents a significant volume of the SFD delivery in the city and compliments the already well-established SFD and physical activity network. Quite clearly, it also positions the student within H.E as more than just a volunteer, but now a practitioner contributing to the communities where they reside (Jarvie, 2014).

However, the Innovation Programme and CIPs do not currently have any innovative coordinated M and E framework. Students are encouraged to evidence their project but there is no overall structure or approach and students are able to freely adopt their own approaches to M and E. This autonomy and agency has led to limited evidence regarding the unpacking of how and why the CIPs may work in addition to meeting the broader aims of the Coaching Innovation Programme. This is because in most cases the SSDPs may lack the competencies of monitoring and evaluation and the current ‘imposed’ lecture and seminar format does little to develop this further.

The table below brings into consideration some of the key factors surrounding evidence in SFD (Adams and Harris, 2014; Harris and Adams, 2016) and as a result presents some key ideas about what M and E participatory frameworks may take into account. It is crucial to assert here that given the framework at this stage was not fully tested, the contents of the table form merely the beginnings of the hypothesis underpinning how and why the framework may work for the CIPs.

Table 8: Factors impacting on and influencing the M and E framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIP Monitoring and Evaluation framework functions</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate some form of intermediate impact / outcome</td>
<td>Funders and organisations are interested in outcomes (Harris and Adams, 2016; Kay 2009) because of the need to demonstrate accountability. The M and E framework would need to recognise this given the need to work with stakeholders and align with expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine and evaluate how and why the CIP unfolded and achieved certain outcomes</td>
<td>This is an underlying issue relating to many SFD programmes (Coalter, 2013; Harris and Adams, 2016). Thus, any evaluation approach that enables deeper insight into how and why would fill a major gap in understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be useable for the students and practitioners</td>
<td>Central to participatory approaches is that of cooperation and capacity building. In similar respect to above, there would need to be utility in the framework for all interested stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit the strategic direction of the CIP and the needs of the practitioner within the steering group</td>
<td>The CIP has its own strategic focus and agenda to follow. To enhance the evidence base behind the CIP any M and E framework would need to facilitate this agenda and those partners who reside within the CIP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable the students to clearly map out the intentions behind their CIP</td>
<td>Pawson and Tilley (1997) and Westhorp (2014) highlight the importance of articulating a clear depiction of how and why a project may work. This then enables a clearer opportunity to test the programme theory underpinning the programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be flexible for allowing the use of qualitative and quantitative methodology</td>
<td>Some M and E approaches are criticised for relying too much upon qualitative or quantitative as well as technocratic (Chouinard, 2013) methodologies. Being able to synthesise the two would enable greater defence of any M and E findings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In line with the preceding discussions, an optional and flexible programme may enable SSDPs to learn more about M and E so they can practice it and address some of the issues underpinning the lack of evidence discourse. In light of this the aim of the M and E framework attempts to trial the RE technique with (SSDPs) within a participatory lens to explore to what extent they are able to M and E their own projects.

In terms of real world learning the SSDPs are a worthy case study for this research because they like existing practitioners are making a major contribution to the SFD landscape. There are two further justifiable arguments for involving SSDPs in this framework. Firstly, they are occupying a field and environment entrenched with scepticism concerning evidence (Harris and Adams, 2016); and secondly as paid practitioners of the future, there is a strong argument to build their capacity around M and E approaches.

This M and E framework is mobilised in two phases. These phases focus on testing the framework on a sample of CIPs. Phase one (study one) which will be based on this provisional framework sought to test the framework upon a sample of CIPs that shared similar characteristics and outcomes. Phase two (study two) which represented the refined framework from the testing in study (one) intended to broaden the sample of CIPs to those with differing characteristics and outcomes. It is within the sampling sections of each respective methodology pertaining to each study where these CIPs are characterised in more depth and explained. Nevertheless, it is important to succinctly provide a
context of the CIPs underpinning the provisional testing of this framework, because their characteristics inform the design of the framework which follows in the next section of this chapter. This M and E framework was designed for ‘Edumove’ CIPs which were all implemented in the Southampton area. They all shared distinct characteristics, target groups and outcomes. Edumove projects run within school settings across all key stages. The key aim of Edumove is to develop understanding of curriculum based subjects through the means of physical activity and movement. This is opposed to traditional methods of teaching and learning which require children to sit and learn. Other key outcomes underpinning the programme theories of the Edumove CIPs were to enjoy physical activity and develop physical literacy skills.

It was intended that this framework would be mobilised with three of the seven Edumove CIPs that were delivered in 2013-14. The three CIPs were carefully selected in coordination and cooperation with the Edumove management team. These CIPs were made up of two to four SSDPs and were mobilised within the framework as a pilot project associated with their M and E strategy. This enabled the framework to focus specifically with a realistic number of CIPs opposed to taking the risk of focusing on all Edumove CIPs. Additionally, as the framework is optional, the SSDPs were given the option to participate.

5.6 Underlying assumptions of M and E framework

Having made a strong case for the utility of RE and PE approaches in SFD programmes the following provides an insight into how such approaches may be implemented by practitioners within the field. The M and E framework (programme theory) is characterised as a light touch RE methodology embedded with empowerment evaluation principles. The duration of the programme extends across two academic periods, which generally spans from October through to April. It is within this time frame that the projects run. Given some of the issues (already highlighted in chapter 3) around RE and EE the framework is referred to as ‘light touch’ because it does not attempt to use each and every conceptual dimension of the two. In order to be ‘industry relevant’ careful consideration was given towards the realistic concepts underpinning the approach and the ten EE principles. This was all done within the context of gaining agreement and focus with the students in line with cooperation and co-learning. Milligan (2014) states that for any form of participatory approach to be maintained, openness and deep respect must be afforded to the community where the research is taking place. In the case of this framework the SSDPs are all intended to be informed of the framework’s relevance to RE and it being a key part of the author’s research. In accordance with Milligan’s additional point, ensuring that those involved in the framework do not feel mislead is also crucial. The following explanation and (table 8) provide deeper insight into this.

To begin, the framework is an optional process defined by a range of key resources provided (introduced below). Whilst the CIP is connected to assessment in the curriculum, the framework in itself is entirely separate from the curriculum where students are given the choice to participate. The benefit of their participation leads to the potential increased understanding that comes with programme learning, employability as well as increased academic attainment as result of increased acquisition of knowledge.

Model one ‘Programme theory conceptualisation’ (model 1) provides a framework for students to build their programme theory. As supported by the previous literature, this is the first and crucial
stage in any programme development as it enables the students to map out how and why they intend to deliver their project. This model is made up of the following stages:

1. The model begins with the SSDPs broader statement of intention which is based on assumption, interest and initial intention. From this, the first stage is to establish and research the field through context mapping / situational analysis (Funnel and Rogers, 2011) establishing needs and finding out what surrounds the area where they intend to deliver their project. These needs may reflect those of fellow partners, but also and equally as important the participants who may be receiving the project. In essence, this stage is depicted by conceptualising the nature of the social problem.

Model 1.1: Stage 1 – Background to programme theory

**Stage 1: Background to programme theory**
This stage involved mapping the field and gaining and understanding of the issues supporting the development of the CIP project. For example, the local parameters, history, characteristics of the participants and needs.

- A review of previous CIPs. A previous CIP was delivered at this school in 2011-12.
- Reviewed schools sport partnerships and current provision of physical activity in this school as this relates closely to the underpinning rationale of this CIP. It was found that minimal combination of physical literacy and education was being delivered.
- Local area of x was researched via the x profile website which highlighted that x was an area of high BME make up. In addition physical activity levels were limited in the school as were young people’s attainment in core subjects.

**Needs of school**

**Needs of Young people**

- More support to cover P.S sessions
- Young people in y 6 struggle to make sense of Geography
- School interested to develop improved staff competency in integrating physical activity into the curriculum.

2. On completion of stage one, SSDPs are able to then move to the next stage and make explicit the key outcomes and underlying programme theories at play within their project. This is crucial because in line with Weiss (1997) programmes are made up of multiple theories opposed to one singular theory. This stage is also crucial because based on sufficient and careful attention given to stage one, SSDPs are then able to think carefully, realistically about what they want to achieve and break things down. As already asserted in chapter 2, a key weakness in SFD programmes lies in their over inflated...
aims and aspirations (Coalter, 2012; Harris and Adams, 2016). This stage therefore helps practitioners to carefully outline what their aims and aspirations are through if, then and because sequences (Westhorp, 2014). In addition to making outcomes explicit, stage two also enables SSDPs through the resource of a logic model to illustrate the anatomy / theory of action underlying their CIP and the outputs they seek to achieve. This enables them to articulate clearly the implementational flow of inputs through to outputs and outcomes.

Model 1.2: Stage 2 - Making explicit programme theories and outcomes

Stage 2: Making explicit Programme Theories and outcomes
This stage maps out the IF / THEN sequences that underpin our Programme Theories as well as the programme anatomy

PT Theory 1: IF x resources are provided THEN the following will happen BECAUSE...
PT Theory 2: IF, THEN, BECAUSE...
PT Theory 3: IF, THEN BECAUSE...
PT Theory 4: IF, THEN, BECAUSE...

KEY ADVICE:

Another key thing for this stage is considering what your ideas are.

• What are the reasons for doing this project?
• In what ways might the project work / play out?
• Why might the project work?
• How will it work for your participants?
• Pull these together in the form of bullet statements that capture the ideas you have

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs / resources</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>Characteristics of sessions (when? where)?</td>
<td>Number of sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaches / staff and characteristics</td>
<td>Training for coaches, teachers</td>
<td>Number of young people targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample or participants</td>
<td>Mentoring?</td>
<td>Performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Making explicit the theories and depicting the anatomy of the programme then enables the SSDPs to develop context mechanism outcomes (CMO) configurations in stage three. This stage helps SSDPs to explain the ‘because’ aspect of their outcome. This is made up of conjecturing how and why their CIP will work for certain people in certain circumstances. It is important to state here that this terminology is used carefully given the complexity and perceptions of such terms, especially the programme mechanism, which may be hard to grasp in terms of distinguishing reasoning and resources (Dalkin et al, 2015). Generally, to avoid confusion the SSDPs are able to sequence the following: ‘if this resource / measure is provided ‘then’ this will enable the following change ‘because’. Students are encouraged to think about what resources and opportunities their programme may provide, and how their participants may reason. This embodies the realist
conceptualisation of the programme mechanism (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Westhorp, 2014). This would then be the depiction of the CMO configuration.

Model 1.3: Stage 3 –Hypothesising mechanisms

Stage 3: Hypothesising the mechanisms
This stage formulates a number of hypothesis for how and why each programme theory will work taking into consideration the environment / context eg what it is about the programme that will bring about change. The delivery will test these.

This is clearly a challenging set of stages to accomplish, particularly stage three which involves realist philosophical understanding of generative mechanisms. Therefore, in terms of support, each project is provided with ongoing tutorial facilitation by the means of a tutor or trained evaluator (Fetterman, 2005) throughout these stages via workshops and action learning sets (see appendix 3.3). However, in line with the principles of EE the SSDPs are able to define how they map the field and are given freedom as to defining their outcomes and CMO configurations. The length and duration spent on model one is usually two months. However, given the acknowledgement that programmes operate in open systems (Westhorp, 2014) and are thus open to change, it is expected that SSDPs may revisit stages throughout as part of refining and reconceptualising.
Model 1: Conceptualising programme theory – complete picture: (also provided in appendix 3.1)

Having established model one, model two outlines the key ‘realistic’ M and E stages that the SSDPs would follow throughout their project to test their programme theory. These M and E stages are accompanied by action learning sets (tutorials) with an evaluation facilitator and workshops (see appendix 3.3) to build understanding and capacity at that stage of the model. Importantly, model 1 is a key prerequisite to this framework because without a programme theory, there is nothing to test. Model two is made up of key stages which are explained in (table 9 below). The aim of the model is to provide the SSDPs with a clear M and E framework that takes them through each step of independently carrying out a RE. It is imperative within the early stages of the model to distinguish between monitoring and evaluation as these are often used interchangeably (Adams and Harris, 2014) and are commonly confused.
Model 2: Mobilizing M and E (also provided in appendix 3.2)

Table 9: Workshop descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage / Workshop</th>
<th>Workshop characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reconceptualising programme theory</td>
<td>This workshop involves SSDP’s re addressing their programme theories to examine and capture any changes that have taken shape. Model 1 is a key focus of this workshop to reignite debate and discussion. In particular, the mechanisms at play within the projects are discussed which form the assumptions of how the programme works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing evaluation questions</td>
<td>This workshop encourages SSDPs to engage in thought surrounding monitoring procedures and evaluation procedures. It is crucial at the very beginning to distinguish between monitoring activities and evaluation activities. What would they like to monitor? What evaluation questions would they like to ask to test their CMOs? Who should they ask these questions to and would different questions be devised for different participants and stakeholders? In essence they are encouraged to build their questioning around Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) what works for whom in what circumstances and why questions. They are also encouraged to decide upon formative or summative approaches, as well as considering needs of stakeholders and intended users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capturing SSDPs competency in research methods</td>
<td>This workshop refines the monitoring and evaluation questions from the previous and stimulates discussion around the SSDPs competency of research methodology and methods. As the RE literature points out, mixed methods are encouraged but what competency do the students have and what do they need support in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeing methods to answer questions</td>
<td>This workshop builds upon the previous and aims to establish a defined set of research methods to answer the questions devised from stage 2. Interviews? Focus groups? Surveys? What would be the most suitable methods to answer such questions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting and making sense of the data</td>
<td>Having collected monitoring and evaluation data this stage helps the SSDPs to make sense of the tranche of data they have at this stage. At this stage, the aim is to support and facilitate the students to analyse and draw key themes from their work. The key focus is identify and analyse the mechanisms at play within their project. Does the data agree with their assumptions from model 1? For whom did it work? In what contexts did it work and how and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating and reporting of the data to refine programme theory</td>
<td>This workshop aims to give the students the freedom and power to decide upon what the most appropriate method of communication is open to them to disseminate their findings. For example, video, report or other forms of reporting data to capture the overall findings of their M and E and programme learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Monitoring data

The framework anticipates that monitoring data will be collected and obtained throughout the lifecycle of the CIP. Monitoring data is distinguished specifically because it is common place within SFD where monitoring data is conflated as evaluation data (Adams and Harris, 2016).

SSDPs are not discouraged to collect monitoring data. On the contrary, they are encouraged to track changes in their CIP by collecting registers, participant profiling, tracking outputs and developing performance indicators. This, thus informs the evaluation process.

In order to encourage fluidity and avoid linearity the framework and training programme recognises the differing stages that each CIP will be in concerning their M and E. Thus, each workshop is repeated throughout the project lifecycle to fit in with when the SSDPs require them. The action learning sets that run regularly throughout the training programme also provide additional support.

In essence, the aim of the framework underpinned by the two models encourages students to be motivated to implement the stages of M and E, but more importantly, be able to understand and feel in control throughout the process. As previously discussed, the mobilisation of the two models is situated within Fetterman’s (2005) and Wandersman’s et al (2005) principles of EE whereby the aim is to build the capacity of the SSDPs to take responsibility for their own M and E. Whilst RE is the main premise underpinning the structure, the models enable the students to independently have the freedom to decide upon their evaluation questions and overall process. The table below draws upon the ten EE principles (already introduced above) and carefully reflects where the training programme aligns.

Table 10: Alignment to Empowerment Evaluation Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>To what extent does / may the CIP framework cohere to the principles of EE?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community ownership:</td>
<td>Within the CIPs the responsibility lies with the SSDPs. The models underpinning the training programme will already be devised and the students will be trained to use it. In terms of ‘building the evaluation’ this will come down to interpretation. This may not be EE as the evaluation framework was already built, but can be EE as the students are doing the evaluation thus building the evaluation through its delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Inclusion</td>
<td>Again, does this come down to the inclusion of stakeholders on the development of the evaluation strategy? If so then possibly not. However, students will be doing the evaluation so they are included, represented and participated. It is they who are doing the evaluating.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Democratic participation</strong></td>
<td>This is done from the moment that the framework is built. The only thing that may not be EE about the training programme is the RE principles underpinning the models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Community knowledge</strong></td>
<td>The students are dealing with the problem, which has been driven and identified by the context mapping / situational analysis, therefore they are best placed to evaluate it. They are being trained with the models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Evidence-based strategies</strong></td>
<td>Students will be using the models to benefit their CIP and overall attainment. As they are contributing towards the CIP there will be a strong evidence based emphasis that will feedback into the steering group of the CIP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Accountability</strong></td>
<td>The students will be responsible for carrying out the M and E but will not be punished for poor results. The key is to demonstrate that programme learning has taken place which resonates well with the RE approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Improvement</strong></td>
<td>Clearly, this is at the heart of the CIPs with refined prog theories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. Organizational learning</strong></td>
<td>This links into a collaborative process for all where the findings from the evaluation process feed into organizational learning and refinement for future CIPs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9. Social justice</strong></td>
<td>Social justice is at the heart of everything concerned with the CIP programme in itself and is visible through the CIP projects carried out by the SSDPs. This is also evident within the training programme which provides equality and diversity for the SSDPs to M and E their own projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10. Capacity building</strong></td>
<td>This is at the heart of the training programme. The aim of the programme is to increase M and E capacity amongst the students involved in the programme so it can inform not only the internal aspirations of the CIP but also their own individual development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.7 No panacea to M and E

There is a significant degree of complexity to encounter surrounding all of this, given that M and E in itself is a complex task and the RE approach in itself brings with it a distinct set of complexities (Marchal et al, 2012). Understanding programme theory, distinguishing between CMOs, and clarifying mechanisms are all complex tasks. In addition to the conceptual pitfalls, the limitations that surround ones ability to analyse and report data is another issue that may serve to dis-empower anyone involved in evaluating complex SFD projects.

As alluded to above, these are perhaps some of the reasons as to why it may not be possible within any training programme to adhere solely and independently to all of the characteristics associated to a particular approach. Starting with RE, model one takes into account the importance of building
programme theory and hypothesising the CMO, yet this is done within reason within a light touch style to avoid the potential confusion with language. The additional characteristics such as ‘mid range theory’ and other intricate processes of carrying out extensive research methods at stage one (Abhayanker, 2013) (such as interviews and focus groups with stakeholders to develop programme theory), are respected, yet realistically omitted. As for EE, to what extent each and every principle of Fetterman’s concept are adhered to could be held to debate, as could the term ‘empowerment’, which should be used with caution. For example, within this framework the RE methodology may be viewed to already be imposed on the SSDPs bringing into question the power and control they have to devise their own approaches. However, to what extent it is organically possible to build evaluation frameworks with participants is open to debate, as there will always be a requirement of guidance and knowledge.

Moreover, Synthesising the participatory framework of EE with the conceptual evaluation methodology of RE presents an interesting avenue for exploration which raises questions concerning to what extent they can be compatible with one another. In terms of structure and agency, it is crucial to consider whether the RE methodology enables or constrains the practitioners within the context of the participatory philosophy underpinning EE. For example, the limitations surrounding the complexity of RE and its conceptual and philosophical foundations need to be carefully considered and communicated if practitioners are to make use of it in their evaluation. This is something empirical findings will uncover more insight into.

5.8 Candidate CMOs in accordance with M and E Framework

In the spirit of the RE approach taken within the framework, and at the heart of the objectives of this thesis, what now follows is an overview of the key resources making up the framework followed by the CMOs that this framework attempts to produce. These configurations are particularly important given that the framework is to be tested through RE. Indeed, at the heart of the RE is the endeavour to test programme theory. In no way are the conjectured CMOs below an exhaustive representation of every context, mechanism and outcome configuration that could be produced in within the framework. Indeed, as Pawson and Tilley (1997) warn, it is important to steady one’s fire and operate within a reasonable way of highlighting the key aspects of the theory to test.

5.8.1 Key resources to be mobilised in M and E framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realist Evaluation Empowerment Evaluation Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE and EE action learning sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainer to support workshops and ALSs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1 programme theory conceptualisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2 Mobilising M and E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 5.8.2 Proposed CMO configurations to be tested through evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contexts</th>
<th>Mechanisms</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension towards M and E</td>
<td>Model two provides students with clear guidelines and may enable them to break down their CIP evaluation stages in a way that fosters deeper understanding</td>
<td>The completion of an accountable and professional M and E process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little or no understanding regarding M and E</td>
<td>Interaction and discussion stimulated through workshops and ALSs</td>
<td>Increased confidence and capacity in M and E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little or no experience of carrying out RE</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased desire to enact M and E in future roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm on the part of the SSDPs to learn a new evaluation methodology, within an opt in environment</td>
<td>Greater realisation through workshops and ALSs to understand how and why their CIP works</td>
<td>More reflexive practitioners appreciating the importance of realist evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence to carry out M and E</td>
<td>Realisation that if broken down into relevant stages (via model 2) M and E may not be as hard as initially feared</td>
<td>Increased competency in M and E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited experience in working with partners and delivering SFD programmes</td>
<td>Model 1 may enable SSDPs to shape the design of how and why their programme may work</td>
<td>Develop an increased understanding of the dynamics of a SFD programme which may inform M and E design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum environment of CIP</td>
<td>Students may be more motivated to get a higher mark and utilise resources</td>
<td>Higher attaining students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edumove programme with hard to measure outcomes of ‘enjoy, move and learn’</td>
<td>Model 1 may enable SSDPs to hypothesize a clearer picture of how and why children may enjoy, learn and move within an Edumove climate / and for which types of children</td>
<td>Clearer parameters of the Edumove programme theory to test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edumove programme with hard to measure outcomes of ‘enjoy, move and learn’</td>
<td>Model 2 may enable deeper realisation of what it is about enjoyment, moving and learning that contributes positive or negative outcomes for Edumove</td>
<td>RE process carried out for Edumove providing new insight and learning for all partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of evidence discourse – Industry focused on performance indicators and targets</td>
<td>Interaction and capacity building of framework may foster deeper insight into the importance of programme learning</td>
<td>More reflexive practitioners seeing beyond technocratic approaches to M and E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying out evaluation in school environment involving teachers and young pupils as part of the M and E design</td>
<td>May prove challenging to mobilise RE questions with young people to unearth generative mechanisms</td>
<td>This could lead to a less robust RE M and E report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Optional M and E framework not embedded solely in the curriculum | May foster ownership and control over the evaluation where they do not feel constrained  
May enable a more relaxed and informal relationship with the trainer | Competent completion of realist M and E |
| Higher Education environment, surrounded by advice and support | Creates safe environment where SSDPs can call upon support as and when needed | Increased competency in M and E |
| Trainer occupying position of course leader | Relationship with course leader may lead the SSDPs to feel that they have to say they understand the approach more than they really do | Perceived increase in M and E on behalf of the trainer, yet opposite in reality |
| Trainer occupying position of course leader / optional framework | Positive relationship with CL and value placed upon being asked to take part on the framework | Increased understanding of M and E |

### 5.9 Chapter summary

Given the complexity of SFD programmes and the outcomes they seek to address, the philosophical realm of Pawson’s (2013) realist positioning has been introduced as a suitable lens to understand how and why social change programmes work and within the context of this case study, the CIP. Within an evaluation sense, RE has been positioned at the centre of the framework to make sense of the CIP projects. Positioned within and EE participatory framework, the framework has been
conceptualised to explain how SSDPs at SSU are working with such techniques. This chapter has specifically highlighted and presented the key models and resources underpinning its focus to build capacity in RE amongst the practitioners identified.

The next step within this process is to explore and test the programme theories underpinning this framework. Key questions surrounding the programmes ability to engage SSDPs with RE and EE principles are of key focus. This is interesting to explore given the robust discussion that took place in chapter 3 regarding EE’s position in line with additional participatory approaches. In addition the conceptual compatibility of EE and RE is crucial to understand. Only when this is done will a provisional understanding be gained within this murky lack of evidence discourse of what approaches to M and E may be best suited to practitioners. This also presents an opportunity to explore how knowledge that is mainly embedded and privileged in academic circles (Harris and Adams, 2016), may be combined with working practice.
Chapter 6

Methodology

6.1 Philosophical foundations underpinning research

This thesis was made up of two distinct evaluation studies. As expressed within the aims and objectives, the first study involved testing the M and E framework on a distinct number of CIPs (all Edumove). This involved the mobilisation of realist evaluation (RE) to inform the refinement of the M and E framework. Furthermore, study two sought to test the refinement of the framework on a broader sample of CIPs again using RE. Whilst the philosophical foundations of the studies were consistent it is important to discuss these individually. This is because within the RE focus different methods were employed to understand how and why the M and E framework worked for those involved in it. As an example, a key distinction was the adoption of Q methodology in study two, and also new and innovative approaches taken in study two to analyse and produce CMOs.

The methodological distinctions of the two studies will be discussed specifically within their respective parts. Moreover, despite the differences of sampling, data analysis and methods each study in the main subscribes to the same realist philosophical underpinnings. Thus, what this chapter firstly intends to do is justify the philosophical reasoning behind the research ontologically and epistemologically.

It is firstly important to highlight that within this study philosophical considerations cross over two distinct areas (see figure 1). The first area (green) is the study / empirical research itself which this thesis is exploring. This has its own philosophical position. The second area to consider (blue and orange) is the M and E framework itself which the student practitioners were mobilising. This is depicted in the following illustration below:

Figure 1: Philosophical considerations
6.2 Ontology and Epistemology

It is important to recognise that philosophy in itself is made up of multiple interpretations and contested positions (Furlong and Marsh, 2010) of what constitutes social reality and how one can know about the social world. Without delving deep into a discussion of metaphysics and the many pitfalls that such an endeavour may create, the basic philosophical positions are mapped out below. Instead of describing what is already known and documented, the strategy is to define the boundaries of the thesis and which philosophical positions best underpin the approach taken. It is important to succinctly discuss ontology and epistemology because such a foundation provides a sound pathway to introducing the philosophical positions of realist evaluation (RE) which was at the heart of the evaluation and M and E framework.

Ontological and epistemological positions shape research (Furlong and Marsh, 2010). At the heart of ontology concerns what is out there to know (Grix, 2002), centering upon “what is the form and nature of reality and what can be known about it” (Furlong and Marsh, pg: 185). Thus, if an ontological position reflects the researchers view about the world, then an epistemological position reflects the view of what can be known about the world (Furlong and Marsh, 2010).

Furlong and Marsh, (2010) highlight two broad ontological positions; foundationalism (also known as realism and objectivism) and anti-foundationalism (also known as relativism and constructivism). Foundationalism, views the world being composed of a discrete set of objects which posses properties independent of the researcher. Anti- foundationalism however according to Furlong and Marsh (2010) asserts that reality is socially constructed and no actor can be objective or value free. Furthermore, Guba and Lincoln (1994, pg: 10) point out that “individuals construct that world and reflect on it and such views are shaped by social, political and cultural processes”.

Such ontological positions lead to epistemological positions. On a general level Furlong and Marsh state that a foundationalist position may lead to a positivistic or realist epistemology. Moreover, an anti foundationalist position may lead to a more interpretivist position. However, despite coming from the same ontology, epistemological positions may vary. For example where a positivistic position may look to infer causal relationships through observation and objective generalisable findings, despite adopting a similar ontology (that a real world exists independent of our knowledge of it) realists epistemologically look for causal relationships but argue that many important relationships between social phenomena cannot be ignored. Thus where a positivist may privilege quantitative methodology a realist may employ qualitative and quantitative approaches (Furlong and Marsh, 2010).

There are of course further distinctions to be made given the emergence of nuances of certain epistemological positions and their adaptations such as realism and critical realism, positivism and logical positivism (Furlong and Marsh, 2010). However, such a discussion as warned previously would lead to limited productivity. What is important here is to discuss how the ontological and epistemological positions highlighted above inform the RE methodology adopted for this study and underpin the M and framework.

6.3 Realist foundations

As alluded to in the name ‘Realist’ Evaluation (RE) lays its foundations within realist philosophy. Ontologically realism asserts that there is a real world that exists apart from our perception of it (Bhaskar, 1979). Furthermore, Matthews and Ross, (2014, pg: 25) state that “this reality can be
known through the senses as well as the effects of hidden structures and mechanisms, as well as the use of theories about our social world to identify the hidden”. Epistemologically, Matthews and Ross (2014) suggest that in similar respects to positivism, realists acknowledge that there is a social reality external to the researcher that be can be researched using natural science. However, given that social reality is comprised of invisible but powerful structures and mechanisms it is not possible to directly observe. Thus, these hidden structures must be identified beyond pure observation.

Within any discussion of philosophy, each position is and has been open to different and varying interpretations. Realism is no different for there is no one way to pin point what realism is. Within its broad church there are indeed many pews that occupy the disparity of this philosophical thinking. In particular, critical realism (Bhaskar, 1979) requires acknowledgement because it can be argued that this aspect of realism has been most instrumental in guiding the RE work of Pawson and Tilley (1997).

Critical Realism sits between positivism and interpretivism as it takes into account that whilst there is a set of social phenomena that exists independent of our interpretation of them, our interpretation and understanding of them effects outcomes in practice (Furlong and Marsh, 2010). Furlong and Marsh (2010) also point out that structures do not determine, rather they constrain and facilitate. Thus as our knowledge of the world is fallible; we need to understand the external reality and social construction of any reality to explain the relationship between social phenomena. Such a preface highlights the position of structure and agency within critical realism. Despite the varying debates concerning structure and agency, Hay, (2002, pg: 166-7) asserts that “agents are situated within a structured context which presents an uneven distribution of opportunities and constraints on them. Actors influence the development of that context over time through the consequences of their actions”.

To develop the discussion of structure and agency further Bhaskar’s (1998) application of critical realism is summed up coherently within the following quote:

“People do not create society. For it always pre-exists them and is a necessary condition for their activity. Rather society must be regarded as an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions which individuals reproduce and transform, but which would not exist unless they did so. Society does not exist independently of human activity (the error of reification). But it is not the product of it” (pg: 36).

Such a representation of structure and agency can be situated accordingly within the context of social change programmes, whereby for any change to be understood, philosophically one must consider the interaction of structure and agency in any change manifesting itself.

At the heart of Bhaskar’s application of critical realism lie the ontological illustration of the domains of the empirical, the real and the actual (2008). These provide an ontological lens to make sense of critical realist thinking. In a recent paper Porter, (2015) articulated the importance of Bhaskar’s domains to demonstrate the power critical realism possesses to make sense of reality. Bhaskar begins with his domain of the empirical which Porter (2015) alongside Bhaskar (2008) refers to as an incomplete conception of reality because on the contrary to empiricist thinking reality is not confined to our own experiences, because events exist and occur independent of ones knowledge of them. Furthermore, Bhaskar’s typology then moves into the domain of the actual which would suggest that events and things take place in observed and non observed capacities (Porter, 2015). In
this sense events and the laws we have (Porter, 2015) are the conjunctions of those events. However, conversely Porter, citing Bhaskar, asserts that the domain of the ‘actual’ does not hold because causes are not the same as effects, and thus hidden causal mechanism need to be accounted for. It is within this back drop of where Bhaskar’s domain of the real illuminates the very premise of his critical realism whereby reality is confined to observed and non observed things and events, and the mechanisms that pattern those events (Bhaskar, 2008).

6.4 Realist Evaluation foundations and positioning this research

It is these foundations of realist thinking that have formed the make up of RE and its use. From the inception of RE, Pawson and Tilley (1997) position their philosophical stance within the critical realist lens which made common reference to Bhaskar’s generative conceptualization of causality drawing emphasis on how reasoning, attitudes and behaviours of social agents intersect with structural forces to create outcomes. This again highlights the importance placed upon structure and agency. As they state in their opening text (1997), Pawson and Tilley talk about structure and agency which constitutes the construction of their context mechanism and outcome (CMO) configurations:

“the basic task of social inquiry is to explain interesting, puzzling, socially significant regularities (R). Explanation takes the form of positing some underlying mechanism (M) which generates the regularity and thus consists of propositions about how the interplay between structure and agency has constituted the regularity. Within realist investigation there is also investigation of how the workings of such mechanisms are contingent and conditional, and thus only fired in particular local, historical or institutional contexts.” (Pawson and Tilley, 1997, p: 71).

However, deeper exploration of RE and most considerably Pawson’s most recent text (2013) highlights how Pawson does not position himself as a critical realist per se (2013) and in his own words states that he opposes direct realism. Therefore it would be wrong to state that this thesis entirely follows a critical realist philosophy because RE transcends the many pillars of realist tradition. This is something he highlights in the first chapter of his book where reference is made to the ‘seven pillars’ of realist wisdom’. It is these seven pillars of realist wisdom that inform the RE methodology. Pawson draws upon the following authors: Bhaskar (1978), Archer (1995), Elster (2007), Merton (1968), Popper (1992), Rossi (1987) and Donald Campbell. Those that apply to this thesis are succinctly highlighted below.

Starting with Bhaskar, despite the utility of generative causality, Bhaskar’s position on critical realism is opposed by Pawson who contests that experimentation can give rise to empirical regularity because experimental closure is not possible. He also questions Bhaskar’s position of experimental work requiring closed systems because to really make sense of generative causality it has to be appreciated in the real world.

Pawson then draws upon Archer, (1995) agreeing that social science should commence with an understanding of how people come to make choices and that decision making constitutes the underlying mechanism that generates all social outcomes. Opposed to pure constructivist and interpretivist positions Archer’s position is critical realist in the sense that society is made up by but never under the control of human intentions because peoples’ choices are conditioned by pre existing structures and opportunities. Thus within social change programmes people make programmes work, but in a generative sense that draws upon influence of those external structures.
On this basis, given the fluid and transformational nature of society (morphogenesis) changes in programmes can never be fully anticipated (Pawson, 2013). This places the importance upon social science for confirming or refuting what we think we may know (Elster, 2007). Within the context of social change programmes this has relevance because sometimes programme theories are so and sometimes they are not so. Such a philosophical outlook leads one to consider the unpredictability of programmes.

Pawson, (2013) then draws upon Merton’s (1968) middle range theory that states that we should produce explanations that are “sufficiently abstract to deal with different spheres of social behaviour and social structure so that they transcend sheer description” (pg: 68). This is crucial within social change because it accentuates the need to embrace wider and broader contextual explanation and theory that surround programme development. As Pawson states the place to start evaluation is with the well travelled programme theory that underpins it. Linking to this, Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) scientific realism is an indication of their attempt to distinguish themselves from the other forms of realism. For them RE orientated within their scientific realism attempts to use methodological apparatus to explain socially contingent specific programmes, opposed to CR’s attempt to explain the larger picture of what underpins the reality we experience through conceptual and philosophical devices (Jagosh, 2015a)

Pawson (2013) moves towards Karl Popper (1992) who in similar respect to Elster states that all scientific data is hedged with uncertainty. By this, it is not possible to establish truth of an unrestricted generalisation. Instead, whilst theories may be able to make sense of regularities empirical evidence can play a part in limiting or falsifying those theories. Therefore, any empirical data derived within the evaluation of a programme may lead to the falsification of the programme theory underpinning the programme. This according to Pawson (2013) makes evidence based policy a contentious area. Instead, adopting a Popperian approach Pawson asserts that scientific inquiry is an evolutionary and continuous process where scientists face a set of observational patterns and set forth a set of conjectures to explain apparent uniformities which can then be tested, and confirmed or refuted. This cumulative position enables science to grow opposed to stating a clear fact (which for Pawson, 2013 is not possible). Many remnants of Popper can be seen in the theory testing and refinement which underpins RE because it is not RE’s quest to prove and confirm programme effectiveness. Affective testing may lead to negatives as well as positives relating to any programme under investigation, which may then lead for further refinements to the programme.

Finally, Pawson points towards Rossi (1987) as a key figure. Focusing on context, Rossi highlights how interventions may trigger opposing mechanisms and that the balance of choices in the populations determine outcomes. Thus, programmes only work when implemented in a certain way for the right people in the right circumstances. This has key implications for evaluation in that it immediately warns against the act of generalisability and transference of programmes outcomes to other areas. As Pawson and Tilley (1997) assert, a programme’s success in one area does not guarantee the same success if it was mobilised in other areas.

6.5 The Pawson application of realism with Realist Evaluation

The preceding discussions clearly shape Pawson’s application of realism within the context of RE adopting certain positions and rejecting some. For him RE adopts and draws together varying nuances of realism. It is the adoption of these nuances and rejection of others that guides the

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foundations of RE. This is important for this research because it is not sufficient to simply state that
the research follows one specific epistemological position. For Pawson realism begins by saying that
scientific enquiry is more than carefully measured facts. Given that the social world contains an
infinite amount of objects theory can play a major role in guiding scientific inquiry and explanation.
In addition, given that correlation is not causation the regularities and uniformities of certain events
cannot be discovered through direct observation (Pawson, 2014). In coherence with Bhaskar’s
generative thinking, it is the underlying mechanisms that enable us to explain why certain outcomes
come about.

Furthermore, at the time of writing, it would be fair to suggest that RE occupies the following realist
philosophical positions. Wong et al (2012) for example state there is a real world and our knowledge
of it is processed through human senses, brains and language / culture. In addition and very much in
line with the ‘critical’ in realism they suggest that “we can improve our understandings of the reality
because the real world constrains the interpretations we can reasonably make of it” (pg: 91). In
addition, Westhorp (2014, pg: 5-6) specifies five key ideas underpinning realism for use within
evaluation:

“1. Both the individual and the social worlds are real. Programmes are real, policies are real and they
have real effects. Social institutions and structures will have real effects eg race, culture, religion etc.
2. There is no such thing as final truth and knowledge. All observation and enquiry are shaped
through the human brain. It is possible to work towards an understanding of why something is
working, but we can never be sure of it.
3. All social systems are open systems. Schools, families and political systems all influence each other
in different ways. Programmes are social systems. Any outcome that is observed will be as a result of
interactions within and across systems. Evaluation approaches that approach causation as linear are
inadequate.
4. Realism offers a particular understanding of how causation works. The causal processes happen at
a different level of the system than the observable outcomes. In realist philosophy, the underlying
causal process is known as a ‘mechanism’.
5. Whether mechanisms fire depends on the context. The implication for evaluation is that what
matters about context is what influences whether mechanisms operate, and which mechanisms
operate.”

The preceding discussion in reference to Pawson (2013) makes reference to the various pillars within
the realist church that guide and specify his position. Wong et al (2012) and Westhorp (2014) for
example frame RE as realist where as other authors make reference to it being critical realist
(Marchal et al, 2012). As presented within the literature reviewed here, it would be fair to suggest
that RE is broadly positioned as realist (particularly in light of Pawson’s most recent work) as it takes
stock of the various nuances of realism that sit within the broad realist church.

However, as one would bare witness to, currently within the realist discourses there resides many
contestations concerning where RE fits within realism. As stated above, Pawson’s most recent text
has gone some way to critique Bhaskar and others and distinguish RE. For some realist orientated
academics (in particular Porter, 2015a and b) they have taken argument with Pawson’s claims that
RE is distinct from the likes of Bhaskar. For Porter (2015a), RE and CR are not entirely different and
provides a stern defence of Bhaskar’s critique by Pawson (2013). These dichotomous tensions are
likely to remain and continue beyond this thesis. Again, at the time of writing there are also regular
discussions emerging surrounding how RE should be carried out and how to conceptualise CMO
configurations (Porter, 2015b; Dalkin et al, 2015). Porter (2015b) has questioned for example RE’s ability to distinguish between structure and agency as a result of its dualism of the programme mechanism, and Dalkin (2015) has called for different ways to disaggregate resources and reasoning in mechanisms.

6.6 Confirming the philosophical position of this research

Nevertheless, within the midst of this philosophical and methodological debate this thesis (as would any) needs to draw a line under any preexisting debate and explicitly state the philosophical approach to be taken. It is important to highlight that the epistemological stance of the research for this study is not fully hardened. Given that Pawson draws upon the varying forms of realism so too is the case of this research. In essence, both study one and study two apply Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) realist evaluation methodology and are philosophically orientated within realist pillars.

As discussed and at the heart of RE are certain nuances of realism which guide the methodology. In terms of making sense of what works for whom in what circumstances and why, this thesis focused heavily on specifying the generative mechanisms of change at play within the M and E framework and its interaction with the students. Thus, despite Pawson’s recent critique and attempts to distinguish between Bhaskar, this research attempts to recognise, apply and be guided by Bhaskar’s critical realist domain of the real for understanding mechanisms in observed and non observed capacities. Additionally, in line with Pawson’s attention given towards explanation and theory building, Bhaskar’s retroduction and logic of abduction are key foundations for building an understanding of how programmes are working.

Further, given that structure and agency is a central component for understanding mechanisms (Porter, 2015) this will also be applied. Like Pawson (2013), Archer’s (1995; 2003) conceptualisation of structure and agency is nuanced within the philosophical foundations of this thesis in that society is made up by, but never under the control of human intentions because peoples’ choices are conditioned by pre existing structures and opportunities. However, at the same time “agents possess properties and powers distinct from those pertaining to social forms, such as thinking, deliberating, and believing which are applicable to people, but never to social structures or cultural systems” (Archer, 2003, p: 2). Thus within social change programmes people make programmes work, but in a generative sense that draws upon influence of those external structures.

Finally, the aim of the thesis itself is to not state a fact that the M and E framework works. The aim is to test and explain how and why the framework (and its constituent parts) was of use for the practitioners. Therefore in line with Popper, the research attempts to draw upon a set of hypotheses (the programme theory) about how and why the framework would work, to test to what extent those conjectures would hold. Study one was the first stage for doing this which lead to refinement and further testing at study two.

Central to realism is the view that the world is an open system that operates within contexts and mechanisms (Rycroft – Malone et al, 2010). Within this world people reason and respond to certain resources that may be provided in diverse ways which may lead to certain outcomes. Thus at the heart of realism is the view that actors or participants in society have a potential for change by their very nature and agency (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) and the way to understand that change is through the eyes of that actor embedded within their particular level of social reality (Nichols, 2007).
philosophical position was therefore central to the two evaluation’s that underpin this thesis. In order to realize the contribution to knowledge (which focused upon ‘what approaches to M and E work best for practitioners in small scale SFD programmes’) it was essential to investigate how and why the practitioners would reason against the resources provided within the framework to enable them to efficiently and competently M and E their CIPs. Also, having an understanding of the contexts and open systems enabling such mechanisms to be released (Dalkin et al, 2015) would go some way for appreciating for whom and under what circumstances the M and E framework would be of use for the practitioners.

Having provided a rationale for the philosophical underpinning of this research, what will now follow is an explicit overview of the methodological procedures followed for the two studies underpinning the thesis. These studies in essence were ‘realist’ evaluations of the framework and were mobilized in accordance with the aims and objectives of the thesis. The next sections are split accordingly into ‘study 1’ and ‘study 2’. It is important to distinguish the two study's because each had specific alignment to the aims and objectives of the thesis, and as highlighted previously entailed distinguishing methodological and analytical protocols.

6.7 Methodology: Study 1

In relation to the aims and objectives, this ‘realist evaluation’ (study 1) intended to uncover an insight into what approaches to monitoring and evaluation (M and E) may be most suitable to sport development practitioners. Specifically, having developed the M and E framework for testing (appendix 3), this stage sought to pilot the framework upon a sample of (all very similar) Edumove CIPs. The framework itself was constructed in line with ‘realist’ principles that the students could mobilize within their CIPs. Given the participatory nature of the framework, at its centre was Fetterman’s (2005) Empowerment Evaluation. Overall, the key objectives at this stage were to develop the framework and test the impact of it upon the SSDPs. This would then lead to subsequent refinements of the framework for further testing at study 2.

This initial stage was tested in accordance with the three key domains underpinning the model which were engagement with realistic evaluation principles, engagement with empowerment evaluation characteristics and their synthesis, and finally the praxis of the SSDPs around professional practice in terms of the ability to apply, realize and exercise evaluation techniques. As discussed, the realistic approach (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) was applied to make sense of what it was about the model which worked (or did not work) for the SSDPs.

6.8 Positioning realism at the centre of the evaluation of the M and E framework

The previous section has provided a philosophical justification underpinning the realist orientation of this thesis. The attention to generative causality (Marchal et al 2012) was useful to understand how the SSDPs reasoned with the resources provided within the M and E framework. Realist inquiry and its middle ground position between positivism and constructivism enabled the researcher to identify and explore the mechanisms (reasoning and external factors) at play within the program that affected professional practice. This then enabled the researcher to improve their understanding of evaluation in the real world by exploring how and why the framework worked or did not work for certain SSDPs. Another strength with realist inquiry (particularly in RE) is its potential to theorise new understandings as mid range theories using concepts that describe interventions at a level between the big policy ideas and the day-to-day realities of implementation (Merton, 1968). Again,
within the context of this evaluation the M and E framework being tested intended to inform practice and make a positive contribution to M and E in the field. The realist approach adopted enabled a clearer understanding of this contribution as a mid range theory (Abhyanker, 2013).

6.9 Study 1 methodology and methods

The methodology implemented within this study drew upon the many characteristics associated with Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) realistic evaluation that seeks to gain an understanding of the generative mechanisms in place within programmes. As discussed within previous chapters there is no standard or rigid approach for carrying out a realistic evaluation (Pawson, 2003) yet in most cases a programme theory is set usually through the form of context mechanism outcome configurations (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Wong et al, 2013) which hypothesise or conjecture how and why the programme may work. These are then subsequently tested through a variety of qualitative or quantitative methods to understand to what extent the configurations manifest themselves. These methods then lead to a re-adaptation of the programme theory which would then generate the cycle again.

Within the context of this study the M and E framework was devised with key underpinning programme theories associated to realist evaluation (RE) empowerment evaluation (EE) with the intention that synthesis of the two would facilitate the outcomes of greater application, realization and practicing of evaluation techniques for the SSDPs. Although no specific CMO configurations were constructed at this stage of the framework the programme theory was represented by key attention made to the contexts of the students and the higher education / social environments surrounding them. In regards to conjectured mechanisms, these were developed in accordance with the context and the EE principles that encompassed the participatory nature of the programme. In addition, the realistic application of ‘mechanism’ and ‘CMO’ for understanding the generative reasoning of actors was also conjectured as a mechanism to enable the SSDPs to make sense of how and why their programmes worked.

The programme theory underpinning the M and E framework was tested via a mixture of three qualitative and quantitative methods. Interviews, reflective blogs and an online questionnaire (see appendix 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 for examples) were implemented with the SSDPs to unearth their engagement and reasoning with the programme. At the heart of these methods was the intention to unearth how and why the SSDPs engaged with the M and E framework. Accordingly, questions focused on unearthing the generative mechanisms to enable an explanation as to what it was about the framework that worked (or not for the SSDPs).

It is relevant to highlight here that as the researcher also maintained the role of the ‘trainer’ / ‘empowerment evaluator’ (as well as course leader), recognition was given to the degree of honesty and openness the SSDPs may have afforded to their responses. This was particularly a potential issue within the interviews where perhaps an argument exists to suggest that students would ‘tell the researcher what they wanted to hear’ regarding the impact of the training programme. However, in addition to maintaining the openness, honesty and clarity associated with participatory action research environments (Milligan, 2014), the anonymous online questionnaire addressed this issue by investigating the key areas also addressed within the interviews.

Finally, given their ability to encourage personal expression and reflection for the respondent (Cribbett, 2010), blogs were implemented. These attempted to encourage the students to reflect over time upon their engagement regarding their struggles, development, and application of
carrying out M and E within the context of the framework. The findings that were drawn from these methods subsequently led to the framework being refined (to be tested again in study 2).

6.10 Study 1 sample

Three ‘Coaching Innovation Projects’ (CIPs) engaged with the training programme over the course of the academic year. Their engagement with the programme was entirely optional and involved them attending a series of workshops (underpinning the framework). In terms of characterizing these CIPs all were ‘Edumove’ focused. The programme theories underpinning these CIPs essentially focused upon combining physical activity and subjects within the school curriculum. For example SSDPs would develop movement based games in line with core key stage 1, 2, 3 and 4 subjects such as Math’s, English, Science and Geography. Thus instead of for example learning Math’s in a classroom, pupils could learn mathematics through movement based games in the playground or hall. The overall anticipated outcomes associated with these CIPs were associated with improved physical literacy and increased understanding of curriculum subjects via active learning and physical activity.

Within the context of this stage of the research, three CIPs were selected to explore the impact of the framework upon those students involved in delivering their projects. The CIPs were made up of six students (two students per CIP were sampled) aged between 19 and 25 years of age. All SSDPs were enrolled on the BA Hons Sport Coaching and Development course at Southampton Solent University.

Table 11: Study 1 sample characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIP characteristics</th>
<th>Duration of project</th>
<th>Number of practitioners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Nutrition based Edumove project focusing on improving young peoples’ physical activity and learning of nutritional values through Edumove games.</td>
<td>6-10 weeks</td>
<td>2 (Both Male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Geography based Edumove project. Key focus on using Edumove games to enhance young peoples understanding of Geography.</td>
<td>6-10 weeks</td>
<td>2 (One male, one female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Math’s based Edumove project. Young people encouraged to develop and increased understanding of Math’s through active movement based games. These may be bringing to life times tables and fractions in an active environment.</td>
<td>6-10 weeks</td>
<td>2 (Both male)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The decision was taken to select three CIPs as the data obtained from these particular projects was sufficient to answer the research question regarding to what extent the M and E framework was fit for purpose. In addition, these CIPs were selected with Edumove partners as discussed in the provisional framework (chapter 5). The questionnaire gained six responses out of a potential six SSDPs. In regards to the methods the interviews and questionnaires were carried out at the end of
the training programme and in line with the academic year finishing. The students completed their blogs over the course of the year.

Overall, the data collection was made up of six blogs, six interviews and six questionnaires.

6.11 Study 1 data analysis

A realistic approach to data analysis was adopted for this study to make sense of how the inner workings of the training programme produced diverse effects (Pawson and Tilley, 2004) for the SSDPs. A key focus of the data analysis was to uncover the contexts, mechanism and outcomes that could explain how and why the framework worked. To be clear, an explicit process underpinning the data analysis is provided below.

Stage 1: Data familiarisation

Data analysis commenced with the transcription of all interviews (see appendix 4.4 for sample transcription). Additionally, the blogs were already in word processed form. Across the three methods, the next phase involved data familiarization. This quite simply involved carefully reading through each interview, blog and survey response to gain a provisional understanding of the findings. This was a crucial phase to mitigate against prematurely rushing into the coding phases and making use of software such as NVIVO. Such a mistake may have led to an inaccurate grasping of the findings.

Stage 2: Generating contexts and forming codes

When the first set of reading was carried out, the transcripts were reviewed again to identify key findings associated with the key areas under exploration within the framework. To reiterate, these areas under exploration were EE / RE and M + E competency. A process was followed whereby key words and phrases were identified as part of the first stage for building an explanatory picture of what was manifesting itself in the framework for the SSDPs. Still at this stage no software was used however the realist cycle was mobilised to gain an insight into what worked for whom under what circumstances and why (see appendix 4.5 for sample evidence of analysis).

This commenced with manual analysis of each transcript to begin the construction of the context, mechanism outcome configurations at the heart of RE methodology (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). In terms of forming CMOs there is no definitive way or gold standard to be adopted (Pawson, 2004). Thus, within these flexible parameters the researcher began with identifying what appeared to be apparent contexts underpinning the findings. To clarify, these contexts were perceived as the range of conditions, external environments, demographics, physical attributes (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) underpinning the practitioners and the framework. It was essential to fully grasp these because as Westhorp (2014) asserts, it is the context that will determine the nature of the mechanisms and outcomes associated with any such intervention or programme.

Whilst identifying the contexts, key codes were identified and highlighted relating to RE and EE. These were simply noted within each transcript such as ‘guidance’, ‘connection and engagement with programme theory’ and ‘observation to understand mechanism’ s’. An example of this from one of the interviews can be located in appendix 4.5. By the end of this stage, all interviews and blogs were analysed and a large volume of preliminary codes were formed. It was not clear however at this stage which of these codes would form mechanisms or outcomes. The contexts were situated within a table, as presented within the findings section.

Stage 3: Identifying mechanisms and outcomes
Having established preliminary codes and contexts associated with the three areas of exploration (RE, EE and M and E) the next stage involved identifying key mechanisms and outcomes associated with the codes generated from those three areas.

Codes were grouped into relevant mechanisms and outcomes by making use of realistic analytical approaches (Abhyankar, 2013). For example, codes that expressed an overall achievement or sense of distance travelled were attributed to ‘outcomes’. Furthermore, codes that demonstrated generative reasoning with resources leading to these outcomes were grouped as ‘mechanisms’. The contexts were of key importance in aiding this because as stated previously such contexts would determine the nature of the mechanisms and outcomes. In terms of software, NVIVO was utilised through the ‘node’ function to store the mechanisms and outcomes identified from quotes within the transcripts. In summary, outcomes were usually identified first and then worked back from to identify the mechanisms (Westhorp, 2014). Appendix 4.6 provides examples of NVIVO screenshots depicting the CMOs.

Stage 4: Creating contexts, mechanisms and outcomes and establishing themes

Having undergone a robust process for identifying the CMOs relating to the findings, what then followed was the crucial exercise of linking the CMOs accordingly into their configuration / statements. The configurations were crated on the basis of theorising through the analysis that within a given context, participants would reason and / or react towards a resource to bring about a particular outcome. It was important that the fluidity in each configuration made sense to depict how and why the framework created specific outcomes. Moreover, to aid discussion and illustrate the CMOs within the context of the programme theory more effectively, they were themed in accordance with the areas under investigation. What resulted from this process was the compilation of a series of CMO configurations positioned within constituent themes representing M and E praxis, RE praxis, and EE praxis. These are discussed and presented in more depth within the findings chapter.

Stage 5: Utilising secondary data to support primary data

The final stage of data analysis involved utilising secondary data to reinforce and clarify the findings gained through the primary data. In the main, the primary findings demonstrated positive outcomes in relation to the SSDPs being able to M and E their projects effectively with the RE focus of the framework. In order to justify the primary data, and to eliminate any questions from observers stating that ‘the practitioners were telling the researcher what they wanted to hear’, the CIP projects were examined. These were examined via the monitoring and evaluation reports the students produced alongside the poster and viva exercise they carried out. Academic attainment (which drew upon the students’ ability to actively carry out M and E) was also reviewed. Appendix 4.7 demonstrates an overview of this process within the context of one of the sample CIPs.

6.12 Ethics

This ethics sub section covers both study one and study two drawing upon the ethical considerations given and subsequent procedures that were followed. First and foremost the two evaluation’s underpinning this thesis gained ethical approval from the Ethics committee at Southampton Solent University (see appendix 1).

In terms of discussing ethical issues in relation to the study it is important to reiterate the position of the researcher within this thesis. Given that the researcher also occupied the role of the trainer within the participatory M and E framework, there are clearly ethical implications to consider. The
study recognizes the implications particularly within the participatory focus of the framework. For example (Greenwood and Levin, 2007) summarise that action / participatory research is philosophically positioned around the idea of carrying out research cooperatively with stakeholders to improve action. Lincoln, (2001) further goes on to suggest that participatory research blurs the lines between ‘researcher’ and ‘researched’. Therefore, within the boundaries of this thesis, whilst the model in itself is participatory and involves the SSDPs carrying out their own M and E with facilitation, it must also be acknowledged that the very person delivering the training and building capacity was also carrying out research to test the M and E framework. To what extent this conflicted, constrained or caused any issues with the participatory nature of the framework was minimal given that the SSDPs were made fully aware of the parameters at the beginning of the process.

Secondly, another crucial ethical consideration surrounded the attributes and characteristics of the researcher. In addition to the trainer and researcher dynamic discussed above, the researcher held a significant position of authority in the sense that he was course leader for the majority of the students involved within the framework, and also resided within the capacity of unit leader for the module mobilizing the CIP and subsequent M and E framework. This is an important ethical acknowledgement and potential limitation given the dangers of research bias and (positive or negative) nature of the relationship between the researcher and the students. To respond to this it was ensured for both study that the framework would be an entirely optional programme for the students to access. Thus, if any student felt uncomfortable with the researcher they would have been unlikely to engage in the process. Furthermore, at the onset of the process each student was informed of the process underpinning the approach and the research, and as such was afforded the right at any time to withdraw from the process. Subsequently, there were no withdrawals across either study. In essence, the SSDPs involvement in the framework was predicated on the basis of a healthy relationship with the trainer and a motivation to do well within the project. As can be seen within each study findings there are many examples of CMOs relating to positive relationships with the trainer.

Thirdly, the final ethical consideration to recognizes surrounds the curriculum context of the M and E framework. To be clear, all the SSDPs involved in the framework were assessed on the mobilization and delivery of their M and E. This was obviously linked to the framework because it was the capacity building of the framework which would be a major factor in their ability to score a good mark. In order to mitigate against any conflicts of interest or bias on behalf of the researcher as unit leader, it was guaranteed that the researcher was not involved in any of the assessments relating to the unit. As such, the assessment of student blogs and vivas were carried out by independent assessors.

Finally, and following on from above, each participant within either study was provided with a participant information briefing sheet outlining the aims of the research. Informed consent was also provided to and gained from each participant (see appendix 1).
6.13 Methodology study 2

This stage of the methodology will now draw attention to the second study which sought to further test the M and E framework. The aim of study 2 in line with the aims and objectives of the research was to carry out further testing of the refined framework (see findings chapter 7). This testing explored the application of the framework on a broader sample of CIPs that did not focus solely on one area. Based on the refinements made to the M and E framework as a result of study 1, study 2 provided an opportunity to further test the development of the framework (these refinements are discussed in depth within chapter 8). Like study 1, a realist evaluation methodology was designed and implemented with a clear goal to understand what it was about the M and E framework (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) that would lead to specific outcomes for the SSDPs involved in it.

In contrast to study 1, study 2 involved the deployment of Q Methodology (Q) which will be explained in more depth below. In essence the following will coherently and succinctly outline what Q entails and its philosophical alignment with the realist principles underpinning the study. This will be followed by an explanation of the study design and methods leading then to a discussion of the data analysis and explicit process followed for informing further refinements to the framework.

6.14 Introducing Q methodology

According to Watts and Stenner (2012) Q emerged in 1935 as a methodology created by William Stephenson as an innovative adaptation of Charles Spearman’s traditional method of factor analysis, which focuses on the revealing of patterns of association between variables within a given data matrix (Watts and Stenner, 2012). Put simply, Q focuses on the subjective viewpoints of its participants (Watts and Stenner, 2012; Brown, 1980). The key aim is to articulate the view points amongst a group of practitioners “to allow those viewpoints to be understood holistically to a high level of qualitative detail” (Watts and Stenner, 2012, pg: 4). It asks its participants to decide what is ‘meaningful’ and hence what does (and what does not) have value and significance from their perspective (Watts and Stenner, 2005).

In practice, Q involves developing a set of statements that may represent viewpoints of certain individuals from the ‘concourse’ about a particular topic, programme or issue. These statements are then ranked relative to one another by those individuals into piles of agreement, disagreement and neutral feeling by use (usually) of a bell curve (Watts and Stenner, 2012). Factor analysis is then implemented to uncover shared viewpoints amongst those individuals about the issue in question which are then interpreted to produce holistic narratives in accordance with each factor. To summarise, Q usually involves the following 7 stage process as depicted in table 12 below.

Table 12: Iterative process for Q method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review the concourse</td>
<td>According to Brown (1980) this is the most crucial stage of the Q process because it is here where knowledge is gained and accrued about the field or context. Using research, increased knowledge regarding the context drives the Q-Set and subsequent deriving of statements (Watts and Stenner, 2012).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Select Q-Set sample of items / statements</td>
<td>This stage involves the generation of a series of statements in accordance with the concourse. A Q-Set in practice is usually made up of 40-80 statements (Watts and Stenner, 2005; Stainton – Rogers, 1995). However, it is also common to see statements to the tune of 20-30 depending on the scale of the investigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Select P-Set / participants</td>
<td>Having developed the Q-Set this stage involves the selection of a P-Set which is a representative sample of participants within the research. Stainton – Rogers (1995) suggests that a Q study is more effective when the P-Set contains between 40-60 individuals. However, the numbers represented in a P-Set are selected relative to the context of the study and what is an achievable amount to work with. For example, Wink and Henderson (2016) worked with 12 within their Q study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. P-Set: sort items into a subjectively meaningful pattern</td>
<td>This stage requires the P-Set to rank the statements presented to them based on their subjective viewpoints. This is initially done by sorting the statements into piles of agree, disagree and neutral. These are then plotted onto a bell curve / forced distribution (Wink and Henderson, 2016) which according to Watts and Stenner (2012) has become the standard approach for Q methodologists because it enables a pragmatic and convenient means of facilitating the subjective evaluations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Factor analysis</td>
<td>Following the P-Set, by – person factor analysis is carried out through the PQ Method programme where the sorts are entered accordingly. PQ method as instructed (given that there are different instructions to give) looks for groups of persons who have rank ordered the statements in a similar fashion and share similar perspectives (Watts and Stenner, 2012). Factors are then produced for interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Interpretation</td>
<td>Factors are selected and interpreted to a high level of qualitative detail. This is usually mobilised via the identification of statements ranked the highest, lowest within each factor and in relation to other factors. Through the logic of abduction (Watts and Stenner, 2012) a story begins to emerge based on this interpretation. Many methodological tools such as Watts and Stenner’s (2012) crib sheet aid this process. In addition, interviews may also be conducted (Pike et al, 2015) to clarify the emerging story for understanding in more depth participants rationales for their view. Pike et al (2015) did interviews as follow up. Gallagher and Porock (2010) advocate the use of interviews which can increase the validity of a Q study by further understanding participants rationales for the factor arrays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Production of holistic narrative</td>
<td>Factor analysis and interpretation enables the production of a holistic narrative which portrays a succinct and coherent story about the shared viewpoints within each factor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q’s distinction and novelty lies within its ability to synthesise quantitative and qualitative methods. Stenner and Stainton-Rogers (2004 in Watts and Stenner, 2005) refer to Q as being ‘qualiquantological’ where it offers the potential to blend the two positions together. Barry & Proops (1999, pg: 339 in Deignan 2012) assert that, “the basic distinctiveness of Q methodology is that, unlike standard survey analysis, it is interested in establishing patterns within and across individuals rather than patterns across individual traits, such as gender, age, class”. This is further supported by Pike et al (2015) who suggest that whilst a questionnaire may broadly establish the ways stakeholders may feel about a topic, it is “constrained by the limited prior understanding held by the researcher of the range of accounts constructed by the participants” (pg: 5). Furthermore, they go on to state that “in depth interviews may elucidate useful participant perspectives but cannot yield robust clusters of standpoints or accounts” (pg: 5). Moreover, Q’s rigorous approach can deliver a semi quantitative approach understanding shared viewpoints (Pike et al, 2015; Watts and Stenner, 2005). Watts and Stenner (2005) point out that instead of breaking up subject matter into a series of constituent themes like other phenomenological and interpretive approaches, Q can show the primary ways in which themes are interconnected or related by a group of participants.

6.15 Synthesising Q with Realist approaches – rationale

Very few studies currently exist where Q approaches have been synthesised with realist approaches. To date only the likes of Wink and Henderson (2016) have made attempts to bring the two approaches together. Nevertheless, it is strongly argued within this research that there is great scope for embedding Q methodology with RE.

The first argument to make for their alliance concerns the point that realist approaches to evaluation favour and support the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Pawson and Manzano-Santella, 2012). Making use of qualitative and quantitative approaches can help to increases the robustness of evaluation and support claims for reliability and validity. As already indicated above, despite the strengths of interviews and questionnaires for example, their independent disconnection from one another may present limitations. Q’s qualiquantological approach helps to mitigate against these issues wherein factor analysis interpretation can be followed up with interviews.

Second, at the heart of the realist evaluator’s approach is the attempt to unearth what works for whom in what circumstances and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) where the identification of hidden mechanisms of change (Westhorp 2014) are prioritised. Q holds significant potential for aiding this process as elucidated by Wink and Henderson (2016), where they were able to conjecture what worked for whom in what circumstances and why. In particular Q enabled the articulation of key outcomes within their evaluation. Furthermore, it can be suggested that through the aid of factor analysis and in depth qualitative interpretation of such factors this can foster a deeper insight for conjecturing a more objective and reliable set of contexts and mechanisms where the individual interpretation of the researcher is not the only means.

The third argument for embedding Q within realist evaluation relates to their philosophical compatibility. It is acknowledged here that any such discussion could be a chapter in itself, therefore below provides a concise overview of the arguments for their alignment.

The most natural place to begin in this argument focuses on the very starting point of any Q study; concourse. Put simply, the concourse is “a field of shared knowledge and meaning from which it is possible to extract an identifiable universe of statements about any situation or context”
(Stephenson, 1986a, pg: 44 cited in Watts and Stenner, 2012, pg: 34). This aligns neatly with the realist foundations of this study given the similar comparisons to that of ‘context’ which is so crucial with realist methodology. As Stephenson (1982) asserts the concourse represents the individuals cultural heritage, and methodologically in reference to Watts and Stenner (2012) the overall population of statements from which a Q-set is sampled. It can draw attention and be drawn together based on understandings about individuals, cultural heritage and policy; which are many of the aspects that should be considered for context in realist approaches. Thus the Q-Set within this study draws attention to the wider contexts of the M and E framework, how it is made up, its theoretical connections and relevance for the context of those individuals (for whom) within the framework. This coheres nicely with the realist position in the sense that for any change or outcome to occur, an appreciation of context must be considered. Q does this as any Q study enables a clearer picture of the concourse / context which drove its design. The same approach applies to realist evaluation.

Interestingly, another argument for compatibility focuses on the logic of abduction which is a central focus with Q methodology. Emanating from the work of Peirce (1839-1914) abduction can be simply defined as “studying facts and developing theory to explain them” (1931 / 1958, pg: 90 cited in Watts and Stenner, 2012, pg: 39). Unlike induction’s attempts to describe phenomenon, abduction and its synonymous comparison with retroduction (Peirce, 1955; Jagosh, 2015b) focuses on explanation and theory building by going back from, below or behind observed patterns (Lewis-Beck et al, 2004). This perhaps shows the strongest alignment to realist principles as within realist evaluation building theory to explain what works for whom and how and why is crucial. To support and strengthen this assertion further Watts and Stenner, (2012) highlight the importance abduction places upon explaining why, which again is central to realist methods and that of this study. In the same way that a Q methodologist searches for clues to form hypothesis and deeper levels of questioning to build a story, so too does a realist evaluator who is searching for clues and indications associated with mechanisms as part of their CMO building.

The final area of compatibility to discuss concerns social constructionism which Watts and Stenner (2012) associate as one of the main foundations of Q. Unlike constructivism and its focus on personal, psychological aspects of meaning whereby “specific individuals come to interpret their physical and social worlds” (Watts and Stenner, 2012, pg: 46), constructionism seeks to explore social or sociological aspects of the same meaning making exercise (Watts and Stenner, 2012). Although Q is dynamic enough to focus on the two a constructionist approach enables (through factor analysis and abductive interpretation) an understanding of the dominant shared viewed points or bodies of knowledge that account for cumulative products of human selections (pg: 46). Situating this within this study and philosophical position, a similar approach is taken. For example, in relation to any program a realist evaluator aims to unearth CMO configurations yet these CMO configurations do not in most cases only reflect one person in a programme. Quite often and similarly with the social constructionist position of Q, they are abductively configured upon a sound evidence base which may often represent shared viewpoints of certain individuals in programmes about how and why that program has worked for them. Of course this configuration also rests upon a realist understanding of the structural factors independent of an actor that impact upon those views.

6.16 Implementing Q methodology within study 2

Having introduced Q and created a rationale for its use within RE discussion now turns to how Q was embedded and implemented with the RE underpinning this study. Having tested the framework
from study 1 and made refinements, study 2 sought to do the same but across a broader sample of CIPs to make further refinements and improvements to the framework.

A potential limitation associated and recognised within this research concerns the position of the researcher. In this case the researcher was embedded within the M and E framework under evaluation as the trainer developing and mobilising the said framework. In addition, the trainer’s relationship with the participants within the framework was also significant as part of the context given that he held the position of course leader and thus came into contact with the participants across various realms of the course. Given that the role of researcher in this process was to evaluate the very framework they created, it could be anticipated that criticisms and questions may manifest themselves concerning bias, validity and reliability of findings. For example, given the tutor – student relationship there may have been the danger of the participant telling the trainer / researcher what they wanted to hear or feel constrained to elicit their true feelings. It would thus be a challenge to mitigate against this purely through the implementation of interviews alone.

Therefore, the implementation of Q within the study was a sensible and sound decision to make as not only did it provide the qualitative and quantitative balance (Watts and Stenner, 2012) but it also provided an objective strategy for unearthing an understanding of what worked for whom in what circumstances and why within the framework. In addition to the rationale and arguments already elicited for using Q in the preceding sections, its implementation within this study provided a stronger layer of objectivity to mitigate against any of the issues discussed above and enabled the researcher to explore the research aims at more of a distance of integrity.

It was anticipated that Q’s implementation within this study would enable the initial conjecturing of refined CMOs based on the testing of the framework. The reasoning for this being that implementing Q first around the concourse of the framework would enable the researcher a more objective and focused way of elucidating an understanding of the shared viewpoints the participants had about the M and E framework. In particular these viewpoints about the framework would be positioned within factors for further interpretation and result in provisional holistic narratives and CMOs. ‘Provisional’ is a key word here because through the follow up methods of realist orientated interviews and examination of blogs with a sample of the sort, these would seek to clarify and gain a deeper understanding via realist examination of the holistic narratives being posed. Completion of this would then lead to a set of refined and robust CMOs with accompanying holistic narratives to explicate what worked for whom in what circumstances and why. Figure 2 depicts the process followed and is explained in more detail below.
6.17 Study 2 design and implementation

Study two was designed to gain a deeper understanding of what worked for whom in what circumstances and why in relation to the M and E framework. This study was made up of a series of phases (see figure 2) which sought to depict a clear and robust approach followed within the evaluation.

The starting point of the design consisted of developing the Q factor protocol of the evaluation. This commenced immediately after the M and E framework had been delivered. Brown (1980) and Watts and Stenner (2012) amongst others place key significance upon developing the concourse. Indeed the M and E framework and its completion was a key part of the concourse underpinning the Q taking into consideration the programme theory and knowledge accrued in relation to the participants. Having gained a clear understanding of the concourse (which was helped considerably by the researcher also being the trainer / creator of the framework), the Q Set was developed. The Q set in this instance was made up of a total of 30 statements emanating from the concourse. The statements were constructed in accordance with the programme theory under evaluation. In essence they were structured across three key areas; 1: competency in M and E, 2: competency in and attitudes towards RE and 3: feelings about the participatory dimension of the framework. All three areas were aligned to and underpinned by the principles for collaborative inquiry in evaluation articulated by Schula et al (2016; see chapter 3 and 8) and aligned to the framework. It was anticipated that the Q sort would foster deeper understanding about the subjective viewpoints and meaning associated to these statements.

The P-Set for this study was made up of a 100% representation of all those who took part in the framework. In total 15 participants ranging across the diversity of CIPs took part in the Q sorting exercise. This was mobilised over four different sessions where the participants would attend either separately or within their CIP groups totaling no more than four members at a time. This made the process more manageable and easier to conduct as in many instances the Q process requires explanation for the P-Set. Within each session the participants were given the 30 statements and were asked to rank them in three piles discussed above. The piles were then ranked accordingly into the bell curve made up of 30 squares / sections as advocated by Watts and Stenner (2012).
Factor analysis (see data analysis section below) brought about the creation of eight factors to interpret. Initial interpretation of the variance and eigenvalues associated with each of the factors led to four overall being selected for full interpretation. Of the four factors six loaded into factor one, four into factor two, three into factor three and two into factor four. This full interpretation made use of Watts and Stenner’s (2012) crib sheet (see appendix 5.1) which they created as a clear process to capture the significant viewpoints within each factor. Through the logic of abduction, the crib sheet facilitated the emerging story about the factor and the shared view points within. Having carried out the crib sheet exercise, the provisional holistic narratives were written (see appendix 5.2) to tell a story about the shared viewpoints, again following the succinct approach presented by Watts and Stenner (2012). At this stage, the holistic narratives began to create a picture of how and why the framework created certain outcomes for particular participants involved. This, then enabled the drawing up of a series of provisional CMOs based on the narrative constructed.

6.18 Using blogs and interviews to clarify narratives and CMOs

At this point in the methodology additional methods of interviews and blogs (see appendix 5.3 and 5.4) were employed to expand upon the Q and facilitate deeper insight and clarification into the narratives that were evoked from the factor interpretation. This was important for three key reasons. Firstly, whilst there appears to be variations of Q studies that do and do not use interviews as part of their design (for example, Watts and Stenner, 2012 pay little attention to such methods in their interpretation chapter), there is advocacy for their use across other studies (Pike et al 2015; Gallagher and Porrock, 2010) given their capacity to explore subjective viewpoints in more depth. Secondly and in relation to this evaluation, the factor interpretation evoked some interesting viewpoints about the framework that the factor analysis and crib sheet interpretation alone could not sufficiently articulate. An example of this surrounded the concept of control within the evaluation. Some of the participants had rated their level of control over the evaluation as low which based purely on the factor and crib sheet processes could have indicated weak implications for evaluating the participatory and collaborative dimensions within the framework. However, the use of blogs and interviews further clarified that it was not a weak sense of control in the participatory collaboration with the trainer and evaluation design that was the issue but the degree of control in which some of the participants were able to implement it within the settings of their CIP. This is obviously an important consideration to make when relying solely on just the factor and crib sheet interpretation.

Thirdly, another key reason for this focuses in relation to the realist philosophical boundaries of the research. Given that realist enquiry from the perspective of Pawson and Tilley (1997) seeks to understand what generative mechanisms are at play within programmes to produce outcomes for certain people, in certain circumstances, any methods employed would need to be robust enough to delve as deep as possible into participant reasoning given that mechanisms are hidden (Dalkin et al, 2015). Thus, it was felt that there were limitations to purely relying on the factor interpretation in itself because whilst the articulation of key outcomes were very clear, the contexts and mechanisms could only go as far as being provisional at that stage. Thus, to fully appreciate how the participants reasoned against the resources (Dalkin et al, 2015) within the framework additional methods were required to clarify what was provisionally conjectured within the factor interpretation.

The additional methods of interviews and blogs however were implemented with caution. The key aim of their implementation was to clarify what was put forward from the provisional holistic narrative opposed to starting with a blank canvas. For this ‘clarification’ to be mobilised effectively,
firstly four realist interview schedules were created for each factor and a sample of participants from each of the four factors were selected (see sampling section). The interview schedules were independently designed around the provisional narratives and CMOs conjectured from the factor interpretation. This enabled further clarification in line with the aims and enabled the researcher to delve deeper into the contexts and mechanisms employing realist style questioning of how and why enabling the CMOs to be refined, supported or disregarded. In similar respect to the interviews, again a sample of participant reflective blogs discussing their feelings towards M and E and the framework were selected and analysed. The blogs were produced by the participants as part of their assessment (same as study 1) for the CIP unit over the course of the academic year. Each of the blogs were analysed to make sense of clarifying the provisional holistic narrative.

Having carried out the interview and blog clarification process / analysis (as depicted in figure 2) the provisional holistic narratives and CMOs were revisited and refined accordingly (see chapter 9) as the final stage in refining the M and E framework under evaluation. In essence these refinements were mainly associated to the refinements of the CMOs and amending the narratives to articulate more clarity around the stories emerging. Additionally, the blog and interviews analyses were able to portray a deeper insight into the contexts and mechanisms. A key strength of the factor analysis interpretation was that there was very little change to the holistic narratives opposed to the danger of further exploration and clarification completely contradicting any provisional results. As intended, the quantitative characteristics of the factor analysis provided the needed objectively orientated methodological lens to mitigate against any claims or bias. This consequently created a successful blend with what emerged from the interview and blog analysis.

6.19 Study 2 sampling

Whilst a brief indication toward sampling has been provided above, it is important to succinctly highlight the approach taken within study 2. In contrast to study one which examined CIPs that were all focused around the Edumove concept of physical literacy and academic attainment, this stage of the study sought to test the framework across a broader set of CIPs outlined in the table below. As indicated, these CIPs spanned across various domains and target groups. For example, some were focused on employability, social capital, physical literacy and female empowerment.

Table 13: Study 2 CIPs and characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIP characteristics</th>
<th>Duration of project</th>
<th>Number of practitioners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community based project working with 50 plus population to reduce loneliness through physical activity sessions.</td>
<td>10-15 weeks</td>
<td>2 (Both female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Zumba sessions designed to provide social setting for inactive Mum’s focused around social capital.</td>
<td>15-18 weeks</td>
<td>3 (All female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.16-18 employability project aimed to increase employment capacity</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>3 (All male)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Edumove project based at local primary school aimed at key stage 1 students  
   8-10 weeks  
   4 (All male)

5. School based mentoring project aimed at 14-16 year old girls to gain more leadership and empowerment skills in coaching  
   12 weeks  
   3 (Two male, one female)

Nevertheless, despite these differences a purposive sampling approach was still adopted. The CIPs outlined above which in line with characteristics of purposive sampling were hand picked because the researcher already possessed reasonable knowledge of their characteristics (Denscombe, 2003) which would provide most insight for the evaluation. Selecting participants who share certain characteristics and traits would also fit a purposive sampling approach. In line with study 1 the framework was entirely optional, yet certain CIPs were selected on the basis of their diversity in social change focus and the commitment the participants possessed for wanting to be involved. Whilst in realist terms context does not assert that everyone is the same, at the point of opting into the framework, all participants as in study 1 were enthusiastic, engaged and excited to be involved. In some cases this was with the motivation to do well in their CIP and or willingness to learn more about M and E. All were aged between 20 and 23 years of age studying at SSU and were on course for at least a 2:1/2:2 honours degree.

For the study design sampling was broken down into three distinct phases. The first stage involved the selection of participants as part of the P-Set to carry out the Q-sort exercise. Those selected for this stage represented all of the participants involved in the framework. The second stage focused on selecting a representative sample from each factor for interview to aid the clarification phase of the study design. A total of eight interviews were conducted. Thirdly, and similarly to the second stage a representative sample of ten blogs were also selected. This process is illustrated below.

Figure 3: Illustration of study sample
6.20 Study 2 data analysis

The following section articulates the data analysis procedures that were followed to meet the aims and objectives. As in the sampling section, preceding sections have drawn some discussion to this already. Nonetheless it is important here to explain clearly how the synthesising of the Q factor interpretation and realist approaches manifested themselves to uncover what worked for whom and how and why in relation to the M and E framework.

6.20.1 Factor analysis

The very first stage of data analysis focused on elucidating a clear picture of the shared viewpoints and factors emerging from the Q sort. Factor analysis was conducted through the use of Schmolck and Atkinson’s (2010) ‘PQ Method’ software which is commonly used by Q practitioners (Pike et al, 2015). Data linked to each sort was entered accordingly into the program and followed the process advised by Pike et al (2015). This involved extracting principal components from the correlation matrix by using the Principal Components Analysis (PCA) function and rotated using the VARIMAX rotation approach. From this a series of seven factors were extracted in line with Brown’s (1980) default number for extraction.

Now moving away from the PQ method software each factor document was investigated to make a decision as to how many factors overall would be retained and selected for interpretation. This was done by adopting the “objective decision making criteria” as advocated by (Watts and Stenner, 2012: pg: 106). This focuses on identifying the eigenvalues and study variances associated to each factor. Watts and Stenner (2012) point out that an eigenvalue indicates a factor’s strength and explanatory power and highlight that any eigenvalue under 1.00 is taken as the cut off point for retention of factors. This is also known as the Kaiser-Guttman criterion (Guttman, 1954; Kaiser, 1960). Closely related to eigenvalues is also the study variance (eg how much percentage of the study variance each factor represents) which according to Watts and Stenner is also a strong indication of a factors strength. Referring to Kline (1994) they suggest that anything in the region of 35-40% of the total study variance across factors is sound justification for retaining factors. Essentially, any factor with a high study variance and eigenvalue is a generally accepted and respected approach recognised within the factor community (Watts and Stenner, 2012). This was therefore the first step taken for retaining and rejecting the factors for the study.

However, whilst embarking upon the Kaiser-Guttman criteria Watts and Stenner (2012) and Brown’s (1980) warnings of the pitfalls of purely following this technique alone were also recognised. They suggest that simply following high eigenvalues and study variances can lead to a high proportion of factors where important features are missed. Therefore as supported by Watts and Stenner, mobilisation of the objective criteria in this study was prioritised but also balanced accordingly with “experience and feel” (Watts and Stenner, 2012: pg: 106) and Brown’s (1980) magic number seven (essentially seven factors were investigated). This enabled the factor retention exercise to remain objective but also allow investigation of other features such as the number of participants that would load onto each factor and taking into consideration characteristics about those participants. This exercise subsequently led to the retaining of four factors out of the seven extracted from PQ method (see appendix 5.5 depicting the data relating to the four factors). Each factor selected scored an eigenvalue of at least 1.00 or more and cumulatively the factors represented 67% of the total study variance (the actual figures associated to each factor can be seen in the holistic narrative).
6.20.2 Interpretation of factors

Having selected the four factors based on them meeting the criteria set out above, interpretation was carried out following the innovative method suggested by Watts and Stenner (2012). The crib sheet system invented by Watts (2001) represents a wider system “of organisation for the interpretative process and encourages holism by forcing engagement with every item in a factor array” (Watts and Stenner, 2012, pg: 150). Thus, the crib sheet system was mobilised for each factor focusing specifically on the factor arrays (see appendix 5.1) section. This was a table outlining a row of the four displaying the Q sorts scores / rankings against each statement. This explicit qualitative process involved highlighting statements that fitted into the following categories:

- Items ranked at +4 / +3
- Items ranked higher in the factor array than any other array
- Items ranked lower in the factor array than any other array
- Items ranked at -4 / -3
- Distinguishing statements
- Using demographical information
- First take – applying logic of abduction
- Any other additional information

Importantly, the crib sheet system did not solely involve identifying numbers. Watts and Stenner (2012) argue strongly that every single item requires full attention and may offer a clue. Applying the logic of abduction as advocated by Watts and Stenner (2012) enabled the questions and preliminary hypotheses to be formed alongside the knowledge accrued in relation to demographical information. Given the realist lens of this study, the first take exercise facilitated this process alongside what followed in the articulation of the provisional holistic narrative depicting the story of that factor. Each holistic narrative accounted for no more than one thousand words. This logic of enquiry was entirely compatible with the realist position of this study because in line with reproduction (a common association made to realism), enabled the idea of going back from, below and behind observed patterns / regularities to understand what produced them (Lewis-Beck et al, 2004). This high level of depth and qualitative detail enabled the construction of the provisional CMO configurations where solid outcomes and emerging contexts and mechanisms were manifesting themselves. As such these were then displayed on each of the provisional holistic narratives (see appendix 5.2).

6.20.3 Clarifying and confirming factors

As outlined in the study design section of this chapter, strong arguments were made for clarifying the emerging stories underpinning each factor. In strong keeping with the realist position of the evaluation a rigorous process was designed for clarifying the narratives and underpinning CMOs. The numbered stages below depict the process for analysing the interviews and blogs. The key aim of this process was to clarify the holistic narrative and articulate robust CMO configurations to mitigate against some of the pitfalls of relying purely on factor interpretation. Whilst some similarities were shared with the process followed in study 1, new developments in the field and the emergence of
new techniques for analysis in realist methods (Dalkin et al, 2015) were implemented alongside new approaches taken by the researcher.

Phase 1: Constructing the CMO crib sheet

The next stage involved developing and implementing a CMO crib sheet (see appendix 5.6) that was used to aid the analysis of each interview and blog. The justification for producing this sheet in similar respects to Watts and Stenner (2012) was to provide a system for breaking down the contexts mechanisms and outcomes which so often cause problems with realist research. In particular it is well advocated within various realist studies how problematic it is to understand what constitutes mechanisms (Dalkin et al, 2015). Following Dalkin et al’s model below the crib sheet was designed around this. Dalkin et al’s model attempts to disaggregate the programme mechanism in the sense that resources are produced into a context which then evoke reasoning on behalf of stakeholders / participants. In no way does this model attempt to entirely separate out resources from reasoning because as Pawson and Tilley (2004) assert, a mechanism is defined by how the resources on offer may permeate, influence and combine with the subjects reasoning. Instead, the model enables the analysis to consider what the resources may be and what type of reasoning this may evoke.

Figure 4: Disaggregating the programme mechanism (Dalkin et al, 2015).

Phase 2: CMO Crib sheet design and process

The CMO crib sheet was designed around the following tabular design:
Table 14: Study 2 CMO data analysis table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE 1: Data familiarisation and any specific comments</th>
<th>STAGE 2: Coding and highlighting key labels / phrases / concurrent with programme theory</th>
<th>STAGE 2.1: Identification of key resources</th>
<th>STAGE 3: TEASING OUT OUTCOMES</th>
<th>STAGE 4: TEASING OUT CONTEXTS</th>
<th>STAGE 5: MECHANISM CONSTRUCTION (Reasoning and response to resources) in line with C’s and M’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

As depicted above within the table, the first stage involved data familiarisation reading through the blog and interview transcripts to fully understand and make sense of the content. This column served the purpose of enabling the researcher to highlight any immediate points concerning the nature of the blog and / or interview. The content was uploaded into NVIVO software but no NVIVO functions such as nodes or coding were used at this stage. This was then followed by highlighting key phrases or words from the transcripts that supported the clarification process with the logic of abduction in mind. Importantly at this stage they were not categorised as contexts mechanism or outcomes. They were merely key instances of the data that would be used to build the CMO structure. At the same time, any specific resources connected with the M and E framework were highlighted, listed and along with the key phrases highlighted in the NVIVO software.

As is common with many approaches to RE (Abhyanker, 2013) key outcomes emanating from stage two were identified and listed accordingly, so that one could work back to identify the contexts and mechanisms. Furthermore, the next stage (four) drew upon identifying the contexts. Embarking upon this process fostered a clear pathway for then identifying the mechanisms that lay between the contexts and outcomes, thus representing the reasoning / reaction to the resources identified.

The final stage (six) of the crib sheet table attempted to draw upon the data identified from the preceding stages into ‘CMMO’ configuration statements. Following the Dalkin et al (2015) approach the mechanism was disaggregated into ‘MRes’ and ‘MReas’ to explicitly illustrate each mechanism. Following this robust approach mitigated against making immediate assumptions of what constituted the CMOs and represented a more evidenced based approach for justifying each CMO and representing the logic of abduction and retroduction.

Table 15: Study 2 CMMO configuration statements template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE 6: CMMO configuration statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within a given Context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 3: Amalgamating and synthesising CMO configurations

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The final phase of the clarification process involved synthesising the commonality of CMOs across the interviews and blogs examined. Each completed CMMO table was copied into a final factor CMMO configuration document (see appendix 5.7 for example) which represented every configuration table per blog and interview in accordance with each factor. For example, the final ‘factor one’ CMMO configuration document contained tables representing three interviews and four blogs examined. These configurations were then synthesised together by comparing and searching for commonalities associated with the provisional CMOs put forward from the factor interpretation stage. They were also aligned to the principles for collaborative evaluation and key elements under exploration within the M and E framework. The CMOs were also themed accordingly per factor. This process concluded the refinements of the CMOs initially conjectured from the provisional narratives and were displayed in the form of an overall factor configuration table.

The penultimate stage then involved revisiting the provisional holistic narratives making any necessary amendments in line with the clarification. In some instances this involved elaborating on points made adding more substance and clarification to the story presented. The final factor CMO configurations were also displayed in this document (chapter 9). The data analysis process was finally concluded by revisiting NVIVO. Nodes were created relating to the themes within each CMO as per factor and content from the blogs and interviews were coded to each node as a data storage process providing supporting evidence to justify the narrative presented (see appendix 5.8 for NVIVO evidence).

Overall, the robust exercise underpinning the data analysis provided a clear evidence based and abductive way for creating an understanding of the stories underpinning the factors.

6.21 Chapter summary

To conclude, this chapter has identified the iterative methodological process underpinning this thesis. Specifically, the chapter has embraced the two independent evaluations that have made up the thesis. The philosophical position of the thesis has been firmly justified in accordance with realist principles, whereby the two evaluations of study 1 and 2 have been firmly positioned. This realist position does not occupy one specific philosophical epistemology taken off the shelf. Instead the philosophical positions have ontologically and epistemologically justified the varying orientations of the realist church informing the study designs. Having explained the RE procedures followed in study 1, study 2 has explained the methodological transition to utilising Q methodology. This has been firmly aligned with RE in their compality and alliance. In line with the contribution to knowledge as discussed in chapter 11, this specific methodological approach offers innovation for how Q method can be embedded within realist approaches to understanding how and why programmes / frameworks work. This chapter has also elucidated the data analysis procedures followed in study 2.
Chapter 7

Study 1 Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an explanation of the key findings that emerged from testing the framework upon the cohort of CIPs involved in study 1. These findings align with methodology stage one. As discussed throughout, the main aim was to test the programme theory underpinning the framework to establish what worked for whom, in what circumstances and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997).

At the heart of the data analysis was the intention to uncover the key inner workings of the programme; thus the programme mechanisms, which would produce certain outcomes. According to Prashanth et al (2014) a mechanism can be defined as “psychological or social explanations for human behavior that explain the interaction between social structure and individual/group agency” (Pg: 2). In light of this study, the research methods chosen attempted to explore these very areas whilst also (crucially) taking into consideration the contextual factors that may have affected the individual / collective learning of the students and its application within the framework (Prashanth et al, 2014).

The data analysis of the six blogs, six interviews and questionnaire facilitated the emergence of key mechanisms which explained the outcomes. These mechanisms were then grouped into the following key themes of ‘conceptualisation to application’, ‘structure to enable agency’, and ‘ownership and autonomy’. A final theme (‘informing M and E practice’) was also produced to group the key outcomes. What now follows is a discussion of the contexts and mechanisms within these themes. These are then formulated into context mechanism outcome configurations (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) which help to explain the programme theory and inform the future refinements of the framework for further testing in study 2.

7.1 Context

According to Pawson and Tilley (1997) ‘context’ refers to social and cultural conditions and the effectiveness of a measure is contingent on the context in which it is produced. Furthermore, given that mechanisms are sensitive to variations in context (Astbury and Leeuw, 2010) it is firstly important to appreciate the structural, social and cultural conditions evident in the training programme.

From the data collection a wide variety of contexts were prevalent. Some of these were already apparent and considered in devising the initial training programme theory. However, the data analysis itself (as depicted within the methodology chapter 6) also unearthed a range of additional contextual factors that were crucial for evaluating the framework, and of course informing its future refinement.

Firstly, the presence of the Coaching Innovation Programme (CIP) in itself was a crucial context impacting upon and influencing the SSDPs. Given that the CIP itself was to be assessed and connected with an academic unit this was a key factor influencing the SSDP's involvement in the framework. Across the data collection one of the key reasons for the SSDPs engaging in the optional programme was to improve their attainment. To allow for time and space the other key contexts are succinctly summarised below in table 16.
Table 16: Study 1 underlying contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wider parameters and goals for Edumove</td>
<td>The organisational context of ‘Edumove’ had a strong influence on the nature of the CIPs being worked with. What was required in terms of evidence from the Edumove team needed to be considered, as did the challenges for achieving the three pillars of Edumove which were ‘enjoy’ ‘move’ and ‘achieve’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpredictable projects / changes and struggles</td>
<td>Many of the CIPs sampled shared similar characteristics. For example some had struggled to link with certain schools. Some had linked and developed programme theories in relation to certain subject areas only for the school to withdraw. This meant that some were starting again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scepticism towards M and E</td>
<td>This was associated to negative perceptions of M and E as a boring process. Also, challenges concerning how any M and E approach could uncover Edumove goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with young people</td>
<td>Young people present a challenge for investigating the ‘what works for whom and why’. Thus, exploration of the generative mechanisms were a challenge within this target group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness and limitations of SFD programmes</td>
<td>Many of the students were aware of the limitations and reach of SFD programmes given the critical analysis developed over the course of the CIP. The students went into the process open and aware about what their CIP could and could not achieve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited understanding of M and E and programme theory</td>
<td>Many, if not all of the students were starting from a fresh with limited knowledge or experience in M and E practice. In particular most had limited understanding of theory driven approaches to evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexperienced practitioners</td>
<td>For nearly all of the SSDPs the CIP was their first real live brief in terms of delivering a project and also collecting evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In frequent support within Edumove</td>
<td>An immediate context that did emerge across the SSDPs was the infrequent support within Edumove. Attention was given to training at the start of the year but in most respects the CIPs were running at arms length from the Edumove team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edumove privacy</td>
<td>SSDPs were limited as to how much depth of their ‘programme theories’ could be shared with the partnering schools. Eg: session plans could not be shared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency and experience in</td>
<td>The innovative focus associated to Edumove surrounding active learning required a level of competency of the SSDPs. This was a factor to be considered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Edumove alongside M and E competence.

Fear of M and E
Limited knowledge and experience associated to M and E and fear over the capacity to carry it out effectively.

Short term projects
In most cases the projects were only 6 weeks. Thus, questions emerge surrounding the capacity for learning over this period and time to carry out M and E.

Working in schools (cooperation and confusion)
Some schools are more cooperative and proactive than others which may impact significantly on the success of the M and E process and any organisational learning to take place.

Disparities in group dynamics and cohesion
Like in most teams and groups disparity of group members should be considered. Those who are more vocal, proactive and motivated opposed to those who are not.

Open minded perceptions / Willingness to learn about M and E
Given that the programme was optional there was a key willingness amongst all of the sampled SSDPs to develop a more comprehensive understanding of M and E.

Optional training programme providing support
The framework being entirely optional meant that only students interested would be involved.

Dynamics of SSDPs doing own evaluations
Over a short period of time and in addition to the implementational aspects of the CIP, there would be key resourcing challenges for carrying out any M and E, yet also the opportunity for more autonomy and responsibility.

Need for support environment
Specific support and guidance required to make sense of M and E approaches.

7.2 Mechanisms
Having made clear and explicit the key contexts emerging within the framework, the following will provide an insight into the range of mechanisms that fired within these contexts. Tilley (2000) states that a mechanism can be defined as what it is about a measure that may lead it to have a particular outcome pattern in a given context. The mechanisms (within the themes below) provide an interesting preliminary insight for uncovering the hidden inner workings of the framework.

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7.2.1 Conceptualisation to application

This was a crucial theme that emerged in relation to the SSDPs engagement and comprehension of evaluation approaches. The data collection and testing uncovered key mechanisms in relation to realistic evaluation (RE) praxis. As a starting point some immediate and key contextual factors hinging on the success of the framework concerned the limited knowledge and understanding that the SSDP had, not just surrounding RE but M and E in general. In addition, the complexity of the Edumove approach, relationships with intended users, short term nature of the projects and characteristics of participants within the CIPs were all contexts that shaped the emergence of the following mechanisms which are highlighted in table 17.

Table 17: Contexts and Mechanisms – Conceptualisation to application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contexts</th>
<th>Mechanisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Scepticism towards M and E’</td>
<td>Perseverance to learn and grasp RE and M and E principles through the resources of the workshops and action learning sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Limited understanding of M and E and programme theory’</td>
<td>Collaborative discovery of knowledge fostered through the support of the trainer in ALSs and working with fellow SSDPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Fear of M and E’</td>
<td>Application of realist methods garnered critical awareness of the approach given its limitations for unearthing generative mechanisms in certain sample groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘In experienced practitioners’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Disparities in group dynamics and cohesion’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘CIP credit bearing unit’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Working with young people’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Unpredictable projects / changes and struggles’</td>
<td>Engagement with RE resources provided through the M and E stages model enabled deeper valuing of RE philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Awareness and limitations of SFD programmes’</td>
<td>Provision of workshops and ALSs created theoretical grasping of RE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Open minded perceptions / willingness to learn about M and E’</td>
<td>Practical application (contextualisation) of RE through the resource of the CIP (project)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Optional training programme providing support’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the limited knowledge, understanding and experience in carrying out M and E, the ‘theoretical grasping of RE’ and ‘practical application of RE’ were key mechanisms which emerged from the data analysis. In relation to the former, both the blogs and interviews in particular demonstrated deep engagement with the theoretical underpinnings of RE. For example the following quotes demonstrates the degree of engagement with and relevance to the theoretical principles underpinning the RE approach:
“and as I was saying, that constant checking yourself in terms of relating that in terms of the context of the outside world, because it’s important to monitor what’s working, you know, the what’s working for and the why and what circumstances. Because at the end of the day, if you’re not constantly checking those things, then what’s the point in doing it to be honest? And if you’re not constantly going well, why did this work, then you’re not -- it’s going to be difficult for you to”. SSDP 1 (Male).

“Well, during the CMOs I found that at the start it’s quite difficult because I didn’t know what exactly I was looking for, but obviously after reading up on it and through your own workshops I actually understood the specific things I wanted to look for. And obviously, with CMOs you can’t actually uncover all of the hidden mechanisms and the different contexts because say if you run your program in one context it won’t be exactly the same for another”. SSDP 2 (Male).

In relation to the latter (‘practical application’), this was a key mechanism for understanding how and in what ways the SSDPs were able to put the RE methodology into practice. This was interesting and key as there is clearly a difference between conceptually grasping RE and applying it in practice. In particular, having the resource of their own CIP project to be able to mobilise and trial the RE methodology was an obvious, yet key resource leading to this mechanism. The following quotes provide evidence of this:

“over the course of the whole six weeks we learned to establish and to refine those MNE questions to get -- so for example what worked for whom, why and under what circumstances; that was one question in itself”. SSDP 5 (Female).

“this idea of mechanisms and actually not about the point of the program theory model. We changed it and we had context tools mechanisms outcomes, which is one of the things I think took us a long time to understand was that the mechanism was how the people would interact with the resources you give them and the -- once when that clicked in our heads we started breaking it down one step further for ourselves, which I think it made it clearer on paper to break it down as having a context, having the resources we’re going to use, this is the interaction we expect them to have with those resources, and therefore this is the outcome that we would drive home to achieve”. SSDP 1 (Male).

In addition to the conceptual and theoretical mechanisms at play within the programme another crucial mechanism emerging from the data analysis was ‘valuing RE principles’. This particularly emerged within the contexts of the limitations and complexities surrounding the SFD landscape and lack of evidence discourse. It was very clear and apparent within the context of their open minded approach to learning about M and E that the SSDPs could really see the benefits associated with how RE could uncover how and why their CIPs would and could produce diverse outcomes for their participants.

If you don’t have proof it doesn’t mean anything. You can say yeah, they really liked it, but you don’t know how or why they liked it. SSDP 3 (Male).

But I’m very much encouraging them to try and use that kind of philosophy of just making sure that everything -- we understand why things are working not just what. SSDP 1 (Male).
The second quote is even more powerful in relation to how the engagement with RE principles has encouraged him to promote the use of the methodology away from his CIP and into future areas of work.

Two mechanisms that also emerged from the research were ‘collaborative discovery of knowledge’ and ‘perseverance’. These mechanisms are worth discussion given that they fired within the contexts so familiar with those that surround the lack of evidence discourse (Nichols et al, 2010) in SFD. For example, the contexts relevant here are those relating to limited understanding of practitioners to M and E (Coalter, 2013; Hylton and Hartley, 2011) and scepticism towards M and E approaches. It was quite clear from the data analysis that ‘perseverance’ and ‘collaborative discovery of knowledge’ were key mechanisms for the SSDP in making sense of RE and then applying it to the CIP so they could understand how and why their programme worked. It was evident from the methods employed for this study that there were a number of obstacles for overcoming what can be referred to as disengaging language used within RE and programme theory. Whilst the SSDPs struggled to come to terms with ‘contexts’, ‘mechanisms’ and ‘outcomes’ these mechanisms were key for overcoming the barriers. The following provide examples of how these mechanisms fired:

“I have found programme theories hard to grasp, but slowly I feel my knowledge of them is increasing. Our programme theory shows all of the potential outcomes of that could occur. At first I did realise that this was correct and I was confused as to why we should be predicting the outcomes of the CIP. However, this is in line with a reading in which I read by Wong et al (2003, p.21) as he suggests; the ‘general idea’ of a program theory ‘is to’ pinpoint “the key components (functions, strategies or activities) of the program” SSDP 5 (Female).

“At first, it was slightly complicated, however, once we started applying this to our own projects and basing it around our own ideas it became much easier to understand and also enabled us to apply the process to our own programmes”. (Anonymous quote from questionnaire).

“I think in terms of our group, xxxxxx got the picture a little quicker and she the engaged with it the most. So she would sort of lead that front and we would collectively come up with the questions and questionnaires” SSDP 3 (Male).

Despite the challenges associated with understanding programme theories, the perseverance to engage with relevant resources and apply it to their own CIPs collectively and cohesively enabled a deeper understanding which of course crosses over with the “theoretical” and “practical application” mechanisms discussed earlier.

The final mechanism that requires discussion within this theme surrounded the critical engagement (‘critical awareness’) that the SSDPs made with RE principles and the underlying philosophy for making sense of mechanisms. At the heart of the ‘realist’ philosophy underpinning RE is the view that mechanisms are hidden and not directly observable (Astbury and Leeuw, 2010). Thus, in similar respect to testing the framework underpinning this research, the CIPs too would need to investigate the inner mechanisms relating to the participants experience of the intervention. This was a pertinent issue which emerged within the context of the SSDPs delivering their CIPs which in most cases were delivered to young people (aged between 7 and 12) within school based sessions. Two particular issues emerged here. Firstly, general data analysis approaches associated with realist approaches and secondly the capacity to be able to identify mechanisms with certain target groups.
For the former, practitioners made reference to the complexity surrounding data analysis procedures in realist approaches:

“we were not quite sure where to start when analysing our data. Also, it was quite hard to identify what was a mechanism and what was an outcome for example”. SSDP 3 (Male).

This finding demonstrates a common issue within realist approaches to evaluation (Pawson and Manzano–Santaella, 2012; Porter, 2015) for identifying, and demystifying what works for whom in what circumstances and why. As such, this has implications for any further mobilisation of the approach for practitioners in future.

For the latter, the context of young people orientated programmes made it extremely hard for the SSDPs to unearth the ‘hidden mechanisms’ within the CIP because in many respects the reasoning the participants would make would sometimes be brought into question in terms of its validity and limited scope for the young people to open up.

“it was hard to say why did it work, how did it work because, you know, children at that small age think there two very similar questions. How it worked and why it worked was very similar and for whom it worked. So you kind of also have to go to external people” SSDP 5 (Female).

SSDPs looked to navigate other ways to unearth and make sense of the mechanisms at play within their CIPs. Despite the view that mechanisms are hidden, in addition to investigating them with other stakeholders they also drew upon the power of observation as a potential way to uncover these which was only possible because of their proximity to the programme and the young people.

The SSDPs argument was associated with being closely involved in the interaction of the CIP and developing relationships with the participants, which enabled them to draw and make sense of the mechanisms in their programme as a result of the observations.

“through observations we can watch the programme develop naturally. Observing a programme in action allows the researcher to understand the true context and how this effects the interaction of the participants”. SSDP 1 (Male).

This finding in relation to the study is interesting given firstly the deep engagement the SSDPs made with the RE methodology to uncover mechanisms, but also the limitations that the RE methodology may hold to uncover mechanisms with target groups that are challenging to investigate.

These findings present important considerations for refinements to the framework if RE is to be mobilised accordingly within study 2. Given that young people are central feature of many of the CIPs, focus should be given towards establishing, or at least spending more time on ways to focus on the generative mechanisms of change with these types of target groups. This relates to focusing evaluation questions and data analysis procedures.

7.2.2 Structure to enable agency

The next theme that emerged from the data analysis surrounded the participatory characteristics of the training programme. It is important to highlight that many of the mechanisms in relation the RE praxis must also be considered in light of the way the training programme was able to provide guidance and increase the capacity of the SSDPs to be able to elicit M and E techniques. The training programme was constructed in line with the ten principles of ‘empowerment evaluation’ (EE) (Fetterman, 2005) and was tested in light of these principles. A key theory underpinning the framework was that RE could be mobilised for practitioners within an open yet structured
participatory programme. In accordance with this theory, the data clearly uncovered the need for structural and support characteristics of the programme whereby the following mechanisms emerged; trust in guidance, structure, relaxed relationship, and interaction and discussion. These are briefly discussed below (table 18) in light of the contexts surrounding the framework.

Table 18: Contexts and mechanisms – Structure to enable agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contexts</th>
<th>Mechanisms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Limited understanding of M and E and programme theory’</td>
<td>Interaction and discussion provided through the action learning sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Fear of M and E’</td>
<td>Structured process made possible by M and E framework and ALSs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Dynamics of SSDPs doing own evaluations’</td>
<td>Trust to be guided by the trainer and expertise</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘In experienced practitioners’</td>
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<td>‘Disparities in group dynamics and cohesion’</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Need for support’</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Open minded perceptions / Willingness to learn about M and E’</td>
<td>Non pressured feeling in response to flexible arrangement for “as and when needed ALSs”</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Optional training programme providing support’</td>
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The mechanisms relating to this theme will now be discussed. A key feature of the context for this piece of work centres on the inexperiences and limited knowledge that the SSDPs had of M and E. Given that all of those sampled expressed a lack of knowledge and understanding before engaging in the programme (context), one of the first mechanisms to emerge surrounded the SSDPs reasoning towards the structure that the framework provided. The breaking down of the framework and the workshops into the six stages provided a clear structure for the SSDPs to follow in developing their M and E which was subsequently a key mechanism for the production of a sound and comprehensive M and E process in their projects. However, what was also interesting in light of these contexts was that within this structure an environment of interaction and discussion (mechanism) and trust in guidance (mechanism) was evident. Given their limited understanding of M and E the SSDPs referred regularly to the positive aspects of the guidance received through their M and E process which supports the need to provide guidance and structure through participatory forms of evaluation (as the following quotes reinforce). What it also does is raise the importance of the role the ‘expert’ or ‘empowerment evaluator’ (Fetterman, 2005) plays within the process, which should be one of facilitation opposed to imposition.

“The workshops and tutorials really helped to fully understand the realistic evaluation methodology. E.g. the idea of, what worked for whom, and why etc. I would not have had a clue on how to structure my M&E questions”. (Anonymous quote from questionnaire).
“Like, without that structure and without the guideline to follow it would've probably all been last minute. It wouldn't have been step by step. I don't think we would've had half the understanding on monitoring evaluation”. SSDP (Male 2).

In regards to ‘interaction and discussion’ this was a mechanism that enabled the students to understand and engage sufficiently with the M and E of their CIPs. Opposed to traditional environments of lectures and seminars they felt that in combination with the ‘relaxed’ mechanism underpinned by the action learning sets and workshops, they were able to openly discuss and engage in discussion which improved their understanding and subsequent mobilisation of their M and E.

“Then as you came to the workshops that was where -- because there wasn't a massive group of us really in comparison to the lectures, we could really go right into the core of it and understand how it works, different types of M&E and how kind of it is”. SSDP 4 (Male).

“So the informality of the workshops kind of allowed us, particularly that last workshop that I was there for, just almost -- to have a little bit more of an open discussion between the groups about how we thought the program had gone, how we thought edumove had gone, how we thought monitoring and evaluation had worked” SSDP 1 (Male).

This was a key underpinning aim of the framework which sought to enable the students to elicit any views and discover learning in a collaborative sense. This concurs with much of the literature surrounding participatory research which calls for developing research with opposed to on participants (Heron and Reason, 2001; Greenwood and Levin, 2007). With specific focus to EE there is clear resonance in relation to the principles of capacity building, inclusion and democratic participation (Wandersman et al, 2005).

“It was like you were we asking us questions, we were asking you questions, more of a discussion, debate about it. I think that was beneficial because then it was easy to ask questions and stuff”. SSDP (Male 3).

7.2.3 Ownership and Autonomy

Within chapter 5, the question of power, ownership and autonomy was openly discussed. Given that RE was introduced by the evaluation facilitator opposed to the evaluation methodology itself being grown by the SSDPs it was crucial to explore the SSDPs response and reaction to this resource being provided within the training programme. On the contrary to the view that the programme itself was imposing and constraining, mechanisms of change emerged in the form of ‘self and collective control’, ‘freedom to act and make choices’ and ‘motivation to gain recognition and accountability’ (see table 19).

Table 19: Contexts and Mechanisms - Ownership and autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contexts</th>
<th>Mechanisms</th>
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120
| ‘Dynamics of SSDP’s doing own evaluations’ | The feeling of self and collective control aligned within semi structured guidance Felt free to act and make choices through evaluation model |
| ‘Open minded perceptions / willingness to learn about M and E’ | |
| ‘Optional training programme providing support’ | |
| ‘Wider parameters and goals for Edumove’ | |
| ‘Working within schools / wider partner needs’ | Felt motivated to gain recognition and accountability from others |
| ‘CIP credit bearing unit’ | |
| ‘Wider parameters and goals for Edumove’ | |
| ‘Inexperienced practitioners’ | |

The key contexts which enabled the releasing of these mechanisms were associated with the relationships the SSDPs had with ‘Edumove’ itself, the intended users associated with the M and E, and the flexible characteristics of the framework. Given that the SSDPs were working with local schools as key stakeholders, and were also aware of the assessment associated with the CIP the ‘motivation to gain recognition and accountability’ mechanism was prevalent. Within this mechanism the SSDPs were keen to ensure that the findings of their M and E would not just benefit their assessment for the CIP, but also used to improve the future direction of the school and ‘Edumove’ as partners. The following quotes from the interviews and blogs support this:

“So, they (Edumove) want to find out okay so, which movement games works for which children, what doesn’t work, what to look out for. So, building background knowledge for them is vital. The school, yeah, I think so for them because they want to know wherever it’s good to actually to have Edumove Move in their school”. SSDP 2 (Male).

“We also want to give our findings back to the school and also the CIP unit. I feel that this is a crucial aspect of monitoring and evaluation because it would be pointless collecting the data if it has nowhere to go”. SSDP 6 (Male).

In line with the EE principles tested within the framework, these two quotations are similar to the principles of ‘improvement’ and ‘accountability’ (Wandersman et al, 2005). However, whilst there were some who clearly felt that their findings would be put to good use, there were some who felt that their findings would not be recognised at all.

“To be honest I think our data will just get swallowed up and ignored”. SSDP 3 (Male).

“I’m not really sure where it’s going because we’ve not really given anything back to him yet because obviously we created a presentation for him and also because we wanted to do a presentation and we haven’t given him” SSDP 6 (Male).

One SSDP referred to the context of being inexperienced as one of the reasons for the CIP’s M and E not being valued:
This is a significant mechanism because different outcomes were generated for those in the programme. Regardless of the motivation to gain recognition as a mechanism, diverse outcomes (positive and negative) were derived whereas for some their M and E was valued, whereas others it was not. In line with the principles of EE it demonstrates the importance of accountability and valuing community knowledge. There is little point in enabling practitioners to carry out their own M and E if that data and underlying process is not recognised by the wider partners.

The final mechanisms to discuss in relation to this theme are those of ‘self and collective control’ and ‘freedom to act and make choices’. These were key mechanisms for explaining the extent to which the framework was enabling or constraining for the SSDPs involved. The optional nature of the training programme, combined with the open mindedness and independence of the SSDPs to elicit their own M and E were crucial contextual factors. These enabled the students to maintain control of their M and E individually and collectively within the guidance of the framework. In terms of ‘self and collective control’ the CIP group (in relation to the data below) was able to mould its own M and E within the context of the support provided within the training programme and interactions with ‘Edumove’:

“Yeah, we did basically what we wanted. Like, we chose our program theory, what we wanted to test, where we wanted to run it, how we wanted to run it within reason to Edumove. I mean, we basically had total control and then we obviously came back to you for some support and some ideas, but even then it wasn’t like a force, I think you should do this. It was like oh well, you could do this, but it’s up to you. I think that was quite good. We did have control.” SSDP 6 (Male).

Again, this quote demonstrates how the framework was able to foster democratic participation (Fetterman, 2005) regardless of the RE approach having already underpinned the framework.

Furthermore, in similar respects to this mechanism the ‘freedom to act and make choices’ mechanism also fired. This demonstrated that through the various stages of the evaluation model provided, the SSDPs had the freedom and independent choice to develop their questions, methods, monitoring approaches and decide upon the samples they wanted to focus on. Again this mechanism was mobilised within the contexts of the optional support provided in the programme and the knowledge from the outset that the students would be independently carrying out their own M and E.

“You know, the methodology side of things, you could do what you wanted. So we did the realistic evaluation framework, but that was suitable to the CIPs. There was never any -- you know -- you had to do questionnaires, you have to do interviews. We had the freedom to say, you know, right we want to do observations; we want to do secondary, not just primary research”. SSDP 5 (Female).

Therefore, it can be suggested that these mechanisms provide suitable evidence how the framework was able to foster a democratic and independent culture where the SSDPs felt in control of the process. Crucially, the evidence would suggest that this was balanced well with the structure and support provided by the workshops and RE methodology that was taught.

7.3 Informing M and E practice
What now naturally follows is a concise exposition of the key context, mechanism and outcome configurations. The preliminary findings of this phase of the thesis would indicate a range of positive reasoning to the resources and opportunities provided within the framework being tested. These are summarised as complete context – mechanism – outcome configurations in table 20. The tables have been produced in accordance with the themes relating to the findings.

Table 20: Study 1 Context – Mechanism – Outcome configurations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contexts</th>
<th>Mechanisms</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Conceptualisation to application</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Scepticism towards M and E’</td>
<td>Perseverance to learn and grasp RE and M and E principles through the resources of the workshops and action learning sets</td>
<td>Increased competence in RE techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Limited understanding of M and E and programme theory’</td>
<td>Collaborative discovery of knowledge fostered through the support of the trainer in ALSs and working with fellow SSDPs</td>
<td>Intent to enact RE in future M and E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Fear of M and E’</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘In experienced practitioners’</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Disparities in group dynamics and cohesion’</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>‘CIP credit bearing unit’</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Working with young people’</td>
<td>Application of realist methods garnered critical awareness of the approach given its limitations for unearthing generative mechanisms in certain sample groups</td>
<td>Increased reflexivity of RE and its strengths / limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Unpredictable projects / changes and struggles’</td>
<td>Engagement with RE resources provided through the M and E stages model enabled deeper valuing of RE philosophy</td>
<td>Realization of what RE can do to understand CIP (how and why)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Awareness and limitations of SFD programmes’</td>
<td>Provision of workshops and ALSs created theoretical grasping of RE</td>
<td>Increased competence in RE techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Open minded perceptions / willingness to learn about M and E’</td>
<td>Practical application (contextualisation) of RE through the resource of the CIP (project)</td>
<td>Valuing M and E as a key practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Optional training programme providing support’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Structure to enable agency</em></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

123
| ‘Limited understanding of M and E and programme theory’ | Interaction and discussion provided through the action learning sets | Increased competence in RE techniques |
| ‘Fear of M and E’ | Structured process made possible by M and E framework and ALSs | Independent Monitoring and Evaluator’s |
| ‘Dynamics of SSDPs doing own evaluations’ | Trust to be guided by the trainer and expertise | Innovative M and E design and findings |
| ‘In experienced practitioners’ | | |
| ‘Disparities in group dynamics and cohesion’ | | |
| ‘Need for support’ | | |

| ‘Open minded perceptions / willingness to learn about M and E’ | Non pressured feeling in response to flexible arrangement for “as and when needed ALSs” | Democratic relationship between ‘trainer’ and SSDP’s |
| ‘Optional training programme providing support’ | | |

Ownership and autonomy

| ‘Dynamics of SSDPs doing own evaluations’ | The feeling of self and collective control aligned within semi structured guidance | Increased reflexivity regarding the strengths and limitations regarding M and E |
| ‘Open minded perceptions / Willingness to learn about M and E’ | Felt free to act and make choices through evaluation model | Increased competence and capacity in M and E |
| ‘Optional training programme providing support’ | | Increased confidence to enact M and E |
| ‘Wider parameters and goals for Edumove’ | | Realization of what M and E holds to understand CIP |

| ‘Working within schools / wider partner needs’ | Felt motivated to gain recognition and accountability | M and E recognised amongst partners and stakeholders |
| ‘CIP credit bearing unit’ | | Improvement of future CIPs |
| ‘Wider parameters and goals for Edumove’ | | M and E undervalued by partners and stakeholders |
| ‘In experienced practitioners’ | | |

Over the course of the training programme the SSDPs developed clear and coherent competencies and confidence in M and E. Given that for many, the starting point for them in the process was that they had limited or no knowledge of how to carry out M and E, there is no denying that comprehensive learning has taken place.
“So I think I can go out now and I think it's going to be a massive bonus for when I'm looking for jobs and say I can specifically monitor and evaluate these projects to a high standard. And say, you know, probably -- so I could be able to distinguish who that works for and why that works for that person”.

SSDP 5 (Female).

The mechanisms discussed (in relation to the contexts) in this chapter have sought to explain how and why this learning took place. As a consequence, the framework has left the students with a greater insight into the value that M and E holds for unpacking the complex nature of SFD programmes, so perfectly captured in the following quote:

“It's definitely important. If you don't monitor and evaluate your program then you won't understand the sort of what, where, to whom, in what circumstances, and why. You won’t understand. You'd just be hypothesizing that your program works; you won't actually be testing”.

SSDP 2 (Male).

A consequence of this realization and valuing of M and E has subsequently led to the intent to embed M and E in future professional practice. This is a powerful finding and implication within the context of the SFD literature which has drawn considerable critique towards the weak evidence base (Coalter, 2007; 2014) in SFD and limited skills that practitioners have (Hylton and Hartley, 2011). Given that the SSDPs are new to the industry it is positive to see the intention to continue pursuing M and E.

Despite the possible limitations associated with RE and its use of conceptual language, the data has also emphasised clear engagement with this evaluation approach. The mechanisms have identified the power that RE may hold as a suitable M and E approach for understanding how and why programmes may work. Furthermore, through this engagement, the critical praxis of RE which the students developed has encapsulated a deeper level of reflexivity surrounding the approach and M and E practice in general. Such a level of reflexivity would never have manifested itself if the SSDPs were not engaged.

It can be suggested here that this increased capacity and competency to carry out M and E could not have been achieved without the overarching support provided within the framework. The optional and open structure and support provided within the programme created an appropriate environment for the students to collectively take control and autonomy over the complexities of their M and E. Despite some of the limitations associated to findings being undervalued and ignored the training programme enabled the students to create innovative M and E designs and findings that they felt in control of. As discussed above, much of these findings demonstrate linkage and correlations with the principles of EE (Fetterman, 2005). For example community ownership is clearly evident given the SSDPs carrying out their own M and E as are the inclusive, capacity building and democratic processes underpinning the training programme. The preliminary findings of study one go some way to suggest that if support is provided in the correct way, then an appropriate environment may well exist for practitioners to take more responsibility and control over their own M and E.

7.4 Secondary data analysis of CIP adherence to framework

Up to this point, the evaluation from study one has indicated that the m and E framework from the viewpoints of the practitioners, enabled them to mobilize (RE) within their CIPs. To add more insight into this mobilization and grasping of RE a secondary data analysis was carried out. This data analysis
sought to examine the data produced by the CIPs to identify whether key characteristics of RE were implemented within the process of programme development and M and E. This stage was interested in identifying if the resources provided by the M and E framework were used and grasped. This consisted of examining the data collection process of the M and E. It sought to identify to what extent realist principles were followed in designing interview questions to illuminate the ‘what worked for whom, how and why’ dimensions. This was followed through to the reporting of the M and E findings and to what extent they were able to identify how and why their CIPs worked.

One case study was selected for this analysis. The case study selected is the ‘Nutrition Counts’ CIP. The analysis was facilitated by examining the following:

- CIP final poster (and discussion within presentation). This was the final presentation the students gave as part of their assessment. The brief of the assessment was to articulate the M and E approach taken and subsequent finding to test the programme theory of their CIP. The discussion was also examined by investigating the feedback sheets provided by the assessment team. This assessment was constructed around key principles of developing programme theory, testing it and demonstrating data analysis procedures. This was followed by the analysis of the CIP M and E report and supporting documentation, which was also part of the assessment and was a requirement for the presentation.

7.4.1 Analysis of CIP final poster (and discussion within presentation)

The poster in its entirety (see appendix 4.7) illustrates the process the SSDPs went through with their project. Examination of the poster shows a strong emphasis on programme theory and in particular realistic characteristics as depicted in figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Supporting evidence of secondary data analysis

It is apparent that the context mechanism and outcome configurations were followed to demonstrate how and why their programme worked. The methods underpinning their M and E findings are also clearly stated. These methods align well with the M and E framework (model 2) whereby it can be seen that the students have followed the appropriate stages. This is depicted in appendix 4.7 where the students have made use of the model and applied it to their CIP. The M and
E findings section within the poster demonstrates an attempt to articulate CMO configurations to explain how and why the CIP worked. However, there is no clear indication of whether the methods employed to test the programme theory were realist (in the sense that realist questions were asked such as how did the programme work for you and why did the programme work for you?).

From examining the assessment process, this highlights how the SSDPs made explicit reference to the framework. The feedback highlights how the students showed a competent understanding of realist programme theory and being able to test their M and E in accordance with RE methods. However, as this was not recorded this is as far as one can go in making sense of this grasping.

### 7.4.2 CIP M and E report and supporting documentation

SSDPs were required to provide a short two sided M and E report with their poster at assessment. Examination of the report (appendix 4.7) highlights the key outcomes associated to the project. The report, however, does not show any clear application of realistic evaluation principles or application of the model. There is no discussion of the ‘what works for whom and in what circumstances’ approach of their M and E. However, additional documentation provided by the SSDPs (appendix 4.7) shows evidence of the framework being adhered to. The ‘evaluation model’ (appendix 4.7) illustrates the realist process underpinning their M and E. This model demonstrates a clear process in line with their programme theory of developing specific realistic questions to test their theory.

### 7.4.3 Implications of secondary analysis

The conclusions of this secondary analysis would support the primary findings that the framework was adhered to by the SSDPs within their projects. The CIP poster examined shows characteristics of RE being applied within the project. The supporting documentation (M and E process) also demonstrates application of RE approaches in line with the framework.

However, there are some limitations at this stage. Firstly, it is a challenge to explicitly examine the discussion within the presentation because this was carried out in May 2014 with no recording, and the primary researcher was not present (for ethical reasons). Within the presentation, evidence from the assessment process indicates that the SSDPs made strong reference to the framework being embedded within their M and E. The assessment criteria also had a strong emphasis on M and E in which the students achieved a first class. Examination of the M and E report does illustrate some limitations in the application and communication of RE being followed. Nevertheless it is of significant importance here to acknowledge a series of factors. Firstly, the context of this framework was one which was made up of new evaluators with a limited understanding of M and E. Whilst competency and grasping of M and E principles were followed, there was always scope for limitations and weaknesses in their application of RE. Secondly, the issues of competency in eliciting RE approaches has been discussed in some depth by the likes of Pawson and Manzano-Santaella (2012). Their review of published (thus academic) RE studies identified many strengths and weaknesses concerning to what extent RE was properly mobilized. Furthermore Marchal et al’s (2012) similar (but more expansive) empirical review also identified issues with the application of RE. This demonstrates the complexity of RE as an approach, and that it is not possible to perfect the methodology. In similar respect to the reviews carried out by the aforementioned authors, the students have made an attempt to grasp RE, but not without some omissions and misapplications along the way, which is entirely consistent with the current application of RE within the field.
7.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a coherent analysis and evaluation of the findings pertaining to the testing of the framework within study 1, and analysis of the secondary data. The RE approach taken to unearth how and why the sample engaged with the framework elucidated a series of contexts mechanisms and outcomes in accordance with the principles of EE. The framework activated a series of mechanisms surrounding conceptualization to application, structure to enable agency and ownership and autonomy. This, in accordance with equifinality brought about a series of outcomes pertaining to ‘informing M and E practice’ in which the framework was able to foster positive engagement with realist methods. In essence the participatory nature of the framework has demonstrated that it is possible for practitioners to apply realist approaches within their SFD interventions. Fetterman’s principles of EE have been illuminated throughout in line with their relevance. There is clear alignment in places, however it must be acknowledged here that not all principles were in abundance. This draws attention to the discussions in chapter 3 concerning the extent to which all principles can be adhered to. This was most certainly the case for study 1, and provides a sound platform to reflect and discuss in chapter 8 to what extent the principles of EE should still be followed.
Chapter 8

Refining the framework and transition for phase two testing

Study 1 and its subsequent findings has provided a suitable platform to progress with the key discussion points of this chapter. As stated within study 1, the key aim of that stage was to test the framework on a sample of CIPs in line with aim two of the thesis. As planned, the findings of this process satisfy the basis for objective five of the study which involves the refinement of the framework. In recognition of the philosophical foundations of this research, realist inquiry recognises that there is no such entity as truth (Westhorp, 2014). Indeed, this thesis recognises that any M and E framework will never be complete and as such, given the importance of context, testing should be repeated accordingly (Pawson, 2013) to further refine.

Furthermore, the importance of this chapter is to reflect upon the findings of study one to consider any refinements that will be made to the framework for testing in study 2. At the MPhil examination stage of this research, key questions were posed in relation to EE’s use within the study on two levels. First, its philosophical compatibility with RE, and second, (and firmly connected with the philosophical foundations), its use and validity in the framework based on the findings from study one. As part of the objective of refining the framework, questions were asked pertaining to whether EE itself should be included or taken out entirely. These were conceptual issues also discussed within chapter 3 concerning the limitations of EE.

The following discussion draws upon these two key areas. In addition consideration is given towards the utility of realist evaluation (RE) as a central evaluation methodology at the heart of the framework. Following a succinct discussion of RE, EE itself is further critiqued (taking into consideration what was reviewed in chapter 3). What then follows is the justification and rationale for an alternative approach to participatory evaluation mobilising Schula et al’s (2016) principles (also discussed in chapter 3) determining the refinement of the framework. This is carefully constructed taking into consideration the compatibility of RE within any participatory realm. This, accompanied with the support of findings from study 1 will illustrate a refined programme theory for testing in study two.

8.1 Progressing with RE

Arguably, RE up to this stage has clearly been the central feature of the M and E framework. The previous chapters have provided compelling cases for mobilising realist evaluation approaches within SFD. Particularly, one of the most compelling cases relates to the context of SFD and where the current evidence gaps lie around how and why programmes work (Coalter, 2002). However, despite the apparent theoretical compatibility of RE and SFD, recognition has been given towards issues surrounding the challenges for grasping key ideas connected with realist principles. In addition, the degrees of misapplication in other fields (Pawson and Manzano – Santaella, 2012) are also prominent, as are the limited examples of practitioners carrying it out in their own programmes.

Nevertheless, regardless of these limitations, the provisional findings from study 1 have presented a positive case for embedding RE as the prevailing evaluation methodology at the heart of the framework. The findings from study 1 have demonstrated evidence of strong application of RE because of the practitioners’ ability to conceptually apply and demonstrate knowledge, understanding and reflexivity around its use. Moreover, the utility of the approach to meet the aims of the evaluation brief set by the practitioners further support this.
Importantly, however, as asserted within the findings of study 1, the mobilisation of RE as a methodology suitable for SFD was by no means mobilised with significant ease. Through the mechanisms associated with reflexivity and critical awareness of its use, SSDPs were able to identify some of the key limitations associated with it. For example, the challenges expressed about uncovering hidden mechanisms of change and the extent to which such endeavours could be achieved directly with children. This is addressed accordingly with the refinements presented below whereby more focus will be afforded to identifying generative mechanisms of change as part of data analysis stages. Also, closer attention will also be placed upon ways of framing evaluation questions for specific target groups and other samples who may be able to provide insight.

These refinements nevertheless link more so with the participatory dimensions of the framework for building capacity and enabling the mobilisation of RE. Thus, now is an appropriate time to discuss the participatory dimensions of the framework.

8.2 To what extent is a participatory dimension needed within the framework?

At the stage of MPhil examination, two examiners questioned the relevance of Fetterman’s EE to the framework. These reservations related to the incompatibility of the framework with the constructivist emancipatory characteristics of EE which the review of literature in chapter 3 covered. This is further discussed in due course. However, to be clear from the outset, whether EE is to be utilized or not in any refinements, the presence of a participatory framework of cooperative enquiry should be central to the framework. This is because, without the presence of support, capacity building and cooperation, the SSDPs within study 1 would have not been able to mobilise RE. As the results showed, the participatory dimensions of the framework provided structure, guidance, capacity building (Fetterman, 2001) and accountability to mobilise their M and E. However, in accordance with the aims and objectives of the study further testing is required to judge the utility of the framework for further implementation. This begins with reflexively resurfacing the debates in chapter 3 concerning EE’s implementation opposed to what other approaches are on offer.

8.3 Reasons for doing EE

Philosophically, EE would be positioned towards more of the emancipatory social constructivist positions of evaluation because of its pursuit of social change, and enactment on behalf of the practitioners to assert control and power to carry out evaluation practice. Thus within the philosophical foundations of realism, this may appear as chalk and cheese. However, this diametric does not necessarily mean that the two are not compatible. There are clear distinctions in the framework. For example, the practitioners are monitoring and evaluating their projects through a RE methodology. This is realist in philosophy drawing upon Pawson’s (2013) position. The EE aspect of the framework is built upon the premise of mobilization, capacity building and individual responsibility to elicit RE as the evaluation methodology. This in itself does not oppose or constrain the realist philosophical dimension of the M and E methodology being implemented.

Secondly, and on an empirical level, the findings from study 1 would provide an argument for continuing with EE. Given that Fetterman’s principles were tested through evaluation in study 1, some of these principles did emerge from the data analysis. The themes of ‘structure to enable agency’ and ‘ownership and autonomy’ are pertinent in relation to this argument. Practitioners demonstrated characteristics predicated on accountability, capacity building and evidence based practice. Indeed, findings demonstrated signs of empowerment and praxis in M and E work which again cohere with Fetterman’s EE approach.
It was at this juncture in the research where it was felt necessary to further reflect upon the literature pertaining to EE and other forms of PE discussed in chapter 3. It was felt that this additional and comprehensive extension to the literature reviewed would garner a more reliable decision for mobilising / refining the RE methodology with EE in study 2.

8.4 A digression from EE

Since its inception, EE has come under criticism, (see chapter 3) and it has evolved (partly in response to such a critique) to advocate the principles discussed in previous chapters. To clarify, these are presented by Fetterman et al (2005) as inclusion, community ownership, democratic participation, social justice, community knowledge, evidence based strategies, capacity building, organizational learning and accountability.

As a starting point for assessing whether EE should be utilized within the M and E framework in this study, independent of EE itself, it is of use to consider Cousins and Whitmore’s (1998) conceptualization of participatory evaluation, which they position in two forms – transformational participatory evaluation (TPE) and practical participatory evaluation (PPE) (see chapter 3). Cousins and Whitmore (1998) recognize that these conceptualisations are not necessarily exclusive or distinct as they may cross over. However whilst acknowledging that EE may characterize the two forms they argue that it is more TPE opposed to PPE because of its focus on empowerment and liberation.

This is important for this thesis given the key question of what is at the heart of the research aims and objectives. The key question at the heart of the study concerns what approaches to monitoring and evaluation are most useful for practitioners in SFD. This question implies more of a direction towards use (PPE) opposed to liberation. The thesis whilst recognizing the scope of transformation and liberation rests more on the use of the framework to enable practitioners to make use of RE findings through capacity building. Therefore, it could be asserted that the thesis leans more towards PPE aspects. Nevertheless, it is still recognized that some of the TPE elements may still be relevant.

As discussed in chapter 3, EE evokes tensions around the concept of empowerment. Measuring and being able to understand empowerment is problematic (Cousins, 2005) and presents a dichotomy in this research given that empowerment is not a primary aim and also that the evidence base (Miller and Campbell, 2006) is weak for showing signs of empowerment. Given the ideological dichotomies surrounding EE, it may present itself as a wiser decision to move away from the transformational / liberational characteristic and focus more on use of the M and E framework to enable the practitioners to mobilise their M and E. This is to not suggest however any ignorance of transformational characteristics that may present themselves within the framework. Instead these characteristics would become more of a secondary focus, again, in line with the aims and objectives of the thesis.

EE also presents issues within this thesis in relation to the principles under which it resides; especially as Wandersman et al (2005) highlight that with the recognition of the varying degrees of their application, all principles should be present. For example one of the principles of EE, community ownership (Fetterman et al, 2005) places key significance on stakeholders and practitioners owning evaluation design from the very outset because they are more likely to make use of findings. For example, within this thesis and as depicted in study 1, the practitioners had no involvement in the design of the M and E framework. Therefore, although the findings from study 1 demonstrated degrees of ownership and autonomy, essentially they do not own the conceptual direction of the methodology. Whilst they are trained to enact and mobilize the framework, this may create tension if positioned within EE because the M and E framework was already predefined.
Whilst it is a valiant aspiration to provide such a responsibility to practitioners of building their own framework, this was not possible within this research given the lack of M and E competency (context) and limited time (context) to be able to produce something in accordance with this principle. Patton (2005) also states that EE takes time so it may be better suited to longer and larger projects that have more time to adhere to this principle. This is something beyond the scope of this research because the CIPs are small scale and do not fit in with a longer time frame.

Finally, Patton (2005) points out that the distinguishing aspect of EE is not its quest for improvement (which has been at the heart of evaluation approaches for years). Instead, it is its focus on self determination, liberation and the emancipatory aspects of the approach and the political / social change dimension that sets it apart from other participatory approaches such as developmental evaluation (Patton, 2005); PPE and TPE Cousins and Whitmore (1998). As already mentioned, this is not the central focus of this thesis. The focus is to establish whether a particular framework enables practitioners to learn specific M and E approaches and understand the evidence behind their programmes. Whilst emancipation is something that may emerge, it is not at the heart of this thesis focus, nor is it seeking to evoke political or social change. Essentially, it would be fair to suggest that use would be the primary focus of any participatory dimension within the framework.

8.5 Future direction of M and E framework refinement

Within the context of this thesis and study 1 findings, it is quite clear that no specific characteristic of (participatory, collaborative or empowerment) emerges. In accordance with Cousins et al (2013) the impact of the M and E framework demonstrated characteristics of practical as well as transformational elements of participatory approaches. It is on this basis and taking into consideration preceding arguments that a deviation will be taken to move away from EE and focus more specifically on a holistic set of principles underpinning collaborative and participatory approaches to evaluation in accordance with Schula et al (2016) as introduced in chapter 3.

Cousins et al (2013) state that collaborative enquiry should be the broader umbrella term that embraces participatory evaluation, and that any participatory evaluation may draw upon empowerment or collaborative aspects dependent upon the context of the case in hand. Again, with the context of the findings of study one, empowering as well as practical outcomes were evident. Furthermore, within their paper Cousins et al (2013) place a firm case for the need to develop a common set of empirically tested evidence based principles underpinning collaborative inquiry in evaluation.

In a letter of response to Fetterman et al (2014), Cousins et al (2014) express that the key rationale for having such a set of evidence based principles is because it enables evaluators “to make adaptations to program contexts and evolving client needs without feeling constrained by the tenets and prescriptions of any given approach” (pg: 150). This strategy is extremely suitable for this thesis and subsequent refinements of the framework because it is adaptable and flexible in light of the context. For example, such a strategy takes into account and is able to respond to programme needs, gaps and aspirations (Cousins et al, 2013) which might not be possible with off the shelf approaches. Whilst the framework within this thesis may be focused more primarily towards ‘use’ for practitioners, adopting a collaborative set of principles that transcends practical and transformational characteristics provides flexibility to reach such outcomes.

Schula et al’s (2016) collaborative set of principles (see chapter 3) articulate that context will always define how useful they will be within practical and transformational realms. For example, in relation to this research, despite how appealing EE was, the context underpinning the framework was not coherent with (some) of the principles underpinning the EE approach. They state that purpose, context, needs and capacities of stakeholders guide the evaluation. Thus for the M and E framework
being tested within this thesis there is a strong argument for it to be principle driven. The context underpinning this research is characterized as students delivering SFD initiatives who require understanding of how their programmes are working. In terms of understanding their CIPs, the realistic methodology is suitable because it unearths the ‘how and why’ of their programmes. However, another key context concerns the need for capacity building and this where the principle driven aspects underpinning the framework come in. The table below shows how the framework may align to the principles.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Contributing factors</th>
<th>Relevance to M and E framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Clarify Motivation For Collaboration</td>
<td>1. Evaluation purpose 2. Evaluator and client expectations 3. Information and process needs</td>
<td>1. The students are motivated to do the evaluation for two reasons. Primarily they are assessed within their degree on the M and E of their CIP. Secondly, they (may) by genuinely interested to see how and why their initiative is working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. The SSDPs are clear from the outset on the parameters of the evaluation design in that it is realist in its design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. At the outset the needs (contextual circumstances of the students) are fully appreciated. This is particularly followed up within the realistic evaluation testing of the framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Foster Meaningful Inter-Professional Relationships</td>
<td>1. Respect, trust and transparency 2. Structured and sustained interactivity 3. Cultural competency</td>
<td>1. It is intended that students feel trusted because they are given the opportunity to opt into the framework, and thus recognize the underlying parameters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. The framework is designed to enable regular sustained interaction and capacity building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. The cultural competencies of the SSDPs are taken into account and thus guide the design of the framework.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3. Develop a Shared Understanding of the Program | 1. Program logic  
2. Organizational context | 1. Students are able to shape their own programme theory through the resources provided in the M and E framework. Importantly the sustained interaction and proximity with the evaluation trainer enables the trainer to fully understand mutually what the intentions behind the CIP are.  
2. As above, the mutual understanding is balanced accordingly in light of responding to the contextual needs of the SSDPs surrounding structure, guidance, trust and support. |
| 4. Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes | 1. Diversity of stakeholders  
2. Depth of participation  
3. Control of decision making | 1. The framework encourages all stakeholders to consider what underpins their needs, and how that aligns with each other. For example, the trainer, the SSDPs and additional partners.  
For example within the context of the study  
2. SSDPs are responsible for the evaluation with the support of the trainer and accompanying resources to enable capacity building and use. The framework thus provides a series of steps to follow for the M and E of their CIP.  
3. It is intended that clear control is afforded through the various stages of the M and E in the case of how to control the evaluation eg: methods and ways of analyzing the data with support. It is recognized that a degree of control resides within the trainer in the sense of the M and E design adhering to provisionally established realist principles. |
| 5. Monitor and Respond to Resource Availability | 1. Time  
2. Budget  
3. Personnel | Across the areas of time, budget and personnel, these are crucial areas to address within the framework. In relation to time, the framework encompasses the LEI476 unit which requires the SSDPs to carry out the M and E of their CIP. The framework addresses the personnel needs based on the capacity building elements of training and support. In the context of the framework there are no relevant budgetry issues given that SSDPs are not paid. |
|---|---|---|
2. Data Collection | 1. The M and E framework's design is considered within the context of appreciating the competency of the SSDPs to carry it out to a sufficient standard. This attempts to mitigate against any external challenges of the credibility of the evaluation results produced by the SSDPs.  

2. The stages of the framework and the structured support sessions mitigate against any deviation or inaccuracy of data collection. The students are in control of the data collection and the methods by which the data is collected, but they are thoroughly supported throughout. |
| 7. Promote Evaluative Thinking | 1. Inquiry Orientation  
2. Focus on learning | This is perhaps one of the most relevant principles that apply to the framework, given the focus on learning and capacity building.  

The framework seeks to encourage learning through the SSDPs understanding how to do RE and gaining more of an in depth insight into how and why their CIPs worked. It also seeks the manifestation of reflexivity to become critical, inquisitive and open regarding the limitations of their CIP and evaluation approach applied. |
8. Follow through to realize use

1. Practical outcomes
2. Transformative outcomes

1. This is explored through the testing of the framework. The stages adopted within the framework enable capacity building at the various stages in terms of the SSDPs deciding upon where the findings go to inform use. This links into the sustainability of the CIP as well.

2. The previous study informing the refinement of this framework demonstrated transformative knowledge for the students surrounding M and E techniques. This of course crosses over with some of the transformational characteristics embodied within the EE principles.

Overall, the preceding discussion and table above provides a coherent argument and justification for refining the framework for study 2 in line with Schula et al’s (2016) principles for collaborative approaches to evaluation.

The final question concerns whether the principles being mobilized within the M and E framework are philosophically compatible with realistic evaluation. The answer to this question is not too dissimilar to the one presented at the beginning of this concerning EE. To combat the incompatibility thesis RE is the evaluation methodology mobilized by the students and is situated firmly within realist thinking. This enables student practitioners to be able to unearth the generative mechanisms at play within their programme. The framework for mobilizing this via the application of the principles of Schula et al (2016) is more pragmatist in the sense of building capacity and mobilizing the students to enact RE. Whilst it may not be entirely coherent with realist thinking, it is far closer compared to the emancipatory and constructivist position of EE because it appreciates the importance of context (Pawson and Tilley, 1997).

8.6 Refined programme theory / Candidate CMOs to be tested in study 2

Having created an argument for embedding the principles previously discussed, what now follows is a coherent illustration of the refined programme theory. This illustration is depicted through CMO configurations empirically driven from study 2 findings. These CMOs draw upon the principles of collaborative enquiries formulated by Schula et al (2016). In addition to the CMOs, reference is made towards the key resources provided within the framework and any changes made to them.

8.6.1 Resources

Any programme / intervention introduces resources. In accordance with realist principles (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) people respond to / reason against these resources which reflect and define the programme mechanism. Thus it is anticipated that the SSDPs will be responding to key resources in the M and E framework.
The table below highlights the key resources underpinning the M and E framework. As such, any refinements to the resources are explained.

Table 22: Illustration of key resources produced within M and E framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources within framework / refinements</th>
<th>How did / will the practitioners respond to these resources / interventions?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Realist evaluation capacity building workshops</strong></td>
<td>The outcome will be dependent upon how the practitioners will respond to / react to these resources being provided. This will reflect the mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These will be provided, but in not the same quantity, given that action learning sets fostered deeper levels of interaction. These workshops are delivered in line with the mobilising M and E model dependent upon the stage of the M and E process the SSDPs find themselves in.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Realist evaluation action learning sets</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closer attention will be given towards identifying evaluation questions and analysing data with a realist lens. The ALS will focus on the workshop topics provided within the workshops and make use of the workshop slides. They will be delivered more frequently on a one to one group level basis as and when required. These ALSs are delivered in line with the mobilising M and E model dependent upon the stage of the M and E process the SSDPs find themselves in.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature / readings associated with RE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trainer</strong> (to be clear this is the researcher / course leader)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The SSDPs running the CIP</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stakeholders within the programme</strong> (partners / organisations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Videos</strong> depicting how to carry out RE methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conceptualising programme theory model (see appendix 6.1 and figure 6)

This has been refined to focus more on the understanding of the social issues – the situational analysis stage. In addition the ‘hypothesising mechanisms stage’ considers additional questions to encourage practitioners to construct CMOs.

Mobilising M and E model (see appendix 6.2)

This has been refined to address clearer thinking around evaluation questions and data analysis. The model itself does not show major differences to the one provided in study one. These changes are mainly reflected through the ALS in line with whatever stage the SSDPs were at in their M and E.

Time

The CIP (Coaching Innovation Project)

Participants within the CIP being evaluated

Figure 6: Conceptualising programme theory model (focusing on stage 1 and 3) refined from study 1
### 8.6.2 Refined framework CMO configurations

The CMO configurations below align neatly with those produced in study 1’s findings. These CMOs have been aligned to the principles asserted by Schula et al. (2016).

Table 23: Refined framework CMO configurations for testing at study 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contexts</th>
<th>Mechanisms</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Deviation from EE and alignment to Collaborative principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conceptualisation to application of RE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Scepticism towards M and E’</td>
<td>Perseverance to learn and grasp RE and M and E principles through the resources of the workshops and action learning sets</td>
<td>Increased competence in RE techniques</td>
<td>The structure of the framework intends to evoke transformational skills for carrying out RE in the future which lies with P8 of ‘follow through to realise use’ where new skills are gained. In addition fostering ‘use’ in the way of practical outcomes also is anticipated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Limited understanding of M and E and programme theory’</td>
<td>Collaborative discovery of knowledge fostered through the support of the trainer in ALSs and working with fellow SSDPs</td>
<td>Intent to enact RE in future M and E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Fear of M and E’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘In experienced practitioners’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Disparities in group dynamics and cohesion’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘The CIP and its broader requirements’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RE enables practitioners and those in the collaborative process to **develop a shared understanding of the programme** (P3) by developing a programme theory (PT).

In accordance with ‘promoting appropriate participatory processes’ (P4), although the practitioners will be following an already developed framework, they can control methods, data collection and carry out the evaluation independently with required support.
| ‘Working with young people / challenging environments of open, socially orientated programmes’ | Application of realist methods garnered critical awareness of the approach given its limitations for unearthing generative mechanisms in certain sample groups | Increased reflexivity of RE and its strengths / limitations | The framework may encourage the ‘promotion of evaluative thinking’ (P7) where the practitioners develop a critical understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of eliciting this evaluation approach. |
| ‘Unpredictable projects / changes and struggles’ ‘Awareness and limitations of SFD programmes’ ‘Open minded perceptions / Willingness to learn about M and E’ ‘Optional training programme providing support’ | Engagement with RE resources / processes provided through the M and E phases model enabled deeper valuing of RE philosophy Provision of workshops and ALSs created theoretical grasping of RE Practical application (contextualisation) of RE through the resource of the CIP (project) | Realization of what RE can do to understand CIP (how and why) Increased competence in RE techniques Valuing M and E as a key practice Understanding how and why their programmes have worked | The grasping of RE as an approach and being reflexive / critical links with P7 and P8. This links to P1 concerning **clarifying motivation for collaboration**, on the basis of wanting to understand how and why their CIPs will work. |

*Structure to enable agency*
| ‘Limited understanding of M and E and programme theory’ | Interaction and discussion provided through the action learning sets |
| ‘Fear of M and E’ | Structured process made possible by M and E framework and ALSs |
| ‘Dynamics of SSDP’s doing own evaluations’ | Trust to be guided by the trainer and expertise |
| ‘In experienced practitioners’ | Increased competence in RE techniques |
| ‘Disparities in group dynamics and cohesion’ | Independent Monitoring and Evaluators |
| ‘Need for support’ | Innovative M and E design and findings |
| ‘Time constraints of managing the evaluation amongst other things’ | At the heart of the framework is the intention to foster meaningful interprofessional relationships (P2) between the practitioner and trainer. This involves trust and respect in guidance. |
| | Again principles (P7) and (P8) apply as does (P4) |

The structure of the framework intends to provide comprehensive support based on the practitioners **motivation for collaboration** (P1) being limited experience in M and E.

It also seeks to take into account the principle of **responding to resource availability** (P5) which considers time and personnel implications (eg skills). (P6) is considered along the lines of the structure of the framework and close contact **enabling the monitoring of evaluation progress and quality** (P6)

This where any EE resonance starts to fade and the focus on use emerges.
| ‘Open minded perceptions / willingness to learn about M and E’  | Non pressured feeling in response to flexible arrangement for “as and when needed ALSs” | Democratic / clear relationship between ‘trainer’ and SSDPs | **Foster meaningful interprofessional relationships** (P2) between the practitioner and trainer. Based on their limited knowledge and time constraints it is overly challenging to develop an organic M and E approach solely designed by the practitioners. Thus it is anticipated that a readily designed approach that matches their motivation for collaboration (P1) is suitable. Again, not so much EE. |
| ‘Optional training programme providing support’ | | |
| ‘CIP credit bearing unit’ | | |

**Ownership and autonomy**

| ‘Dynamics of SSDPs doing own evaluations’  | The feeling of self and collective control aligned within semi structured guidance  
Felt free to act and make choices through evaluation model | Increased reflexivity regarding the strengths and limitations regarding M and E  
Increased competence and capacity in M and E  
Increased confidence to enact M and E  
Realisation of what M and E holds to understand CIP | (P7) and (P8) in terms of increased capacity and use of the M and E. (P4) applies in relation to control over the evaluation process and being clear on what everyone’s role is within the framework. The role of the trainer is to guide and the practitioners role is to do the M and E (P2). |
| ‘Open minded perceptions / Willingness to learn about M and E’  | | |
| ‘Optional training programme providing support’ | | |
| ‘Wider parameters and goals for Edumove’ | | |
| ‘Working within schools / wider partner needs’ | Felt motivated to gain recognition and accountability | M and E recognised amongst partners and stakeholders Improvement of future CIPs M and E undervalued by partners and stakeholders | (P7) and (P8) in terms of the transformational aspects of findings being recognised. |
| ‘The CIP and its broader requirements’ | | | |
| ‘Wider parameters and goals for Edumove’ | | | |
| ‘In experienced practitioners’ | | | |

8.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided an opportunity to reflect upon the status of the framework post testing at study 1. In line with the aims and objectives of the thesis it has attempted to draw discussion towards refinement of the framework for further testing at study 2. Specifically, much of the discussion has centred upon the debates between EE and the collaborative principles of evaluation (as discussed in chapter 3). As a result, a case has been presented to retain RE as a central evaluation methodology but deviate away from EE to Schula et al’s (2016) principles in their capacity to focus on use as well as transformational characteristics for the SSDPs involved in the framework. This has led to a new and refined framework and programme theory to be tested within study 2.
Chapter 9

Study two results

The following chapter displays the findings of study 2 in the form of the holistic narratives and refined CMOs that were drawn. It is important to highlight the significance of the CMOs here to demonstrate the realist orientation of the study, and how the holistic narratives have guided them as informing the refined programme theory of the framework. The holistic narratives are presented in succinct terms following the procedures advocated by Watts and Stenner (2012). Each narrative is supported by the Q rankings of -1 to +4 as highlighted within the crib sheet. In addition, the clarification stage of this study through the interviews and blogs also support the claims made within each narrative. Each narrative is discussed in more depth within chapter 10 where quotations from the clarification stage will be illuminated.

9.1 Results

Given the huge proportion of data produced from the factor analysis (circa 8000 words) it is not possible to include it in its entirety within this chapter. The comprehensive ‘lis output files’ pertaining to the factor analysis can be located within appendix 5.5. However, given the importance of this document figures 6 and 7 highlight the key focus of the factor analysis. Figure 7 indicates the number of practitioners (defined by an ‘x’) who loaded on to each factor, with an indication of the study variance at the bottom of the matrix.

Figure 7: Factor matrix and defining sort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QSORT</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6938X</td>
<td>0.0329</td>
<td>0.3228</td>
<td>0.1695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8566X</td>
<td>0.1061</td>
<td>-0.2564</td>
<td>0.0688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.0496</td>
<td>0.7407X</td>
<td>0.0258</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.1768</td>
<td>0.0496</td>
<td>0.7407X</td>
<td>0.0258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.6650X</td>
<td>0.2410</td>
<td>-0.0478</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.3685</td>
<td>0.2304</td>
<td>0.6841X</td>
<td>-0.0882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.0095</td>
<td>0.8485X</td>
<td>-0.1012</td>
<td>0.0095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.1663</td>
<td>0.7367X</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>0.3067</td>
<td>0.3067</td>
<td>0.3067</td>
<td>0.3067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.0095</td>
<td>0.8485X</td>
<td>-0.1012</td>
<td>0.0095</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.1978</td>
<td>0.0071</td>
<td>0.0071</td>
<td>0.0071</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.2356</td>
<td>0.0714</td>
<td>-0.0714</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.5921X</td>
<td>0.0268</td>
<td>-0.0268</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.5921X</td>
<td>0.0268</td>
<td>-0.0268</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.5921X</td>
<td>0.0268</td>
<td>-0.0268</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% expl.Var. 27 19 12 9

Furthermore, (figure 8) provides the specific detail regarding how the practitioners within each sort ranked the stetments from the Q set. These are displayed clearly across the four factors to demonstrate the shared view points. For example column one illustrates the sort for all of those with shared viewpoints in factor one and where they ranked each statement.
As discussed within the data analysis section for study 2 in chapter 6, the qualitative interpretation identified the four holistic narratives. In terms of making sense of these narratives and the distinction across them, table 24 below is a good starting point to illustrate this.

Table 24: Distinguishing differences amongst factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 1 “From zero evaluators to accomplished”</th>
<th>Factor 2 “Polished Problem solvers”</th>
<th>Factor 3 “Passive passengers”</th>
<th>Factor 4 “Proficient and competent and cautiously optimistic”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinguishing features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Since the M and E training programme my competency for care 1 factor 3 2 3 4
2. Since the M and E training programme I feel more competent 2 factor 4 1 0 1
3. Since the M and E training programme I feel more competent 3 factor 3 1 -1 -1
4. I can see the value in developing context—mechanism—on 4 factor 4 0 2 1
5. I feel that the M and E framework has made it possible 5 factor 4 -1 1 0
6. I think that it is important to develop a programme theory 6 factor 4 0 0 -1
7. The stage 1 programme theory template enabled me to explain 7 factor 1 -2 -3 -3
8. The stage 2 M and E framework provided me with a clear set 8 factor 0 0 -2 -1
9. I am more reflexive now about the processes I take to M an 9 factor 1 -2 -2 2
10. Working with my fellow students in my CIP enabled me to u 10 factor 0 -3 0 0
11. I feel that RE is an appropriate evaluation methodology f 11 factor 0 3 2 0
12. I now understand more about how and why my CIP worked 12 factor 2 4 2 -2
13. Since carrying out the training programme I can see the n 13 factor 2 0 3 -1
14. I would implement RE in future roles 14 factor -1 3 1 -3
15. I feel that M and E training should be a key part of a pr 15 factor 1 -1 4 2
16. The resources (eg literature) surrounding RE enabled my u 16 factor 0 2 0 1
17. I felt that my relationship with the trainer enabled me t 17 factor -2 1 -1 3
18. I feel that the structure to the M and E process through 18 factor -2 1 2 4
19. I felt engaged in the M and E 19 factor 0 1 0 1
20. I felt that my views within the collaborative process wer 20 factor 0 0 -2 -2
21. I felt that throughout the M and E training programme I w 21 factor 0 0 0 0
22. My role within the M and E was entirely clear 22 factor 0 -4 1 -4
23. The trainer and I shared the understanding of the evaluat 23 factor 0 -1 -1 2
24. I feel that the findings from our M and E will be valued 24 factor 0 -3 -4 -4
25. The M and E training programme was suitable to meet the n 25 factor 0 2 1 -2
26. I was able to embed the knowledge of my CIP within the M 26 factor 0 0 -2 0
27. Throughout the training programme I felt in control of th 27 factor 0 -4 0 -2
28. Without the structure of the training programme I do not 28 factor 0 2 3 3
29. The training programme has been possible to complete give 29 factor 0 -2 -3 -4
30. M and E should be embedded within a practitioner’s role 30 factor 1 4 4 0

145
- Relied on support more than others to get through
- The capacity building and support enabled them to get the job done
- M and E competency and RE competency increased significantly (more so than other factors)
- Despite competency still lack confidence to go alone
- Less reflexive towards M and E
- Less transformational on all levels
- Increased understanding of mechanisms
- Use of the M and E a prevailing characteristic
- Critical of RE but able to solve problems
- Conceptually engaged in RE
- Likely to implement RE in future based on conceptual awareness and grasping
- Leaders / problem solvers
- Synical and negative about their findings having and impact
- Critical of industry
- Utilised semi autonomous control and support to aid use
- As a result less enthusiastic about M and E role in the future
- Less critical and aware of issues in M and E
- More attuned to coaching
- Surface level approach to engaging in M and E
- Looked to other members
- Find it hard to synthesise project learning with M and E findings
- Struggle with RE jargon
- No significant distance travelled
- Value relationship with the trainer more so than other factors
- More cautious of RE and may not favour it as an evaluation approach because of its compatibility with the context
- Less likely to carry out RE in future
- Apprehensive about developing PT
- Strong belief in findings

### Similarities across factors

- Practitioners should be focused on M and E (factors 3,2)
- Struggle to control the evaluation in practice (factors 2,1,4)
- Critical engagement with M and E (factors 4,2)
- Limited confidence in M and E findings (factors 3,2,1)
- Can apply M and E through the kinaesthetic act of running their CIP (factors 4,3,2,1)
- In it for use over empowerment (factors 4,2,1)
- Appreciation for understanding how and why projects work / deeper realisation and appreciation (factors 4,3,2,1)
- M and E competency enhanced (4,2,1)
- RE knowledge and understanding improved (4,2,1)
- Keen to do well within the curriculum (4,3,2,1)

### 9.2 Factor 1 theme: “From zero evaluators to accomplished”

Factor 1 has an eigenvalue of 5.33 and explains 27% of the study variance. 6 participants are significantly associated to this factor. 4 are female and 2 are male. Barring one participant, all share an average age of 20. They all had limited or near 0 experience of eliciting M and E work and came into the M and E framework with limited knowledge. 4 were sports studies students and the other 2 are representative of Sport Coaching and Development. All participants loading into this factor were spread across the sampled CIPs.
The viewpoints from this factor indicate that the M and E competency of the practitioners has increased significantly from being involved in the framework (1:+3). It supports the importance of capacity building through the action learning sets and support to fulfil M and E tasks. This also indicates the value placed around practitioners having more responsibility in M and E but relative to other factors those loading here scored lower (30:+1) compared to those in factors 2 and 3. This is an interesting finding within the interpretation given that there are questions within the SFD literature regarding how involved practitioners should be in M and E. This supports the view that they should be involved yet the near neutral response to M and E being a key part of a practitioner’s role is not as strong. Leading on from this, it is viewed as necessary but not excessive to have M and E CPD embedded in the support and development of a practitioner role (15:+1). Thus it could be concluded that despite the increased competency these practitioners are cautious about how much M and E should be embedded perhaps due to the time constraints and additional workloads (29:-2) yet they do feel considerably more confident about doing M and E in the future (2:+4). In terms of distance travelled they have clearly progressed significantly from a limited competency in M and E partly due to the independence and responsibility gained from running their own project, applying M and E in practice, and appreciating how gaining more of an in depth knowledge of a project can benefit learning. Furthermore, their enthusiasm and interest in sport development are key factors in this.

RE competency has improved (3:+3) which is further justified by practitioners indicating their improved understanding of mechanisms within their CIP (5:+4) which in line with RE literature is not only a key tenet of RE but also one of the most problematic wherein the realist community many find it hard to uncover mechanisms. Practitioners have shown clear engagement, linkage and resonance with this amongst this factor (13:+2) despite there emerging neutral views of the importance of RE as an evaluation methodology (11:0) and intent to use it in the future (14:+1). This is further supported with other key conceptual elements that support the RE process such as the importance of developing programme theories of change (6:+2), seeing the value in developing CMO configurations (4:+2) and simply understanding more about how and why their CIP worked (12:+2).

Despite being able to mobilise M and E / RE and see its benefit to aid use practitioners within this factor are less reflexive and critically engaged with the M and E discourse compared to those particularly in factors 2 and 4. They have identified knowledge regarding the M and E concepts they were using but they do not appear to demonstrate any critical issues or strong feeling about RE which is reflected in their neutral view of RE (11:0). This may suggest that although heavily involved, they have relied to some extent on others to overcome issues and specific barriers imposed by the evaluation approach because they lack that deeper engagement. Linked to this, there is a lack of confidence in the findings of their evaluation having any real impact on the external landscape (24:-4) such as partners partly because they are not critical of that landscape. They are less likely to enhance the use of the evaluation on any transformational level concerning change.

As far as the collaborative dimension of the framework goes, those within this factor demonstrate viewpoints (18:-2) that the structure of the framework did not necessarily enable clear grasping of M and E (which contradicts 1:+3). Yet they rank higher (relative to other factors) the statements associated with the two models (7:+1; 8:0). This would indicate (as the blogs and interviews support) a positive engagement with the structure and the need for support, and guidance based on the contextual needs. Statements 6:+2 (developing PT’s of change), 5: +4 (improved understanding of mechanisms) and 4: +2 (valuing CMO configurations) would support this answer, as would the
demographical information available which supports that most of these participants were not the overall driving forces behind their CIP. Those in this factor required more control, support and special attention to facilitate the process and understand how to conduct the M and E. Like other factors practitioners loading into this one struggled with control (27:-4) of mobilising the evaluation in practice. They felt in control to a degree but became anxious when confronted with practical issues and conceptual barriers.

Table 25: Factor 1 CMO configurations

Based on Q factor interpretation, interviews and blog analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within a given Context</td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling far in M and E competency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Limited knowledge and understanding of M and E and realist concepts | Action learning sets (focus on mechanisms) and CIP | Contextualising real subjects within CIP created a light bulb moment of realisation that implementation resources are not solely mechs and participants respond to resources | Deeper understanding of generative mechanisms | P7:Promote evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |
| Apprehension towards carrying out M and E | Processes within the framework (eg PT templates and stages) alongside CIP | Realisation that the independent process helps you understand more about why it worked or not | Greater understanding of the programme and its potential sustainability | P7: Promote evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |
| Challenging environment for practitioners to do M and E | The CIP project / Action learning sets | Created a sense of responsibility and independence concerning the importance of evidence | Appreciating importance of M and E | P4:Promote appropriate participatory processes  
P7: Promote evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |
| Low confidence in M and E and hesitancy to mobilise | The CIP project and resources relating to RE within framework (eg developing evaluation questions) | Active application to the real life project | Fostered increased understanding for conducting M and E | P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes |
| Low confidence in M and E and hesitancy to mobilise | Action learning sets (broken down into phases of the framework) | fostered belief that they would help address and plug knowledge gaps and fears | Improved competency for carrying out M and E / RE | P7: Promote evaluative thinking |
| Diverse stakeholder group and open programme | Delivering the CIP and being in charge of the programme; also / the resources provided by the trainer around exploring hows and whys / PT model | Stimulated realisation that through direct observation it is not possible to understand mechanisms—needing to look deeper | Grasping realist concepts (eg how and why) | P3: Develop a shared understanding of the programme P7: Promote evaluative thinking |
| Awareness of the importance of M and E for SFD projects and the CIP / Curriculum requirement | Making use of reading resources provided through the programme and attending ALSs | Heightened motivation to persevere to achieve high mark and understand more about the project and M and E | Better M and E competency | P7: Promote evaluative thinking |
| Inexperience of developing a Proj Theory | Team resources of working together | Reliance on others within group to help fill gaps | Able to construction a of PT they could understand | P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships |
| Open minded, passionate student, interested in sport development | Programme theory templates and action learning sets | Appreciation of what I am trying to do and why I am trying to do it in my project | Clearer understanding of how and why programme worked that aided M and E | P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking P8: Follow through to realise use |
| CIP curriculum requirements and high interest in CIP and sport development | CIP project aligned with framework resources | Instilled emotional attachment because the project meant something to the students which led to willingness to do M and E | Increased competency in M and E | P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes  
P7: Promote evaluative thinking |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Limited experience of doing M and E and willingness to learn | Tutorials and PT template | Promoted the reflective cycle of learn – apply – reflect | Deeper understanding of how and why CIP unfolded | P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes  
P7: Promote evaluative thinking |
| **Less transformational / less reflexive** | | | | |
| University based project led by in experienced student practitioners | Presentations (particularly those with activities focusing on partner collaboration) | Weak confidence in findings because of the negative student perception as practitioners evoked little thought provocation or awareness of involving partners more within the M and E | Weak take up of findings by stakeholders / partners | P7: Promote evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |
| Those with limited understanding of M and E | Action learning sets / Presentations | Evoked little stimulation or enthusiasm about the critical depth of M and E | The absence of critical engagement and depth towards M and E within the context of the CIP | P7: Promote evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |
<p>| Student centred / practitioner driven evidence / not as aware of wider evidence context | Action learning sets / CIP project | Increased but still perceived limited confidence in M and E competency | Resulted in apprehension of evaluation findings being valued by external partners | P8: Follow through to realise use |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student practitioners with limited experience, leading all aspects of the project</th>
<th>Practitioners within CIP</th>
<th>Perceived lack of human resource and panic</th>
<th>Made it harder to complete and be able to deal with the evaluation</th>
<th>P5: Monitor and respond to resource availability</th>
<th>P8: Follow through to realise use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Reliance on control and support**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students who find lots of information and lectures challenging</th>
<th>Broken down smaller chunks ALSs offered throughout life cycle of the CIP</th>
<th>Fostered the feeling that they could steadily clarify understanding with the trainer before progression to the next stage / pathway</th>
<th>Evaluated project effectively</th>
<th>P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships</th>
<th>P6: Constant monitoring to check that procedures were of suitable standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inexperienced practitioners delivering complex interventions</th>
<th>Framework and appropriate steps to follow combined with repetition of ALSs</th>
<th>felt in control of doing the evaluation but needed and could call on support / dipping in and out</th>
<th>Increased competency in M and E more confident about doing M and E in the future</th>
<th>P1: Clarify motivation for the evaluation</th>
<th>P6: Constant monitoring to check that procedures were of suitable standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear of standing out as stupid</th>
<th>Specific individualised action learnings sets where each group was at the same stage</th>
<th>Motivation to progress given that no one was behind or ahead of them in the process / feeling looked after / special attention</th>
<th>Feeling looked after and able to accomplish the evaluation</th>
<th>P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships</th>
<th>P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes</th>
<th>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
9.3 Factor 2 theme: “Polished Problem solvers”

Factor 2 has an eigenvalue of 2.23 and explains 19% of the study variance. Four participants are significantly associated with this factor. Two are male and two are female with an average of age of 22 years. All four study the Sport Coaching and Development degree and at the time of writing were on course for first class / second class upper degrees. These participants spread across the sample of CIPs involved in this study.

Of those loading into this factor it is quite apparent that ‘use’ in M and E is a prevailing characteristic. Practitioners make use of RE (11:+3) in the sense of it being a suitable evaluation approach for their CIP. Practical outcomes emerge on the basis of them being able to understand how and why their CIP worked (12:+4) and being able to meet the goals of their M and E. Actively applying the M and E through their own CIP was a key factor to this success in addition to the support provided (28:+2); (18:+1). Being close to their participants within the project enabled them to apply the M and E more easily. On a more transformational level these practitioners show willingness to make use of RE in the future (14:+3) and strongly feel that M and E should be part of a practitioner’s role (30:+4). The main factor in this desire relates to the realisation of understanding how and why their CIP has worked (12:+4) evoking a much deeper understanding of their CIP. Practitioners within this factor are evaluative thinkers focused on the willingness to learn and gain more skills. Their competency in conducting M and E has increased (1:+2) which is consistent with factors 1 and 4.

The practitioners within this factor are more conceptually engaged in sport development and RE which may explain their desire to continue using it in the future (14:+3) and valuing it as a suitable methodology (11:+3). To support the grasping of RE practitioners highly rated the statement of understanding how and why their programme worked (12:+4). They are more engaged in the process compared relative to those in other factors (19:+1) and support their understanding / lack of
understanding of it with additional reading and resources (16:+2). This is further supported by their ability to identify and solve problems, aligned to their interest in sport development and career aspirations connected with the industry. This conceptual engagement is confirmed given their increased reflexivity and recognition of the limitations imposed by the methodology. In particular they do not place significant approval towards the CMO configuration (2:0) and acknowledge the problems of applying it within their projects (which are always subject to change and limits of cooperation with participants). Yet, they make attempts to mitigate against these issues through improvisation, support, guidance (28:+2) and independent leadership. This makes more sense when demographical factors are concerned where in this case all but one of the practitioners in this loading were the leaders of the project and resided in that responsibility role.

These transformational aspects are slightly quashed given their limited confidence as to where their findings will go or make an impact (24:+3) which may explain apprehension limited confidence of doing M and E in the future. This is similar to factor 1. Despite the new fostering of evaluative thinking they are still apprehensive about carrying out M and E in the future (2:+1) mainly due to the limited perception of how regarded their findings will be (within a context that favours technocratic approaches). This again demonstrates their conceptual engagement with the subject area.

The practitioners are keen for guidance and support (18:+1) and use that support to enable effective M and E mobilisation. Structure and guidance is needed (28:+2) and relied upon because of their limited experience in carrying out M and E. Thus having a pre – defined framework enabled the practitioners to mobilise their M and E from the outset opposed to the view of building it entirely themselves and choosing from the multitude of other approaches. The viewpoint of lacking control of the evaluation (27:+4) and lack of clarity (27:+4) does not relate to the design of or participation of the framework. Interviews and blogs clarified this lack of perceived control and clarity to relate to the mobilisation of the M and E framework itself within the CIP itself which was open to a series of barriers that made it problematic to mobilise what was initially intended. The limited time to carry out the M and E (29:+2) is an example as was the volatile nature of securing certain stakeholders. The practitioners share a positive relationship with the trainer which enabled deeper grasping of concepts through the framework (17:+1) and helped to mediate disagreements within groups. In the context of this framework such a process is supported by the practitioners because they needed training, but their independent leadership enabled them to solve problems and not rely on control and support as much as other factors.

Table 26: Factor 2 CMO Configurations

Based on Q factor interpretation, interviews and blog analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within a given Context</td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fostering use in M and E
| Practitioners who recognise the importance of stakeholder collaboration | Stakeholders / and M and E framework models | Enabled cooperative construction of how the programme would work with partners | This led to a more robust M and E design and focus of evaluation questions | P3: Develop a shared understanding of the programme  
P7: Promoting evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Independent practitioners passionate about SD and career in the field | Running own CIP combined with ALSs | enabled active M and E where engagement with participants was enhanced and fostered greater appreciation of those hidden mechanisms | More understanding of how and why CIP was working / coherent m and e process | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use  
P4: Promote participatory processes: eg approach met the programme needs |
| Highly opinionated group dynamics amongst conceptually engaged practitioners | Tutorial support through action learning sets | Because of the shared understanding of the programme between trainer and practitioners diffused disagreements and provided clearer direction and cohesion | More competent to fulfil M and E process and fulfil tasks | P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships  
P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes |
| Independent / leader practitioners conceptually engaged in M and E and SFD | No funding or stakeholder ties | Freedom and agency to make clear cut decisions in the evaluation design | Dynamic and creative M and E process followed. | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking |

Realising and prioritising RE for future
| Pre conceived belief that M and E was a waste of time in the scale of other priorities | Action learning sets / trainer / RE methodology | Realisation of the important to understand how and why programmes work to inform future learning | Greater value afforded to M and E / RE | P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes  
P7: Promoting evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Within an environment of limited understanding of RE and the desire to prioritise outcomes | Action learning sets and facilitation of the trainer | Realisation of RE’s use to meet programme evaluation needs / particularly going deeper into the programme | Lead to willingness to implement RE in the future | P8: Follow through to realise use  
P4: Promote participatory processes: eg approach met the programme needs |

**Detecting and solving problems through conceptual engagement**

| Complexities of an open social programme. Many potential methods (no defined procedure for RE) to use for answering questions / anxiety and fear for wanting to cover so much around w, w for whom... | Action learning sets and model 2 of framework depicting evaluation stages | provided steady, focused and assertive realistic attitude for conducting not trying to cover too much | Achieved M and E targets | P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes  
P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships  
P7: Promoting evaluative thinking |
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivated practitioner – keen to do well in CIP and interested in SD</td>
<td>CMO configuration within framework model 2</td>
<td>Applying CMOs unearthed awareness and tensions around the infinite number that could be produced and what was c, m or o.</td>
<td>More reflexive, inquisitive, critical and knowledgeable about RE</td>
<td>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Limited experience of carrying out M and E / willingness to learn about SD | Active application of w.w, for whom within own projects exposed weaknesses in own CIP | More astute and reflexive for honest appraisal of project – Change in disposition towards programme | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking
P8: Follow through to realise use |
|---|---|---|---|
| Open CIP / unpredictable nature of participants providing obstacles / Motivated practitioners | Created trust to be guided aligned with increased confidence in leadership to readjust approaches | Hard to run the M and E as intended but able to meet targets through improvisation | P2: Foster meaningful professional relationships
P4: Promote participatory processes
P7: Promoting evaluative thinking
P8: Follow through to realise use |
| Young enthusiastic and strong minded practitioners engaged with SD industry evidence discourse | Realisation of how programmes work and of what is not done in industry – coupled with motivation to be successful in industry | Aware and critical of current industry M and E practice and need for conversation | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking
P8: Follow through to realise use |
| Open minded and unconditioned towards certain approaches | Became more critical about the limitations of simply demonstrating facts | More innovation around how and why the CIP worked – understands philosophy of RE | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking
P8: Follow through to realise use |
<p>| CIP project being conducted in open system and environment involving partnership working | Limited cooperation from participants and or stakeholders led to frustrations in developing relationships | Hard to control intended goal of M and E and production of findings that did not reach full potential | P8: Follow through to realise use |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of evidence discourse / technocratic figures</th>
<th>Framework focused on unearthing how and why</th>
<th>Cynical view towards the value placed on ‘HOW AND WHY’ findings by partners</th>
<th>View that M and E findings may not have intended impact</th>
<th>P8: Follow through to realise use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quasi autonomous Control</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Inexperienced M and E practitioners not requiring an organically designed M and E framework | Pre defined framework mobilised via action learning sets and models 1 and 2 | Provided the needed capacity building and direction fused with conceptual engagement | Coherent M and E carried out and grasping of realist concepts | **P1:** Clarifying motivation for collaboration  
**P2:** Fostering relationships (sustained interactivity)  
**P7:** Promoting evaluative thinking  
**P8:** Follow through to realise use |
| Limited experience in M and E / short programme life cycle of CIP | Tutorials Powerpoints / Models 1 and 2 | Provided needed support and sustained interactivity | Coherent M and E carried out | **P2:** Fostering relationships (sustained interactivity)  
**P4:** Promote participatory processes  
**P7:** Promoting evaluative thinking  
**P8:** Follow through to realise use |
| Young, enthusiastic practitioners / assertive in nature | Pre written framework and action learning set sessions / trainer | Facilitated a helping hand where practitioners still felt in control of independently mobilising M and E but also had trust in the trainer to control direction | Competent M and E produced | P1: Clarifying motivation for collab.  
P2: Foster meaningful interprofessional relationships  
P8: Follow through to realise use  
P5: Monitor and respond to resource availability (ensuring that people have the skills)  
P6: Monitor evaluation progress and quality (constraining or enabling?) |

9.4 Factor 3 theme: “Passive Passengers”

Factor 3 has an eigenvalue of 1.45 and explains 12% of the study variance. Three participants are significantly associated with this factor. All three are male with an average age of 21. Each were third year students on the Sport Coaching and Development degree of 2:2 / 2:1 calibre.

The practitioners loading on to this factor represent key viewpoints that M and E should be a key part of a practitioner’s role (30:+4) and continual professional development (15:+4), mainly because they have gained more understanding of how and why their CIP worked (12:+2). This demonstrates transformational characteristics in that evaluation work should be centred within a practitioner’s role. This was far more prominent in this factor than any other. This may represent strong views associated with empowerment and challenging the status quo in evaluation work where external evaluators are generally called upon.

However, deeper interpretation of this factor indicates that the viewpoints of those in this factor are less critical of the M and E landscape and perhaps do not appreciate the extent of the challenges for practitioners doing this work. For example, they are less reflexive (9:-2) than those in factors 1 and 4 about their approach to M and E so may not be as engaged (19:0) due to other supporting viewpoints of them stating that they may not be as inclined to carry out M and E in the future (2:0) nor RE (3:-1). In similar respects to factors 2 and 1 there is little confidence (24:-4) of their M and E findings having any impact. However, in their case this is mainly due to their weaker engagement and reflexivity towards M and E. In addition the context of them being more attuned to coaching
roles within their CIPs is also significant because it suggests that they favour the act of coaching opposed to conducting M and E which is more development / management based.

These practitioners have perhaps taken more of a surface level approach to M and E where the process has enabled use but that use has been more reflected in the reliance on other practitioners in their group and the encouragement from those in the group to take part in the programme. The viewpoints from this factor are neutral (10:0) regarding the importance of interacting with others to understand RE but without the support of the framework (28:+3) and the support of those in their group, their grasping would be far more limited. Interestingly, their M and E competency has not increased (1:-4) significantly yet they were able to (through the kinaesthetic act of running their CIP) understand more about how and why their CIP worked (12:+2) and that this type of learning is important for sport for social change programmes (13:+3). In addition there are small glimpses on the part of the practitioners where they see the benefit of the stages underpinning the framework supporting other areas. Nevertheless, practitioners within this factor find it challenging to see the connection as to how the learning and deeper understanding of their CIP can be synthesised with M and E findings.

As far as competency in RE is concerned this interpretation is further supported by the viewpoint that RE competency was not significant (3:-1) nor is there any specific intention to carry it out in the future (3:-1) because of issues with grasping RE terminology and jargon. This is further supported by the disengagement with the models provided (7:-3); (8:-2). The picture emerging here concerns the shared viewpoints that there is no significant distance travelled as far as M and E competency is concerned. These practitioners appear more laid back about the framework opposed to other factors and seem content to be guided by others (28: +3).

Table 27: Factor 3 - CMO Configurations

Based on Q factor interpretation, interviews and blog analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within a given Context</td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Competent on the surface in how and why

<p>| Fear and apprehension towards M and E | Extensive meetings and capacity support sessions from trainer and support from others in their group | Fostered increased confidence in grasping the distinction between M and E | Intention to carry out M and E in the future in industry and view point that M and E should be part of a practitioner’s CPD | P7: Promote evaluative thinking P8: Follow through to realise use |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of the lack of evidence discourse</th>
<th>The CIP project and support of action learning sets / fellow group members</th>
<th>Enabled repetition and independent kinaesthetic application of realist programme theory to project</th>
<th>Showed awareness of the importance to understand how and why</th>
<th>P4: Promoting appropriate participatory processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partial understanding of how and why their CIP worked</td>
<td>CIP, ALSs and leaders in their project</td>
<td>Instrumental / Motivated to succeed to achieve higher mark in CIP unit and looking up to others in CIP</td>
<td>Partial understanding about how and why</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited awareness and curriculum requirements of Coaching Innovation Prog</td>
<td>Terminology of RE such as CMO / Programme Theory</td>
<td>Resulted in confusion / hard to grasp certain concepts leading to disempowerment</td>
<td>Less engaged in the M and E process and less willing to elicit RE in the future</td>
<td>P8: Follow through to realise use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort of practitioners made up of coaches and SD enthusiasts / Framework</td>
<td>Action learning sets / fellow group members</td>
<td>Main motivation to score a good mark and get the job done</td>
<td>Less reflexive around M and E and took less of a lead within the process. More passive</td>
<td>P1: Clarifying motivation for collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited understanding and experience in conducting M and E</td>
<td>Action learning sets / fellow group members</td>
<td>Less engaged and relied upon group members and trainer</td>
<td>Unable to see the connection between learnings of how and why with M and E practice</td>
<td>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Factor 4 theme: “Proficient, competent and cautiously optimistic”

Factor 4 has an eigenvalue of 1.05 and explains 9% of the study variance. Two participants are significantly associated with this factor. Both are male with an average age of 21. Each were third year students on the Sport Coaching and Development degree of 2:1 calibre. Each were also involved in the same CIP.

The viewpoints of those within this factor strongly suggest that the M and E framework facilitated them carrying out the evaluation (18:+4). Without the structure of the framework (28:+3) and opportunity to apply it in practice they would have found the process of evaluating their CIP challenging. Thus, support in the collaborative process is definitely required. These practitioners share the views that the relationship with the trainer enabled deeper understanding of doing M and E (17:+3) and that there is a mutual understanding of programme evaluation goals (23:+2). This would indicate that among the practitioners and the trainer there is a mutual understanding and trust is maintained whereby they feel they are able shape their M and E design within the parameters of the framework. When respect and control come into consideration they do not feel as highly valued (20:-2; 27:-2). Like factors 2 and 1, viewpoints associated with control assert that they do not feel in control of the evaluation. This lack of control is associated not with the building of the evaluation and participation in the framework itself, but with act of mobilising the evaluation within their own project. For them, the context of their project which was often subject to change, and working with very young people made it hard for them to mobilise the M and E as they initially intended.

Exploring this further, the practitioners loading onto this factor tend to express viewpoints that do not significantly favour RE as an evaluation approach. Despite the views that the framework enabled use and the implementation of RE, other views suggest that their competency is not considerably increased in carrying it out (3:-1) although the interviews would suggest the opposite. They are less likely than any other factor to carry out RE in the future (14:-3) partly because of apprehension towards developing programme theory (6:-1) and using models to develop it (7:-3). This is also relevant in terms of the compatibility of the context of the programme and M and E design. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that these practitioners whilst recognising the use and benefit of RE are also reflexively aware of its limitations.

Their motivation for engaging in the optional framework was initially on the basis that the programme would enable them to get the job of the evaluation done and achieve a good grade. However, the affordance of time and engagement in the stages of the framework fostered motivation and intrigue to develop an understanding of (whilst recognising the limitations of RE) why their project would meet certain outcomes beyond simply proving project success. They have demonstrated critical engagement in the M and E process because they have made an effort to make use of resources (16:+1) and are more reflexive about how they would embark on M and E in the future (9:+2).

On a transformational level they more than any other factor strongly feel that their findings will be valued by others (24:+4) partly because they have taken pride in their achievements. They feel that their findings are likely to have an impact beyond the curriculum itself because the approach taken has uncovered new knowledge, which suggests that RE has been able to evoke findings that will be recognised externally and influence future practice within the workings of partnering stakeholders.
Table 28: Factor 4- CMO Configurations

Based on Q factor interpretation, interviews and blog analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within a given Context</td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td>Alignment to principles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Avenues for use based on strong relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants in a predefined and constructed framework</th>
<th>Broken down stages provided within the framework (e.g., model 2) alongside CIP</th>
<th>Enabled them to shape how the M and E was done and make use of qual / quans through active application of CIP</th>
<th>Enabled completion of the M and E</th>
<th>P4: Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weak competency in M and E and limited M and E experience</td>
<td>Action learning sets / trainer</td>
<td>Positive and strong reliance on capacity building and support where trainer could track progress</td>
<td>Improved grasping of M and E / RE</td>
<td>P2: Foster Meaningful Inter-Professional Relationships P3: Develop shared understanding of the programme P5: Monitor and respond to resource availability P6: Monitor evaluation progress P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated student practitioners keen to do well</td>
<td>RE stages / phases within framework</td>
<td>Strong team ethic to understand and apply the stages coupled with consistent enthusiasm to see how project worked</td>
<td>Clearer M and E findings</td>
<td>P4: Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak initial competency in M and E and challenging CIP project participants to conduct RE</td>
<td>ALSs / Trainer</td>
<td>Mutual trust and engagement with trainer based on trainer knowledge provided needed guidance</td>
<td>Coherent implementation of the evaluation despite contextual challenges</td>
<td>P2: Foster Meaningful Inter-Professional Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism of findings (for own praxis and partners)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P3: Develop a shared understanding of the programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Edumove concept / unproven / knowledge gaps | RE stages within framework / model 2 - CIP | Enabled students to identify through their CIP delivery and M and E kinesthetic learners and other kinds of learners / strong relationship with Edumove | Optimistic about influence of findings for Edumove | P7: Promote evaluative thinking |
| | | | | P8: Follow through to realise use |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inexperienced and limited understanding in M and E</th>
<th>Time to carry out the project and interact with resources and training</th>
<th>Seeing the evaluation through own eyes unearthed realisation of why the CIP was working</th>
<th>More pride in the project and achievements associated with M and E for the project</th>
<th>P8: Follow through to realise use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Initial intention of good grades connected with CIP programme | Phases of RE to follow within framework addressing how and why | Led to a deeper motivation to learn more about the CIP beyond just getting a good grade | More engaged within the evaluation and understood more about CIP | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |
| Inexperienced and limited understanding in M and E, within a context of proof associated with SFD projects | Time to carry out the project and interact with resources and training | Changes of disposition towards programme learning beyond philosophical underpinning of proving CIP worked | More reflexive and motivated to create robust M and E approach that advocates how and why project worked | P4: Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes  
P7: Promoting evaluative thinking  
P8: Follow through to realise use |

**RE sceptics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIP project working with young people</th>
<th>RE concepts / methodology on the sample participants RE jargon</th>
<th>Created tensions in gaining cooperation from the young people to uncover what it is about the CIP</th>
<th>Limitations of findings and RE to uncover hidden mechanisms</th>
<th>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working with young children within CIP project and limited knowledge and expertise.</td>
<td>The CIP process and utilising RE tools to establish how and why</td>
<td>Critical of RE and the framework based on its suitability for the context where it will be implemented CURIOSOUS and more calculated</td>
<td>More reflective about if and how it will be used in the future</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Working with children within complex programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The CIP process</th>
<th>Adaptable methods to unearth how and why wasn’t always possible because of young people's cooperation</th>
<th>Able to unlock outcomes to an extent</th>
<th>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIP that had changed significantly and was still changing</td>
<td>Stage 1 of model which focused on developing a PT</td>
<td>Evoked apprehension and inquiry orientation about postulating how and why so early given that things would change so frequently</td>
<td>Less likely to develop a PT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.6: Chapter summary

This chapter has illustrated the key findings from the testing of the framework at study 2. It has provided a concise exposition of the findings in accordance with the factor analysis carried out from the Q sorting exercise. This has been done through the articulation of four distinguishing holistic narratives elucidating the shared viewpoints of those across sample tested. The holistic narratives provide a novel insight into how the practitioners within each loading engaged with the framework and certain aspects of it. Accompanying the narrative are also the CMO factor configurations supporting the clarification stage of what worked form whom in what circumstances and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). These findings will be further analysed and discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter 10

Study two and final discussion

Having displayed the results for study 2 within the previous chapter, this chapter will draw specific attention to each factor. Factors 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be addressed along with their supporting CMOs. Each factor will be analysed in accordance with the relevant themes that emerged through the interpretation stages as a result of implementing realist evaluation protocols. The sub themes within each factor articulate in more depth what it was about the framework that led to outcomes.

In line with the aims and objectives of the overall study the main discussion points will focus upon the alignment to the principles tested and the utility of RE for practitioners working within small scale SFD programmes. In essence the implementation of the RE design for testing the framework has uncovered four factors concerning how and why the framework worked for those involved. What follows is a discussion of each of those four factors. This will demonstrate in accordance with Pawson and Tilley (1997) that programmes do not work in the same way for all those involved and individuals will and can experience change in different ways depending on the context. At the same time whilst Q methodology sought to distinguish shared viewpoints amongst the practitioners; hence the presentation of factors, it was also apparent that there would be similarities across factors. This is summarized in the table at the beginning of chapter 9. Further, these similarities existed given that a number of these practitioners across factors worked in the same CIP (eg a practitioner loading into factor one worked in the same CIP as someone in factor two).

As illustrated within the methodology and analysis section, Dalkin et al’s (2015) realist approach was followed along the lines of disaggregating the programme mechanism. The CMO configurations are thus discussed in light of this analysis where common reference is made to mechanism resources (mres) and mechanism reasoning (mreas) to explain how the outcomes emerged.

10.1 Factor 1 discussion: Zero to accomplished

As reported within the results section, factor one accounted for the largest number of those involved in the framework (6) with an eigenvalue of 5.33 and study variance of 27%. In summary those who loaded into this factor shared key viewpoints concerning the significant distance they had travelled from little or no competency in M and E as a result of opting into the framework. Their competency for carrying out M and E and specifically RE had enhanced considerably. They relied heavily upon guidance and support throughout given the limited knowledge and experience they brought to the framework. However, despite the distance travelled there still appeared scepticism around to what extent within the future they could elicit the same process again, and how the findings from their M and E would impact and be valued.

10.1.2 Travelling far in M and E competency

As presented within the CMO table, participants shared similar contextual characteristics in that they had little or no experience in M and E and specifically RE. In addition there was apprehension and low confidence towards carrying out M and E, yet the practitioners in general shared a common interest and enthusiasm in sport for development. These were crucial contextual factors for enabling the increased competency in M and E. Thus a series of positive outcomes in relation to the framework unfolded.

As a starting point, these participants indicated a deeper understanding of generative mechanisms of change within their programme. This, as Pawson and Manzano – Santaella (2012) suggest is one
of the hardest concepts to grasp within realist evaluation. Yet, through the resources of the action learning set focusing on mechanisms and carrying out their CIP (mres) participants could specifically ‘contextualise’ their own live project participants in the process where they were able to realise that making sense of a mechanism involved their participants responding to resources (mreas); and ‘realisation that it is not possible to understand mechanisms through pure observation’ (mreas):

“the tutorial sessions really helped us to think more about what was going on in our CIP, I mean in terms of looking at our resources and investigating how the participants engaged with them.. like our session plans and delivery” (Lilly, female: Interview)

This brings to attention the importance that Schula et al (2016) place upon ‘developing a shared understanding of the programme’ enabling practitioners to shape and describe themselves (with support if necessary) how their programme should work, and then being able to test whether it plays out as anticipated. Within the context of this study the example above plays testament to this whereby the support of the trainer through the ALSs and programme theory model enabled the shared understanding of the programme to be realised in realist terms.

This quote supports the strength of the framework for engaging the practitioners beyond simply focusing on the technocratic aspects of evaluation (Chouinard, 2013) and attention to outcomes (Adams and Harris, 2014). The mechanisms displayed above and within the configuration tables demonstrate evidence of RE facilitating the practitioners to think more deeply about the inner workings of their CIPs and illuminating the black box (Astbury and Leeuw, 2010) which opens up clear alignment with Schula et al’s principle relating to the ‘promotion of evaluative thinking’. Here there is evidence of the practitioners’ identifying key learning in relation to the program mechanism where their learning is depicted by realisation and application to their project. Additionally, ‘follow through to realise use’ also becomes pertinent. Schula et al conceptualise this within practical and transformational outcomes with the former referring to changes in disposition towards a programme and new skills gained, and the later surrounding power and control. It would be fair to assert that the practical construct of this principle is relevant here given the ways that the practitioners have been able to take the knowledge gained and understand more about their CIP, whilst developing the skills needed to uncover mechanisms. This would have not been possible without the participatory nature of the framework.

This highlights the fundamental importance of the CIP project as resource because by being at the centre of running their own project enabled a clearer engagement with certain aspects of the framework and fostered the evaluative thinking and enhancement of the evaluation in practical terms. Additional examples within the CMO configurations support this whereby for example running the CIP project alongside the support of the action learning sets and models (mres) ‘created a sense of responsibility and independence for producing evidence’ (mreas); and also ‘realisation that the independent process helps to understand more about how and why their projects worked’ (mreas).

“And, then as time went on, I started to understand it more and I could understand the relevance and then I could start applying it. Before, I was sort of I wasn’t applying it to my own CIP whereas as time went on, I could see more and more how relevant it was to my project”. (Mia, female: Interview).

“And, I think it was only when the project started and I was a practitioner that I could actually put it into practice. Because, I think before it was more theory. You know, you were in the lecture, you’re more talking about it and it’s
when you actually start delivering your project and then you apply the framework that you can...that it started to make sense basically.” (Mia, female: Interview).

This emphasises a significant finding in that without the resource of the practitioners running their own CIP they may have considerably struggled to make sense of or reason accordingly with the resources provided within the M and E framework. This finding is crucial because it raises an important issue that for any collaborative evaluation training to be carried out with practitioners it should take place alongside the independent mobilisation of a live project brief (in this case the CIP). As kinaesthetic learners (another key context underpinning those in this factor) being able to apply the principles underpinning the evaluation actively alongside the support and training provided was a crucial factor in fostering such competency. It demonstrates the utility of the framework for mobilising M and E in a context of limited competency and links closely with the principle associated to ‘promoting appropriate participatory processes’. In the instance of Schula et al’s application of this, the depth of participation and decision making enabled the M and E to be mobilised accordingly within the active mobilisation of the CIP.

Other significant examples of distance travelled in M and E competency were mechanisms associated with self-belief, motivation and emotional attachment. Again, within the context of low confidence in and hesitancy to mobilise M and E the practitioners highlighted the importance of the action learning sets within the framework. As depicted by the framework, each ALS was broken down accordingly in line with the relevant phases for doing the M and E (mres). This breaking down of the processes into manageable chunks fostered increased belief and capability amongst the practitioners that each phase would help to plug gaps in knowledge (mreas) which it subsequently did.

“Well, at first I thought, ‘Why are we doing this? What are we gaining from it?’ But then as the project went on, I thought actually it’s really helpful because it helps you to understand what went wrong and why it worked. And then it helps obviously for us to sustain our project.” (Lilly, female: Interview).

In terms of motivation, within the context of the practitioners valuing and recognising the importance of evidence within SFD and having a general interest, by making use of readings and ALSs (mres) they became more motivated to persevere and understand more about their project and M and E (mreas). This is an interesting finding because despite the contextual curriculum requirements afforded to evidence within the CIP (that may have explained this motivation), clearly other contextual factors manifested associated with recognition of the lack of evidence discourse (Nichols et al, 2010, Coalter, 2013) and general interest in SFD, particularly for career goals. This finding represents engaged practitioners showing characteristics beyond student practitioners being motivated solely by attainment. In line with the principle of ‘promoting appropriate participatory processes’ these examples provide evidence of depth in terms of involvement and engagement within the M and E process where it would appear that the framework’s design embraced the needs of the practitioners. For example:

“Thus to begin with it was difficult to understand why the programme was not working. And this therefore gave us the drive to want to try and understand why. Even if we were unable to reach out to mums in the community, it was important to understand why this is, so that we can develop a new programme theory” (Lilly, female: Blog).
“But, I think it was because we are really passionate about the project that we’re willing to put in the time and effort. So, we just made time for it no matter what”. (Mia, female: interview’).

Further explanation of this engagement centres upon the degree of emotional attachment that the practitioners placed on their CIP. This was not something limited to this factor and spread across most factors. Indeed, because of the contexts surrounding what was at stake in the assessment element of the CIP and high levels of interest in the CIP process, the practitioners’ competency in M and E was enhanced because of the emotional connection they had with their project. This was a key mechanism in the sense that they were very committed to seeing their CIP through and valued it as something personal to them. Consequently, this reasoning aligned with the resources provided was welcomed by the practitioners because they could see the framework strengthening and provide security for their CIP. Similarities can be made here with practitioners within the over-arching SFD field. Firstly, Levermore (2011) asserts there is growing evidence of practitioners playing an important role in the construction of evidence through participatory approaches. However, as indicated by the lack of evidence discourse (Nichols et al, 2010; Kay, 2012; Lindsey and Gratton, 2012; Harris and Adams, 2016; Adams and Harris, 2014) too often practitioner voices are not accounted for enough. The point here concerns the value in involving practitioners in the creation of this evidence because beyond pure use and disempowered perceptions of evidence, there are emotional and transformational (Cousins and Whitmore, 1998) characteristics that practitioners possess. These points align considerably with the ‘promotion of appropriate participatory processes’ principle (Schula et al, 2016) in that it is fundamental that any process is designed well enough to enable the motivational, emotional and self belief characteristics to come through the M and E process. Through the evidence above it would appear that the framework was able to manifest these crucial characteristics as depicted through the examples above of ‘promoting evaluative thinking’ and ‘enhancing the use of the evaluation’.

10.1.3 Less transformational – less reflexive

Despite some transformational characteristics gleaned from the discussion above, in the main practitioners loading into this factor were far less optimistic about the findings of their evaluation compared to other factors. In sum, they were far less optimistic about the impact their findings would have and gave limited consideration or depth towards this element. In addition, they demonstrated limited intention to elicit RE in future. The key contexts associated with this factor surrounded the higher education environment of in experienced student practitioners leading on the projects. This was aligned with limited confidence and knowledge in M and E as well as limited awareness of the wider M and E landscape.

To begin, despite the provision of the ALS resources (mres) which specifically focused on the importance of partner collaboration in the evaluation, practitioner reasoning against this resource represented ‘weak confidence in their findings because they felt that they were perceived negatively from the industry’ (mreas).

“I don’t know. I suppose I don’t really think about that. I kind of thought, well, why would they be interested.” You know, it’s just a university project. You know, why would they need to know?” (Mia, female: interview)

In addition, those loading into this factor shared similar viewpoints in the sense of showing limited stimulation or enthusiasm about the critical depth of M and E and how their findings may influence
change. Although they were aware (as already highlighted above) of the SFD M and E discourse and the importance of evidence, their connection with it was far more passive and subdued.

Following on from this, practitioners within the clarification phase of the data collection did not provide any specific critical observations or connections with the wider parameters of their evidence. For example, one reason for apprehension of findings may have been associated with industry partners not valuing the how and why approach that RE presents. Another form of reasoning may have been associated to the technocratic requirements that many partners are required to follow (Choiunard, 2013). However, these viewpoints did not emerge. In alignment to the principles, this resonates interestingly with ‘follow through to realise use’. Despite the evidence of practical outcomes and realisation of new skills on this level, Schula’s assertion that transformative outcomes are embodied by changes in power and control are certainly not as apparent concerning the viewpoints of the practitioners towards evidence. There would appear limited desire, awareness or control over what their findings would change or influence. Again, this enhancement of the evaluation only extends as far as the practical outcomes.

Linked to this finding is the level of engagement the practitioners had with RE as an evaluation methodology. As alluded to above, the practitioners within this factor were able to make effective use of RE to understand how and why their CIP worked. However, they did not present any particular issues or views concerning the limitations of the approach which reflected their neutral view of its overall value and intent to mobilise it in the future. It could be suggested that any sign of critical engagement would be reflected through the identification of any issues or tensions that may have manifested themselves within the process.

It can be suggested that despite the increase in M and E competency and completion of the Evaluation, those within this factor were only able to go so far in influencing their evaluation findings on the practical (Schula et al, 2016) opposed to transformative level (Cousins and Whitmore, 1995). Mechanisms associated with passivity, confidence and stimulation have been alluded to. However, given the inexperience and limited competency, a key finding that stands out from this analysis concerns the issues concerning human resources within projects. For example, within the CIP projects the practitioners were responsible for delivering, managing, funding as well as evaluating their projects. This, was a key contextual factor that led to high levels of panic and worry mechanisms around achieving such tasks which affected their capacity and willingness to influence their evaluation.

“I have understood how hard it can be for practitioners to complete this process. As a practitioner, carrying out monitoring and evaluation can be difficult. I’ve learnt that sometimes you cannot rely on people. For instance, trying to organise a time and date that practitioners who were involved in the project was extremely difficult” (Lilly, female: Blog).

This finding has important implications regarding how practitioners are trained in mobilising M and E. Whilst the M and E framework within this study has stimulated use and enabled the practitioners to complete the M and E tasks set out, there has been little evidence to suggest that it has influenced the impact of the evaluation findings. The point to make clear is that the characteristics and contexts underpinning those involved in the evaluation should be attended to clearly, because such will influence what can or cannot be achieved. Within the context of this study, the RE approach employed in study 2 has enabled a clear picture concerning those practitioners loading onto this factor in that there were limitations as to how much they could do and achieve around M and E. For them, if any influence of the evaluation were to be realised, more resource within their
programme, time and awareness would be needed. These points all align neatly with the principle concerning ‘monitoring and responding to resource availability’. In essence, the M and E framework has fostered use more than transformational characteristics associated with influencing the evaluation findings. This however does not necessarily mean that collaborative approaches should seek to align with and satisfy all principles and components within. As Schula et al point out there will be alignment to some or all in many cases. In this case for those practitioners in this factor ‘use’ in the form of practical outcomes was the main ‘motivation for collaboration’. This should not necessarily place a negative light on the framework.

10.1.4 Reliance on control and support

The final theme that emerged from the interpretation of this factor concerned the levels of control and support provided within the framework. The initial Q factor interpretation (prior to the clarification stage of analysis) provisionally provided a varied insight into the viewpoints afforded to support and control provided in the framework. For example the initial crib sheet process of abduction uncovered some negative viewpoints concerning the structure of the framework not enabling clear grasping of M and E nor being in control of the evaluation. This, however contradicted a series of other positive viewpoints associated with M and E competency being increased and the resources associated with the models as part of the framework. Furthermore, the clarification stage of the data analysis soon demonstrated a clearer picture of those viewpoints. In essence, based on the context of limited knowledge and experience surrounding M and E, a significant level of support and control was sought by the practitioners.

Given that the practitioners opting into the M and E framework had no prior experience of conducting M and E, support was identified as a key requirement to enable use and practical outcomes set out in ‘follow through to realise use’. Through the clarification stage of the research the practitioners made regular reference to the support provided within the M and E framework as a major contributor to enabling them to produce their M and E. Within this context of inexperience, additional contexts also emerged concerning the way that practitioners could learn and digest information. For those loading into this factor they shared the similar characteristics of struggling to engage in lecture based environments, and where large proportions of information were provided. In similar respect to the kinaesthetic discussion above, in order to mobilise the M and E the practitioners responded well to the broken down structure of the ALSs (mres) where they felt they could steadily clarify understanding and progression with the trainer before moving to the next stage (mreas).

“So, highly, from the beginning, so throughout the workshops, you have certain tutorials and certain sit down meetings, where you can put your questions forward and then you get new problems, then you can work them with your projects and then put forward any problems that you’ve had or issues or questions. So, it was so much like on a fortnightly basis, that we were always having the contacting and answering our questions. So, anything that we were unsure, we’re learning it and taking it forward” (Josh, male: Interview).

In some respects the practitioners referred to the repetitious nature of the framework where they felt they could revisit areas of the framework such as certain ALS’s at specific times which enabled them to keep in control of the M and E (mreas) whilst gaining specific ‘special attention’ for them (mreas) at the same time.
“But towards the end, it become clearer and I think that was just repetition, you know, more workshops, lectures, you know, tutorials. They all built together and then by the end of it, I felt confident in the framework that we applied to our CIP”. (Mia, female: Interview).

This ‘dipping in and out’ mechanism was key for striking a balance between maintaining responsibility and independence of conducting the M and E whilst at varying times drawing upon the support of the framework. A key finding that emerges here in relation to the framework concerns the flexibility that it provided throughout the lifecycle of the CIPs. Rather than scheduling the ALSs at specific and exclusive times, the framework was designed in a way where the practitioners could make contact in relation to whatever stage they felt they were at. This highlights the importance of ‘fostering meaningful inter professional relationships’ which Schula et al align to respect, trust, sustained and structured interactivity and cultural competency. The findings from the analysis would support the view that the framework resonated well with this principle particularly through the sustained interactivity.

This has important implications for collaborative and participatory approaches to evaluation where in essence this evidence would suggest that it is best guided by the practitioners carrying out the M and E work in terms of what they need to carry out the task at hand, and how they wish to control the structured and sustained interactivity (Schula et al, 2016). Whilst this context of higher education may be slightly different to the external SFD landscape where funding requirements and time dictate, there are similarities and lessons that the external field can take from this framework where in particular practitioners are the key deliverers of the M and E. As Lindsey and Gratton (2012) and Harris and Adams (2016) assert, many approaches to participatory M and E are either rigid, or sequestered within academic discourses (Kay, 2012) which may limit the capacity of meaningful inter professional relationships being fostered (Schula et al, 2016). Whilst arguably the same could be said for the M and E framework within this study, it can be argued that a context within this factor required the pre-established design because those mobilising M and E required a framework in place that they could then mobilise.

The preceding narrative highlights some important considerations surrounding control emanating from the practitioners within this factor. The prevailing contexts emerging within this factor concerned the limited knowledge and experience of those practitioners conducting M and E, and the higher educational context of where their CIP sat. It is quite apparent from the analysis of this factor that the framework created an appropriate balance of control. The point to make here concerns how in control the practitioners were and to what extent the framework controlled them. The opening crib sheet analysis actually depicted that the practitioners were not in control of the evaluation, yet this was associated more with the inability to control the evaluation in practice given the volatile nature of the projects. Further clarification indicated that the practitioners did feel in control in preparing the evaluation and carrying it out as the quote below states:

“You get guided along the only direction that you want to take. So, I’d say, yeah as a group, you are in a lot of control. Yeah and I don’t think we were was once told that, actually, no, you can’t do this.”

(Josh, male: Interview).

Moreover, based on the contexts highlighted, the capacity building design of the ALS and knowledge provided by the trainer (mres) enabled the practitioners to ‘trust the trainer to control and guide’ (mreas) them through the M and E process. However, in some respects they would also look to
others as fellow practitioners (for example those in factor 2) to lead the way and provide guidance whilst making key decisions. This was something they specifically required to enable the M and E to be completed and resonates with principle pertaining to ‘monitoring evaluation progress and quality’. As has been discussed practitioner focused evaluation is often open to critique associated with, and limitations of programme bias, evaluation credibility and validity (Patton, 1997; Shufflebeam, 1994). Within this factor the practitioners’ motivation for collaboration was on the basis of needing the support to check what they were doing (within a conceptual M and E approach) was of an appropriate standard. Nevertheless, it was crucial as Schula et al attest to ensure that this control and monitoring would be mobilised accordingly within a ‘meaningful professional relationship’ and ‘shared understanding of the programme’.

10.2 Factor 2 discussion: Polished Problem Solvers

Having provided a themed discussion in relation to factor one, attention will now turn to factor two. Factor two accounted for four of fifteen practitioners who took part in the M and E framework. This factor accounted for 19% of the study variance and represented an eigenvalue of 2.23%. The practitioners loading onto this factor shared similar traits to factor one in terms of M and E competency and being able to apply their M and E through the active mobilisation of their CIP. However, contrastingly there was more desire on the part of these practitioners to make use of RE in the future, alongside critical viewpoints of the RE approach and advancement of such findings. Unlike the practitioners within factor one, factor two practitioners were able to negotiate and overcome the obstacles associated with the M and E process in more efficient ways given their increased confidence levels and awareness of the contexts surrounding SFD and M and E discourses.

10.2.1 Fostering use in M and E

Practitioners within factor two shared similar viewpoints as those in factor one in regards to M and E competency and particularly practical outcomes. As discussed above, factor two shared similar outcomes surrounding the ‘promotion of evaluative thinking’ in respect of new learning and ‘following through to realise use’ in terms of practical outcomes related to the M and E of the CIP and new skills gained for conducting RE. The CIP as a key resource in combination with the ALSs provided within the framework also enabled the ‘active M and E’ (mreas) mechanism which can be associated with promotion of appropriate participatory processes (whereby the framework enabled depth and participation around the CIP). These outcomes were very much reliant upon the contextual factor of their engagement with SFD.

However, there were key distinguishing characteristics that set the practitioners within this factor apart from those in factor one. The first point to make in this distinction concerned the level of engagement and awareness of the SFD and M and E landscape surrounding their CIPs. This was a key contextual factor that enabled the manifestations of mechanisms associated more in line with the transformational dimensions associated with ‘follow through to realise use’.

Given that some of the practitioners within this factor worked closely in their CIP with those across other factors it was quite apparent that they took on the leadership role and were accountable for more of the transformational outcomes associated with their CIP. As the CMO configurations show, these practitioners were able to go further in developing relationships with partners to bring their programme theory to life prior to any M and E being carried out. By introducing programme theory resources to partners within the CIP (mreas) this facilitated the ‘cooperative construction of how each partner could see the programme working’ (mreas) which subsequently led to what the practitioners felt was a more comprehensive evaluation design.
“the skills and qualities which were picked out received praise from fellow practitioners as well as lecturers and tutors. This is because they was agreement in the skills and qualities identified as a key focus in the project. Also, the college tutor at xxxx College who worked with this group on a daily basis highlighted a real strong need for these areas to be implemented”. (Alan, male: Blog).

This example relates and aligns accordingly with the ‘promotion of evaluative thinking’ on not just the process of learning but also in relation to inquiry orientation. In line with Preskill and Torres (1999) the practitioners were keen to explore the values, beliefs and knowledge represented by their partners to inform the CIP and subsequent evaluation design. Moreover, this also demonstrates characteristics associated with the principle of ‘developing a shared understanding of the programme’ reflected by this mutual intention to design their M and E with their partners. Additionally, this demonstrates transformational characteristic associated with ‘follow through to realise use’ on the basis that engaging stakeholders reflects them taking control and an interest in power over how their M and E and programme design may be recognised by their partners. This is quite distinguishing from other factors.

Furthermore, whilst it may be viewed that the context of being conceptually engaged within M and E and SFD discourses was positive for enabling mechanisms like above to fire, these also linked to other contexts that created tense environments within the CIPs surrounding viewpoints. In one instance two of the practitioners loading into this factor resided within the same CIP and because of their conceptual engagement sometimes led to disagreements in approaches to the M and E. Within this context, the resources of the ALSs combined with the support of the trainer (mres) enabled the diffusion of disagreements to provide clearer direction and cohesion (mreas).

“And you’d be like, “Oh actually, both your views are fine and you’re both coming from the right place. Why don’t you try and put them together?” And we’d be like, “Okay, let’s do it that way.” Whereas, if we were just left as a group, we’d have chosen one way instead of the other”. (Teresa, Female: Interview).

This was a crucial mechanism within the framework to foster the promotion of ‘evaluative thinking’. However, like factor one this was only possible if there existed ‘meaningful inter professional relationships’ and a ‘shared understanding of the programme’ where the trainer knew enough about the CIP to guide the direction.

10.2.2 Realising and prioritising RE and M and E for the future

The next theme to discuss involves the distance travelled in relation to the realisation and prioritisation that the practitioners afforded to M and E / RE. It is within this theme where many transformational outcomes manifest themselves such as greater value afforded to M and E and willingness to carry out RE as an evaluation methodology in future practice. What is significant in relation to this study is that a key context leading to these outcomes was the pre conceived apprehension afforded to M and E work amongst the various other priorities the practitioners were responsible for in the process.

“Prior to the CIP, I had viewed evaluation as waste of time where professionals collect numerical data and manipulate it to justify their jobs. However, this process of applying realistic evaluation has taught me that M and E is important to identify how changes have occurred so that you can utilise what works to develop a programme or to guide others in building their programmes.” (Elvin, male: Blog).
Such a context is one that is pertinent across the wider SFD discourse, particularly concerning the limited resources and time that practitioners have for prioritising M and E work (Harris and Adams, 2016; Adams and Harris, 2014; Kay, 2012). Yet despite these contextual issues, the provision of the ALSs alongside the facilitation of the trainer and processes for conducting RE (mres) enabled the practitioners within this factor to develop ‘a realisation that understanding how and why programmes work can actually aid future learning and programme development’ (mreasures). This mechanism helps to explain positive value afforded to RE and in the broadest sense M and E practice. This is a major example linking to the principles of ‘follow through to realise use’ and ‘promoting evaluative thinking’. On the level of evaluative thinking, the RE approach has evoked key learning and understanding of the programme. This has clearly informed the ‘influence of the evaluation’ in the sense that the practitioners have shown characteristics in line with the practical outcomes of developing new skills and aiding use (Schula et al 2016). However, by also asserting control and power over how the knowledge of their CIP can aid learning, the practitioners also resonate with the transformational dimension of this principle which in turn has informed their positivity towards M and E practice:

“If you just do a plain monitoring and evaluation and you don’t ask those what works for whom and what circumstances and why, you’re not going to be given that information and you could go back and you say, “Oh, this programme overall, it was a success,” and you’d go back and you’d redeliver it and it would be a failure and it’d fall through and you’d have no idea why”. (Teresa, Female: Interview).

This holds considerable value and scope for RE’s mobilisation as an evaluation methodology in collaborative evaluation approaches. Even more so, as expressed by the mechanism of ‘being able to delve deeper into the programme to serve evaluation needs’ there was clear indication from the analysis that the practitioners saw scope for using RE in the future which again aligns with the two principles ‘evaluative thinking’ and ‘realising use’. When asked if they were likely to make use of RE in the future, the practitioner below responded with the following:

“Yeah definitely. I think I don’t know obviously if they use it kind of that much. I think for us...well for me, it was something which was quite new. So trying to get it across to kind of big places like Sport England might be quite difficult but for me personally, I’d definitely use it and kind of show people. It definitely had more of a outcome, than kind of you just saying, “Oh. This is how many mums we’ve got and this is what they learned from it,” kind of thing. Yeah, I definitely feel confident.” (Louise, female: Interview).

As has been discussed within the literature (Harris and Adams, 2016), despite the proliferation of many theory driven approaches in M and E on participatory and consultancy levels (Levermore, 2011; Lindsey and Gratton, 2012), there still appears few examples of realist approaches to evaluation being carried out. Evidence from this factor (given that the circumstances underpinning the CIPs are not too different from traditional SFD approaches) would suggest that there is value for applying such an approach in the future to transcend those that focus solely on outcomes and technocratic approaches (Choiuard, 2013). However, given the complexity that surrounds the use of RE it is imperative that any collaborative framework should take stock of Schula et al’s (2016) recommendations concerning ‘appropriate participatory processes’. By this, any participatory process should be designed in response to the context and recognition of need (Schula et al, 2016) where control, depth of participation and diversity of stakeholders is accounted for. In light of the
evidence from this study and the outcomes associated with RE, it would appear that the participatory process underpinning the framework served this purpose well.

10.2.3 Detecting and solving problems through conceptual engagement

What also emerged from the analysis was the role in which the practitioners in this factor played in enabling the M and E to be achieved. It became quite apparent that their characteristics associated with leadership and problem solving were key drivers for detecting and solving problems. Similarly, like factor one these practitioners as a contextual characteristic were very driven towards learning about sport development and gaining a career in the industry. Given that the practitioners within this factor worked with practitioners in their CIP across the other factors, they were instrumental for guiding and steering the M and E in the right direction (as indicated in factor 1). As shown within the results, there are a comprehensive range of CMO configurations pertaining to this. As illustrated, each CMO displays a high level of conceptual engagement and ‘evaluative thinking’ afforded to the process. Despite their limited experience in carrying Out M and E work, the practitioners referred to experiences of meeting certain obstacles concerning the volatile nature of their CIP changing, and un-cooperative participants. In practice, like other factors they found it hard to see and mobilise their evaluation design in its initial intention.

“Due to the fact that with such a broad spectrum of choices on which the Monitoring and Evaluation could focus on, it made it difficult to whittle down our options to a select few in which the group felt held a high level of importance.” (Alan, male: Blog).

However the increases in knowledge aligned with the flexibility and guidance of the M and E framework to improvise (mres) enabled the practitioners to still produce sufficient realist M and E findings despite the deviation from any initial intentions. In the case of the practitioner below, being involved in the project provided flexibility and greater reach to engage with the participants:

“We found it difficult to put into practice our evaluation questions. So the support that we got from yourself and running the CIP we kind of got round that. It was more so kind of…we kind of acted as if we were doing it casually into conversation because otherwise they would have thought, “Hold on sec. This is like an experiment or something.” (Louise, female: Interview).

A similar context concerned the complexities of running the CIP combined with the anxiety of applying an evaluation approach that as Pawson (2012) states has no rigid or defined method. Whilst this may appear flexible, as in experienced practitioners it also created anxiety. Within this context the resources provided in the form of the ALSs and the evaluation model depicting stages to follow (mres) fostered a ‘steady, focused and assertive attitude towards what was being investigated’ (mreAs) in the evaluation. As Pawson (2012) asserts, it is important to steady your fire and through the ‘evaluative thinking’ the practitioners showed adherence to this whereby limiting the number of CMOs to focus on.

“I think an issue was the amount of outcomes and mechanisms that were triggered from the mums. So for example, we had like a never-ending list of what the mums did achieve or in line of what...who it didn’t work for or kind of what circumstances. So in that respect, it literally can be never-ending. So there were loads of things to explore but I think you can only explore so much.” (Louise, female: Interview).
This conceptual engagement with RE was further supported in the way that practitioners within this factor were able to identify problems and develop more knowledge and reflexivity towards the evaluation approach. For example, despite the utility of applying the CMO configuration approach (mres) practitioners could soon see problems associated with how many configurations to produce and also complexity of deciding what would constitute a context, mechanism or outcome (Dalkin et al, 2015).

“Our big one was sometimes confusing or not understanding whether our context was the mechanism or whether the mechanism was the context. And that was our biggest one because I remember meeting Andy, sitting down, and he’d be like, “To me, that’s a mechanism,” but I’d be like, “Oh, to me, that’s a context.” (Teresa, female: Interview).

This demonstrates the ‘promotion of evaluative thinking’ on two levels. Firstly, within the dimension of learning about how to mobilise the RE approach, and secondly in accordance with inquiry orientation. Archibald (2013) asserts that evaluative thinking encompasses learning and inquisitiveness and Schula et al also suggest that when evaluative thinking is fostered, a culture of enquiry is nurtured amongst stakeholders. The findings here illustrate the ways in which the practitioners have shown inquisitiveness towards RE within the context of their CIP.

In addition, this mobilisation of evaluative thinking is further evidenced through the ways the practitioners were able to make use of RE to enable a more reflexive and honest appraisal of their project. Again, within the context of limited experience, the crucial resources provided through the RE tools in the framework and active mobilisation of their own CIP (mres) ‘exposed weaknesses of the CIP through exploring what worked for whom and how and why’ (mreas). This is significant in the sense that the practitioners were keen to go beyond just simply highlighting the positives of their CIP. Instead, as advocated by (Harris and Adams, 2016) they were able to articulate key learning points articulating negative as well as positive outcomes.

“So actually finding out what the mums kind of gained or actually not from our programme, finding out obviously again what worked for whom in what circumstances and why was massive for us”

(Lousie, female: Interview).

Furthermore, such learning points support the alignment to practical and transformational outcomes within ‘following through to realise use’. On the practical level there is evidence of changes in disposition towards the programme aligned with new skills gained. On the transformative level the practitioners have taken control as to how they view their CIP positively and negatively which moves away from traditional approaches in SFD that focus purely on positive outcomes.

The final discussion point concerns the transformational viewpoints associated with evidence. Through their awareness of the issues surrounding the lack of evidence discourse, the framework and opportunity to M and E their own projects (mres) enabled the practitioners to realise through their own eyes how and why their CIP was working illuminating key issues in the industry (mreas). This increased awareness drew strong viewpoints as presented below regarding what is not done and what should be done within the industry to tackle evidence issues.

“And being able to have that conversation, I think that’s what practitioners lack as well, is that they’re not having the conversations. They’re farrowing ahead with one method and I think it’s the method that they’ve probably always used.” (Teresa, Female: Interview).
The example above would align with the transformational dimension within ‘follow through to realise use’ because in similar respect to preceding discussions, viewpoints emerged regarding the construction of knowledge and how it is created within evidence.

However, despite these strong transformational characteristics it was very much apparent like those in factor one that the practitioners from this factor did not see their findings having any sufficient impact, nor did they feel certain about carrying out M and E in the future. However, unlike factor one whose apathy towards M and E was more associated to lack of reflexivity and awareness, these practitioners were very much aware of the M and E landscape and their reasoning for such reluctance was more based on sincism and issues within the industry as the quote below illustrates:

“I think it is probably more about the numbers for him because of Sport England and Sportivate they need...then the government obviously, they need to get these numbers. Initially it was quite difficult and he didn’t really understand what we actually found. It was more, oh, how many people attended or kind of that aspect” (Louise, Female: Interview).

These examples highlight tensions surrounding working with fellow stakeholders in projects and reflect similar issues in the wider SFD industry surrounding partnership working and synthesising the disparate organisational goals. Within the context of CIPs despite previously mentioned cases of the practitioners being able to collaborate and develop insight with partners of programme goals, conversely limited engagement and cooperation (mreas) resulted in M and E findings that according to the practitioners did not reach their full potential. This highlights some potential tensions within the framework concerning ‘developing a shared understanding of the programme’. This is because although amongst the trainer and CIP practitioners a mutual understanding was forged and guidance was provided for the M and E, in most cases this was absent from additional partners involved in the programme such as the schools, community organisations and other stakeholders involved. Moving forward and mobilising the framework again, it would be worth exploring the utility of involving in more depth the full range of stakeholders involved with the intention of working towards M and E goals that embraced the needs of all concerned.

Leading on and connected with this very issue focuses on the utility of the RE approach for the stakeholders that the practitioners were working with in their CIPs. Whilst the philosophical approach of RE fostered practical outcomes for ‘follow through to realise use’ amongst the CIP practitioners, to what extent this was the same for their fellow stakeholders was open to debate. As such, practitioner reasoning centred upon the belief that their fellow stakeholders were either ‘cynical or unable to see specific use of RE’ (mreas) due to their strict M and E funding guidelines.

As a result, there were limitations surrounding to what extent the findings of the M and E were put to good use or enhanced the influence of the evaluation amongst other stakeholders. As recognised by the practitioners this resurfaces major tensions within the SFD industry concerning the favoured approaches to M and E. These have been discussed in considerable depth within previous chapters (chapters 2 and 3 specifically) in the sense that outcome orientated and technocratic approaches continue to take precedence. If RE is to make more headway within SFD circles a shift in focus is required (Harris and Adams, 2016) to focus more attention on programme learning.

10.2.4 Quasi autonomous control

The final theme to draw upon centres upon findings associated with control and support emanating from the framework. In similar respects to factor one, the data analysis and interpretation uncovered interesting viewpoints concerning the ‘fostering of meaningful inter professional
relationships’, ‘developing a shared understanding of the programme’ and ‘promoting appropriate participatory processes’. Where factor one practitioners demonstrated the need for more of a hands on level of support, practitioners within factor two due to their independence and conceptual grasp of M and E and RE preferred more of an arms – length approach.

Despite the independent leadership characteristics they possessed for problem solving and being engaged within M and E discourse, they still resided in a position of in experience and limited knowledge for carrying out RE and M and E in general. As such, within this context the predefined design of the M and E framework mobilised by the ALSs (mres) provided ‘the needed capacity building and direction alongside the independence and conceptual engagement’ (mreas), resulting in coherent completion of the M and E.

“I think we kind of did need guidelines because otherwise you wouldn’t know where to start. So for our programme, I think we needed a starting point so we could then stem like different kind of mechanisms for the mums. So we definitely needed that push to begin with.” (Louise, female: Interview).

These supporting quotes and CMO configurations support the pre designed structure of the framework because if it had not been in place, the design of the M and E from scratch would have hindered the whole process. This reilluminates the importance of ‘clarifying the motivation for collaboration’ because as apparent within the context, it was not a desire on behalf of the practitioners to build their own framework entirely where they could choose their own approach. In accordance with ‘promoting appropriate participatory processes’ the pre designed RE framework enabled a sound depth of participation and appeared to strike a good balance along the lines of control in decision making.

This control in decision making reflected ‘the fostering of meaningful inter professional relationships’ where again as in factor one, those within this factor felt they could call upon support and guidance when needed. The difference for factor two practitioners concerned them not requiring as much control or support as those in other factors. In particular, due to their assertive nature they were able to ‘go it alone in the M and E processes for longer, but when needed could draw upon the needed control and guidance of the trainer’ (mre) to keep them on track. Again, this reiterates the importance for any collaborative approach to foster trust and respect in terms of ‘developing a shared understanding of the programme’. Particularly in this case the practitioners would have needed the trainer to be aware of the programme and its direction to consent to any direction or guidance. As such any approach should also be flexible enough to strike a balance between hands on and arms-length support. This aligns with characteristics associated with ‘monitoring and responding to resource availability’ where consideration should be given towards whether all including the trainer possess the appropriate skill set to conduct the evaluation. This was a crucial factor given that within this study practitioners loading into the four factors in some respects shared CIPs. This meant that for some hands on support was needed and for others it was not. In line with ‘motivation for collaboration’ one should consider carefully the diversity of the stakeholders within each project opposed to viewing them the same based on the programme they are involved in.

10.3 Factor 3 discussion: “Passive Passengers”

Factor three had an eigenvalue of 1.45 and represented 12% of the study variance where by three were associated with this factor. These practitioners were the less engaged within the M and E
framework more so than any other factor yet at the same time did demonstrate learning and knowledge within M and E. They were less critical and aware of issues in M and E and demonstrated more of a surface learning approach to engaging in it. As a result their distance travelled in M and E competency was not as significant.

10.3.1 Competent on the surface in how and why

The first of two themes making up this factor concerns the degree of competency the practitioners within this factor developed around M and E and in particular grasping of RE principles. Despite the limited degree of engagement (which will follow below) practitioners within this factor did embody some positive outcomes in relation to the framework.

Firstly, there was clear distance travelled in connection with developing an understanding of how and why their CIP worked which supports the ‘promotion of evaluative thinking’. This was a common correlation across factors whereby because of the ‘repetition and kinaesthetic application of realist programme theory to their own project’ (Mreas) they were able to develop this greater appreciation for how and why. It was also no surprise to see this mechanism fire within contexts of ‘fear and apprehension towards M and E’ and ‘awareness of the lack of evidence discourse’. This again reinforces the importance of the CIP process running alongside the M and E framework to provide the ‘appropriate participatory processes’ to foster and enhance learning.

However, what has become a key distinction across factors is the depth and degree of engagement for appreciating how and why. Whilst it was quite clear that the practitioners within this factor had made progress in M and E practice as well as expressing more understanding in how and why their CIP had worked, this was far more surface level orientated. For example, within the interviews phase of the clarification process, when asked to clarify ‘why’ and ‘how’ they felt that they had developed a deeper understanding of how and why their CIP had worked, they were not able to draw upon some of the key realist principles or explanations provided by those in other factors. In this sense unlike other factors (particularly factor two) limited or no reference was made to ‘mechanisms of change’ or ‘reasoning’ which would be common reference points made by other factors for showing this deeper understanding.

“I think it was just a lot of the time it was like the terminology. Like, at first I thought, realistically, like I didn’t understand the realistic evaluation approach, so I was like – I couldn’t piece together what it meant, but as time went on I started to grasp it a bit more”. (Mark, male: Interview).

Furthermore, continued analysis of the data captured additional contextual factors and mechanisms explaining these outcomes. A key prevailing context that emerged concerned the characteristics of the curriculum dynamics involving the CIP. Because of the academic implications of being involved in the CIP and what was at stake, this context led to ‘motivation to succeed and score a higher mark’ (Mreas) by making use of the ALSs. It was also apparent in this configuration that part of this mechanism also related to ‘looking up to fellow members in their CIP’ (Mreas) for guidance to achieve this end. It is not to say in any respect this was mechanism was only evident within this factor because motivation to succeed in connection with the curriculum was a key mechanism (and in some cases context) across other factors. Nevertheless, it was instrumentally more significant within this factor.

It is apparent that the ‘promotion of evaluative thinking’ and its dimension of learning is relevant to this factor. Yet, this is not so much the case in relation to the inquiry orientation dimension of this principle as the practitioners did not express any sufficient degree of reflexivity or critical
engagement with RE. This would highlight as an implication for the principles of collaboration that each one (in particular this one) will have different degrees of depth and application by any actor based on their ‘motivation for collaboration’. Within the context of this factor this surface level grasping of learning evokes caution in taking seriously the positive affordance given towards M and E by the practitioners as being a major part of a their role and intention to make use of it in the future. In this case, the mechanism associated with this outcome was attuned more towards distinguishing between M and E opposed to any intention of future use based on inquisitive critique and deeper evidence of learning about their programme. Therefore, within this factor it would be naïve to conjecture with any confidence that they would be likely to elicit M and E in future roles, especially given that they had little faith with any critical justification as to where there findings would go.

10.3.2 Passengers

This focuses on reinforcing the characteristics of passive engagement associated with the practitioners. Key outcomes present themselves within this factor such as less intent to carry out RE in the future, less reflexivity around M and E practice and being unable to see the connection between learnings associated with how and why with M and E practice.

Like other factors, the context concerning the ‘limited experience in M and E’ was very much relevant to this theme. However, unlike practitioners in other factors the resources associated with the terminology of RE such as CMO configurations and programme theory (mres) created ‘confusion and the inability to grasp certain concepts’ (mres). This was a disempowering mechanism that supports the previous explanations connected with the surface learning approach taken and relying on fellow practitioners within the CIP. It also explains why the practitioners within this factor were less optimistic about eliciting RE in the future.

In extension to the ‘limited experience and expertise’ context another also emerges consideration the characteristics of the practitioners within this factor. All of the practitioners loading into this factor were students enrolled on the BA Hons Sport Coaching and Development degree. As is notorious within the course, some are more driven towards coaching whereas others are more driven towards sport development. This was a crucial context across all factors indicating the degree of interest, motivation and desire to engage within the programme. Unlike other factors, those here were more interested with coaching and a desire to achieve a career in this field. As a result, such a context led to them ‘feeling a sense of comfort taking on more of a coaching role within the CIP opposed to focusing on M and E’ (mres):

“I've always...I think because, again saying, I'm more of a practical learner. I've always had, I'd say, more of a passion for the coaching side.” (Mark, male: Interview).

This finding helps to explain why practitioners here were not as engaged critically in the process due to their underpinning motivational dispositions. In terms of ‘motivation for collaboration’ this was no more than the instrumental use for them ‘to score a good mark for their CIP’ (mres) and ‘rely upon others such as the trainer and fellow group members’ (mres) to enable this to happen.

“I think I obviously we were all, we are all engaged. But I personally felt I was less engaged, just maybe because I didn’t seem to understand it a lot more. Like when we’re having the discussions, it did seem as if, the other lads knew a little bit more about it. And I’m not sure, it’s just maybe that they might have read a little bit more than I did” (Mark, male: Interview).
Such findings resurface points previously discussed concerning the importance for ‘clarifying the motivation for collaboration’. As Schula et al (2016) point out this concerns not just clarifying what the stakeholders (in this instance the practitioners) want from the evaluation, but also their background and how that background and set of circumstances will influence their depth of participation (Cousins et al, 2013). If it was not for those within other factors residing in the leadership roles it would be fair to suggest that those within factor three would have struggled considerably to make use of the framework. This reiterates the importance for any collaborative framework’s ability to firstly ‘monitor and respond to resource availability’ as well as secondly ‘monitor progress and quality’ (Schula et al). With the former, the capacity of the practitioners within factor three were limited to grasp RE principles and mobilise them accordingly which would have required more in depth monitoring of progress and quality if not for those within additional factors. This demonstrates important considerations for the SFD field given that across many programmes, SFD people resources consist of volunteers, coaches in addition to the practitioners (Lindsey and Gratton, 2012, Kay, 2012, Nichols et al, 2010). For any framework for collaborative use to be effective, (like the disparity of those in this study) the capacity of those in such roles and their motivation need to be understood so that ‘appropriate participatory processes can be mobilised’.

In conclusion, it would be fair to assert therefore that one should adopt a degree of caution in suggesting that the framework has enabled significant use and distance travelled for those in this factor. In relation to ‘following through to realise use’ one could suggest a degree of enhancement in practical outcomes but only as far as the instrumental value of the CIP for them and their own individual attainment. Moreover, transformational characteristics of power and control do not take shape. The most significant finding from this factor concerns the variation of practitioner motivation and aspiration within and M and E framework. To what extent (without the leaders from other factors) these practitioners can make use of RE given its conceptual complexity is open to debate and further exploration. Nevertheless, this is not to say that without such guidance RE would not benefit them.

10.4 Factor four discussion: “Proficient, competent and cautiously optimistic”

Factor four possesses an eigenvalue of 1.05 and explains 9% of the study variance. This factor accounted for two of the practitioners involved in the M and E framework. For demographical interests both were involved within the same CIP which involved working with young children at a local primary school. To summarise the findings of this factor, practitioners placed strong value upon their relationship with the trainer more so than any other factor. Despite their strong belief in the value of their findings, practitioners within this factor were more cautious about RE’s use than any other factor, and as a result less likely to make use of it in the future. They made more reference than any other factor to its incompatibility with the context of their CIP, yet through their engagement were able to mobilise appropriate findings. As depicted within the CMO configurations presented within the results chapter, three themes are presented. These are ‘avenues for use’, ‘optimism of findings’, and ‘RE sceptics’.

10.4.1 Avenues for use based on strong relationships

Within similar respects to factors one and two, many of the CMOs in the theme presented here focus on the positive outcomes of use associated with achieving M and E targets, gaining increased competence in M and E and understanding through active application of their CIP how to carry out the process. However, whilst other factors recognised (more implicitly) the importance of capacity
building provided by the trainer to enable the fruition of the M and E process, practitioners within this factor placed explicit emphasis upon it, and in reference to the quote below, flexibility:

“You were very flexible which really suited us. You weren’t really forced into it. You say that, “Oh you can’t turn up to the workshop. Or we can arrange another time.” So you’re very flexible in that way. In terms of my understanding of M and E, it sort of each...I like the fact we work through stages” (Nathan, male: Interview).

An emerging context surrounded the challenging nature of the CIP in addition to the weak initial competency in M and E. This challenging nature was characterised by the project (Edumove) focusing on enhancing through movement the learning of young people. This was something that the practitioners found problematic in the sense of implementing RE within such a context that would require them to explore mechanisms of change with young people. It was within this context where the practitioners made effective use of the ALSs and support of the trainer (mres) because of the mutual trust and engagement between them and knowledge on behalf of the trainer to provide needed guidance (mres).

“I think I needed it, yeah. And even when we didn’t have like a scheduled time to meet with regards to a session with you, if any of us really had any queries about how or where we go from, where we go from somewhere, we would just arrange a tutorial with you anyway and talk it through and go from there”. (Robert, male: Interview).

It becomes apparent within this theme that ‘developing a shared understanding of the programme’, ‘fostering meaningful inter professional relationships’, and ‘monitoring resource availability’ are key principles that apply to the practitioners. The high value placed upon trust was strongly associated with the need to ensure that the trainer and practitioners had a clear understanding of what the project was about. This was key in order for the trainer to be able to guide and provide advice as to how to address any concerns, and in turn foster the sustained interactivity needed from the practitioners so that evaluation progress could be monitored. As the data supports, these were key viewpoints associated with the successful mobilisation of the evaluation for use.

10.4.2 Optimism of findings (for own praxis and partners)

The practitioners within this factor were the most optimistic about the value afforded to their findings than any other factor. Interestingly, the practitioners were operating within the context of a contemporary physical literacy programme that with a limited evidence base underpinning it. By utilising the stages underpinning the RE approach in model 2 alongside the delivery of their CIP (mres) this ‘enabled them to identify new knowledge associated with certain learning styles (mres), which in turn they truly felt would enhance the use for Edumove. Within the same configuration additionally the mechanism associated with the ‘strong relationship with Edumove’ (mres) fostered this optimistic belief:

“And I feel our research actually led to a different approach in EduMove because EduMove used to work with a class of 30. Now they split the class. They split the people who are only like kinaesthetic kind of learner. They weren’t doing that before but it’s only thanks to sort of our programme that they’ve done that.” (Nathan, male: Interview).
In aligning these findings with the principles for collaborative evaluation tested in this study, it is this factor more than any other that resonates most with 'follow through to realise use'. Where factor two was more transformational in respect to practitioner use of RE, the use of findings and their impact were key for those in factor four. This claim can firstly be associated with the high value placed upon their findings by the practitioners and influence they felt they would have upon their stakeholders.

Secondly, transformational impact for them was very strong in regards to how increasingly more engaged they had become in the evaluation as a result of the capacity building developed within the framework. As the data supports, a key context leading to this outcome was the curriculum context of the CIP and the attainment factors associated with it. As such, of what was an initial desire to achieve a good grade, practitioners reasoned against the resources of time, trainer and the CIP (mres) in a way that created increased motivation to learn more about their project (mreas):

“Obviously in the beginning it was just to sort of, to be honest, get good grades, things like that. But towards the end it’s something...like I’ve said I’ve gained a lot from it. And I wouldn’t have cared at the beginning but obviously having more time with you to really understand monitoring and evaluation as something I’ve previously struggled with. If it didn’t sort of have a positive effect on my degree, I probably wouldn’t have taken it up at the beginning. But I felt now I’ve been through the programme, it’s really helped me to become more reflective myself”. (Nathan, male: Interview).

Finally, within the practical dimensions of this principle the RE approach adopted enabled changes of disposition towards their programme (Schula et al, 2016) and subsequent learning. This change of disposition was the key mechanism leading to greater reflexivity and value afforded to going beyond traditional technocratic approaches to evaluation (Choiunard, 2013; Harris and Adams, 2016) and attention to more realist positions. This optimism afforded to the M and E findings was further supported by the increased pride practitioners possessed for their CIP and achievements associated to their M and E. A key reason for this was because (again like in previous CMO configurations discussed above) implementing their own project and mobilising realistic approaches within M and E uncovered for them key insights into how and why their project was working. This is a recurring finding for this study in relation to the value placed upon the active application of RE for opening up new knowledge in the projects, thus striking clear connection with ‘the promotion of evaluative thinking’.

Thus, there would appear great scope for the ‘promotion of evaluative thinking’ in realist terms because as supported by this study practitioners may be able to uncover closer insight into unearthing mechanisms of change, given their close proximity to the programme and developing an understanding with participants. This would support the calls made by Harris and Adams (2016), Adams and Harris (2014), (Fetterman, 2005), and Nichols et al (2010) for practitioners being more closely involved in M and E work opposed to relying on external consultants who may find the unearthing of mechanisms harder to capture.

10.4.3 RE sceptics

However, whilst it may be apparent from the preceding theme that RE has fostered use and transformational outcomes for the practitioners, those within this factor did also express reservations about RE. Like factor two, factor four practitioners shared a strong conceptual grasp of RE. To distinguish the two, where factor two practitioners were more transformational in the sense
of utilising RE for future, practitioners within this factor were more cautious about its use given conceptual terminology and application to the programme.

This can be connected with the context of the CIP. As already indicated the CIP underpinning these practitioners involved working with young people within a school setting. Although practitioners through the CMOs articulated within ‘avenues for use’ were able to mobilise RE, this was not achieved with ease. Conversely, it was made apparent that trying to explore and unearth mechanisms of change with young people was a challenge either because of the reliability of what the young people were saying, but also the degree to which it could be taken seriously given their age:

“For example what is it about the Edumove approach that can enhance children’s behaviour within the classroom? I’m not sure if we fully achieved this. With regards to the feedback gained from the children, it was of a limited nature because of their age and expression” (Robert, male: Interview).

Regardless of the resources provided within the M and E framework such as the programme theory and evaluation stages model’s (mres) practitioners at times experienced ‘tensions and limited cooperation on behalf of their participants’ (mreas) to uncover hidden mechanisms that RE endevors to identify. As a result, limitations of the RE approach, particularly for engaging and exploring how and why with young people at such a young age were identified. Such a finding is a key sign of engagement with RE in the sense of understanding that RE goes beyond simple observation (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). Moreover, this engagement with RE and characterisation of ‘evaluative thinking’ fostered ‘curiosity and a more calculated appraisal of the approach’ (mreas). Whilst they did not rule out using RE is the future, this did lead to a more cautious opinion as to whether they would make use of it. It would also be fair to conclude that a reason for not mobilising this may be contingent upon the need for support and fear that the same level of support may not be available for future roles.

This finding has implications for any mobilisation of this type of realist framework, one must consider and account for such issues highlighted above. Again, this accords well with having a clear steer upon ‘monitoring resource availability’ and ‘progress and quality of the evaluation being carried out. This is an important consideration for any SFD project and particularly those that work with young people.

Finally, the practitioners within this theme expressed scepticism surrounding the practice of developing a programme theory which as Pawson and Tilley (1997) state is a key part of realist approaches to evaluation. This scepticism emerged again from the context of the CIP which in this case was characterised by the project’s instability. To be clear, practitioners made reference to the challenges they faced in setting their project up, engaging a school and establishing a set of participants to carry out their project. This subsequently led to the activation of an ‘apprehension’ mechanism when provided with the programme theory conceptualisation (model one) resource (mres). Because their project was always changing, and in some respects to extreme extents they found themselves regularly changing and re drafting their programme theory.

“I think we were able to achieve what we wanted to an extent with our programme theory. Again sort of that...this is what I was referring to the outcomes. The outcomes you’ve got from those children, they’ll be so different within another school. So you can never get to a stage where you are happy...the framework needs constant changing. It can never sort of stay the same which impacts on your programme theory”. (Nathan, Male: Interview).
Although it is well argued that programme theory is never stable (Pawson, 2012) and should also be open to reconfiguration and amendments (Weiss, 1997) there are limitations and practical considerations to be given about drawing a line at what should be tested. Moreover, within the context of SFD programmes issues associated with the ‘monitoring of resource availability’ have to be considered in respect of how much time practitioners have to articulate what may constitute their programme theory for testing. Consequently, for any collaborative approach mobilising theory driven approaches, to enable the ‘promotion of appropriate processes’ a balance would need to be struck around developing programme theory and then testing it. Practitioners within this factor demonstrated critical awareness and engagement of this issue which pays testament to their conceptual grasping of RE and the ‘evaluative thinking’. Specifically, inquiry orientation (Schula et al, 2016) was apparent.

10.5 Summary of discussion pertaining to collaborative principles of evaluation

The preceding narrative has provided a robust discussion around the distinguishing sub groups of practitioners engaging with the framework. These have been discussed in accordance with the collaborative principles of evaluation under testing within study 2. For further clarity the table overleaf captures the most relevant and apparent principles of Schula et al’s principles that aligned to each sub group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Most relevant and apparent principles of collaborative evaluation</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 1. Zero to accomplished | **Principle 1**: Clarifying motivation for collaboration  
| | □ Use was the most predominant feature within this factor.  
| | **Principle 2**: Fostering meaningful inter-professional relationships  
| | □ Practitioners benefited from sustained interactivity that the framework provided.  
| | **Principle 3**: Develop a shared understanding of the programme  
| | □ Being able to mutually describe what the programme (in their case, CIP) looked like enabled trust in guidance between trainer and SSDPs.  
| | **Principle 4**: Promoting appropriate participatory processes  
| | □ Design of the framework enabled the practitioners to mobilise the project and understand RE in a kinesthetic way. SSDPs showed depth in terms of interest and enthusiasm.  
| | **Principle 5**: Monitoring and responding to resource availability  
| | □ Perhaps needed more support when dealt with obstacles and problems.  
| | **Principle 6**: Monitoring evaluation progress and quality  
| | □ Strong control afforded to the trainer by SSDPs based on limited knowledge and experience. This affordance enabled guidance to deal with ensuring their evaluation was reputable.  
| | **Principle 7**: Promoting evaluative thinking  
| | □ Learning in relation to understanding mechanisms in their CIP and RE.  
| | **Principle 8**: Follow through to realise use  
| | □ Practical skills gained in RE in terms of practical outcomes for meeting the assessment requirements for the CIP. In line with P6 strong support was needed from the trainer.  
| | □ Less optimistic of findings due to lack of awareness of landscape and where they might go. Lacking critical awareness and confidence.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle 1: Clarifying motivation for collaboration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wanted something semi built that they could take on and mobilise.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 2: Fostering meaningful inter-professional relationships</th>
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<tr>
<td>Relied on trainer to stabilise and direct accordingly through any tensions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt they could dip in and out of the framework and call upon it when they needed support.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 3: Develop a shared understanding of the programme</th>
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<tr>
<td>Trainer and practitioner had a shared appreciation of the programme which worked positively when guidance was sought.</td>
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<tr>
<td>This was not so much the case with external partners impacting on the evaluation process.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 4: Promoting appropriate participatory processes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process was suitable to foster understanding of RE through application of CIP.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Didn’t have to build their very own M and E framework and could step into a readily defined process.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 7: Promoting evaluative thinking</th>
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<tr>
<td>Realising worth of how and why CIP unfolded.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inquisitive about issues with RE and evidence landscape. Through inquisitiveness could solve problems.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 8: Follow through to realise use</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aligned with transformative outcomes for making use of RE in the future.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical of M and E landscape and tensions with partners, leading to cynical attitude for carrying out M and E because of the politics of partnership working and working towards differing agendas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cynical about M and E findings although more positive about doing M and E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>New skills learnt and applied. Changes of disposition towards the programme (CIP).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Findings of the evaluation have helped meet the requirements.</td>
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### 3. Passive passengers

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<tr>
<th>Principle 1: Clarifying motivation for collaboration</th>
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<tr>
<td>□ Motivation based on desire to achieve a good mark within the CIP. These practitioners were more driven towards coaching as a career and within the CIP itself.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 5: Monitoring and responding to resource availability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ The context of them being coaches and less aligned to SFD interests led to less engagement and motivation to fully grasp M and E compared to other factors. This meant that these types of practitioners would struggle to complete the M and E without a strong support network around them.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 6: Monitoring evaluation progress and quality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Relating to the point above, these practitioners needed more support within the framework and amongst their fellow CIP practitioners.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 7: Promoting evaluative thinking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Definitely learnt more about M and E but very much on a surface level. No real depth of reflection shown or engagement with inquisition.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Principle 8: Follow through to realise use</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Mainly driven to use and outcome of the evaluation. Optimistic about M and E but only with a naïve lens and lack of awareness of the wider landscape and issues. No conceptual depth shown.</td>
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**4. Proficient, competent, optimistic yet cautious**

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<tr>
<th><strong>Principle 1:</strong> Clarifying motivation for collaboration</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Initial motivation based on desire to achieve good marks within process. However, soon transcended by the desire to learn more.</td>
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**Principle 2:** Fostering meaningful inter-professional relationships

- Relationship with trainer based on guidance, support and flexibility.
- This professional relationship encouraged sustained interactivity with the framework.

**Principle 3:** Develop a shared understanding of the programme

- Sustained interactivity took affect because of the positive relationships as depicted in P2.

**Principle 5:** Monitoring and responding to resource availability

- Practitioners required guidance and support within a strong desire and motivation to learn more about their CIP.

**Principle 6:** Monitoring evaluation progress and quality

- Through the sustained interactivity the trainer could monitor the quality of the M and E. Given the problematic context of young people, standards were maintained through shared understanding between SSDPs and trainer.

**Principle 7:** Promoting evaluative thinking

- Very good conceptual grasp of RE.
- Developed inquisitive thinking and reflection concerning the issues presented by RE, but were able to still mobilise RE.

**Principle 8:** Follow through to realise use

- Transformational outcomes in terms of optimism of findings and relationships with partners.
- However, less desire to enact RE in future.
- Practical outcomes for serving the purposes of the M and E.

Consequently the implications of these findings concern the crucial recognition that the framework was experienced in varying ways by the SSDPs involved in it. For those in factor one who had travelled far in M and E competency, their capacity for carrying out RE and understanding how and why their intervention worked had developed considerably. Specifically, structure and guidance was relied upon to enable this. For those in factor two, capacity building was required, yet due to being able to solve problems and deal with the conceptual complexities of RE they were able to act upon their roles more independently. Such a close awareness and connection with the contemporary industry left them skeptical however in terms of what value they felt their findings would have because of the technocratic climate Chouinard, (2013). Factor three was significantly different in that practitioners here were less motivated to engage within the M and E process, mainly due to the motivational circumstances that preceded them. RE was mobilized by them in accordance with the
principles, however their limited awareness of the contemporary climate made it a challenge for them to fully capture the implications of their M and E findings. Finally, those within factor four like factor one drew positively in the strength of guidance and support to build their capacity in RE. However, whilst RE fostered use for them, the contextual circumstances of their interventions made it hard at times to mobilise RE. This led to apprehension in their desire to elicit RE as much as other factors in future roles. It is thus fair to suggest that the analysis of factors has uncovered four typologies of practitioners engaging within the framework. These are interesting to say the least particularly for future work that may be carried out with wider practitioners excentuating the importance to appreciate what works for whom in what circumstances and why (Pawson and Tilley, 1997).

These findings (within the realist spirit) have led to a series of refinements to the framework from study two (see below). To be clear, the realist orientation and alignment to the collaborative principles for M and E will be proceeded with and not changed given that there was no empirically derived need to change them. (Please see appendix 7.3 for the compilation of the full, and new refined programme theory).

10.6 Key refinements to framework moving forward

- The findings from study two demonstrated how crucial kinaesthetic learning was for the varying practitioners across factors. However, this was not initially articulated in the initial programme theory to be tested. Therefore, this has been illuminated more clearly within the final CMO configurations (see chapter 9) for further testing.

- The programme theory conceptualisation model (see appendix 7.1) has been revised. In reference to stage three ‘predicting how and why’ this is illustrated through the use of Dalkin et al’s (2015) disaggregation of the programme mechanism and a snapshot is provided in figure 9 below. It is intended that this approach to breaking down the programme mechanisms will make future realist CMO configurations easier to construct. Stage two has also undergone some slight refinements in terms of making explicit outcomes and highlighting key resources within the programme anatomy.

Figure 9: Programme theory conceptualization model (focusing on stage 3)

The M and E model (see appendix 7.2) has been refined to take less emphasis away from the workshops. This emphasis has resulted in the workshop content to be greater mobilised

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within the action learning sets which would be delivered in smaller and repeated chunks specific to the needs of each project opposed to a selection of projects at the same time (as in the workshops). This has also been captured in figure 10 below.

Figure 10: M and E model refined from study 2 focusing on action learning sets

- Any future mobilisation of the framework should attempt to distinguish more clearly between the ‘monitoring’ and ‘evaluation’ functions of the framework. Whilst this did not emerge as a key finding informing refinement the M and E model it is important (Harris and Adams, 2016) to distinguish between the two forms because confusion can occur. Thus, the M and E model now highlights what the monitoring tasks may be (see figure 10 and appendix 7.2) aside from the evaluation phases. In addition, the action learning sets in line with the workshop content attempt to distinguish the distinction from the beginning.

- The framework has also been refined to place further consideration on the role of stakeholders and fellow partners in mobilising the M and E. This has been asserted on the basis of seeing more credibility and influence in the findings of the M and E process, whereby partners may be more embedded in this process. This was fully recognised within the initial programme theory prior to testing in study two. However, the findings of study two across factors emphasised limitations of partner recognition and how influential the findings may be. Therefore the M and E model now places more emphasis on this, and it is further encouraged throughout the M and E process.

- The data analysis process for analysing M and E data will follow the CMO crib sheet method mobilised within study two (see chapter 6, section 6.20). As discussed within the methodology chapter, this draws upon the CMO disaggregation method advocated by Dalkin et al (2015).

- The framework will focus more attention at the beginning for establishing the motivation for collaboration on behalf of the practitioners. This is of course in line with Schula et al’s (2016) principles. The Q method employed in study two unearthed a deeper understanding based on the factor configurations of each practitioner’s motivation for collaboration. It is anticipated that this may be developed further if within the action learning sets at the beginning of the programme practitioners are encouraged to state their motivation. This may involve asking practitioners why they engaged in the framework, what they intend to get out of it and what they feel they may bring to the process.

- Finally, appendix 7.3 provides the overall CMO configuration statements for each sub group of practitioners as a result of the framework being tested at study 2. These act as the programme theories underpinning the broader programme theory of the framework moving forward. Figures 11 and 12 illustrate a snapshot of these for subgroups 1 and 2.
Figure 11: CMO configuration snapshot for cohort 1 post study 2

**Practitioner cohort one: Limited to accomplished practitioners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within a given Context</strong></td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travelling far in M and E competency</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited knowledge and understanding of M and E</td>
<td>Action learning sets (focus on mechanisms) and CIP</td>
<td>Contextualising real subjects within CIP created a light bulb moment of realisation that implementation resources are not solely mechs and participants respond to resources</td>
<td>Deeper understanding of generative mechanisms</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking&lt;br&gt;P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension towards carrying out M and E</td>
<td>Processes within the framework (eg PT templates and stages) alongside CIP</td>
<td>Realisation that the independent process helps you understand more about why it worked or not</td>
<td>Greater understanding of the programme and its potential sustainability</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking&lt;br&gt;P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Figure 12: CMO configuration snapshot for cohort 2 post study 2

**Practitioner cohort 2 – Polished problem solvers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within a given Context</strong></td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fostering use in M and E</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Practitioners who recognise the importance of stakeholder collaboration</td>
<td>Stakeholders / and M and E framework models</td>
<td>Enabled cooperative construction of how the programme would work with partners</td>
<td>This led to a more robust M and E design and focus of evaluation questions</td>
<td>P3: Develop a shared understanding of the programme&lt;br&gt;P7: Promoting evaluative thinking&lt;br&gt;P8: Enhance influence of evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent practitioners passionate</td>
<td>Running own CIP combined with ALSs</td>
<td>enabled active M and E where engagement with</td>
<td>More understanding of how and why CIP</td>
<td>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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10.7 Chapter summary

Essentially, the preceding narrative has critically discussed the four groupings of practitioners. This critical discussion has attempted to elucidate the distinctions across the groupings of practitioners in respect to how and why the framework worked for the practitioners involved. Given that Schula et al’s (2016) collaborative principles for evaluation were embedded and tested within the framework, these have been highlighted throughout the discussion in relation to which principles are most pertinent across the groupings of practitioners. For succinct clarity, those pertaining to each grouping were highlighted in table 29 above. These subsequent findings have led to key refinements to the framework moving forward, again for further testing.
Chapter 11

Conclusion and asserting the Contribution to Knowledge

The purpose of this final chapter is to provide a concise summary of the findings related to the research underpinning this thesis. Given that this thesis was made up of two evaluation studies, these findings will be evaluated in a succinct form. The chapter commences with an overview of the aims and objectives of the thesis, supported by a commentary cell within the table (30) to evidence how they have been met. This is then followed by a succinct exposition of the two evaluations in accordance with these aims and objectives. Having provided this exposition, the chapter will move on to discussing the implications of the framework as a foundation for its future mobilization within industry. The chapter moves into its final stages with a summary of its contribution to knowledge, and a reflexive appreciation and recognition of the limitations and scope of the thesis.

11.1 Summarising Aims and Objectives

Table 30: Final Aims and Objectives with summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Methods / Commentary</th>
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</table>
| 1. To develop a suitable Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) framework enabling deeper understanding of SFD programmes for Sport Development Practitioners (SDPs) | 1. Review a range of approaches to M and E to develop criteria for a practice based framework  
2. Create M and E framework synthesising participatory principles and realist evaluation methodology | □ The literature reviews covered these objectives as articulated within chapters 2, 3 and 4. Having established the context for evidence within SFD in chapter 2, chapter 3 argued that a realist and participatory orientated approach would be best suited. This was further supported by chapter 4 which defined the boundaries of the practitioner (specifically within the context of the student practitioner).  
□ The reviews above guided the construction of the framework. (See framework chapter 5). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.</th>
<th>To test and refine framework according to practitioner praxis</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>Within framework test realist evaluation’s capability for Coaching Innovation Programme (CIP) practitioners to evaluate and understand their SFD programme</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This was tested within a realist evaluation methodology. Mixed methods were used to test RE. These were blogs, interviews and a survey undertaken after a 6 month training programme / fieldwork (see chapter 7).</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As above but specific elements of empowerment evaluation were tested</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The findings of the realist evaluation led to the framework being refined (chapter 8). This refinement continued to embrace RE as the principle methodology students would use. However, further literature reviews in accordance with the research findings led to Schula et al’s (2015) principles being included within the framework. Thus specific characteristics underpinning EE were omitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>To synthesise and evaluate professional practice in light of aim 2</td>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Having refined framework repeat objectives three four and five upon broader CIPs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Draw conclusions concerning the utility of combining realist evaluation and collaborative / participatory principles for enhancing M and E use and competency</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Study 2 (see chapter 9 and 10) further tested the refinements to the framework through a realist evaluation methodology embedding Q methodology</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Having re tested the framework within study two overall conclusions</td>
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</table>
were drawn to assert what approaches to M and E may be best suited for practitioners within SFD small scale programmes.

11.2 Summarising stage one

This preliminary stage sought to establish a suitable M and E framework that could be trialled on SDPs. Having reviewed a range of approaches to M and E the realist evaluation (RE) approach pioneered by (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) was positioned as a suitable method to make sense of the complex SFD interventions that reside within a lack of evidence discourse (Nichols et al, 2010, Coalter, 2013). Given the focus on training and support, the participatory oriented ‘empowerment evaluation’ (EE) (Fetterman, 2005) framework was adopted to build the capacity with practitioners to be able to M and E their SFD interventions. The framework was thus positioned and trialled on a sample of three ‘Coaching Innovation Projects’ (CIPs) which were delivered and managed by student sport development practitioners SSDPs. The training programme consisted of six workshops and action learning sets spread over and repeated throughout the academic year. The three CIPs sampled were all ‘Edumove’ orientated CIPs and shared similar programme theories. To test the utility of the framework, the RE methodology was employed via mixed methods to make sense of what worked for whom, in what circumstances and why in relation to the framework.

In conclusion, the preliminary findings of this thesis demonstrated that the methodology underpinning the framework had provided capability to increase the capacity of the SSDPs understanding and practice of M and E techniques. As discussed within the findings 1 chapter, the following conclusions can be drawn from the research:

- **Realistic evaluation (RE) was a suitable evaluation methodology that firstly was suitable for small scale SFD interventions, and secondly useable for the SSDPs to make sense of how and why their programmes achieved certain outcomes. Engagement with RE facilitated mechanisms of practical and theoretical application of RE concepts which were applied within the CIPs. There was clear appreciation and value (mechanisms) afforded to RE as the SSDPs realised that there was a way to open the ‘black box’ (Funnel and Rogers, 2011) of their interventions. In addition, this engagement was also represented by a critical praxis of RE where SSDPs reflected in and for action on its strengths and limitations as a method within certain circumstances (eg working with young people).**

- **In light of this last point, the conceptual complexities and language embroiled within RE presented barriers in terms of engagement and understanding for practitioners. As a result it was recommended that the language and conceptual terms were to be broken down even further in order to be fit for purpose for the SSDPs. A way to deal with this issue may involve**
considering their views of what this language should be and how they may be able to understand this more sufficiently.

Characteristics surrounding the ten principles of EE were evident from the literature. The training programme and balance between structure and agency enabled the SSDPs to take control over the M and E of their CIPs. Regardless of the context of the demands and requirements of the academic unit connected with the CIP, in addition the SSDPs were enthusiastic and committed for their M and E to be recognised and inform practice. However, to enable this autonomy, control and ownership of the M and E process to manifest itself, unanimously, all SSDPs pointed towards the optional structure and interactive (mechanism) guidance of the programme as crucial to enable their understanding. This was an interesting finding within the democratic principle of EE evaluation (Wandersman et al, 2005) regarding how structure and agency is balanced without imposing or constraining practice.

The framework produced positive outcomes surrounding M and E professional practice of the SSDPs. They felt more equipped around understanding RE techniques and their praxis (ability to act, practice and embody) was apparent in terms of their desires to continue implementing such approaches in the future. The process also drew a range of outcomes regarding increased confidence, realisation of the value of M and E and reflexivity concerning the limitations and obstacles for competently eliciting M and E practice. However, within light of the inexperience of the SSDPs some resistance was met from external stakeholders in terms of valuing the M and E the SSDPs produced.

Despite the positive findings drawn, some key limitations did emerge from this study. The first limitation focused on the integrity of the EE principles underpinning the framework. Having carried out a further comprehensive and extensive literature review of EE beyond testing, many limitations became apparent around how empowerment could be measured and its emancipatory focus pertaining towards transformation (see chapter 8). The second limitation focused on the validity of the evaluation and the methods used to test the framework upon the SSDPs. Questions were raised concerning the relationship between the researcher (who was also the trainer) and the students and how that dynamic influenced the ways in which the SSDPs responded within the interviews, surveys and blogs. These were responded to at stage 2.

Nevertheless, this stage of the study was able to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of approaches to evaluation, enabling the construction and provisional testing of the framework upon a sample of SSDPs. Already, some novel insight was gained surrounding what approaches to evaluation may be best suited for practitioners carrying out M and E practice.

11.3 Summarising stage 2

Stage 2 of the thesis involved two distinct phases. The first phase involved refining the M and E framework (based on study 1 findings) and the second involved testing the framework on a broader set of CIPs. The refinement phase (chapter 8) enabled the researcher to address the limitations surrounding EE. Having provided compelling reasoning, EE was deviated from to focus on a more
generic practical and transformational set of principles for collaboration asserted by Schula et al (2016), that were aligned with RE. The second phase consisted firstly of selecting a broader and diverse set of CIPs to assess to what extent the framework was able to capture the differing dynamics and characteristics of such CIPs. Five CIPs were identified and mobilised within the framework. This was distinctly different to study one which focused on Edumove CIPs. Secondly, phase two focused specifically on strengthening the methodological rigour of the research to mitigate against the limitations raised from study one. This involved the mobilisation of Q methodology which sought to provide a qualitative and quantitative balance and enabled a more objective distancing of the researcher from the SSDPs. In essence Q methodology was mobilised accordingly (alongside interviews and blogs) within the RE approach taken as in study 1.

The findings from study 2 provided an extensive insight to what it was about the framework which worked (or not) for the SSDPs involved. Mobilisation of the RE methodology and the methods of Q, interviews and blogs uncovered four factors / groupings of SSDPs. Each factor told a specific story about those within in line with principles of collaborative evaluation mobilised within the framework. Q, in particular proved a robust and insightful method for understanding the subjective diversity of the practitioners loading into each actor. Factor one was most prominent as it represented more of the practitioners than other factors in that M and E competency had increased sufficiently (specifically the capability to elicite RE). Factor two demonstrated how the practitioners loading into this factor were not only able to show competency but also the ability to solve problems associated with carrying out the M and E. Conversely, factor three demonstrated examples of practitioners who were less engaged within the M and E process, where competency of M and E was claimed, yet limited depth was shown towards this. Finally, factor four demonstrated how practitioners were able to demonstrate competency and optimism for findings amidst scepticism surrounding the framework for reaching out their target groups in their CIPs. In conclusion, within the spirit of the realist orientation of this study it was quite clear that the framework worked in different ways for different people.

Ultimately, the findings of study two informed a new compilation of realist context, mechanism and outcome configurations (CMOs) as depicted in the findings and discussion chapters. These CMOs were aligned to the principles depicted in the table above. Within a realist evaluation lens these CMOs represented how the programme theory underpinning the framework should be constituted, and again tested for future mobilisation. This was in line with realist evaluation principles (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Westhorp, 2014) which advocates the testing of programme theory through CMO testing and refinement / re-configuration.

11.4 Implications for progressing the field

This is a crucial area for discussion pertaining to the implications of the findings and any use of the framework for future evaluation practice. The bullet points below articulate explicitly the potential the framework holds for future implementation. What then follows is further discussion of these points.

- The framework has potential for fostering use and transformation for practitioners mobilizing M and E
- The framework has potential for distinguishing between use and transformation in M and E practice
• There may be a diversity of practitioners who respond to frameworks like this in certain ways emphasizing the importance of context

• The framework presents potential to build capacity with practitioners based on motivation for collaboration

• The framework provides scope for coproducive opportunities to develop, deliver, and evaluate programmes across a range of stakeholders

• There is significant scope to mobilise realist approaches to evaluation and programme development with practitioners within participatory forms, asserting how and why programmes may work, or not

• The framework provides scope for practitioners to take more control over the M and E process

It is quite apparent from the findings of the two evaluations conducted that the framework has fostered use and transformation for those involved. The discussion of ‘use’ / ‘practicality’ over ‘transformation’ has been a major focus within the participatory evaluation field (Fetterman, 2013; Cousins, 2005). This has naturally resonated with this thesis given the refinement of the framework from EE (Fetterman, 2001) to the collaborative set of principles (Schula et al 2016). Given that the former was more aligned to the transformational empowerment level, the collaborative principles enabled a clearer focus on use whilst taking into account any transformational developments. The adoption of Schula et al’s principles has enabled this thesis to clearly identify and distinguish between practical / use and transformational outcomes. Whilst across all factors it was apparent that adoption of the framework fostered use for those involved, there were key transformational outcomes emerging. Whilst these outcomes were diverse across the factors, it can be suggested that frameworks such as this have the capacity to foster practical and transformational outcomes for practitioners.

The mobilisation of Q within study two has enabled the identification of the diversity of practitioner praxis in relation to the factors highlighted above. These differing groups of practitioners demonstrate that not every practitioner is the same and they will experience the framework in different ways. This realist orientation of the studies demonstrates how important it is to consider the contextual characteristics that characterise a practitioner’s potential involvement in any form of collaborative evaluation. As the findings confirm, it would be wrong to assume that any designed framework would work in the same way for all involved. Whilst in practical terms this may create tensions for how any framework could be delivered, it strikes agreement with Cousins and Whitmore (1998) of the importance of context and adjusting and mobilising any framework in a flexible way to the needs of those utilising it.

This holds significant potential for the framework’s future mobilization within the wider industry. In the same way that contextual nuances were apparent with the SSDPs it would be fair to suggest that this may well be similar for wider practitioners working within SFD and wider public health industries. This is crucial given the current climate of top down M and E approaches that are expected to be followed by practitioners in line with gold standard approaches to evidence that are discursively created (Harris and Adams, 2016). Specifically, the framework has potential in its’ ability to clarify motivation for collaboration and build capacity with practitioners who may have varying needs around M and E. Conclusively, this thesis would support the view that not every practitioner has the same needs around M and E.
A key finding emerging highlighted the tensions and obstacles relating to involving external stakeholders within the M and E process. A common theme across the factors was the challenges the SSDPs faced in engaging their partners within the framework. Nevertheless, it highlights that for any future mobilisation of this framework, consideration should be given to how external partners and stakeholders may inform and become more embedded within the process. Whilst it is recognised within the current environment of evidence based policy that these stakeholders may be driven towards more technocratic approaches, there may still be scope to mediate and synthesise this with the realist orientation underpinning the M and E framework. Additionally, given the participatory nature of the framework, this gives every opportunity for such issues being addressed in coproductive ways.

At the heart of the framework was the focus for the practitioners to mobilise a realist orientated programme theory depicting how and why they could see their project working. The findings across both evaluations recognise how the realist orientation of M and E can foster use and transformational characteristics for practitioners. It cannot be underestimated how useful and insightful this can be for those working within the wider industry. As discussed in previous chapters (2 and 3) the mobilization of RE within the SFD industry is scarce. Moreover, application of RE by practitioners within participatory frameworks is non existent. Given the scope that RE possesses for dealing with complexity in SFD programmes, and with the empirical data supporting this thesis, a compelling argument forms for mobilizing frameworks like these for practitioners working within organisations in industry. Whilst one accepts the contextual differences from this thesis, an industry currently lacking innovation in evaluation methodology is in significant need of realist capacity building. Not withstanding the SFD field, the same claim can also be made for practitioners working in other fields of public health, social care and in general the social problems industry where complexity is in abundance.

However, this realist orientation (like any other) does not come without the need to recognise the challenges in its mobilisation. For example, firstly, within the programme theory development stage (model 1) SSDPs highlighted how their project was changing all the time which meant the regular (and in some cases) constant revisiting of their programme theory. This has implications for future use in terms of knowing when to be content with what constitutes a programme theory amongst the other time and resource implications of delivering a project. However, another way of viewing this in positive terms is the way such an exercise encourages refinement and flexibility throughout the process of programme delivery. Nevertheless, to what extent this can be applied within the wider SFD industry would need further testing given the even greater time, funding and resource dynamics affecting delivery. The key message relating to this concerns recognising the dynamic awareness needed to be able to assert realist understandings of programmes involving such populations, and in fact any population.

The two studies underpinning this thesis have produced findings that have seen the framework undergo two refinements in line with the aims and objectives. Chapter 8 discussed in depth the changes and refinements made to the framework as a result of study 1. Furthermore, as intended, study 2 has done the same, and has presented the current position of the M and E framework (see chapter 10). By embedding these refinements, it is strongly advocated that there is scope to continue to mobilise this M and E framework in practice. The findings informing this thesis give no reason for not continuing to trial and refine the framework within industry. Already, the refined aspects of the framework have been mobilised and are currently being tested again with the latest cohort of SSDPs carrying out their CIPs. Furthermore, there is considerable scope to consider trialling the framework, and / or aspects of it with industry practitioners within the field. Of course, it is
important to recognise here again that the framework should be mobilised in accordance with the contextual needs of those who may be using it.

The synthesis of RE with collaborative principles of evaluation is a key strength of this thesis. Some of the limitations of participatory approaches to evaluation may be associated to the lack of scientific evaluation methods within their application. In similar respects to Chouinard (2013) a current disconnect exists between participatory and more conceptual approaches to evaluation. On the basis of this thesis, the characteristics of RE and collaborative principles were combined within the framework. It was more than apparent across both studies that without the participatory principles aligned within the framework, the SSDPs would have struggled significantly to carry out RE. These findings may suggest that there is a space within M and E practice for RE to be mobilised, but only within a framework that is participatory, collaborative and provides support and guidance.

A key question residing over research of this nature concerns to what extent practitioners should, and have the capacity to carry out M and E. Previous chapters (chapter 2, 3, 4 and 5) have discussed this in depth, and as such a rationale has been asserted for involving them more closely within the M and E process. The synthesis of this thesis demonstrate that the framework has capacity for enabling practitioners (in this case SSDPs) to collect and analyse their own M and E data and produce findings. In the case of this thesis, differing variations of practitioners were able to demonstrate degrees of reflexivity, competency and transformation in terms of their grasping towards M and E. This is extremely powerful within the context of SFD given the current context of an evidence base for sport which is currently under developed (Edwards, 2015; Sherry et al, 2015; Coalter, 2013). Firstly, this is powerful because it demonstrates the role that practitioners may be able to have in the process. Secondly, it is powerful because the realist approaches involved in this framework may enable a deeper understanding of a key omission within current SFD scholarship; which is understanding how and why programmes work. Whilst every context will be different, this highlights and provides empirical rigour for pursuing closer M and E work with practitioners.

Finally, such a framework enables scope for the industry to explore coproducive ways of programme delivery. It is quite apparent that the SFD and social change industry consists of a wide range of stakeholders often working together to develop, deliver and evaluate programmes. However, as elucidated within the literature (Harris and Adams, 2016) (see chapter 2) much of this does not involve all stakeholders and reinforces discursive formations of power. What this framework at the heart of this thesis holds is the capacity to synthesise stakeholders not just in evaluation practice, but across the whole piste of programme development, programme delivery and programme evaluation. Only when these three key dynamics are reflexively intertwined with realist retroductive thinking (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) can the field make any progression. The mobilization of this framework with practitioners in industry can be the inception of this intertwining.

11.5 Overall contribution to knowledge

In line with the aims and objectives, this thesis sought to, and has provided an insight into what approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation may be most suited to practitioners working within SFD. This contribution to knowledge is broken down within the following summary below:

1. Use of framework for practitioners working within SFD

The mobilising and testing of the M and E framework through the two evaluations conducted has provided novel insight into how and why the framework could be used by practitioners working
within the field. The mobilisation of key participatory evaluation principles encompassing EE (Fetterman, 2015) in study 1 and collaborative principles (Schula et al, 2016) in study 2 has demonstrated empirical evidence that RE is a suitable approach for the M and E of SFD small scale interventions. The evaluation findings of testing the framework have illuminated key insights surrounding competency, engagement and professional praxis of practitioners whilst also illustrating diversity of practitioner engagement and the outcomes they experienced. Within the context of this thesis the case study of SFD practitioners sampled were university based students. To mitigate against any scrutiny that may question to what extent university students are practitioners, the work they were doing was consistent with industry standards and responsibilities. However, it is recognised explicitly that there are clear distinctions and boundaries in terms of funding, contexts and renumeration that need to be recognised in this distinction of SSDPs from traditional SDPs. Nevertheless, this thesis acknowledges (see chapter 10) that further testing is required to understand whether the framework is useable for those within industry.

2. Relevance of realist orientated participatory frameworks for the SFD field

As aluded to many times throughout this thesis, the SFD field has found itself in a lack of evidence discourse. Key tenets relating to this discourse are associated with issues around participatory approaches to M and E and the need to gain more understanding about how and why programmes may work opposed to providing proof of success and accountability. The testing of this framework demonstrates the scope for the SFD field making more use of evaluation methodologies like RE so that learning and understanding can be enhanced. This is crucial whether it is mobilised with practitioners or via external commissioning work.

3. Synthesising conceptual evaluation methodology with participatory approaches

This thesis has provided empirical insight into testing RE within a participatory evaluation environment mobilising practitioners to carry it out. Given the very few examples of RE being mobilised in practice within industry and education, this thesis has illustrated findings of this whilst also providing in depth insight towards understanding the capacity of RE being mobilised for practitioners. This work has gone some way to illuminate the scope for mobilising RE within participatory framework. Specifically Schula et al’s (2016) principles to guide collaborative approaches to evaluation have been applied and tested to guide the capacity building for the SSDPs carrying out RE. This is novel in itself given only the very recent publication of the principles and their dissemination.

4. Developing new and innovative methods for conducting RE

Study 2 in particular has attempted to illustrate a new and novel way for conducting RE. The testing of the framework in study two involved the mobilisation of Q methodology which aside from Henderson and Wink (2016) has yet to make its way sufficiently into the RE community. In essence, study 2 has specifically developed and employed a methodological design that is yet to be seen in the field whilst demonstrating clear compatibility of the two (RE and Q). Thus, this work paves the way for further exploration in the future.

11.6 Limitations and scope of the study

Within any form of research it is important to recognise and respond to any limitations that may emerge. Some of limitations residing within this work have already been referred to within this chapter. One of these relates to the proximity of the researcher to the framework and relationships with the SSDPs involved. It could be argued that the researcher maintaining the role of ‘trainer’ as
well as ‘course leader’ may have created certain implications related to bias. For example, the issue of over influencing the SSDPs could emerge based on the students already having a pre-existing relationship and set of dynamics with the researcher. It cannot be ignored that this could have led them to responding to the evaluation in a positive way towards the framework. Nevertheless, whilst this limitation has been acknowledged, this thesis has gone some way to mitigate against these limitations as comprehensively as possible through the ethical procedures followed and specifically within study 2 which employed Q methodology.

An additional limitation is associated with the underlying principle of who should be responsible for conducting the M and E of programmes. In the case of this thesis two REs made up the thesis to test the framework. These evaluations were essentially conducted and carried out by the trainer and author of the framework. An ever present argument (which was discussed in specific depth in chapter 3) concerns whether evaluation should be something done objectively by those separate from the programme with a fresh pair of eyes (Shufflebeam, 1994). On the premise of evaluation work being carried out objectively, this thesis could come under scrutiny because the evaluator evaluated their own programme, and could be open to bias. However, again such an attack is mitigated against in this thesis for two key reasons.

Firstly, it is the very foundation of this work that advocates the importance for practitioners and those delivering programmes to be actively involved in the M and E process (Fetterman, 2005). Providing that ethical values can be upheld alongside principles of accountability (Schula et al, 2016) and reliability there is no reason for practitioners to not be involved. Indeed, whilst recognising the importance and scope of externalised commissioning of evaluations because of the objective rigour they bring, it would be naïve to suggest that objectivity can be maintained in its entirety. Evaluation practice whether externally driven or carried out by practitioners involves human volition and interpretation. In addition, given that many external evaluations are commissioned by the funder or specific programme requiring evaluation, this may lead to a desire and expectation to portray the said programme in a positive light (Adams and Harris, 2014). Evidence within this thesis supports the argument that practitioners can make a significant contribution to the M and E of their programmes because they understand the context and have a closer proximity to the project to gain in depth insight into the process. This was no different for the two evaluations underpinning this thesis where (as in the same way as the SSDPs in the framework gaining insight into their CIPs) the proximity of the researcher to the process enabled a deeper insight into the merit and worth of the framework. This was particularly pertinent within the RE approach employed because being closer to the programme enabled greater grasping and understanding of mechanisms of change.

Secondly, it can be suggested that evaluation methodology mobilised within this thesis has gone some way to represent a reputable and professional approach taken for assessing the merit and worth of the framework. RE in itself was mobilised sufficiently and the research methods employed were robust enough to meet professional standards. Moreover, the very foundation of realist principles in evaluation is to gain insight into how and why programmes work. These ‘how’ and ‘why’ understandings do not only advocate positive attributes of programmes, but also negative ones. This was no different within this thesis whereby the RE mobilised unearthed positive and negatives about the framework leading to refinements being made.

The final limitation to recognise within this conclusion involves the current status of RE and its future with M and E practice. The reviews of literature have demonstrated how prolific RE has become within certain fields and its continued profile particularly through the current RAMESES platform and international conference. Also, this research has clearly demonstrated the contribution RE can make
to SFD as a field and with those practitioners mobilising it. However, given its infancy in M and E practice RE is an evaluation methodology that is open to debate and is continually evolving. This evolution has brought with it critique and recommendation for how it should be mobilised within the future. Whilst this is good for any field, it may also create tension and confusion for how it should be carried out. This particularly relates to the conceptual language embroiled with RE; specifically what constitutes a mechanism (Porter, 2015a and b) and how CMO configurations are developed. Porter (2015a and b) for example has been critical of the current premise of what makes up a mechanism and how that relates to context. This discussion is very much situated in a philosophical debate of realist principles where Porter has come to recently criticise Pawson’s (2013) critique of Roy Bhaskar. The point to make here is that philosophical debates such as this (whilst positive in academic settings) create murky waters for understanding what RE is and how it should be carried out. Given the many differing interpretations of what realism is (as discussed in the methodology chapter) this is indeed a challenge for developing understanding with practitioners because it has implications for how the methodology is carried out. It can be suggested that RE still has some way to go within this evolving process if it is to be applied within a clearer and less confusing way in industry (opposed to academic circles).

11.7 Chapter summary

This thesis has firmly articulated its contribution to knowledge in respects of what types of approaches of M and E work best for practitioners in industry. This chapter has has specifically highlighted how the aims and objectives were met. It has succinctly summarized the findings pertaining to the two evaluations and asserted the scope for mobilization of the framework in wider contexts. Finally, the chapter has explicitly highlighted the contributions it has made around synthesizing collaborative approaches with conceptual methods such as RE as well as the methodological alliance between Q and RE. It has ended with a reflexive appreciation of any given limitation that underpins the thesis and approach taken.
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### Appendix 1: Ethics evidence

#### 1.1: Ethics approval from Southampton Solent University

FBSE Ethics Panel Outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title: Coaching innovation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator: K Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor if appropriate:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Panel Decision:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved/Approved with conditions/Not Approved/Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes (including any conditions):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conditions applying to all Research & Enterprise projects
All data must be held in a confidential and secure place and destroyed on completion of the project or associated assessment results being confirmed. Anonymity and privacy should be guaranteed. You should ensure that it is not possible to identify an individual from the data you collect. The data should only be used for the purposes it was collected.

Informed consent should be obtained where appropriate and participants should have the right to withdraw without explanation.

The approval given applies ONLY to the submission to which it relates. If you change your research, then you are required to resubmit for approval.

Evidence of any specific ethical requirements will be sought in the outputs from the project. Please remember that a breach of SSU ethics procedures is now considered as academic misconduct.

Signed Chair FBSE Ethics Panel:  
Date: 05/03/2017

1.2: Sample consent form implemented across study 1 and 2

INFORMED CONSENT

Title of research project: “Evaluating Sport for Development interventions- professionalisation and praxis investigating what approaches to monitoring and evaluation work best for practitioners in sport for development”

The researcher conducting this project subscribe to the ethics conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of participants. This form and the information sheet have been given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures. Your signature on this form will signify that you have received information which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that you have received an adequate opportunity to consider the information, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the project.

Having been asked by Kevin Harris of the Faculty of Business Sport and Enterprise at Southampton Solent University, to participate in a project, I have received information regarding the procedures of the project.

I understand the procedures to be used in this project and any possible personal risks to me in taking part.

I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time.
I also understand that I may register any complaint I might have about this project to the Faculty Ethics Advisor, Sport Leisure and Tourism School at Southampton Solent University, and that I will be offered the opportunity of providing feedback on the study using standard report forms.

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion, by contacting: Kevin.Harris@solent.ac.uk

I confirm that I have been given adequate opportunity to ask any questions and that these have been answered to my satisfaction.

I have been informed that my participation in this project will remain anonymous. Any information obtained during this research will remain confidential as to my identity: if it can be specifically identified with me, my permission will be sought in writing before it will be published. Other material, which cannot be identified with me, will be published or presented at meetings and conferences with the aim of benefiting others. All information will be subject to the conditions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and subsequent statutory instruments.

I agree to participate in this research project:

Signature: _____________________________________________________________

NAME (please type or print legibly): __________________________________________

Tel number: (Optional) _______________________________________________________

PARTICIPANT’S SIGNATURE: __________________________ DATE: __________

RESEARCHER’S SIGNATURE: __________________________ DATE: _______

1.3: Participant Information Briefing sheet implemented across study 1 and 2

INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Research Project: “Evaluating Sport for Development interventions- professionalisation and praxis investigating what approaches to monitoring and evaluation work best for practitioners in sport for development”

You are asked to read this form carefully. If you consent to take part, as a participant, in the research being undertaken by Kevin Harris then you should sign the consent form accompanied with this document. If you have any query, or are unsure or uncertain about anything, then you should not sign until your problem has been resolved and you are completely happy to be involved in the project.

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SECTION 1

Overview – Aims of the research:

This research project seeks to explore what types of approaches to monitoring and evaluation may work best for those practitioners working in sport for social change projects. You have been contacted because you took part in the full monitoring and evaluation training programme underpinning this research. This participatory programme imparted and tested a new monitoring and evaluation model. Having taken part in the programme the researcher seeks your consent to uncover your perceptions and experiences of the programme. In particular, the researcher will be exploring your engagement and grasping of the key concepts underpinning the model and the extent to which it has developed your professionalism and practice. Based on the findings it is anticipated that the model will be refined and improved for future monitoring and evaluation practice.

SECTION 2

Key requirements from participants

In order to achieve the objectives of this research the researcher requires your consent and participation in the following research methods:

- 1 interview
- Thematic examination of your blog for key themes underpinning the model and its delivery
- Your participation in a ‘Q sort methodology exercise’. This will involve you ranking statements about the programme in accordance with your views
- Analysis of your M and E report, and poster presentation (will be recorded).

SUMMARY

You may at any time withdraw from this research. You do not have to give any reason, and no one can attempt to dissuade you. If you ever require any further explanation, please do not hesitate to contact Kevin.Harris@solent.ac.uk.
Appendix 2: Information relating to the Coaching Innovation Programme

2.1: CIP Brochure

WHAT IS THE COACHING INNOVATION PROGRAMME?

The CIP is a curriculum based initiative that enables students on sport courses to get involved with the sport and coaching in Southampton and the region. Developing and delivering an innovative coaching project to help increase sport and physical activity engagement in the local community.

Students’ sport development students are encouraged to research a community or group in their second year – engaging with local practitioners, examining physical activity or niche areas and working with the community to develop a project that uses coaching, sport or physical activity to address its unique needs. This is their third year, the students tackle through on course project following their project in the chosen community.

The work of the CIP currently takes around 200 people a year in the Southampton area and addresses a wide range of social and health issues. These issues include physical activity, school sport, crime and anti-social behaviour, disability, equal opportunities and women’s participation, grouped according to four key themes.

- Sustainable combating physical literacy and
  - Education
  - People with disabilities
  - Women and girls
  - Inclusion

The CIP has four distinct coaching groups, based on the four key themes above and working on projects that are specific to the needs of the community.
THE CIP TIMELINE
THE PLANNING AND DELIVERY STAGES OF STUDENTS CIP PROJECTS.

YEAR 2 CIP STUDENTS

October – April
Students are encouraged to develop their career goals by means of supervising practice placement.

May – June
Students complete their practice placement.

YEAR 3 CIP STUDENTS

October
Students arrange themselves by means of a placement meeting.

April – May
The Coaching Innovation Programme teams take part in the Symposium, making their plans for the following year.

June
The Symposium provides the opportunity for students to present their work on a CIP project and receive feedback.

SAMPLE PROJECTS

ACTIVE RECOVERY
Active Recovery is a community-based project that aimed to increase physical activity for people aged over 50 years.

The project involved a 12-week physical activity programme to address the needs of older adults and improve their health and well-being.

Participants were encouraged to take part in group sessions, led by trained volunteers, to increase their physical activity levels.

Topics covered included diet and nutrition, weight loss, and social contacts. The project aimed to provide opportunities for social interaction and support, as well as promoting physical activity.

The project had a positive impact on the participants, with many reporting increased physical activity levels and improved well-being.

The project was evaluated through a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, including questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups.

The project was successful in increasing physical activity levels and promoting healthy lifestyles for older adults.
PRYMS ON THE MOVE

Hums on the Move was a community-based project aimed at increasing awareness of physical activity for young people aged 11-15. Initially, the project was for 10 weeks and focused on activities including Zumba and kickboxing, as well as a healthy eating.

Group discussion of the programmes such as health benefits and importance of exercise, the participants learned about day-to-day skills such as developing their language skills and also assessing their resources - whether they would benefit from leisure activities or the exercise that could help them in their future.

Hums on the Move activities were cheap, which made the class extremely affordable for the members, whereas a previous exercise class was held at a university and was very expensive. The class offered exercise for all ages and included activities such as yoga, Aerobics, and Zumba. The group of 15-20 members enjoyed the programme.

Outcomes: Improved self-esteem, increased confidence, a positive view of life, being more engaged in healthy habits, and increased programme.

City on the Move was still going and not offering them viable options for engaging with different communities. They created a new user-friendly, family-friendly project called Zumba, which was also the core of the programme along with Julie Chisum who ran the sessions.

NUTRITION COUNTS

Nutrition Counts was an education programme involving young people and schools, aiming to increase awareness of healthy eating. Participants learned about the importance of a balanced diet and the benefits of eating a variety of foods.

Working with children with behaviour issues was challenging, but the programme was designed to engage them and provide an exciting and enjoyable learning environment.

The project was innovative in its approach, as it combined theory with practical activities, allowing the pupils to demonstrate their skills in an enjoyable way.

Outcomes: Improved nutrition knowledge, increased confidence, a positive view of healthy food, and increased programme participation.

Young people who were part of the programme could now cook and enjoy healthy meals, which were much more nutritious than the previous snacks.

Outcomes: Improved nutrition knowledge, increased confidence, a positive view of healthy food, and increased programme participation.
Appendix 3: Framework Resources

### 3.1: Conceptualising Programme Theory (prior to testing in study 1)

**CIP PROGRAMME THEORY CONCEPTUALISING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</table>

**Stage 1: Background to programme theory**

*The stage method was used for testing and understanding of the issues supporting the development of the CIP project. For example, the local audience in the characteristics of the participating needs.*

**Stage 2: Making explicit Programmes Theories and outcomes**

*This stage maps out the IP - THIRP experiences that underpin our Programme Theories as well as the programme evaluation.*

**Stage 3: Hypothesising the mechanisms**

*The stage formulated a number of hypotheses for how and why union programme theory will work by taking into consideration the environment: contextualising what it is about to programme that will bring about change.*

### 3.2: Mobilising M and E (prior to testing in study 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TARGET</th>
<th>INCREASES</th>
<th>TOXICITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stage 2 – Mobilising M&E model**

*Develop evaluation questions for feedback*; *consideration questions for feedback.*

**EVIDENCE VALLT**

*Evidence base and M and E report annual testing? Video, teaching? Written report?*

**Hypothesise new CIP model for testing**

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3.3: Workshop slides (prior to testing in study 1)

The workshop slides can be made available electronically, and / or in hard copy form on the day of examination.

Appendix 4: Evidence supporting methodology (study 1)

4.1 interview schedule (study 1)

Questions

1. How did you first engage in the training programme and why?

2. How did your learning develop over the course of the year in relation to your understanding of m and e?

-Did you learn anything and what was your depth / level of engagement in relation to this learning?

-Realistic evaluation prompts of CMO (and putting these into practice) How did they put this into practice

-Challenges / progress / strengths

-Praxis – the process by which a skill is enacted, practiced, embodied

CAPACITY BUILDING

3. Do you feel that you have become more competent in M and E practice and do you feel m and e practice is important in your own view? Why?

-Do you feel that m and e is important for a practitioner working in this field and that they are best placed to do this work in programmes?

-Are you likely to use this approach in the future?

CAPACITY BUILDING

4. Do you feel that the M and E framework we used was suitable for what you wanted to find out in your CIP?

-Did it uncover what you intended and what was useful for you?

COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE (EE) (Stakeholders and not evaluators best placed to understand community needs)

EVIDENCE BASED (EE)

5. What do you feel/ how significant was your role in the training programme was over the course of the year?

-subject?

-participant?
-did everyone take responsibility?
-structure vs agency (guidance, was the structure needed?)

PARTICIPATION / INCLUSION (EE)

6. How involved did you feel in the construction and delivery of your M and E approach and the programme we undertook?

-Was it too imposing (ie the RE)?
-or did you need guiding?
-Did you take control?

PARTICIPATION / COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP (EE)

7. Throughout the M and E do you feel you had a voice to guide the M and E (framework)

-Taking to RE principles

DEMOCRATIC (EE)

8. Having carried out your M and E CIP what (in terms of action) has resulted from this process?

-what has it contributed?
-self managing?
-honesty in reporting results? Reflexivity
-Improvements and learning
-Organisational learning within the CIP – do you feel your findings will influence what the CIP and future CIPs do?

ACTION / RESEARCH (informing new knowledge) / ACCOUNTABILITY (reflexivity) EE / IMPROVEMENT (learning and reflexivity) EE / ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING EE

9. Are there any things that you would change about the whole process (the model and the training programme?)

10. Do you now have the skill set / interest to move into future work and embed M and E principles?

4.2: Sample blog (study 1)

This can be made available electronically, and / or in hard copy form on the day of examination.

4.3: Questionnaire (study 1)

What is your gender?
2. Why did you engage in the M and E training programme?

3. What did you learn over the course of the programme?

4. Do you feel that Realistic Evaluation methodology was appropriate for monitoring and evaluating your CIP?

5. In relation to the Realistic Evaluation methodology what was your understanding and level of engagement with this approach (EG CMOs, programme theory)

6. In reference to your involvement and participation in the training programme please tick which statement(s) applies to you

7. How much control do you feel you and your CIP had in constructing and carrying out your M and E?

8. Please tick which statements best describe your experience of the facilitator (Kev)

   - Supportive and encouraging enabling us to make the best decisions for our M and E
   - Over imposing with certain ideas and approaches which did not recognise our views and what we needed
Not needed. We could have done the evaluation on our own with our own approaches

The facilitator was extremely helpful and increased my understanding of M and E

9. As a consequence of being involved in this programme, do you feel more competent and more likely to carry out M and E in the future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>To a certain extent</th>
<th>Yes, absolutely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. If there was anything you would change about the training programme what would it be?

4.4: Realist transcribed interview (study 1)

This can be made available electronically, and / or in hard copy form on the day of examination.

4.5: Sample evidence of analysis supporting study 1

Methodology explicit process of data analysis

Stage 1: Data familiarisation

- Transcription of data
- Interviews and blogs and survey were read through thoroughly to familiarise with the data again
- It was crucial to do this before NVIVO was even considered

Stage 2: Generating contexts and forming codes

- When the first set of reading was done, the transcripts were reviewed again to identify key findings associated with EE /RE and M + E. A deductive process testing the model / framework. Still no NVIVO.
- This time the realistic framework was utilised to gain an understanding of what worked for whom in what circumstances and why
- Each interview and blog was then manually analysed
- At the heart of realistic evaluation is to identify the context, mechanism and outcome configurations (Pawson and Tilley, 1997).
- The first part of the analysis involved developing an understanding of the contexts (conditions, external environment, circumstances) influencing the students and impacting on the model / framework.
- Without understanding these contexts, it would make understanding the mechanisms and outcomes a major task.
- Whilst identifying the contexts, key codes were identified and highlighted relating to RE and EE. These were simply noted within each transcript such as ‘guidance’, ‘connection and engagement with programme theory’ and ‘observation to understand mechanism’s’. See photos below which provide an example from one of the interviews.
By the end of this stage all interviews were analysed and a large volume of preliminary codes were formed. It was not clear at this stage which of these codes would form mechanisms or outcomes. The contexts were placed within a table.
Table: Contexts derived from data analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wider parameters and goals for Edumove</td>
<td>The organisational context of ‘Edumove’ had a strong influence on the nature of the CIPs being worked with. What was required in terms of evidence from the Edumove team needed to be considered, as did the challenges for achieving the three pillars of Edumove which were ‘enjoy’ ‘move’ and ‘achieve’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Coaching Innovation Programme (CIP)</td>
<td>As discussed above but in general its broader requirements and credit bearing characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpredictable projects / changes and struggles</td>
<td>Many of the CIP’s sampled shared similar characteristics. For example some had struggled to link with certain schools. Some had linked and developed programme theories in relation to certain subject areas only for the school to withdraw. This meant that some were starting again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scepticism</td>
<td>This was associated to negative perceptions of M and E as a boring process. Also, challenges concerning how any M and E approach could uncover Edumove</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


| towards M and E | goals. |
| Working with young people | Young people are hard to investigate the ‘what works for whom and why’. Some, unwilling to open up and explore the generative mechanisms |
| Awareness and limitations of sport for development programmes | Many of the students were aware of the limitations of SFD programmes given the critical analysis developed over the course of the CIP |
| Limited understanding of M and E and programme theory | Many, if not all of the students were starting from a fresh with limited knowledge or experience in M and E practice. In particular limited understanding of theory driven approaches to evaluation. |
| In experienced practitioners | For nearly all of the SSDP’s the CIP was their first real live brief. |
| In frequent support within Edumove | An immediate context that did emerge across the SSDP’s was the infrequent support within Edumove. Attention was given to training at the start of the year but in most respects the CIPs were running at arms length from the Edumove team. |
| Edumove privacy | SSDP’s were limited as to how much depth of their ‘programme theories’ could be shared with the partnering schools. Eg: session plans could not be shared. |
| Competency and experience in Edumove | The innovative focus associated to Edumove surrounding active learning required a level of competency of the SSDP’s. This was a factor to be considered alongside M and E competence. |
| Fear of M and E | Limited knowledge and experience associated to M and E and fear over the capacity to carry it out effectively. |
| Short term projects | In most cases the projects were only 6 weeks. This questions emerge surrounding the capacity for learning over this period and time to carry out M and E. |
| Working in schools (cooperation and confusion) | Some schools are more cooperative and proactive than others which may impact significantly on the success of the M and E process and any organisational learning to take place. |
| Disparities in group dynamics and cohesion | Like in most teams and groups disparity of group members should be considered. Those who are more vocal, proactive and motivated opposed to those who are not. |
| Open minded perceptions / Willingness to learn about M | Given that the programme was optional there was a key willingness amongst all of the sampled SSDP’s to develop a more comprehensive understanding of M and E. |
and E

Optional training programme providing support

The model / training programme being entirely optional meant that only students interested would be involved.

Dynamics of SSDP’s doing own evaluations

Over a short period of time and in addition to the implementational aspects of the CIP, there would be key resourcing challenges for carrying out any M and E, yet also the opportunity for more autonomy and responsibility.

Need for support

Specific support and guidance required to make sense of M and E approaches.

Stage 3: **Identifying mechanisms and outcomes**

- Having established preliminary codes and contexts associated with the three areas of exploration (RE, EE and ME) the next stage involved identifying key **mechanisms** and **outcomes** associated with the codes generated from those 3 areas.
- Codes were grouped into relevant mechanisms and outcomes by making use of realistic techniques. For example, codes that expressed an overall achievement or sense of distance travelled were ‘outcomes’ where as codes that demonstrated generative reasoning with resources that led to these outcomes were grouped as ‘mechanisms’. The contexts were of key importance in aiding this. This was aided by NVIVO through the node function.
- Quotes from the transcripts associated to ‘outcomes’ or ‘mechanisms’ were stored within the nodes function.
- In summary, outcomes were usually identified first. They were then worked back from to identify the mechanisms. Again, this is a common RE technique (Westhorp, 2014).
- To aid discussion, these were then themed accordingly
- This is illustrated in the tables below:

Table: Illustration of mechanisms and outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M + E Praxis</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased competency in RE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased confidence to carry out M+E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflexivity in questioning RE methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appreciating limitations of M +E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valuing M+E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theme: Informing M+E practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RE Praxis</th>
<th>Mechanisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theoretical grasping of RE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practical application of RE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perseverence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborative discovery of RE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valuing RE principles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theme: Conceptualisation to application

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Theme: Structure to enable agency

- **Mechanisms**
  - Trust / Guidance
  - Structure
  - Laid back
  - Interaction and discussion

Theme: Ownership and Autonomy

- **Mechanisms**
  - Self and collective control of process
  - Freedom to act and make choices
  - Motivation to gain recognition

Stage 4:
- The contexts mechanisms and outcomes were then all combined to provide a robust and informed set of CMOs. This is discussed in greater depth within the findings chapter.

Stage 5:
- This stage involved reinforcing primary data. The primary data itself drawing from the methods told a compelling story of the practitioners positive engagement with the framework.
- In order to justify the primary data, and to eliminate any questions from observers stating that ‘the practitioners were telling me what I wanted to hear’, the CIP projects were examined. These were examined via the monitoring and evaluation reports the students produced alongside the poster and viva exercise they carried out. Academic attainment (which drew upon the students ability to actively carry out M and E) was also reviewed.

4.6: Sample NVIVO screenshots (study 1)
4.7: Student Practitioner work informing secondary data analysis (study 1)

**Student Poster**

An EdulMove Project trying to address mathematical attainment and Nutritional knowledge in a PRU in Southamption.

**Creating a Programme Theory**

“Purposeful programme theory begins by identifying its intended users – who will be using it how and why, then there are implications for what the school should be doing (Rogers 2011, p35)”

**Planning and Delivery**

Darling, 2013 suggests that the games need to be easy to understand and be engaging for the learner. In this case, the EdulMove contract did not allow us to engage the school and teachers in the planning and preparation of sessions.

**Outcomes**

- Increased knowledge of maths skills which will lead to an improved attainment levels.
- Students will be more interested in learning methods through a variety of different approaches.

**Sustainability**

- Raw data to EdulMove (Complying with data protection)
- Results will be fed back to EdulMove and Vinnant School
- Introduction for PRU in Southampton

**Data Collection**

- Monitoring Logs and Overt Observations (Petton, 2002)
- Focus Groups (Stuart et al, 2007) and Interviews

**Realistic Evaluation**

Paxson and Tiller (2004) describe the process of realistic evaluation understanding how programme works, in what circumstance, for whom and why.
Nutritional Understanding

"I definitely think they know more about it... the kids know about it but it's difficult for them to act upon it because they're not the one (Buying the food)"

Student Evaluation framework

**Findings**

**Mathematical Attainment**

"it's a more memorable lesson... You can see that when you say that game when you ran, they remember more"

**Nutritional Understanding**

"I definitely think they know more about it... the kids know about it but it's difficult for them to act upon it because they're not the one (Buying the food)"

**Physical Activity**

"when you do physical activity around a sport kids are automatically put off by it if they don't like that particular sport"

**EduMove In PRU**

"Yeah I think it has and I think that they've enjoyed it. I think they've got a lot out of it and usually as well as they had to work together, sometimes with people they didn't want to work with and that side of things, so I think as well as the academic side of things, socially and fitness wise I think it was good"
How the project worked?

The concept of Edumove looked to combine traditional subject areas with physical activity, providing an alternative way of learning. When used strategically, Edumove is:

- A formidable tool to introduce new topics in a wide range of school subjects.
- An effective approach to promote fitness and health through participation in physical activity.
- An approach to promote cooperation and competition in completing tasks. (Edumove 2013)

What we aimed to do

- **Nutritioncounts** ran a full six week programme, incorporating a variety of different techniques.
- Improve the pupils mathematical attainment; specifically decimals, fractions and percentages along with some basic nutritional knowledge.
- Include an array of physical activities rather than competitive sporting games.
- The ultimate aim of the project was to improve pupil’s mathematical attainment and provide them with skills that they can take forward to use throughout their life.

How the project was monitored and evaluated?

As part of the project **Nutritioncounts** monitored the learning of pupils giving them the chance to feedback to us on the sessions that we ran. This consisted of like it scale questionnaires so that writing was minimal, Observations were continually carried out on a weekly basis to monitor progress. The project evaluated whether the children’s mathematical ability had improved. This was undertaken through the use of: Focus groups with the pupils of Vermont School and interviews with the teachers.

How will the project be sustainable?

As an Edumove project, **Nutritioncounts** falls under organisational sustainability, as this programme has been used by Edumove to mould future programmes involving behavioural issues. We attended a volunteering symposium to interact with local practitioners in Southampton, as well as inviting a selection of second year students to our final session to experience Edumove and working with PRU students.

Findings

**Mathematical Attainment:** It was suggested that it would be difficult to measure what the real impact on the maths levels had been until the pupils studied the three mathematical areas in the classroom. This being said, there was a noted improvement in knowledge retention throughout the Edumove process. T1 noted “it’s a more memorable lesson... you can see that when you say that game when you ran, they’re more likely to remember”. This highlights that Edumove could work effectively as a revision tool.
There was a noted improvement in S3 who achieved a level 4 in a mock SATs paper “which is quite a big jump from where he was” (T1). Observations also showed that there had been improvements in ability and confidence from S6 who had shown an increased understanding of maths as the project went on (NC1 and NC3). This being said, T2 said there had been no improvement as yet, suggesting that more time needed to be given for explanation of activities and that a greater use of the whiteboard would have been beneficial, however, this does not coincide with the Edumove principles.

**Nutritional Understanding:** T1 suggested that nutritional knowledge had improved but it was difficult for the pupils to act upon this as they are not the ones who buy the food in their household. T1 also noted that the teachers had an increased awareness and interest around nutrition – “when you look in their lunches, pretty much everything is chocolate”. T2 suggested that the pupils don’t necessarily know more as the school is very active in supporting health food and lifestyle. The pair that I worked with looked to select the chocolate cake continuously; however, by the end of the session they replaced this with an apple and could state why this was a beneficial decision (C2).

**Physical Activity:** T1 suggested that physical activity had been useful stating “I think that when you do physical activity around a sport, kids are automatically put off if they don’t like that particular sport”. T2 suggested that physical activity in the classroom can be of benefit suggesting that movement can increase the concentration of students. Observations suggested that there was an improving level of physical activity and fitness as the six weeks went on.

**Awareness of Edumove concept with students in PRUs:** “I think they’ve got a lot out of it socially, as they’ve had to work together, sometimes with people they don’t want to work with” (T1). This suggests that the Edumove concept of working together and promoting teamwork can have a positive impact on this type of group. This is supported by the observations, with one stating that “the boys I was supervising on completion of their own budgeting and healthy eating then moved around the class to help their friends which re-laid to me that their confidence could be growing” (NC3). This furthered the idea of Edumove helping to develop teamwork and this shows that it was beneficial in a PRU setting.

**Summary**

- Edumove would work well as a revision tool for maths for pupils in PRUs, as our data shows us that there was an improved retention knowledge in the pupils as the project went on.

- Despite there being an increase in the awareness of nutrition, the evidence suggests that this may not have a positive impact on their health, as it was evident that they do not have control over what they eat.

- The evidence suggests that Edumove can have a positive impact on mathematical attainment levels in pupils in PRUs, as active learning suits the needs of this type of participation group.

- Physical activity was seen to have a positive effect on the participants who did not necessarily have an interest in competitive sport, because without the pressure of competition, they felt more inclined to engage.

- Edumove was shown to have improved social interaction between the participants, because they worked together to complete tasks combining physical activity and academic subjects highlighting the importance of teamwork.

**Recommendations**

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To maximise the impact of the project, the duration could have been extended beyond six weeks to achieve a more significant turnaround in mathematical attainment primarily. Furthermore, emphasis should be placed on one curriculum subject as opposed to two, as this would potentially work better in a PRU due to the specific needs of the pupils. Finally, more freedom should be given by Edumove to show session plans to the staff beforehand to maximise their involvement within the project and throughout the weekly sessions.

Appendix 5: Evidence supporting methodology (study 2)

5.1: Watts and Stenner Crib Sheet (study 2 – applied to factor 1)

Q Factor 1 Story / Holistic narrative

6 participants loaded onto this factor

Crib sheet section

Factor arrays

*Items ranked at +4 and or +3*

2 Since the M and E training programme I feel more competent about undertaking M and E in the future +4
5 I feel that the M and E framework has made it possible for me to identify mechanisms of change in my CIP +4
1 Since the M and E training programme my competency for carrying out M and E has improved +3
3 Since the M and E training programme I feel more competent in carrying out Realistic Evaluation +3

*Items ranked higher in factor 1 array than in any other factor arrays*

1 Since the M and E training programme my competency for carrying out M and E has improved +3
2 Since the M and E training programme I feel more competent about undertaking M and E in the future +4
3 Since the M and E training programme I feel more competent in carrying out Realistic Evaluation +3
4 I can see the value in developing context – mechanism – outcome configurations to aid my evaluation +2
5 I feel that the M and E framework has made it possible for me to identify mechanisms of change in my CIP +4
6 I think that it is important to develop a programme theory before an evaluation is carried out +2
7 The stage 1 programme theory template enabled me to explain my programme theory effectively +1
8 The stage 2 M and E framework provided me with a clear set of steps to follow for conducting a realistic evaluation 0
9 I am more reflexive now about the processes I take to M and E programmes / projects +1

*Items ranked lower in factor 1 array than in other factor arrays*

11 I feel that RE is an appropriate evaluation methodology for my coaching innovation project 0
16 The resources (eg literature) surrounding RE enabled my understanding of the evaluation methodology -2
17 I felt that my relationship with the trainer enabled me to progress to understand how to M and E my CIP -2
18 I feel that the structure to the M and E process through the workshops and meetings enabled me to carry out my M and E -2
19 I felt engaged in the M and E 0
23 The trainer and I shared the understanding of the evaluation goals we had -3
24 I feel that the findings from our M and E will be valued by our partners -4
27 Throughout the training programme I felt in control of the evaluation -4
28 Without the structure of the training programme I do not feel I would have been able to elicit realistic evaluation -2

**Items ranked at -4 or -3**

24 I feel that the findings from our M and E will be valued by our partners -4
27 Throughout the training programme I felt in control of the evaluation -4
22 My role within the M and E was entirely clear -3
23 The trainer and I shared the understanding of the evaluation goals we had -3

**1st take - Initial reflections / hypotheses (Applying logic of abduction)**

In line with Watts and Stenner (2012) the logic of abduction pertains to the view of considering the implications of each items ranking. What does it mean? Why is it ranked where it is?

- Very blunt viewpoints emerging. RE competency improved (3:+3) and M and E competency improved (1:+3).
- Indication that the framework enabled the understanding of mechanisms within the CIPs (5:+4). However, (18: -2) does not shed an important light on the value to the structure of the framework.
- Indication of lacking control of the evaluation (27: -4) despite learning to do what was needed (1:+3; 3:+3).
- However, not overly engaged or empowered by the process. This is something that needed to be done. Not an enjoyable / worthwhile process. I just have to do this.
- Sensing that these practitioners happy to be guided. Control not essential (27: -4)
- RE and Kev [trainer] more interested in the mechs of change opposed to what perhaps they wanted to find out what they really wanted to in their CIP (23: -3)
- The consensual engagers. Not seeing that their findings will be taken forward (24: -4).
- The importance of developing a programme theory prior to evaluation (6: - +2)

**Using demographic information**

Opposed to doing this before factor interpretation, Watts and Stenner suggest waiting because each factor array is approached on its own terms and avoids preconception and expectation.
**Demographical observations from factor 1:**

- 6 participants were significantly associated with this factor
- Of the 6 participants 4 were female and 2 were male
- Wells and Mcc (females) were from the same CIP – 1st class students and driven to do well.
- Paris and Milan (females) were from the same CIP – not as capable as Wells and Mcc
- Chaz and Medhurst came from different CIPs and adopted lesser leadership roles compared to other members in their CIPs
- Paris and Milan also not the driving force behind their CIP
- The competency and grasp of M and E amongst these 6 was extremely limited and near to zero at the start which explains why for all of them they rated their increased competency of M and E highly as a result of this. (2: +4; 1: +3)

**Distinguishing statements**

This pulls out all statements for each factor that were placed in a significantly different position to the other factors -eg statement 2 is a distinguishing statement for factor 1. Those in factor 1 strongly agreed and the others didn’t. These are indicated below:

**Represented viewpoints of those in factor 1 significantly different**

**Items**

2 Since the M and E training programme I feel more competent about undertaking M and E in the future +4
5 I feel that the M and E framework has made it possible for me to identify mechanisms of change in my CIP +4
6 I think that it is important to develop a programme theory before an evaluation is carried out +2
7 The stage 1 programme theory template enabled me to explain my programme theory effectively +1

14 I would implement RE in future roles -1
28 Without the structure of the training programme I do not feel I would have been able to elicit realistic evaluation -2
17 I felt that my relationship with the trainer enabled me to progress to understand how to M and E my CIP -2
18 I feel that the structure to the M and E process through the workshops and meetings enabled me to carry out my M and E -2
23 The trainer and I shared the understanding of the evaluation goals we had -3

**Adding additional items**

This section focuses on items currently omitted up to this stage from the arrays.

**Items**

12 I now understand more about how and why my CIP worked +2
(Supports statement 5 about mechs of change)
13 Since carrying out the training programme I can see the need to understand how and why sport for social change programmes work +2

(An appreciation of the need to understand mech of change)

15 I feel that M and E training should be a key part of a practitioners professional development +1
(CPD around M and E is valued and links to statements previous regarding M and E competency increasing)

20 I felt that my views within the collaborative process were respected -1
(Views around the M and E process given their lack of experience were not as crucial to the students)

21 I felt that throughout the M and E training programme I was able to highlight any issues or tensions -1
(Highlighting issues or tensions was not valued as strongly as those achieving higher rankings)

29 The training programme has been possible to complete given my additional workload -2
(External pressures are an issue)

30 M and E should be embedded within a practitioner’s role +1
(Clariﬁes the importance of practitioners being involved in M and E. Contrasts with a current theme running through the story at present regarding the limited transformational aspect of doing M and E).

5.2: Provisional holistic narrative (study 2 – factor 1 sample)

Factor 1 Holistic Narrative

Full interpretation of Factor 1

“From zero evaluators to passive realistic evaluators”

Factor 1 has an eigenvalue of 5.33 and explains x % of the study variance. 6 participants are significantly associated to this factor. 4 are female and 2 are male. Barring one participant (female: McC) all share an average age of 20. They all had limited or near 0 experience of eliciting M and E work and came into the M and E framework with thus limited knowledge. 4 were sports studies students and the other 2 are representative of Sport Coaching and Development.

The viewpoints from this factor indicate that the M and E competency of the practitioners has increased signiﬁcantly from being involved in the framework (1: +3). It supports the importance of capacity building to fulﬁl M and E tasks. This also indicates the value placed around practitioners having more responsibility in M and E but relative to other factors those loading here scored lower (30: +1) compared to those in factors 2 and 3. This is an interesting ﬁnding within the interpretation given that there are questions within the SFD literature regarding how involved practitioners should be in M and E. This supports the view that they should be involved yet the near neutral response to M and E being a key part of a practitioner’s role is not as strong. Leading on from this, it is viewed as necessary but not excessive to have M and E CPD embedded in the support and development of a
practitioner role (15: +1). Thus it could be concluded that despite the increased competency these practitioners are sceptical about how much M and E should be embedded perhaps due to the time constraints and additional workloads (29: -2) yet they do feel considerably more confident about doing M and E in the future (2: +4). In terms of distance travelled they have clearly progressed significantly from a limited competency in M and E.

RE competency has improved (3:+3) which is further justified by practitioners indicating their improved understanding of mechanisms within their CIP (5:+4) which in line with RE literature is not only a key tenet of RE but also one of the most problematic wherein the realist community find it hard to uncover mechanisms. Practitioner’s have shown clear engagement, linkage and resonance with this amongst this factor (13: +2) despite there emerging neutral views of the importance of RE as an evaluation methodology (11: 0) and intent to use it in the future (14: -1). This is further supported with other key conceptual elements that support the RE process such as the importance of developing programme theories of change (6: +2), seeing the value in developing C-M-O configurations (4: +2) and simply understanding more about how and why their CIP worked (12: +2). They have identified knowledge regarding the M and E concepts they were using but they do not appear to demonstrate any critical issues with any given weakness of RE.

As far as the collaborative dimension of the framework goes, those within this factor demonstrate viewpoints (18: -2) that the structure of the framework did not necessarily enable clear grasping of M and E (which contradicts 1: +3). Yet they rank higher (relative to other factors) the statements associated with the two models (7: +1; 8: 0). This would indicate perhaps an implicit positive engagement with the structure and the need for support and guidance based on the contextual needs. This does create further calls to understand in more detail what their interpretation of structure was. A provisional conclusion would suggest that the structure did facilitate M and E grasping within this factor. In this sense it enabled practical outcomes for the practitioners.

Although the framework enabled clearer grasping of M and E and RE techniques this factor indicates issues concerning lack of control over the evaluation (27: -4) where the degree of control over the evaluation was ranked lower. Some key questions emerge from here: did they not feel in control because they did not want to be and were thus happy to be guided? (statements 6: +2, 5: +4 and 4: +2 would support this answer, as would the demographical information available which supports that most of these participants were not the overall driving forces behind their CIP); or did the framework stop them from eliciting control and did the regular monitoring of progress and quality impact on this? What would control mean for them? The context of the programme was based on the practitioners wanting and needing to learn more about M and E thus their motivation for collaboration was based on that need to be guided.

The shared understanding between the practitioner and the trainer of what the evaluation was supposed to do also emerges. Statement (23: -3) highlights a potential tension between what the trainer saw as important in the evaluation goals and what the practitioners saw important. Despite the increased capacity in RE, to what extent mechanisms of change were as valuable for the practitioners opposed to evoking more explicit outcomes is open to debate. These practitioners were not involved in organically driving the design of the framework which may explain the limited voice. Its pre conception and focus on RE perhaps contributed to this and led to their role not being entirely clear in process (22: -3).
Key Outcomes
- M and E competency increased from the framework
- Increased competency to elicit RE
- Deeper understanding of how and why programmes work
- Programme theory seen as a crucial stage to aid evaluation
- The programme theory model enabled clearer grasping of theory generation
- M and E stages model enabled clear guidance for conducting RE
- Dis appreciation of shared goals
- Hard to juggle with other things
- Apathetic towards collaborative transformational goals (let’s just get it done)
- Role not entirely clear

Emerging Contexts - Mechanisms – Outcomes

Provisionally developed and to be further explored through interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CMO</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Capacity building (m) to facilitate M and E competency (o) for those with limited knowledge (c) of M and E</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Practitioner responsibility and involvement (m) to facilitate deeper understanding of how and why programmes work (o) within an environment where there is flexibility to independently do the evaluation (c)</td>
<td>P3: Develop a shared understanding of the programme) whereby the framework enabled practitioners to develop a shared understanding of their CIP. This is a clear sign that when given the opportunity and provided with capacity support such collaboration leads to the evaluative thinking (P7) Promote evaluative thinking as indicated in Schula’s principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Limited control over the conceptual dimensions of the evaluation (m) lead to clear understanding of how and why the CIP worked (o) for those with a limited understanding of M and E and proactivity to challenge RE as a methodology (c)</td>
<td>P1: Clarify motivation for the evaluation – they needed guidance and were happy to take it P8: As far as the transformative nature of M and E in the collaborative process this is not so much evident. P6: Constant monitoring to check that procedures were of suitable standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The forcing of a preconceived evaluation epistemology (m) lead to a nexus in shared goals and clarity between the trainer and practitioners (o) within a practitioner community concerned with outcomes and impact (o)</td>
<td>P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships – raises issues of trust and respect P6: Constant monitoring to check that procedures were of suitable standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Constant monitoring of performance could also have had a detrimental effect (m)</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking P8: Enhance the influence of evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The absence of critical engagement and depth towards M and E within the context of the CIP (m) Lead to apathetic attitude towards M and E (o) for those with limited understanding of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Follow up points for interview

In addition to the outcomes and CMOs abducted from the narrative, below are some pertinent areas from the factor that would benefit further clarification within an interview format:

- Sharing the goals of the evaluation. Clarification needed here towards the extent of exploring what they felt the goals of the evaluation were versus what the trainer felt

- Clarification surrounding their voice in the process. Did they feel silent because they trusted the trainers guidance on the basis of having limited knowledge (hence they were happy to)? What is control for them and how did they feel about it?

- Clarity of role in the process

- Do they appreciate how important mechs are or is it more on the level of knowing how to unearth them?

- Did the models help within the framework?

- Why will the findings not be valued?

- Role and understanding. Did they want more of a say or did they want to be guided?

5.3: Sample realist interview schedule (study 2 – factor 1 sample)

Interview schedule Factor 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
<th>In relation to provisional CMO from Q</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What was it about the framework / experience that increased your</td>
<td>P7: (Promote Evaluative thinking)</td>
<td>-Capacity building (m) to facilitate M and E competency (o) for those with limited knowledge (c) of M and E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competency for M and E?</td>
<td>Very much about education. Getting somewhere around being educated in M and E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you say the framework enhanced your M and E competency?</td>
<td>P7: (Promote evaluative thinking) P8: (Enhance the influence of evaluation)</td>
<td>-Limited control over the conceptual dimensions of the evaluation (m) lead to clear understanding of how and why the CIP worked (o) for those with a limited understanding of M and E and proactivity to challenge RE as a methodology (c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How far do you feel your M and E competency has come?</td>
<td>P7: (Promote evaluative thinking) P8: (Enhance the influence of evaluation)</td>
<td>-Capacity building (m) to facilitate M and E competency (o) for those with limited knowledge (c) of M and E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How embedded do you feel M and E should be in practitioners role (based on the fact that you did not rate it that high)?</td>
<td>P8: (Enhance the influence of evaluation) Was it more about practical outcomes opposed to transformational outcomes? Not too fussed about doing M and E. It’s a bane.</td>
<td>-Lack of resources and panic (m) made it harder to complete the evaluation (o) within an environment consisting of so many other demands in addition to running the programme on their own (c) -Limited confidence in M and E capability and recognition (m) resulted in apprehension of evaluation findings being valued by external partners (o) in a context of student centred / practitioner driven evidence (c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you see yourself doing M and E in the future?</td>
<td>As row above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent did developing a programme theory enhance the development of a shared understanding of the programme?</td>
<td>P3: (develop a shared understanding of the programme) whereby the framework enabled practitioners to develop a shared understanding of their CIP through the PT process. This is a clear sign that when given the opportunity and provided with capacity support such collaboration leads to the evaluative thinking (P7) as</td>
<td>-Capacity building (m) to facilitate M and E competency (o) for those with limited knowledge (c) of M and E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>P4: (Promote appropriate P processes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| How well would you say you grasped RE?                                  | P7: (Promote evaluative thinking)     | -Practitioner responsibility and involvement (m) to facilitate deeper understanding of how and why programmes work (o) within an environment where there is flexibility to independently do the evaluation (c) 

*Because the sorts do not really indicate any conceptual critique here.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>P7: (Promote evaluative thinking)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How useful would you say RE is as an evaluation approach?                | P8: (Enhance the influence of evaluation) | -Practitioner responsibility and involvement (m) to facilitate deeper understanding of how and why programmes work (o) within an environment where there is flexibility to independently do the evaluation (c) 

*Because the sorts do not really indicate any conceptual critique here.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>P7: (Promote evaluative thinking)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Your sort would suggest that you engaged well with understanding mechanisms of change (discuss) |                              | -Practitioner responsibility and involvement (m) to facilitate deeper understanding of how and why programmes work (o) within an environment where there is flexibility to independently do the evaluation (c) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>P1: (Clarify motivation for collaboration)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How happy were you with RE as an approach? Would you have liked to have implemented other approaches?</td>
<td>P2: (Foster meaningful inter prof relationships) – raises issues of trust and respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was it you feel that made your RE competency increase?</td>
<td>P8: (Enhance influence of evaluation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let’s talk about the control and clarity you had in the evaluation. How much control and clarity do you feel you had? Were you monitored too much? Suggests from the sorts that you did not have much control or were very clear. Is that because you didn’t want as much control?</td>
<td>P1: (Clarify motivation for the evaluation) – They needed guidance and were happy to take it P2: (Foster meaningful inter prof relationships) Raises issues of trust and respect P6: (Monitor evaluation progress and quality) P8: (Enhance influence of evaluation) As far as the transformative nature of M and E in the collaborative process this is not so much evident. However it is in terms of use and practical outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you genuinely feel about M and E? What were your feelings before, and what are your feelings now?</td>
<td>P7: (Promote evaluative thinking) P8: (Enhance the influence of evaluation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What sort of impact do you feel your findings will have? Sort indicates limited</td>
<td>P8: (Enhance the influence of evaluation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about</td>
<td>P5: (Monitor and respond to)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
your capacity to do the evaluation around other commitments within your CIP and other responsibilities? resource availability) made it harder to complete the evaluation (o) within an environment consisting of so many other demands in addition to running the programme on their own (c)

5.4: Sample Blog and transcribed realist interview (study 2)
These can be made available electronically, and / or in hard copy form

5.5: Factor analysis data pertaining to four factors (study 2)
This can be made available electronically, and / or in hard copy form

5.6: CMMO crib sheet template (study 2)

CMO crib sheet

Subject: Factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE 1: Data familiarisation and any specific comments</th>
<th>STAGE 2: Coding and highlighting key labels / phrases / concurrent with programme theory:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAGE 2.1 : Identification of key resources:</td>
<td>STAGE 3: TEASING OUTCOMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGE 4: TEASING OUT CONTEXTS</td>
<td>STAGE 5: MECHANISM CONSTRUCTION (Reasoning and response to resources) in line with C’s and M’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STAGE 6: CMMO configuration statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within a given Context</td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STAGE 7: Amalgamating analyses from each crib sheet within each factor to come up with unified CMOs per factor. These CMOs are stored as nodes in NVIVO where quotes from the blogs and interviews will be stored

STAGE 8: Holistic narrative re amended and CMOS confirmed for retesting
5.7: CMMO final factor configuration document (study 2 – factor 1 sample)

This can be made available electronically, and / or in hard copy form

5.8: NVIVO evidence supporting study 2
Appendix 6: Refined M and E framework (from testing at study 1)

6.1: Model 1: Developing Programme Theory

Stage 1: Background to programme theory

The paper has inspired the field in developing effective strategies to address educational issues and has become a cornerstone in education. For example, the latter arguments have emphasized the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for students. Furthermore, the results have highlighted the need for teachers to be knowledgeable about the subject matter they teach. Mappal and Rogers (2016) have also referred to the educational context.

Stage 2: Making explicit key outcomes

underpinning Programme Theory

This stage maps out the M and E frameworks that underpin our Programme Theory. It highlights the outcomes that we expected and also attempts to map out the 'hinges' behind the programme framework.

Stage 3: Predicting how and why

The stage formulates a number of predictions for how and why the programme theory will work, and describes what it is about the programme that will bring about change in relation to the 4 key educational outcomes.

Programme overview

- Outcomes 1: If the teacher(s) engage with the session and link it to the students' everyday experiences, students will experience a greater level of satisfaction from the activity.
- Outcome 2: Students will have a greater understanding of the subject matter.

Programme analysis

- Teachers
  -Challenge encouraged
  -Teaching strategies varied
- Students
  -Increased engagement
  -Improved understanding
- Parents
  -Satisfaction with programme

Diagram: Process Flowchart

1. Session organisation
2. Session delivery
3. Student feedback
4. Programme evaluation
5. Programme refinement

Diagram: Conceptualising

- Location: Highfield School
- Project Description:
  - Students will work collaboratively to understand curriculum content and develop new skills in literacy. 
  - The programme will be delivered in an enhanced learning environment to enhance student engagement and achievement.
6.2: Model 2: Mobilising M and E (refined from study 1)
Appendix 7: Refined M and E framework (from testing at study 2)

7.1: Model 1: Developing Programme Theory (refined from study 2)
Stage 2: Predicting ‘how’ and ‘why’ (BECAUSE)

This stage involves a number of predictions for how and why the programme will work. It becomes what it is about the programme that will bring about change in relation to key questions (Whitley, 2014):

1. For whom will this basic programme theory work and not work, and why?
2. In what contexts will this programme theory work and not work, and why?
3. What are the main mechanisms by which we expect this programme theory to work?
4. How does programme theory work, what outcomes will we see?

The best way to approach this is to consider the following (See Callin et al, 2015):

1. What resources will your project access?
2. How might your participants respond and respond to these resources?
3. What outcomes may these produce?

This process can then be repeated in the form of aC(O)R= (Context, Mechanism, Response, Outcomes) configuration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration Statements</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A resource is introduced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhances a change in thinking / response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcome 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration Statements</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A resource is introduced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhances a change in thinking / response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcome 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration Statements</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A resource is introduced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhances a change in thinking / response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.2 Model 2: Mobilising M and E (refined from study 2)
7.3: Context mechanism outcome configurations articulating how the framework may work for specific practitioners (refined from study 2)

The following CMOs are based in accordance with how it may work with specific practitioners bearing certain characteristics. The factors from study two have been utilised to articulate how the framework may work within certain circumstances.

**Practitioner cohort one: Limited to accomplished practitioners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C Within a given Context</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O Producing Outcome</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travelling far in M and E competency</td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited knowledge and understanding of M and E and realist concepts</td>
<td>Action learning sets (focus on mechanisms) and CIP</td>
<td>Contextualising real subjects within CIP created a light bulb moment of realisation that implementation resources are not solely mechs and participants respond to resources</td>
<td>Deeper understanding of generative mechanisms</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension towards carrying out M and E</td>
<td>Processes within the framework (eg PT templates and stages) alongside CIP</td>
<td>Realisation that the independent process helps you understand more about why it worked or not</td>
<td>Greater understanding of the programme and its potential sustainability</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging environment for practitioners to do M and E</td>
<td>The CIP project / Action learning sets</td>
<td>Created a sense of responsibility and independence concerning the importance of evidence</td>
<td>Appreciating importance of M and E</td>
<td>P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low confidence in M and E and hesitancy to mobilise</td>
<td>The CIP project and resources relating to RE within framework (eg developing evaluation questions)</td>
<td>Active application to the real life project</td>
<td>Fostered increased understanding for conducting M and E</td>
<td>P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low confidence</td>
<td>Action learning</td>
<td>fostered belief that</td>
<td>Improved</td>
<td>P7: Promote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in M and E and hesitancy to mobilise</td>
<td>sets (broken down into phases of the framework)</td>
<td>they would help address and plug knowledge gaps and fears</td>
<td>competency for carrying out M and E / RE</td>
<td>evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse stakeholder group and open programme</td>
<td>Delivering the CIP and being in charge of the programme Also / the resources provided by the trainer around exploring hows and whys / PT model</td>
<td>Stimulated realisation that through direct observation it is not possible to understand mechanisms—need to look deepen</td>
<td>Grasping realist concepts (eg how and why)</td>
<td>P3: Develop a shared understanding of the programme P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of the importance of M and E for SFD projects and the CIP / Curriculum requirement</td>
<td>Making use of reading resources provided through the programme and attending ALSS</td>
<td>Heightened motivation to persevere to achieve high mark and understand more about the project and M and E</td>
<td>Better M and E competency</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexperience of developing a Prog Theory</td>
<td>Team resources of working together</td>
<td>Reliance on others within group to help fill gaps</td>
<td>Able to construction a of PT they could understand</td>
<td>P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open minded, passionate student, interested in sport development</td>
<td>Programme theory templates and action learning sets</td>
<td>Appreciation of what I am trying to do and why I am trying to do it in my project</td>
<td>Clearer understanding of how and why programme worked that aided M and E</td>
<td>P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking P8: Follow through to realise use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP curriculum requirements and high interest in CIP and sport development</td>
<td>CIP project aligned with framework resources</td>
<td>Instilled emotional attachment because the project meant something to the students which led to willingness to do M and E</td>
<td>Increased competency in M and E</td>
<td>P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited experience of doing M and E and willingness to learn</td>
<td>Tutorials and PT template</td>
<td>Promoted the reflective cycle of learn – apply – reflect</td>
<td>Deeper understanding of how and why CIP unfolded</td>
<td>P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less transformational / less reflexive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>thinking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University based project led by in experienced student practitioners</td>
<td>Presentations (particularly those with activities focusing on partner collaboration)</td>
<td>weak confidence in findings because of the negative student perception as practitioners evoked little thought provocation or awareness of involving partners more within the M and E</td>
<td>weak take up of findings by stakeholders / partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those with limited understanding of M and E</td>
<td>Action learning sets / Presentations</td>
<td>Evoked little stimulation or enthusiasm about the critical depth of M and E</td>
<td>The absence of critical engagement and depth towards M and E within the context of the CIP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student centred / practitioner driven evidence / not as aware of wider evidence context</td>
<td>Action learning sets / CIP project</td>
<td>Increased but still perceived limited confidence in M and E competency</td>
<td>resulted in apprehension of evaluation findings being valued by external partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student practitioners with limited experience, leading all aspects of the project</td>
<td>Practitioners within CIP</td>
<td>Perceived lack of human resource and panic</td>
<td>Made it harder to complete and be able to deal with the evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance on control and support</td>
<td>Broken down smaller chunks ALSs offered throughout life cycle of the CIP</td>
<td>Fostered the feeling that they could steadily clarify understanding with the trainer before progression to the next stage / pathway</td>
<td>Evaluated project effectively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who find lots of information and lectures challenging</td>
<td>Framework and appropriate steps to follow</td>
<td>felt in control of doing the evaluation but</td>
<td>Increased competency in M and E more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexperienced practitioners delivering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P7: Promote evaluative thinking
P8: Enhance the influence of evaluation
P5: Monitor and respond to resource availability
P8: Enhance the influence of evaluation
P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships
P6: Constant monitoring to check that procedures were of suitable standard
P1: Clarify motivation for the evaluation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>complex interventions</th>
<th>combined with repetition of ALSs</th>
<th>needed and could call on support / dipping in and out</th>
<th>confident about doing M and E in the future</th>
<th>P6:Constant monitoring to check that procedures were of suitable standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear of standing out as stupid</td>
<td>Specific individualised action learnings sets where each group was at the same stage</td>
<td>Motivation to progress given that no one was behind or ahead of them in the process / feeling looked after / special attention</td>
<td>Feeling looked after and able to accomplish the evaluation</td>
<td>P2:Foster meaningful interprof relationships P4:Promote appropriate participatory processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited understanding of PT and feeling lost at certain times</td>
<td>Capacity building / provision of action learning sets (focused on mechanisms) and knowledgeable tutors / models / fellow practitioners in the CIP</td>
<td>Trusted the trainer to control and guide certain aspects of the evaluation</td>
<td>Able to apply mechanisms to CIP and M and E</td>
<td>P4:Promote appropriate participatory processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP programme operating in a climate subject to change</td>
<td>CIP project alongside M and E framework design</td>
<td>Created tension because of the inability to control participant engagement in project and M and E</td>
<td>limited / unable to apply M and E as planned</td>
<td>P4:Promote appropriate participatory processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Practitioner cohort 2 – Polished problem solvers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within a given Context</strong></td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fostering use in M and E</strong></td>
<td>Stakeholders / and M and E framework models</td>
<td>Enabled cooperative construction of how the</td>
<td>This led to a more robust M and E design and focus of evaluation</td>
<td>P3:Develop a shared understanding of the programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of stakeholder collaboration</td>
<td>programme would work with partners</td>
<td>questions</td>
<td>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</td>
<td>P8: Enhance influence of evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent practitioners passionate about SD and career in the field</td>
<td>Running own CIP combined with ALSs</td>
<td>enabled active M and E where engagement with participants was enhanced and fostered greater appreciation of those hidden mechanisms</td>
<td>More understanding of how and why CIP was working / coherent M and E process</td>
<td>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly opinionated group dynamics amongst conceptually engaged practitioners</td>
<td>Tutorial support through action learning sets</td>
<td>Because of the shared understanding of the programme between trainer and practitioners diffuse disagreements and provided clearer direction and cohesion</td>
<td>More competent to fulfil M and E process and fulfil tasks</td>
<td>P2: Foster meaningful inter prof relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent / leader practitioners conceptually engaged in M and E and SFD</td>
<td>No funding or stakeholder ties</td>
<td>Freedom and agency to make clear cut decisions in the evaluation design</td>
<td>Dynamic and creative M and E process followed.</td>
<td>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Realising and prioritising RE for future**

<p>| Pre conceived belief that M and E was a waste of time in the scale of other priorities | Action learning sets / trainer / RE methodology | Realisation of the important to understand how and why programmes work to inform future learning | greater value afforded to M and E / RE | P4: Promote appropriate participatory processes | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking | P8: Enhance influence of evaluation |
| Within an environment of | Action learning sets and | realisation of RE’s | lead to willingness to implement RE in | P8: Enhance |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited understanding of RE and the desire to prioritise outcomes</th>
<th>Facilitation of the trainer</th>
<th>Use to meet programme evaluation needs / particularly going deeper into the programme</th>
<th>The future</th>
<th>Influence of eval P4: Promote participatory processes: eg approach met the programme needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Detecting and solving problems through conceptual engagement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Complexities of an open social programme. Many potential methods (no defined procedure for RE) to use for answering questions / anxiety and fear for wanting to cover so much around w, w for whom...</strong></td>
<td><strong>Action learning sets and model 2 of framework depicting evaluation stages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Provided steadying, focused and assertive realistic attitude for conducting not trying to cover too much</strong></td>
<td><strong>Achieved M and E targets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivated practitioner – keen to do well in CIP and interested in SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>CMO configuration within framework model 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Applying CMOs unearthed awareness and tensions around the infinite number that could be produced and what was c, m or o.</strong></td>
<td><strong>More reflexive, inquisitive, critical and knowledgeable about RE</strong></td>
<td><strong>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limited experience of carrying out M and E / Willingness to learn about SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>CIP project and RE resources</strong></td>
<td><strong>Active application of w, w, for whom within own projects exposed weaknesses in own CIP</strong></td>
<td><strong>More astute and reflexive for honest appraisal of project – Change in disposition towards programme</strong></td>
<td><strong>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</strong> <strong>P8: Follow through to realise use</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open CIP / unpredictable nature of participants providing obstacles / Motivated practitioners</strong></td>
<td><strong>CIP project / non rigid M and E frameworks / trainer guidance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Created trust to be guided aligned with increased confidence in leadership to readjust approaches</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hard to run the M and E as intended but able to meet targets through improvisation</strong></td>
<td><strong>P2: Foster meaningful professional relationships</strong> <strong>P4: Promote participatory processes</strong> <strong>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</strong> <strong>P8: Enhance the</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Young enthusiastic and strong minded practitioners engaged with SD industry evidence discourse | Framework tools and CIP process | Realisation of how programmes work and of what is not done in industry – coupled with motivation to be successful in industry | Aware and critical of current industry M and E practice and need for conversation | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking  
P8: P8: Enhance influence of evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Open minded and unconditioned towards certain approaches | Reading resources and interaction with trainer | became more critical about the limitations of simply demonstrating facts | more innovation around how and why the CIP worked – understands philosophy of RE | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking  
P8: Enhance influence of evaluation |
| CIP project being conducted in open system and environment involving partnership working | Participants within CIP project / time and practitioner resource / location of CIP | Limited cooperation from participants and or stakeholders led to frustrations in developing relationships | Hard to control intended goal of M and E and production of findings that did not reach full potential | P8: Enhance influence of evaluation |
| Lack of evidence discourse / technocratic figures | Framework focused on unearthing how and why | Cynical view towards the value placed on ‘HOW AND WHY’ findings by partners | View that M and E findings may not have intended impact | P8: Enhance influence of evaluation |
| Quasi autonomous Control | Inexperienced M and E practitioners not requiring an organically designed M and E framework | Pre defined framework mobilised via action learning sets and models 1 and 2 | Provided the needed capacity building and direction fused with conceptual engagement | Coherent M and E carried out and grasping of realist concepts  
P1: Clarifying motivation for collaboration  
P2: Fostering relationships (sustained interactivity)  
P7: Promoting evaluative thinking  
P8: Enhance influence of evaluation |
<p>| Limited | Tutorials | Provided needed | Coherent M and E | P2: Fostering |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in M and E / short programme life cycle of CIP</th>
<th>Powerpoints / Models 1 and 2</th>
<th>Support and sustained interactivity</th>
<th>Carried out relationships (sustained interactivity)</th>
<th>P4: Promote participatory processes</th>
<th>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</th>
<th>P8: Enhance influence of evaluative thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young, enthusiastic practitioners / assertive in nature</td>
<td>Pre written framework and action learning set sessions / trainer</td>
<td>Facilitated a helping hand where practitioners still felt in control of independently mobilising M and E but also had trust in the trainer to control direction</td>
<td>Competent M and E produced</td>
<td>P1: Clarifying motivation for collab.</td>
<td>P2: Foster meaningful inter professional relationships</td>
<td>P5: Monitor and respond to resource availability (ensuring that people have the skills)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Practitioner cohort 3 – “Passive passengers”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Alignment to principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within a given Context</td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent on the surface in how and why</td>
<td>Extensive meetings and capacity support sessions from</td>
<td>Fostered increased confidence in grasping the distinction between</td>
<td>Intention to carry out M and E in the future in industry and view point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear and apprehension towards M and E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

265
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of the lack of evidence discourse</th>
<th>trainer and support from others in their group</th>
<th>M and E</th>
<th>that M and E should be part of a practitioner’s CPD</th>
<th>influence of eval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The CIP project and support of action learning sets / fellow group members</td>
<td>Enabled repetition and independent kinaesthetic application of realist programme theory to project</td>
<td>Showed awareness of the importance to understand how and why</td>
<td>P4: Promoting appropriate participatory processes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
<td>P8: Enhance influence of evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited awareness and curriculum requirements of Coaching Innovation Programmes</th>
<th>CIP, ALSs and leaders in their project</th>
<th>Instrumental / Motivated to succeed to achieve higher mark in CIP unit and looking up to others in CIP</th>
<th>Partial understanding about how and why their CIP worked</th>
<th>P1: Clarifying motivation for collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P8: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passengers</th>
<th>Terminology of RE such as CMO / Programme Theory</th>
<th>Resulted in confusion / hard to grasp certain concepts leading to disempowerment</th>
<th>Less engaged in the M and E process and less willing to elicit RE in the future</th>
<th>P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less engaged and considered</td>
<td>P1: Clarifying motivation for collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Cohort of practitioners made up of coaches and SD enthusiasts / Framework | More of a desire to coach opposed to the SD role / more comfortable with coaching opposed to dealing with complex issues around M and E | Less engaged in the M and E process and consideration of M and E findings | P1: Clarifying motivation for collaboration |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum requirement of doing a CIP and working with more motivated practitioners in group</th>
<th>Action learning sets / fellow group members</th>
<th>Main motivation to score a good mark and get the job done</th>
<th>Less reflexive around M and E and took less of a lead within the process. More passive</th>
<th>P1: Clarifying motivation for collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Limited understanding and experience in conducting M and E | Action learning sets / fellow group members | Less engaged and relied upon group members and trainer | Unable to see the connection between learnings of how and why with M and E practice | P7: Promoting evaluative thinking |
### Practitioner cohort four: “Proficient, competent and cautiously optimistic”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>MRes</th>
<th>MReas</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within a given Context</strong></td>
<td>A resource is introduced (MRES)</td>
<td>Enhances a change in reasoning / response (MREAS)</td>
<td>Producing Outcome</td>
<td>Alignment to principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avenues for use based on strong relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participants in a predefined and constructed framework</strong></td>
<td>Broken down stages provided within the framework (eg model 2) alongside CIP</td>
<td>Enabled them to shape how the M and E was done and make use of qual / quans through active application of CIP</td>
<td>Enabled completion of the M and E</td>
<td>P4: Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weak competency in M and E and limited M and E experience</strong></td>
<td>Action learning sets / trainer</td>
<td>Positive and strong reliance on capacity building and support where trainer could track progress</td>
<td>Improved grasping of M and E / RE</td>
<td>P2: Foster Meaningful Inter-Professional Relationships P3: Develop shared understanding of the programme P5: Monitor and respond to resource availability P6: Monitor evaluation progress P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>An environment where the practitioners lacked the competency to do M and E</strong></td>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>Flexible and trusting to be guided and affordance of quasi control to trainer through RE</td>
<td>Coherent implementation of a realistic evaluation that met their needs and expectations</td>
<td>P1: Motivation for collaboration. The SSDPs needed support and guidance. It could not have been organically grown. P6: Constant monitoring to check that procedures were of suitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated student practitioners keen to do well</td>
<td>RE stages / phases within framework</td>
<td>Strong team ethic to understand and apply the stages coupled with consistent enthusiasm to see how project worked</td>
<td>Clearer M and E findings</td>
<td>P4: Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak initial competency in M and E and challenging CIP project participants to conduct RE</td>
<td>ALSs / Trainer</td>
<td>Mutual trust and engagement with trainer based on trainer knowledge provided needed guidance</td>
<td>Coherent implementation of the evaluation despite contextual challenges</td>
<td>P2: Foster Meaningful Inter-Professional Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism of findings (for own praxis and partners)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edumove concept / unproven / knowledge gaps</td>
<td>RE stages within framework / model 2 - CIP</td>
<td>Enabled students to identify through their CIP delivery and M and E kinesthetic learners and other kinds of learners / strong relationship with Edumove</td>
<td>Optimistic about influence of findings for Edumove</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexperienced and limited understanding in M and E</td>
<td>Time to carry out the project and interact with resources and training</td>
<td>Seeing the evaluation through own eyes unearthed realisation of why the CIP was working</td>
<td>More pride in the project and achievements associated with M and E for the project</td>
<td>P8: Follow through to realise use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial intention of good grades connected with CIP programme</td>
<td>Phases of RE to follow within framework addressing how and why</td>
<td>Led to a deeper motivation to learn more about the CIP beyond just getting a good grade</td>
<td>More engaged within the evaluation and understood more about CIP</td>
<td>P7: Promoting evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexperienced and limited understanding in M and E, within a context of proof associated with</td>
<td>Time to carry out the project and interact with resources and training</td>
<td>Changes of disposition towards programme learning beyond philosophical underpinning of proving CIP worked</td>
<td>More reflexive and motivated to create robust M and E approach that advocates how and why project worked</td>
<td>P4: Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFD projects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P8: Enhance influence of the evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RE sceptics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP project working with young people</td>
<td>RE concepts / methodology on the sample participants RE jargon</td>
<td>Created tensions in gaining cooperation from the young people to uncover what it is about the CIP</td>
<td>Limitations of findings and RE to uncover hidden mechanisms</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with young children within CIP project and limited knowledge and expertise.</td>
<td>The CIP process and utilising RE tools to establish how and why</td>
<td>Critical of RE and the framework based on its suitability for the context where it will be implemented CURIOUS and more calculated</td>
<td>More reflective about if and how it will be used in the future</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with children within complex programme</td>
<td>The CIP process</td>
<td>Adaptability of methods to unearth how and why wasn’t always possible because of young people’s cooperation</td>
<td>Able to unlock outcomes to an extent</td>
<td>P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP that had changed significantly and was still changing</td>
<td>Stage 1 of model which focused on developing a PT</td>
<td>Evoked apprehension and inquiry orientation about postulating how and why so early given that things would change so frequently</td>
<td>Less likely to develop a PT</td>
<td>P4: Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes P7: Promote evaluative thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8: Peer reviewed publications supporting thesis

Appendix 8.1: Adams and Harris (2014).
Appendix 8.2: Harris and Adams (2016).