Stories of Happiness, Emotional Goals and Identity in 21st Century Teachers

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Abstract

Happiness may be the key to keeping teachers in the profession. Rarely, however, does teaching tend to be associated with moments of happiness in educational research or in the popular imagination.

In fact, quite the opposite view is presented in the significant body of literature that describes the emotional travails, stress and burnout of teachers. Consequently, there are recruitment and retention crises in schools throughout the Western World. Teacher identity is also in crisis, undermined since the late-1980s by economistic reforms which view teachers as producers and achievement as currency in an educational marketplace. Running counter to the more holistic, altruistic educational philosophies held by many in the profession, the reforms have attached a vulnerability to the identities of many teachers. Teaching culture has been described as one of *unhappiness*.

This study aims to shine a light on the happy moments which exist in teaching life. In doing so, it wonders if others were to do the same, whether an embattled but noble profession could find new life and allow the people within it greater agency in their identities. With little in the way of preceding research, the thesis is exploratory. Sitting in the interpretive paradigm, it utilises a narrative methodology to capture stories of happiness from teaching life. Interviews were employed to elicit the stories from eight participants, with the aim of providing thick, socially-situated description of happy episodes in the classroom. Supporting, scene-setting data comes from two focus groups while participants also completed a diary to document their daily emotion.

The study shows that teachers mainly experience eudemonic happiness, a type of positive emotion associated with self-actualisation after meeting long-held, personally important goals. It finds that a necessary precursor to these experiences is for participants to emphasise these long-held, altruistic goals in the narrative construction of their personal-professional identities, their *teacherly selves*. Furthermore, positive aspects of the *teacherly self* emerge from happy experiences in teaching because of self-actualisation occurring in the experience of eudemonia. Additionally, many of the teacher participants found particular happiness in the positive narrative arc of an underdog. Positive professional identity is important in teaching because it is associated with quality teaching practice.

Therefore, there are implications for teachers who want to improve their happiness and also their practice. There are also implications for educational leaders and teacher educators to make space for happiness and the positive identity formation of teachers. This is because students are likely to benefit from teachers' happy episodes if such episodes improve practice, although, further research into the connection between teacher happiness and student outcomes is suggested. That teachers may be particularly enlivened by an underdog story is good for students who require the greatest support. It is recommended that researchers address the connection between eudemonia and positive identity formation. In particular, it is important to determine if similar phenomena can be located across a range of settings and cultures.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the study and my research interest with regard to happiness in teaching. The study's rationale and significance are described, and the research aims are outlined. An overview of the thesis is provided.

Interest in the study

I surf and I believe many surfers construct their lives around the pursuit of peak moments of existence (Offrocker, 2019). We wait for a range of elements to come together in ephemeral, natural majesty. Over time, I have learned to relish these episodes and have observed how such peaks sustain and energise me through Pacific tranquillity and Tasman storm fronts. And, I have learned to pay attention to the same rhythms in the rest of my life. Watching my young son and baby daughter screaming around the kitchen tiles is to be captured and treasured in the mind's eye. Maslow (1964) talks about 'peak experiences', describing them as "rare, exciting, oceanic, deeply moving, exhilarating, elevating experiences that generate an advanced form of perceiving reality, and are even mystic and magical in their effect upon the experimenter" (Livingstone, 2015, p. 261).

On occasion, peak moments of existence occur for me in my teaching life. They are varied and, like a day of good surf, rely on factors inside and outside of my control. Such factors may include but are not limited to: a sense of my own creativity, new learning about my work, ego-fulfilment, the achievement of a child, the joy of a child, the behaviour of a child, collaboration between children and, on occasions, the weather (children go bananas if it is windy!) In ten years of teaching, the job has provided me with many happy experiences. Importantly, these past experiences often drive me to create new, similar experiences in my work; they provide motivation through a loop of positive feedback. I love aspects of teaching and know plenty of colleagues who do also.

In the initial research design, the term happiness was generally utilised in an episodic sense. Yet, on reflection, although it retains prominence episodically (because of the research design), it is also used, at times, to describe broadly pleasant emotions felt by teachers in the classroom. I recognise that the term has been chosen from my own vocabulary for how I feel towards positive moments in the classroom. I also prefer the term happiness because it seems more worthily aspirational than, for example, satisfaction or well-being. I tend to agree with Gorski (2017), who points out rather derisively that, in modernity, the term well-being often evokes little more than "a passive physical state" (p. 30). Further, as means of justification for the personal nature of this choice, I point to the inherent individual and cultural subjectivity of emotional experience as conceptualised by appraisal theory (Lazarus, 1991; Roseman & Smith, 2001; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Happiness is like other emotions in that its accepted features vary across cultures and individuals (Tsai & Park, 2014). For me, and for many others, the term happiness suggests a profoundly human prize, one that teachers could nobly seek.

Growing up in the United Kingdom (UK), I was part of the first cohort to sit standardized tests in primary schools. I came through a target-driven, outcome based education system and then became a teacher in one. For a long time therefore, my inherent instinct has been to teach to the test because this seems best for my students and my career performance. I feel a happy buzz of reward when students achieve well in those tests. The deeper I delve into the goal-oriented nature of my happy experiences at work, however, the more resentful I feel towards a politicised education system that seems to have programmed my emotional responses around narrow targets which fail to correspond with my broader philosophies for education and life.

In a previous role, I worked for two years in a number of schools as the Lead Teacher for a collaborative project between a group of schools. The aim was to coach teachers and leaders to support their professional development. In reality though, it was difficult to get beyond counselling competent practitioners through their professional unhappiness, unsustainable workloads and the 'emotional labour' of teaching. As a part of the coaching conversations for instance, my role was to facilitate goal setting. Goals were supposed to be about a 'Teaching as Inquiry' project but often other priorities were too pertinent to ignore. Or often, participants would be overwhelmed by the sea of goal topics from which to choose:

professional learning, administration, behavioural, achievement, pedagogical, personal, career goals and so on. I observed how each individual came to eventually select a goal that was worth devoting an hour long coaching conversation or series of coaching conversations to. For the individual there was stress, conflict and emotion within this goal selection process, and more often than not the goal would be altered so frequently it seemed to fragment and disrupt any authentic professional development. Conversely, although the sessions were meant to provide support, the process regularly seemed to breed unhappiness for the teachers. It served only to highlight for them the scale and complexity of their work. I have come to see that the unhappiness of teachers represents a recurring theme in my ten years of teaching. It has been present in every educational context in which I have worked, seeming to inhibit or influence the good work that occurs in schools.

In 2016, as a part of a postgraduate paper about organisational development, I wrote a position paper debating whether teacher well-being was the responsibility of school leadership. As an aspiring school leader albeit still working in the classroom, my intention was to critique the performative and managerialist leadership I had experienced. I was interested in other ways of motivating teachers and providing optimum conditions for learning. Consequently, I became interested in the positive approach fostered by positive psychology and how it related to my personal take on the happiness and unhappiness of teaching, as discussed above. The paper also developed my interest in how the politics and philosophy of neoliberal marketisation policies have created a 'new common sense' in education. By that, I mean the way success for students, teachers and leaders in schools has for over thirty years, been defined by competition through standardised achievement measures. Furthermore, how a relentless focus on these arbitrarily defined outcomes, as opposed to the process of learning and its less quantifiable outcomes, is now deeply embedded in education. It is embedded not only in the systems and jargon of policymakers but in the collective thinking and culture of modern practitioners.

Most intriguing for me is how this altered "common sense" influences the way teachers derive happiness, satisfaction or meaning from their work (Apple, 2004, p. 14). I am particularly interested in how an outcome-based, goal-oriented educational culture might influence the goals teachers form, and how emotional importance is attached to these goals by each

individual through the unique narrative of their personal-professional lives. Emotional appraisal theories suggest that positive emotions occur when goal congruence is established for an individual (Lazarus, 1991; Roseman & Smith, 2001). Such theories seem to support a neoclassical, economistic view of happiness "based on the premise that individual utility or well-being is the extent to which the individual's preferences are satisfied" (Dolan, Peasgood, & White, 2008, p. 95) and assume preferences can be satisfied by the market. If such views about happiness justify and underpin performative, neoliberal reforms to education, I wonder if the manner in which teachers experience work happiness has been narrowed, even inadvertently, to encourage goal-oriented emotional responses?

The continued unhappiness of teachers described in the literature (and identified in my preceding anecdotes about coaching) suggest that happy experiences for teachers are not associated with the realisation of performative goals and targets (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Bridges & Searle, 2011; Schutz & Lee, 2014). It seems likely teachers require more than these linear processes to obtain happiness. Hence, I have formulated a study which allows me to investigate the interaction of positive constructs from positive psychology within the goal-driven school cultures and professional personalities fostered under neoliberalism. The purpose of such an endeavour is to consider the place of happiness in our education system, contribute to knowledge about teacher happiness and address the implications of teacher happiness for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers. This has led to the development of the following research questions for this study:

- What is the impact of teachers' happy experiences for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers?
    - How is happiness experienced by teachers in their work?
    - Are there influences on the formation of daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' for teachers? What are they?
    - Do the daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' of teachers interact with their happy experiences? How?
    - What are the effects for teachers of paying closer attention to their happy experiences?

Overview of the Research Design

This study was guided by humanist research philosophies with the interpretive paradigm identified as its framework. Narrative methodology guided the generation of qualitative data primarily by using semi-structured interviews from which stories of happiness in teaching were elicited. Supporting data was generated by utilising two exploratory focus groups and a two-week daily diary, in which participants noted their day to day emotional goals and happy experiences. Eight classroom teachers from one urban school in a low socio-economic setting elected to participate in the study.

Thesis Organisation

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the research focused on my interest in the topic, the rationale for the research topic and its significance. The research aims are outlined and an overview of the rest of the thesis is provided in this section. Chapter 2 reviews the literature relevant to this study. A scoping of the body of literature on happiness in teaching is conducted; although, in doing so, the review identifies a paucity of literature on the topic. Consequently, the literature draws from a range of fields to portray the importance of work happiness for teachers. Chapter 3 outlines the research philosophy and paradigms, the methodology and the research design, explaining certain considerations related to researcher reflexivity. Ethical issues are also presented in this chapter.

Chapters 4 and beyond are likely to appear more unconventional to the reader. Therefore, a little more time is taken in this introduction to explain their structure and approach. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present findings and discussion melded together; the stories of participants interwoven with points of analysis and the ideas and theories of other researchers. The intention is to avoid separating participant from data, so as to represent most accurately the realities of the participants. Where possible, the hope is that this approach lessens “interpretative theft” by the researcher because the link between data and analysis is left highly transparent for the reader (Maclure, 1993, p. 314). It is an approach inspired by an

article by Kirk and Wall (2010) which, in turn, drew inspiration from the words of Maclure (1993). In my initial reading for the thesis I came across the Kirk and Wall (2010) article and I felt it dealt poignantly with the resilience and loss experienced by teachers through the course of their careers. I wanted to do something similar but instead capture the positive emotional moments in teaching life.

The research takes a narrative approach, meaning that time is taken, for example in Chapter 4, to introduce each participant separately, giving some background to their teaching career, and where possible, their life and worldviews. The aim is to assemble for each participant, across three sections of findings and discussion, something along the lines of what Kirk and Wall (2010) term a "work-life history" (p. 628). There is, of course, a focus on the happiness and emotional goals within these work-life histories.

To reflect the multifaceted nature of the topic and to effectively address the five research questions, data is examined in three separate chapters. Chapter 4 is titled ***Exploring Participants' Beliefs about their Emotional Goals and Happiness in Teaching Work***. It recognises the exploratory nature of this research, examining participants' general ideas and perspectives about happiness in teaching work. Chapter 4 seeks to deal primarily with the following research questions:

- What is the impact of teachers' happy experiences for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers?
- How is happiness experienced by teachers in their work?

Chapter 5 is titled: ***Stories of Emotional Goals and Episodic Happiness in Teaching Work***. It attempts to capture episodic happiness as experienced by teachers, utilising narratives elicited in the interviews. Chapter 5 addresses the same two research questions as Chapter 4. In addition, the chapter ends with a short section including data from the diary about daily emotional goals so as to explore the following question:

- Do the daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' of teachers interact with their happy experiences? How?

Chapter 6 is titled: ***Being Mindful of Teachers' Emotional Goals and Happy Experiences***. This chapter aims to examine the impact of being involved in happiness research on the participants. It addresses three research questions:

- What is the impact of teachers' happy experiences for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers?
- Are there influences on the formation of daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' for teachers? What are they?
- What are the effects for teachers of paying closer attention to their happy experiences?

Finally, Chapter 7 serves as a synthesis and conclusion. It is structured to address the nature of the melded findings and discussion chapters. At times, points of interest emerge out of participants' narratives in a disparate manner. Therefore, Chapter 7 deals with each research question directly, drawing together the loose threads of the preceding chapters into a synthesis more approachable for the reader. As with a more conventional thesis, Chapter 7 ends by discussing the study's limitations, implications and contributions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

"Levin lost all sense of time, and could not have told whether it was late or early now. A change began to come over his work, which gave him immense satisfaction. In the midst of his toil there were moments during which he forgot what he was doing, and it all came easy to him"

From 'Anna Karenina' by Leo Tolstoy

The idea of being happy or even emotional at work is a relatively new and slightly awkward idea (Fisher, 2010). For some, the concept of work happiness might simply appear a managerial ruse to persuade millenials to give themselves to work in a new way, via that archetypical project of self: the 'career' (Costea, Crump, & Amiridis, 2008; Fleming, 2009; Hooker, 2013). Certainly, research on happiness at work and in teaching is limited. Furthermore, much of the literature that does address the topic occurred prior to reforms and technology which continue to dramatically redesign the work of teaching and the nature of teaching itself (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Bridges & Searle, 2011; Lortie, 1975; Nias, 1989; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

In this chapter, I critically review literature from a variety of fields to highlight how important it is for all those involved in education to consider the impact of teachers' happy experiences on students, teachers themselves, leaders, and policy-makers. In essence, I argue that the happy episodes of teachers should be a critical consideration for ethically motivated educational leaders and policy makers wishing to make decisions for the common good (Branson & Gross, 2014). This is because the happy experiences of teachers likely interact with and influence teaching practice, teacher identity and therefore the education of students; and, there is an inherent value in episodes of happiness and joy for teachers,

students and for the positive progress of society itself (Duckworth, Quinn, & Seligman, 2009; Hargreaves, 1998; Hood, 2019). It is also made clear that work happiness for teachers has been almost entirely neglected, both by the education systems in which teachers work and as a subject for research (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009).

Chapter Organisation

The importance of teacher happiness is outlined below and the key themes found in the diverse literature: ***emotion, happiness, educational cultures*** and ***unhappy identities*** are drawn upon. Each theme is then expanded upon in sections contained in the main body of the literature review, and are sometimes structured into sub-themes. It should be noted that due to the exploratory nature of the topic, this review can be described as interdisciplinary in that it attempts to integrate and synthesise perspectives from a range of disciplines (Barry, Born, & Weszkalnys, 2008). Thus, literature is drawn from the fields of psychology, sociology, philosophy, politics, and education.

In order to discuss happiness with clarity, it is firstly essential to examine some of the knowledge and perspectives on **emotion** in general, so as to give background to the study's research and research questions. Emotion in teaching is also addressed because it is a crucial and often misunderstood facet of practice (Hargreaves, 1998). In addition, the relatively small body of literature dealing with teacher motivation is discussed. So as to fully comprehend the role of emotion in teaching, a particular focus is given to theories of emotional appraisal: the process conceptualising how emotion is triggered in each of us through congruence or incongruence with the emotional goals we hold (Lazarus, 1991; Roseman & Smith, 2001). These theories inform the literature on teacher emotion (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003); hence, the discussion below about what influences the happy experiences of teachers. Above all, these theories point to the complexity and subjectivity of emotional experience in humans, and highlight the importance of culture, context, personal history and physiological difference in how an individual may respond in a given situation. Variance occurs because an emotional response (happy smiling or jaw-gnashing rage) is based on the goals of the individual as opposed to being a direct response to the actual, real world situation in which the individual

finds his or herself (Jiang, Vauras, Volet, & Wang, 2016). Appraisal theories confirm that a vast range of moment to moment emotional experiences may occur in the daily work of a teacher. They challenge linear, economic perspectives of happy experiences, in turn pushing educational leaders and policy makers to consider the complexity of what motivates teachers. Yet, in addition, appraisal theories provide challenges to researchers for the accurate documentation of subjective emotional experiences in teachers. Therefore, the way in which appraisal theories conceptualise emotion contributes significantly to the narrative design of this research as it aims to establish thick description of the happy experiences in teachers' work.

In the next section, it is illustrated that neglect of teacher happiness sits in stark contrast to rapid expansion in the literature on **happiness**. Sparked by the revolution in positive psychology at the turn of the century, this research has deepened our understanding of happiness and its positive effects, influencing research in a range of fields, and is altering societal views of work in the 21st Century (Fisher, 2010; Jayawickreme, Forgeard, & Seligman, 2012). Yet, a positive perspective addressing happiness in teachers has rarely been prioritised, even if the emotion is linked to student well-being, organisational commitment and worker performance (Fisher, 2010; Roffey, 2012). This section also addresses different conceptualisations of happiness and how these sit within society as a whole.

In the background of teachers' happiness is the political creation of goal-oriented, outcome-based **educational cultures** which are regularly neglectful, for all stakeholders, of more holistic outcomes – such as critical thinking, enlightenment or, of course, happiness (Noddings, 2003, 2012, 2015). A sociological imagination enables scholars to appreciate the meaning of the larger historical scene in the lives of individuals (Wright-Mills, 1959). Specifically applying a sociological imagination to the happiness of teachers encourages discussion about how such educational cultures might influence the state of mind of the people who work within them. Over the last thirty years, a new "common sense" has been established in educational cultures through ongoing reforms which apply an economic rationale to the processes of teaching and learning (Apple, 2004, p. 14). By contriving an odd combination of markets and rigorous systems of accountability, neoliberal politicians aim to foster entrepreneurial competition between schools and teachers, encouraging a culture of

goal-setting managerialism in the process (Apple, 2004; Codd, 2005; Harvey, 2005). The implication for the work happiness of teachers is that an economic rationale is also assumed to apply to the manner in which satisfaction occurs in teaching work. Framed by positive psychology literature as outdated, economic views on happiness assume that preferences can be satisfied by the market and that emotion functions linearly within each of us: we set targets, we achieve (or fail to achieve) targets and we achieve happiness (or unhappiness) (Dolan, Peasgood, & White, 2008). The complexity of work happiness in 21st Century teaching likely demands more nuanced attention from researchers and educational leaders; especially if the human potentials of teachers are to be optimised.

Literature about teacher emotions and teacher identities are closely linked to one another with both strands of research also being closely associated with school reform (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Zembylas, 2003). In fact, much of the writing in these areas can be viewed as a politicised response to reforms. Therefore, focus is, in general, on the continuing ***unhappy identities*** of teachers brought about by reforms (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Bridges & Searle, 2011; Franks, 2018; Kirk & Wall, 2010). While well-developed, the literature fails to offer thick description about positive experiences, instead addressing the negative impact of emotional labour in teaching (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). The consequences of teacher unhappiness are outlined to include not only the poor mental health of teachers, but an ongoing recruitment and retention crisis that impedes an effective education system, particularly in areas of socio-economic depravation (Schutz & Lee, 2014). Furthermore, Hargreaves (1998) emphasises the inseparable nature of emotion from teaching and learning practice. It is an assertion which, I believe, leaves space to also explore the impact of positive emotions on classroom practice – in this instance, happiness.

Emotion

Emotional Appraisal Theories

To engage with the topic of happiness, examination of the literature about how emotions are conceptualised is essential. Having said that, this is not scientific or psychological writing and so I critique a small core of quite general literature which resonated with me in my position as an educational researcher. For example, attention is concentrated in the proceeding paragraphs on the social and subjective nature of emotion. Emotional appraisal theories examine the highly complex, multi-componential processes of how emotion occurs in humans (Lazarus, 1991). The term multi-componential refers to the independent but related facets of emotional experience: appraisal, subjective experience, physiological change, emotional expression, and action tendencies (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In line with literature about emotions, the terms *episode* and *experience* are used interchangeably throughout the thesis and refer, with a degree of breadth, to "anything starting from the stimulus to the later components or the immediate consequences of the emotion" (Moors, 2009, p. 626).

Crucially, appraisal theories of emotion explain how the same events do not necessarily lead to the same emotions in different people and why emotional responses vary across cultures (Roseman & Smith, 2001; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). As Jiang et al. (2016, p. 23) claim: "appraisal theory advocates that emotions are responses to evaluations or judgments of events, rather than (the) events themselves" and therefore places subjectivity at the heart of emotional experience. Appraisal theories also indicate that the manner in which emotion is experienced is socially constructed, sitting in opposition to earlier theories about emotion generation which conceptualised emotion primarily as a physiological phenomenon (Roseman & Smith, 2001; Schutz & Lee, 2014). It is now considered that emotional experiences are framed by and dependent upon a set of learned rules and convictions, unique to each culture and society (Cornelius, 1996). Therefore, the emotions of teachers are not solely "matters of personal (private) dispositions or psychological qualities" but are also "social and political experiences that are constructed by how one's work (in this case, the teaching) is organised and led" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 216).

The assertions that emotional responses are both socialised and subjective are significant to this research in two ways. Firstly, they highlight the importance of considering the wider culture of education as a socialising influencer on the happy episodes of individual teachers. The **educational cultures** section treats schools and teaching as a type of culture and the potential influences of that culture on the emotional goals and happy experiences of teachers are discussed. Secondly, as will be revisited and elaborated on in the Methodology Chapter below, a narrative approach to research seems a sensible way to understand emotional experience because narrative methods are able to socially situate experience while retaining the unique subjectivity of an emotional episode (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Hargreaves, 1998; Zembylas, 2003).

In this thesis, and in keeping with literature on the topic, an *emotional goal* describes an individual's emotional motives or concerns in a given situation (Moors, 2009; Roseman & Smith, 2001; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Appraisals occur consciously and unconsciously (Schutz & Lee, 2014). Yet, whether an emotional episode occurs in relation to present, perceived, remembered or imagined events and is processed consciously or unconsciously, appraisal theories suggest that "appraisals start the emotion process, initiating the physiological, expressive, behavioural, and other changes that comprise the resultant emotional state" (Roseman & Smith, 2001, p. 7).

For notable emotion to occur, Lazarus (1991) describes how there must be, for the individual, goal relevance to the event in question. Once goal relevance is established, goal congruence or incongruence determines whether the emotion is positive or negative (Lazarus, 1991; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). So, if the event is judged to be congruent to the emotional goal of the individual then happiness or another positive emotion is experienced. If the event is appraised as goal incongruent, negative emotion occurs. The level of an individual's ego-involvement with an event is thought likely to enhance or detract from the intensity of the emotional episode (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). There may also be temporal differences in the nature of an individual's response (Roseman & Smith, 2001). In addition, Lazarus (1991) theorises that the manifestation of each emotion involves a core relational theme which takes into account the costs and benefits in the relationship between each individual and their environment. For example, the theme for happiness is "making reasonable progress towards

the realization of our goals" (Lazarus, 1991, p. 267). Therefore, it is believed that the appraisal process ensures an emotional response that is appropriate to the situation and that provides effective coping mechanisms for the world around us (Roseman & Smith, 2001).

Emotion in Teaching

Emotions are central to teaching and learning because emotions are central to the creation of relationships between teachers and students. Emotions enable the two way understanding necessary for teaching, learning and successful classroom dynamics, intersecting deeply in teacher practice (Hargreaves, 1998). Almost constantly, teachers utilise their emotional intelligence to read the emotional state and readiness for learning of their students. Moreover, good teachers use emotions such as passion to connect with their students to "fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy." (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 835) Justifiably, cognitive scaffolding of ideas and teaching strategies receive much attention in the teacher development literature (Hargreaves, 1998; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Yet, while these technical skills are important, it seems necessary to emphasise that their effectiveness is "held together with emotional bonds" (Woods & Jeffrey, 1996).

From the late 1990s through to the early 2000s, emotion in teaching received renewed interest; in particular, the emotional politics of teacher development and educational reform (Zembylas, 2003). Yet, given the complexity of emotional response and the importance of emotion in teaching and learning, it is little wonder scholars of the subject point to myriad opportunities for further study; they argue that educational research's engagement with emotion has only scratched the surface (Hargreaves, 1998; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Emotion, like learning, is ephemeral and subjective – difficult to measure, and difficult to easily comprehend in ourselves, let alone in others; particularly when understanding involves the emotional and cognitive interactions of an adult and thirty young people for six hours a day, five days a week. So, the political and societal preoccupation with positivist measurement in education, described by writers such as Labaree (2003) and Denzin, Lincoln, and Giardina (2006), likely impacts strongly on emotional research in education. Like education, and like happiness, it seems the emotional skills of teaching can be side-lined by

technical-rationalist academic cultures and schooling reforms (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Woods & Jeffrey, 1996). In the case of emotion, positivist over-rationalisation of the social sciences is then further reinforced by traditional, patriarchal views in Western culture in which emotion has long been treated as childish, destructive, primitive and, fittingly, irrational (Keltner, Oatley, & Jenkins, 2013; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Emotion does not seem to be viewed as a topic weighty enough to be taken seriously in education. Or perhaps, educationalists simply do not know how to talk about feelings.

The individual, cultural and situational variance in emotion illuminated by appraisal theories is staggering, especially when considered within highly interactive work such as teaching (Hargreaves, 1998; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). For example, wild cheering and exclamations from students after an explosion of baking soda and vinegar could lead to happiness or unhappiness for the teacher depending on whether their goal at the outset of the lesson was student engagement or student behaviour. But, in assessing the teacher's emotional response, their cultural expectations of classroom behaviour would have to be factored in, as well as the interaction of those cultural expectations with personal or familial expectations. Not to mention the teacher's personal relationship with the students doing the cheering would have to be considered, as well as the reaction of the students who were not cheering. Then there are the teacher's professional goals, short term and long term in addition to how much sleep the teacher had the previous night. There is the physiological manifestation of that emotion in the individual, their current mental state is applicable also and so on! Having said that, teacher-student relationships and a teacher's aims for the lesson have been shown as the two most important factors in teachers' appraisal process, contributing significantly to their daily emotional episodes (Jiang et al., 2016). The goal formation and emotional experiences of teachers are undoubtedly a complex process.

Teacher Motivation

Emotional goals form a key part of the study's research questions and literature on teacher motivation also addresses teachers' goals. Early work on teacher emotion and identity touched broadly on teachers' goals but more in painting a wider picture of teachers (Lortie,

1975; Nias, 1989). Important but limited work was done by Brookhart and Freeman (1992) who found that the initial goals of student teachers were generally altruistic. In response to teacher shortages, and emerging slightly after the peak of the teacher emotion literature described in the previous section, research has begun to look at teacher motivation in greater depth and detail (Han & Yin, 2016). Notable research that endorses the earlier work about altruism by Brookhart and Freeman (1992) has been conducted by Richardson and Watt (2014), who in adopting an expectancy-value approach, found that social utility values, such as enhancing social equity, were an important motivational factor for becoming a teacher. These authors also proposed that further investigation of the different career stages of teachers to discover what sustains teachers over time was critical. A different achievement-goal approach is taken by Butler (2014) who also hoped to discover more about resiliency in teachers by looking at four main classes of goals: (task) mastery, ability (competing and comparing achievement with others), ability-avoidance and work-avoidance. Mastery goals were found to foster resilience in teachers. In summary, the teacher motivation literature, while underdeveloped, contributes to what we know about the formation of teachers' goals around the context of their work. It tells us less about the impact of their personal goals on teaching work. As emerges in the following section, it is difficult to separate the personal from the professional when it comes to happiness.

Happiness

Perspectives on Happiness

Happiness, particularly in the sphere of work, is a slippery term to conceptualise. My own perspective is that the ambiguity of happiness and attempts to define it are complicated by the range of disciplines which approach the subject. Philosophy, economics, neuroscience, organisational development, education, and sociology are but some of the areas which contribute to the happiness literature. Traditionally, philosophy plays a key role in our understanding of happiness. Dating to Ancient Greeks such as Aristotle and Plato in recorded Western thought, throughout history happiness has been valued as a desirable state of being

(Michalos & Weijers, 2017). With its focus on studying internal human phenomena, psychology is, however, the most dominant discipline. Due to the relatively recent rise of positive psychology, many of the current perspectives from which I draw originate from that discipline. Despite the proliferation of research, what remains clear is that happiness, both in syntax and conceptual understanding, is contested and controversial (Donaldson, Dollwet, & Rao, 2014; Gorski, 2017; Jayawickreme et al., 2012). This is unsurprising when the nature of such a human prize holds sway over practices of government, teaching, parenting and preaching because "such endeavours aim to change humans for the better, and thus require some vision of what the 'better' is" (Ryan & Deci, 2001, p. 142).

Today, an historical ambiguity is fostered further by happiness' close links to a range of other positive emotional terms such as well-being, subjective well-being, psychological well-being, hedonism, eudemonia, health, wellness, and flourishing (David, Boniwell, & Ayers, 2013). Many of these terms have been popularised by positive psychology, a relatively recent branch of psychology. In the last twenty years, this movement has stimulated much work, in many disciplines, by investigating positive emotions, positive traits and positive organisations (Donaldson et al., 2014; Jayawickreme et al., 2012). Yet critics of positive psychology deride the vagueness of happiness terminology, lambasting flippant interchange and misuse (David et al., 2013; Jayawickreme et al., 2012). It is alleged that positive psychology overemphasises positivity while propagating a disguised ideology of individualism to collude with and perpetuate traditional Western hegemonies (Becker & Marecek, 2008; Christopher & Hickinbottom, 2008; Fineman, 2006; Hackman, 2009). Thus the exclusive focus on positivity arguably papers over the cracks in society rather than actually addressing them.

Nonetheless, positive psychology and its related literature leads the way in conceptualising happiness in the 21st century. For example, David et al. (2013) suggest happiness can be viewed as a lay umbrella term under which to place other positive constructs; although they also suggest well-being as the umbrella term from a purely psychological perspective. These authors also note the term Subjective Well Being (SWB) which incorporates how people feel about their lives and is viewed as a key indicator of happiness. All three terms (happiness, well-being and SWB) are used variously throughout the literature even if the confusion is raised repeatedly (Dolan et al., 2008; Michalos & Weijers, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Beyond terminology, three approaches to conceptualising happiness are usefully identified by Jayawickreme et al. (2012): wanting (associated with economic theory), liking (hedonic) and needing (eudemonic). Economic views of happiness (wanting) assume that preferences are satisfied by the market. As Dolan et al. (2008) describe, these traditional, neoclassical perspectives on happiness are "based on the premise that individual utility or well-being is the extent to which the individual's preferences are satisfied" (p. 95). Economic perspectives draw close relation to economic liberalism, supporting its position as the "organising principle" of Western capitalist societies (Polanyi, 2001, p. 141). Yet in much of the modern literature, economic theories of happiness are generally discarded (David et al., 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

A more complex view of happiness is constructed in the psychological literature, which suggests that the emotion cannot simply be achieved through meeting a desired goal. Two principal approaches are prioritised – hedonic happiness and eudemonic happiness. *Hedonic* happiness remains overtly self-interested, being the pursuit of pleasure (David et al., 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Whereas *eudemonic* happiness is portrayed more holistically, involving meaningful, personal fulfilment (Waterman, 1993). Relatedness is conceived as being important to eudemonia – for example, working as part of a community project (Jayawickreme et al., 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000). At times there is an element of virtuousness in its portrayal, an association with moral action which leads to a connection with teaching (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009). A key idea of eudemonia is that it is a satisfaction derived from self-actualisation; that is, being true to oneself (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2013; Waterman, 1993). Although perhaps this makes eudemonia a more narcissistic emotion than I think it is sometimes represented as. Given the nature of my research, which investigates the happy experiences of teachers via their personal anecdotes from classroom life, the temporal distinctions in these different conceptualisations of happiness are pertinent too. *Hedonic* happiness is associated with momentary pleasure or instant gratification. In contrast, *eudemonia* is often viewed as an emotion that occurs over a longer time period (David et al., 2013; Fisher, 2010). A point of interest in beginning this study is how the long term, hard-fought rewards of teaching will converge with the spontaneous moments of joy and laughter that come from working with children.

Due to the individual variance in how we experience emotion, a degree of ambiguity seems inescapable in how happiness is conceptualised. As the 'softest' of scientific concepts, the ambiguity of happiness contributes significantly to its neglect by schools, educational research and formal indicators of success such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Labaree, 2003). Although in the last ten years happiness and associated constructs have been afforded greater priority by national and international institutions, they remain a long way from being primary drivers of governmental, financial and socio-cultural aspiration (David et al., 2013). In education, such nebulous outcomes remain obvious casualties of a compulsion to measure and standardise, a phenomenon intensified by the neoliberal education reform policies discussed below (Apple, 2004; Busch, 2011; Denzin et al., 2006; Hargreaves, 1998). As with traditional views promoting the irrationality of emotion, the 'softness' associated with happiness has traditionally prevented it from being discussed in the serious, rational domain of work. The sections below do exactly that, first looking at the relationship of happiness and work in general, before examining literature about happiness in teaching work.

Happiness and Work

As is the case in the general happiness literature, Fisher (2010) highlights "a family of constructs related to happiness at work" (p. 388). *Job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job involvement, engagement* and, more recent terminology from the sphere of positive psychology, such as *thriving* and *vigour,* have all been used to describe positive feelings towards work. *Satisfaction* is the concept most popular in organisational and sociological literature about work and emotions. It is employed as a measure of how people feel about their work and, while it is used to describe "a positive or pleasurable emotional state" at work, much organisational research utilises it to address performance advantages and disadvantages (Wharton, 2014, p. 336). In fact, positive organisational scholarship (POS) is a new discipline aimed at investigating and fostering positive constructs so as to stimulate excellence at work (David et al., 2013). Certainly, in POS and positive psychology, the benefits of positivity at work for organisations and employees are celebrated (David et al., 2013; Donaldson et al., 2014; Fisher, 2010).

Even so, the very existence of POS might be seen to favour the objectives of organisations as opposed to those of workers. By attaching purpose and economic value to positive emotion at work, POS and positive psychology in effect perpetuate traditional, authoritarian hierarchies because they suggest a need to grant organisational permission for positive emotion in the workplace. Such framing inhibits the way we view work as a society and is historical; for instance, the term 'satisfaction', first used in academic writing about work by Herzberg (1966), speaks of a well-deserved reward and fits with longstanding socio-cultural and religious traditions of work (Hodgkinson, 2005). I have been scoffed at more than once when raising the topic of this research with friends who seem perturbed or confused by the notion of happiness at work. One teacher friend half-joked: "Happiness? At work? Not possible! Work is about rigour, determination and suffering!" Moreover, Sutton and Wheatley (2003) describe a Western tradition of reticence for emotional discourse that is likely magnified by emphasis on professionalism when dealing with emotions at work.

When discussing happiness in teaching, Bullough Jr. and Pinnegar (2009) point out that "social systems and social mechanisms frame the action so that to be excellent or virtuous, the activities must further valued social goals" (p. 244). In the next section, it appears questionable as to whether the happiness of teachers is a valued social goal. Yet amid changing perceptions of work in the 21st century, recent research and popular media reveal rising expectations from workers for happiness at work and increasing references to its existence (Buxton & Knight, 2018; Fisher, 2010). There is no doubt that positive psychology contributes significantly to our knowledge of positivity in individuals, extending to knowledge of positivity in individuals at work (Donaldson et al., 2014; Jayawickreme et al., 2012). As is shown in the next section, while there exists the beginnings of knowledge about positive emotions in teaching work, there is still much to learn.

Happiness and Teaching

The influence of the positive psychology revolution remains limited when it comes to the work of teachers. According to Donaldson et al. (2014) research related to positive psychology has occurred in education but focusses largely on positive traits as predictors of student

achievement. There also exists significant investigation into the interaction of positive constructs and worker performance, but episodes of teacher happiness do not seem to be strongly represented in these studies (Donaldson et al., 2014; Duckworth et al., 2009; Fisher, 2010). Articles by Collie, Shapka, and Perry (2012) and Duckworth et al. (2009) provide detailed analysis of positive traits and teacher performance but there is an absence of comment about structural impact or real critique typical of positive psychology (Christopher & Hickinbottom, 2008). A wider societal awareness is provided by Price and McCallum (2014) who argue for the necessity of teacher well-being to address the crises of teacher recruitment and retention. Perhaps Bullough Jr. and Pinnegar (2009) come closest to capturing the importance of happy experiences in teaching. Unfortunately, while their thinking is well-reasoned, their methodology is barely exploratory, dealing only with the reflections of a sole teacher educator. Articles capturing and situating teacher emotions in a substantive manner and from a positive point of view seem not to exist.

Eudemonic happiness certainly seems to be the most obviously applicable form of happiness to teaching work. For example, Bullough Jr. and Pinnegar (2009) theorise that teachers find happiness when work aligns with personal morals, when it is meaningful to them and an expression of their identity. In support of this view, Fisher (2010) suggests that "individuals will be more authentically happy if they feel a 'calling' or a connection" to work (p. 398). This aligns with the long-standing views that teachers have altruistic motivations (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992). Certainly, the work happiness of teachers seems tied to their identity and motivation, with Bridges and Searle (2011) arguing that teacher happiness in New Zealand is undermined by the conflict between the leftist political stance of many teachers and the neoliberal system for which they work.

While not denying the political nature of teachers' work, the moral purpose teachers feel for their work is associated with a love for children by Bullough Jr. and Pinnegar (2009). Working with children is emphasised by Bridges and Searle (2011) as a source of satisfaction for New Zealand teachers, but they note the number of teachers reporting this had dropped between 1992 and 2011. It is Sutton and Wheatley (2003) who provide the most detail about the sources of teachers' positive emotions. They list children's progress (especially that of underachievers), relationships with children, spending time with children in extra-curricular

activities and cooperation of children with regard to behaviour as key sources. No detail is given about how these happy incidents impact on children. Other factors leading to happiness for teachers include cognitive challenge, professional development and task completion (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In their research about how teachers' perceptions of social–emotional learning and climate in their schools influences teachers' sense of stress, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction, Collie et al. (2012) found that school climate is a predictor of both job satisfaction and stress. These authors summarise that "teachers are generally satisfied with the aspects of their job that relate to their teaching work (e.g., work tasks, professional growth) but dissatisfied with the aspects that surround the performance of their job (e.g., working conditions, interpersonal relations, salary" (p.1190). Given that emotions are socialised by the cultures that surround an individual, this last point could be seen to be advisory to policy makers and school leaders addressing ongoing crises in teacher recruitment and retention. This last idea is touched on again in Chapter 7, in a discussion of the implications of this study.

The Benefits of Happiness

For the happiness of teachers to be considered important by educational leaders and policy makers, it is essential to outline the impact of happy teachers on the children they teach and on their own teaching practice. As described briefly in the introduction and in greater depth in the preceding sections, current educational and wider society has not demonstrated that it values the happiness of teachers as an outcome in itself. The improved performance of teachers has, however, been highly prized by neoliberal reforms. Hence, work inspired by positive psychology or POS, which illustrates how organisations may benefit from happy workers being more committed and better performing becomes useful (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009; Fisher, 2010). For example, Fisher (2010) details how happiness improves coping, goal attainment and enhances "outgoingness and expansiveness. The safety signalled by happiness allows for play and experimentation" (p. 339). Economic importance is added by Collie et al. (2012), who point out that "because teachers constitute the greatest cost and human capital resource of a school, improving teachers' sense of job satisfaction can help to

reduce costs associated with high levels of teacher stress that include teacher absenteeism and teacher illness" (p. 1190). Given the changing nature of work and generational perspectives, as Fisher (2010) predicts, happiness at work will be crucial to retaining and motivating the high-quality employees of the future.

Of course it is not only organisations who benefit from happy workers. There are also inherent benefits for the happy individual. In their critique of education and teacher education Bullough Jr. and Pinnegar (2009) explore teaching as a "form of human flourishing connected to the virtue of eudaimonia, a kind of happiness" (p. 241). They identify how upward cycles in mood can come from happy experiences and argue that "eudaimonia sustains teachers" (p. 253). With the intensification of education work, the mental health of teachers has become a concern (Schutz & Lee, 2014; Walters, 2019). Promoting happiness through early interventions while individuals are healthy potentially offers a way to mitigate mental health issues in advance of their onset (Hood, 2019). Pertinently, there is also growing evidence that the happiness of teachers is closely related to the happiness of the students they teach (Price & McCallum, 2014; Roffey, 2012). In keeping with achievement focussed educational agendas, the positive emotions of teachers have been linked to improved student performance and also to self-efficacy (Collie et al., 2012). Offering an explanation as to why this is likely to be the case, Duckworth et al. (2009) explain "children may be drawn to and engaged by teachers who are higher in life satisfaction, whose energy and positive attitude can shift the set-point of mood for the entire classroom" (p. 541). In contrast, teachers who are stressed or possess low self-efficacy are known to have a negative impact on their students (Louis, Murphy, & Smylie, 2016; Pakarinen et al., 2010). As discussed in the previous section, there is respected and convincing literature which emphasises the centrality of emotions to quality teaching (Hargreaves, 1998). Unfortunately it is highly debateable whether happiness is a valued emotion in the educational cultures of the 21st Century. The next section explores those cultures in greater depth, considering their impact on the happiness of teachers within them.

Educational Cultures

Educational cultures are considered in this section as the socio-cultural and political structures which surround teachers and their work. Their detailed examination in this Literature Review is justified because appraisal theories show that emotional responses, although physiological in part, are socialised by socio-cultural expectations and structures, which then influence the emotional goals of the individual and their appraisal process (Roseman & Smith, 2001). Seeing as one of the research questions for this study interrogates *the influences on the formation of daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' for teachers,* it seems important to investigate and critically examine the literature on the common socialising influences (such as work and organisational culture) on peoples' emotional responses.

In sociological theories, it is acknowledged that, in the very least, a reciprocity of influence exists between micro (individual), meso (organisational) and macro (societal) levels, facilitating the actions that take place at each level (Benade, 2017; Dopfer, Foster, & Potts, 2004). Some writers, such as Turner and Boyns (2001) take a 'macrochauvinistic' perspective, in which power at the macro level (in this case, state education policy) is privileged to exert greater influence over the micro level (in this case, the happy experiences of individual teachers). By utilising the sociological imagination described by (Wright-Mills, 1959), it is certainly possible to see how macro level policies based on "conservative modernization both has altered common sense and has transformed the material and ideological conditions surrounding schooling" (Apple, 2004, p. 14). Here then, I investigate the literature about what altered common sense looks like after over thirty years of neoliberal policy intervention in educational cultures. Then, in the following section, the actual impact of these reforms on teachers' work, identity and emotions is explored in greater depth in light of the literature to describe teachers' **unhappy identities**.

From the 1980s onwards, in Western countries such as the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, political institutions began implementing policies based on neoliberal ideologies (Smyth, 1992). Put simply, neoliberal ideology is the installation of competitive markets into all areas of society even if, as in the case of education,

state action is necessary to artificially create markets where they do not exist (Birch, 2015; Harvey, 2005). A paradox of concerted state control alongside market freedom is fostered, and is evident in the application of rigorous systems of accountability based around the outcomes of contrived markets (Apple, 2004). Under these conditions an economic, over-rationalised view on societal issues is often able to dominate public discourse (Denzin et al., 2006). Nevertheless it is important to be careful to avoid the trap of using neoliberalism to explain all that is negative in education (Birch, 2015). Similarly, portraying neoliberal reforms as a grand plan from right wing policy-makers to deliberately undermine teachers is naïve to the machinations of policy and simplistically malevolent (Benade, 2017; Smyth, 1992).

Neoliberalism is underpinned by the supposed ideological fairness of meritocracy and is articulated in educational societies as a rhetoric of freedom and high quality: parent choice, the decentralisation of school administration and a relentless focus on school improvement (Chubb & Moe, 1988). Strangely at odds with this freedom are actions of state control such as standardised testing regimes, league tables, school inspection and professional standards, which give teeth to managerialism and performativity in schools (Apple, 2004; Codd, 2005). These two antithetical political messages present separate but worthy points in a discussion of macro level influence on the happy experiences of teachers, and help to paint a picture of the altered common sense described above.

First is the idea that meritocracy, when applied without mercy, impacts negatively on the happiness of many in (educational) society. In neoliberal meritocracies, Busch (2011) describes how "each individual is to take on the burden of his or her fate" (p. 186). Prior to such unshackled meritocracy, De Botton (2005) points out how an individual's fate was instead seen to be in the hands of the gods. He points out that holding one's fate in one's own hands is empowering for those individuals with the talent, resources or ideology to succeed. Yet for those individuals who are unable or unwilling, for whatever reason, to rise to the ruthless challenge of meritocracy, the implication in a neoliberal society is that the responsibility for failure is solely their own. Such self-knowledge seems unlikely to bring happiness for the many who do not achieve conventional meritocratic success. While De Botton (2005) is referring to the homeless and unemployed in Western society, the same could be said for teachers (not to mention students) struggling in neoliberal educational

cultures. For example, in their oral history study about the impact of 1980s and 1990s reforms on teachers, Kirk and Wall (2010) describe a teacher left behind by change. A moving interview occurring after hastened retirement finds a man still struggling to make sense of how his working life broke down around him. He describes his inability to adapt as the common sense of the educational cultures he knew shift focus from nurturing young people to mapping every aspect of their academic achievement.

In neoliberalism, policies of state control have been enacted through managerialism in educational societies and this has created a common sense characterised by performativity. Performative cultures narrow what is valued, taught and learnt in schools, making intangible constructs such as happiness or well-being dispensable. Writers such as Codd (2005) detail how neoliberal marketization policies have led to a *dominant culture*, which is driven by pre-defined and measurable performance outcomes for students and for teachers; theories of teaching and learning can be cast aside – imagination, critical thinking, interpersonal skills and the momentary nature of learning de-prioritised in favour of the observable. Borrowed from business but politically motivated in their application, rigid systems of accountability and performance management ensure teachers adhere to narrow goals or targets in their work (Codd, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2008; Wright, 2003). Rigid accountability means teachers are not trusted as professionals but treated as producers in an industrial system. Crucially, this economic perspective on learning fails to grasp (or truly measure) the nature or the enlightening value of the educative process itself (Codd, 2005). Like economic views on happiness such a perspective removes value from unanticipated or easily measurable outcomes, especially when underpinned by strong systems to measure the learning of children and the performance of teachers (Dolan et al., 2008).

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, academics heavily criticised neo-liberal managerialism, performativity and the de-professionalisation of teachers but this type of critique has largely fallen away (Apple, 2004; Codd, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2008; Hargreaves, 1998; McGregor, 2009; Olssen & Morris Matthews, 1997). Is this because the new common sense has become common sense? Even if not, it should be remembered that, as a *dominant culture* in educational management for at least 20 years, managerialism and performativity will likely influence educational culture for some time. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018) describe

how when the paradigm placing the Earth at the centre of the universe was replaced with the Copernican heliocentric model, it took generations for the old orthodoxy to fade in influence. Hopefully, 21st century education is a more fluid environment. Long-serving teachers, who experienced reforms from their inception, remain aware of the political nature of education's move away from egalitarianism. Hence, they are able to interpret the reforms on their own terms, retaining many of the motivations and rewards which they had always felt for teaching work (Kirk & Wall, 2010). Moreover, I wonder how the convergence of these goal-oriented economic perspectives on learning and on happiness leaves happiness for a new generation of teachers such as myself?

As the cycles of government and policy continue, the neoliberal rhetoric is shifting or perhaps becoming subtler – at least in New Zealand. Government policy semantics are less overt about holding teachers to account. Rather the language of accountability and quality assurance is softened by an emphasis on evidence or research based decision making – more palatable perhaps to a profession which values academically sourced knowledge highly (M.O.E., 2016). A highly critiqued example is that 21st century learning has been embedded in New Zealand schools by the Ministry of Education's insistence that all new buildings feature open, de-privatised Innovative Learning Environments (ILEs) (Benade, 2017; Charteris, Smardon, & Nelson, 2017). Encouragingly, 21st century learning emphasises the process of learning as well as the outcome, whilst promoting difficult to measure skills and competencies such as collaboration. Yet this new approach also places emphasis on the individualism of the learner, calling for children to be agentic and entrepreneurial (Benade, 2017). It is a global phenomenon that Biesta (2014) refers to as "learnification" (p. 29). Whether 21st century learning is neoliberal is not especially pertinent to a discussion about teacher happiness; however, it is possible that the learnification of New Zealand classrooms has the potential to ensconce a mantra of individual entitlement in a new generation of teachers and learners. A parallel could therefore be drawn with positive psychology and its uncritical approach to enhancing individual human potentials (Becker & Marecek, 2008; Christopher & Hickinbottom, 2008; Fineman, 2006). While there are positives for those championing educational cultures with more holistic values, 21st century learning seems unlikely to halt the

perpetuation of the values, benefits, problems and macro impact on happiness which, since the 1980s, have been established by neoliberal policy within a globalised capitalist economy.

Unhappy Identities

As described in the Introduction, in ten years working in schools I have observed much negative emotion in teachers. In fact, Bottery (2003) describes many educational workplaces as possessing "cultures of unhappiness" (p. 188). Tellingly, in the considerable literature addressing emotion in teaching, much of it deals with negative feelings such as stress and burnout, which are shown to detract from motivation (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In the context of unhappiness, it is also important to recognise the human, educational and financial problems caused by a long-lasting retention and recruitment crisis which spans Western countries such as the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada (Anonymous, 2018; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Walters, 2019). Moreover, student well-being has been linked to teacher well-being, which is concerning when teachers are dealing with mental and physical health issues brought on by stress (Roffey, 2012; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011).

Literature about negative emotions in teaching makes direct links between reforms and the unhappiness of teachers (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Bridges & Searle, 2011). As outlined above, the target-based culture established by the reforms views teachers as extrinsically motivated producers (Codd, 2005; Wright, 2003, p. 142). Viewing teachers in this manner is a contention that seems to fundamentally misunderstand teacher identity; that is, why teachers teach (and perhaps why humans learn) (O'Connor, 2008). Teachers' goals have been shown to be largely intrinsic and centred around a moral purpose to work with children or a desire to make a difference to society (Bridges & Searle, 2011; Nias, 1989; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Correspondingly, the rewards that perpetuate intrinsic motivation are not necessarily tied to the measurable outcomes provided by accountability systems: the happiness teachers take from their work is thought to be eudemonic (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009).

The disparity between teachers' self-identity and their role as it is viewed by the neoliberal state has, as a result, fostered a link in the literature between the contested identities of

teachers and their unhappiness (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Schutz & Lee, 2014). Therefore it follows that evidence exists describing how a misalignment in goals between policy-maker and educator is a key contributor to unhappiness in teaching (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Bridges & Searle, 2011). Similarly, the job-related attitudes of teachers are tied to how a school context is shaped by its leaders, either enhancing or buffering the impact of governmental reforms (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Evans, 2001). The morale, satisfaction and motivation of teachers has been shown to depend on how a school culture matches what teachers want in relation to equity, social justice, pedagogy, organizational efficiency, interpersonal relations and self-image (Evans, 2001).

Although accountability systems are seen to narrow educational experience and do not necessarily align with the philosophies of many teachers in a way which can facilitate their unhappiness, this does not mean that teachers are willing or able to disregard authority or accountability (Fitzgerald, 2008; Kelchtermans, 1996). Instead, emotional conflict involved in meeting the desires of all stakeholders has been shown to deepen the unhappiness of teachers (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009). While disregard of authority is impossible because teachers' livelihoods and careers have been bound to policy initiatives such as professional standards (Codd, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2008), it could also be argued that teachers fail to rebel against authority because they value societal recognition as competent (Kelchtermans, 1996; Nias, 1989). In a similar vein, a curious irony exists in how teachers' moral and emotional commitment to their students and work has contributed to intensification in the profession by an unwillingness to say no to work that could support children (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Hargreaves, 1998).

Reforms are viewed as crucial to the intensification of teachers' workload, exposing them to continuous and stressful change in the nature of their work (Apple, 1986; Bridges & Searle, 2011; Kirk & Wall, 2010). Given that we know 'learning anxiety' is fostered in individuals by organisational change, this is unsurprising (Schein, 2017). In particular, teachers report experiencing increased workload and negative emotions because of rapid change around digital communication demands (Bridges & Searle, 2011; Clarke Sr. & Zagarell, 2012). Increased administration tasks lead to frustration, especially when these tasks detract from the attention teachers are able to give their students (Bridges & Searle, 2011; Sutton &

Wheatley, 2003). The same can also be said for reflective practices, which while viewed as useful for teacher growth, are often associated with overly laborious processes and linked to compliance with professional standards (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009).

While change brought about by reforms seems an important factor in teacher unhappiness, it is important to remember that teaching is a type of *emotional labour* and that the unique characteristics of this type of work have long been linked to negative emotions such as stress, burnout and unhappiness (Hochschild, 2003; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Schutz & Lee, 2014). Emotional labour involves an individual exerting significant control over their emotions to meet the norms of certain work contexts (Morris & Feldman, 1996; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Zembylas, 2003). In teaching work, this means the suppression, generation and expression of emotions to ensure generally pleasant transactions with students (Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000; Schutz & Lee, 2014). In, for example, instances of challenging student behaviour, emotional regulation is highly stressful for teachers (Chang, 2013). Inner dissonance and conflict is a feature associated with emotional labour and is known to lead to emotional exhaustion (Schutz & Lee, 2014). Appraisal theories emphasise that an individual's natural emotional response to a situation is likely the most appropriate and suggest humans' ability to actually control emotion is significantly limited (Roseman & Smith, 2001).

The nature of emotional labour connects it with identity because that is also associated with the mastery of emotions (Day et al., 2006; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Zembylas, 2003). For example, it is argued that emotional labour is most impactful on early career teachers as they construct a mask of professional identity (Pearce & Morrison, 2011). Disharmony in identity then can bring stress, burnout and unhappiness (Schutz & Lee, 2014). Of course, identities shift and morph over time, space and place so can be defined as "the type of person an individual is recognised as being in a given context" (Erikson, 1959; O'Connor, 2008, p. 118). Therefore, the personal and professional identities of teachers remain in precarious balance throughout a teaching career because in spite of the need to exert control over their emotions, teachers are also known to bring so much of their personal selves into their work (Day et al., 2006; Nias, 1989). Some argue that it is precisely this personal passion which makes a great teacher (Hargreaves, 1998). Constructing positive teacher identities then is important work.

A review of the literature shows limited research has been conducted that focuses on teachers' happiness. No research in this area has been found in the New Zealand context. In this chapter the importance of developing an understanding of the concepts and theoretical underpinnings of teacher happiness has been highlighted by examining emotion, happiness educational cultures and the unhappy identities of teachers. The literature indicates that happiness is not recognised as a part of teachers' work, at least by researchers or the educational cultures in which they work. In fact, the nature of their work, which is a type of emotional labour, means that negative emotions are experienced frequently.

In the next chapter the methodology and methods used in the research to investigate these questions are outlined.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter aims to enlighten and inform the reader as to how the research for this thesis was carried out, addressing the approaches and methods employed as well as the ethical procedures applied. In doing so, it aims to clarify the positioning of the researcher in a manner which aids the reader in making sense of the research. In spite of a lack of clarity in much social science research, the view is taken that research methodology can be defined as the system of methods utilised in a particular field or paradigm; methodologies then, sit 'below' a research paradigm, taking their cues from the paradigm, which tie the researcher's philosophies of existence and knowledge to the research (Newby, 2014). Within the research design, methods of data generation are chosen as being 'fit for purpose' but are in keeping with the guidance provided by the methodology.

The structure of the chapter is reflective of this conceptualisation of the research process. It begins by addressing ***Research Philosophy and Paradigms***, their relation to my positioning as a researcher and the implications for this study. The chapter then examines the application of ***Qualitative Methodology*** and ***A Narrative Approach*** in the section titled ***Research Methodology***. It gives a description of the ***Research Design***, outlining the ***Setting and Sample***. The data generation methods are explained in sections about ***Semi-Structured Interviews***, ***Focus Groups*** and ***Diaries***. ***Researcher Reflexivity*** is addressed before the chapter ends with a section about ***Ethical Issues***. The study aims to investigate the emotional goals and happy experiences of teachers. Underpinning this research was the central research question:

- What is the impact of teachers' happy experiences for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers?

The central research question was supported by four sub-questions:

  - How is happiness experienced by teachers in their work?
  - Are there influences on the formation of daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' for teachers? What are they?

- Do the daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' of teachers interact with their happy experiences? How?
- What are the effects for teachers of paying closer attention to their happy experiences?

Philosophy and Paradigms

For a novice researcher, discussing research paradigms and philosophies amid the scale, breadth, depth, orthodoxy and unorthodoxy of their meaning has proved somewhat intimidating. Therefore I approach this section tentatively. Rejecting the view of Kuhn (1962), that paradigms cannot co-exist, I take solace in the advice of Cohen et al. (2018) that research philosophies and paradigms do not exist in "unproblematic singularity", but that their defining lines are in fact blurred and overlapping (p. 9). Even so, although I stress my inexperience as a researcher, I recognise the importance of assisting the reader in understanding my positioning so as to strengthen the validity of that positioning from critique (Newby, 2014). Moreover, I understand that working within the guiding framework of a paradigm is highly important to the process of robust research. Hence, the next two sections apply ideas about research philosophy and paradigms to this thesis in order to build a strong framework for the research undertaken.

Two key areas of philosophy often said to pertain most obviously to research are ontology, dealing with *what* we know and epistemology, which is about *how* we know (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). The more prominent of these in social research today tends to be epistemology; possibly because since the Enlightenment, scholars have tended to focus on knowledge rather than existence (Williams, 2016). A fundamental debate in ontology then, concerns the nature of reality, centring around idealism and realism; idealism, at its far solipsistic frontier argues that realities only exist in the mind whereas realists assume that there is an underlying reality that is knowable in some form (Williams, 2016). Correspondingly, epistemology debates how we know about reality and, in social sciences such as education, epistemological questions tend to arise as to a researcher's position on the

objectivity-subjectivity continuum; an issue which spills naturally into paradigmatic positioning (Denzin et al., 2006; Mercer, 2007; Rooney, 2005; Rowbottom & Aiston, 2006; Williams, 2016). Objectivity and subjectivity tend to be characterised as scientific methods, positivism or naturalistic approaches vs. anti-positivism, interpretivism or humanism, respectively – although terminology seems to depend on who you read (Cohen et al., 2018; Newby, 2014; Rooney, 2005). And, of course, there are some who argue the characterisation is crude or unnecessary (Rowbottom & Aiston, 2006). For example, champions of mixed-methods paradigms argue for a more pragmatic, responsive approach (Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Applying Philosophies and Paradigms: Humanistic and Interpretivist

My personal philosophies for going about life would rarely encourage me to stake my flag and stand by it regardless. I therefore find the necessity to identify my stance as a researcher with such certainty somewhat challenging. I try to be humble and am empathetic to all views, looking at the social world without judgement where possible, while knowing that I view knowledge as idiosyncratic, socially constructed, framed strongly by context and culture. Furthermore, local and traditional forms of knowledge should not be discounted. From my limited understanding of the world, truth or reality is, at least in questions of social science, based on the perspectives and personal experience of the individual facing the reality in question. I believe in the importance of trying to understand and describe these perspectives of reality. According to Newby (2014) such a philosophy can be defined as broadly humanistic because humanists aim to understand and describe realities by recognising the individuality of perspectives. I recognise that humanism has a long, broad and at times, not especially empathetic history; for many it is associated with imperialist views and appears strongly androcentric, perspectives with which I do not sympathise (Davies, 2008). Furthermore, it does not entirely escape my notice that this is perhaps a simplistic take on my epistemological position and that many philosophical schools likely dissect any viewpoint. For example, my philosophy above might also be described as relativist because I prioritise contextual, cultural and local knowledge (Williams, 2016).

Clearly, given the above comments, I believe that my philosophies influence and define the way I approach the topic and research. A good example would be the manner in which emotional experience has been dealt with in this thesis. My immediate thought on comprehending the subjectivity of emotion was to prioritise the voice of the individual through narrative methodology. Educational researchers such as Kirk and Wall (2010), and Pearce and Morrison (2011) thought along the same lines as me in their treatment of teachers' emotions. They wanted to identify the humanity and social situated nature of emotions. Psychologists such as Duckworth et al. (2009) and Collie et al. (2012) take a less descriptive, interpretive view, employing scientific quantitative methodologies. My humanistic view would be that they take this approach because of the contextualised manner in which they have experienced the world as individuals.

In addition, it seems natural that the topic also plays a part in directing the nature of the research, more so as exemplified in the previous paragraph when it comes to identifying an appropriate paradigm and methodology. Humanist philosophies sit well within the interpretive paradigm because interpretivism rejects "single, verifiable" realities (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). It is appropriate for the topic's research questions also, as while causal explanations are tenable within the interpretive paradigm, interpretivism focuses on seeking meaning and description (Williams, 2016). Crucially, interpretivism also recognises the role of the researcher in the research, as I am attempting to do now and have endeavoured to do throughout this study (Grix, 2019; Mercer, 2007; Rooney, 2005). Often, and perhaps to its detriment, interpretivism seems to be defined by what it is not, eternally a response to positivism because of its own social, political and cultural awareness (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016; Rowbottom & Aiston, 2006).

Research Methodology

Taking their lead from the paradigm, which, in turn, draws on philosophy for guidance, research methodologies serve to ground philosophical ideas in the research process (Newby, 2014). Methodologies can be conceptualised as the point at which research philosophies and

paradigms, concerned with concepts, values and assumptions, meet the more pragmatic business of collecting and analysing data. In this respect, a methodology enables the formulation of a plan about how to do research (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Therefore, methodologies are concerned with context and particularities of research (Grix, 2019).

Qualitative Methodology

The methodology utilised in this thesis can in general be considered qualitative. This is in keeping with the interpretive paradigm and the research questions which seek description and meaning, as opposed to causality and measurable outcomes (Rooney, 2005; Williams, 2016). Employing a qualitative methodological style meant that for this study the following data generation methods about happy experiences and emotional goals were able to be utilised: semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and a diary or journal. In this respect, the creative variance of qualitative methodology is also represented, as well as the humanity of the methodology (Denzin et al., 2006). Also important to note is the inductive nature of data analysis, which is framed by a qualitative approach. In this research, qualitative methodology can be seen as an overarching construct. As is outlined in the following section, a narrative approach is prioritised where possible, the purpose being to further emphasise the humanity and idiosyncrasy of emotional experience in the stories of individuals.

A Narrative Approach

Narrative is the central methodology of this research (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2011; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Holstein & Gubrium, 2016) As a qualitative research approach, narrative has grown considerably in popularity in the last 30 years, and across a range of disciplines (Andrews et al., 2011). This section explores briefly what a narrative approach to research is, before identifying its strengths. In contrast, the weaknesses of narrative are acknowledged and the potential limitations such an approach puts on the scope of inquiry are examined. In doing so, the suitability of a narrative approach to this research, as opposed

to other approaches, is outlined. Finally, the application of a narrative approach in this research is discussed.

There is considerable breadth in what is defined as a narrative approach in research. Narrative is described by Riessman (2012) as "a sequence of ordered events that are connected in a meaningful way for a particular audience in order to make sense of the world or people's experience in it" (p. 370). Yet, narrative has become far more than a story. The inter-disciplinary nature of the approach has fostered a range of styles, spanning from personal narratives of life-altering experiences to stories of large scale social and political change (Andrews et al., 2011; Gibbs, 2007). Some scholars speak only of narrative analysis, focussing on the manner in which data is analysed after being generated through a method such as interviewing. Particularly influential is the work of Labov (1972), which utilises narrative structures and sociolinguistic features (such as orientation, complication and evaluation) to interpret the meaning of data (Gibbs, 2007; Holstein & Gubrium, 2016; Thornborrow, 2012). Alternatively, a researcher might be referring to the style in which the findings of a study are presented, using the stories provided by participants to weave their own story about a phenomenon (Kirk & Wall, 2010; Netolicky, 2016; Pearce & Morrison, 2011). Other scholars apply narrative more holistically to the research design, using terms such as narrative approach or inquiry to elicit, for example, life histories (a form of narrative) from participants (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Pearce & Morrison, 2011). In this respect, narrative is viewed as a methodology, as it is in this research.

Strengths and Applicability of a Narrative Approach

A key strength of a narrative approach is the ability to produce thick, socially situated data about specific, decidedly human phenomena; authenticity, realism, emotions and values are emphasised (Adams, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Riessman, 2012). As explained in Chapter 2, individuals appraise and experience emotions such as happiness in a unique manner, based on their own views, values, personality, culture and the situation surrounding them at the moment of emotion (Lazarus, 1991; Roseman & Smith, 2001; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Importantly, the research questions seek description as opposed to measurement. The

depth provided by narrative reporting and analysis allows multi-layered examination of participants' complex emotional goals within each story (Holstein & Gubrium, 2016; Riessman, 2012). A wide range of circumstances around happy episodes are also illustrated, helping the reader understand the varied nature of how happiness occurs in the varied work of teachers. Narrative can also be an excellent way to capture subjective and transient emotional experience in a manner which remains as faithful as possible to participants' lived experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Maclure, 1993). Moreover, stories are powerful forms of communication and of making findings relatable to a reader (Atkinson, 1997). Above all, narrative analysis and reporting reduces "the risk of disembodied text that can too easily result from coding and retrieval exercises; it keeps text and context together… and enables evolving situations, causes and consequences to be charted" (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 665). Meaning that in the case of individual episodes of happiness, narrative seems well suited to capturing the subjectivity of the experience but also the conditions surrounding that experience.

As a useful and prominent approach in feminist, queer and indigenous research, another strength of narrative is to emancipate disenfranchised voices (Holstein & Gubrium, 2016). Hence, some narrative researchers argue that their research is a form of action against oppression (Holstein & Gubrium, 2016). Teachers are hardly a disenfranchised minority. Therefore to suggest that this research will give voice to teachers as an "otherwise muted group" would be to indulge in the sort of "sentimental and romantic" championing of the narrative approach so criticised by Atkinson (1997). Even so, it is recognised in the literature that the professional opinions and agency of teachers have been repeatedly cast aside by politicians in educational reforms spanning over thirty years (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Hargreaves, 1998; Schutz & Lee, 2014).

From my own professional experience, when narrating their work teachers present a professional identity of stress and sometimes helplessness. This view is supported in the literature (as shown in the literature review) and the mainstream media (Bridges & Searle, 2011; Hunter, 2018; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Walters, 2019). Perhaps, by facilitating stories of the joyful moments in teaching, by highlighting the reasons we teach in spite of the stress and workload, a narrative approach can prove in some way useful in addressing teacher

unhappiness and the crisis in recruitment and retention. Perhaps, if only to support participants in appreciating lighter moments in a demanding line of work.

Pitfalls of a Narrative Approach

While a narrative approach has been shown to be well-equipped to examine the individual and their immediate context, the reflexive researcher must remain mindful of the weaknesses of their approaches. Narrative is not especially useful for providing a general overview of a subject (Cohen et al., 2018). This is because, in drawing on a limited number of stories from individuals and prioritising their agency, narrative approaches can miss broader, structural themes (McAlpine, 2016). Atkinson (1997) also warns that narrative approaches can be characterised by a lack of systematic analysis or over-emphasis on narrative conventions. He advises researchers to remember that within the narratives are "social facts", which should be treated with the same "methodological scepticism" as any other research approach (p. 341).

With regard to researcher positioning, validity and authenticity, reporting findings in a narrative style can be considered problematic due to the subjective and creative nature of narrative analysis. For example, Riessman (2012) explains how narrative researchers and their participants "create plots from disordered experiences" (p. 370). The notion of plot creation raises immediate concerns for positivists and post-positivists about accurate representation of reality. 'Creation' emphasises the difficulty for a researcher to avoid interfering in the re-creation of participants' realities when reporting findings. At a minimum, there is a worry that in the process of interviewing and analysing, researchers can diminish the narrative of the participant or alter its essence (Kirk & Wall, 2010). In the researcher, there can exist an "in-built assumption that there is an essence in the first place", not to mention the danger of over-interpretation – finding the profound in the mundane (Frosh & Emerson, 2005; Kirk & Wall, 2010, p. 640). In the participant, a researcher must be wary of the misrepresentation of reality (if it is reality they are seeking); or, a representation of reality which the teller tailors for the listener (Mishler, 2004). Even so, the world is experienced by humans and interpreted by them, often through stories. As discussed above, this research takes the interpretivist view

that researchers are inescapably part of the world they research (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016; Williams, 2016), thus any analysis of the world, especially with regard to the emotional experience of individuals, seems certain to be "coloured by our subjectivities" (Rooney, 2005, p. 7).

Application of a Narrative Approach to Methods, Analysis and Findings

A narrative approach is applied to this thesis in a number of ways and aligns with the study's epistemology and philosophy. As explained, it has bearing on methodology with the thinking being to make the most of the features of narrative in order to capture and communicate subjective experiences of participants' happiness with thick description. To that end, interviews were conducted in a semi-structured style (explained in the following section) with minimal prompts and interrogative questioning by the researcher so as to give participants space to tell their stories (Riessman, 2012).

The interviews were also analysed narratively. After identifying textual units based on the research questions, I analysed data by developing working hypotheses, checking hypotheses, looking again at the text as a whole and considering potentially different interpretations of the text to retain fidelity (Cohen et al., 2018). As Netolicky (2016) usefully describes, this process is an 'ongoing circle' of analysis (p. 71).

Findings were presented narratively in a form inspired by, and meant to compliment, the work-life histories presented by Kirk and Wall (2010) about teachers' experiences of loss and resilience. The work-life histories of participants in this study are presented across three chapters: *Exploring Participants' Beliefs about their Emotional Goals and Happiness in Teaching Work*, *Stories of Emotional Goals and Episodic Happiness in Teaching Work* and *Being Mindful of Emotional Goals and Happiness in Teaching Work*. These incorporate key themes set by the research questions. They are related causally (i.e. the perspectives teachers hold, in part, form the conditions for their happy episodes) and are also based on the chronological sequence in which the research occurred. It should also be noted, again, that findings and discussion are interspersed, following the convictions of Maclure (1993). Advice

comes too from Cohen et al. (2018) who suggest that: “when using verbatim quotations from participants, it is often useful to accompany them with the researcher’s interpretive commentary” (p. 665).

Research Design

In this section, the research design is outlined. The purpose is to explain the practicalities and details of how research was carried out, informed by the philosophies, paradigmatic conventions and methodological approaches described in preceding sections. The section begins by introducing the **Setting and Sample** of the thesis research before describing the data generation methods: **Semi-Structured Interviews**, **Focus Groups** and **Diaries**. It concludes with a section about **Researcher Reflexivity**.

Setting and Sample

The research was conducted at a primary school in Auckland, New Zealand. It is referred to by the pseudonym Moana School, so as to protect the anonymity of participants (as detailed in the ethical procedures section below). The demographic of children at Moana School is deemed by the Ministry of Education to be of low-socio economic status. Culturally, the school’s students are highly diverse. The school was selected for research in part because of my connections to the school. In the two years prior, I had developed a close working relationship with some senior members of staff at the school while employed on a regional education project. When looking for a school outside of my own, the school indicated it would be supportive of my research. My rationale for working with teachers at only one school was based on the greater depth of description about teacher happiness that I felt could be achieved, thus augmenting my narrative approach. That said, it is acknowledged that researching in only a single primary school limits the scope of inquiry. As discussed in Chapter 2, structures such as context and culture influence the emotional goals individuals hold,

meaning if teachers work in the same context there is the potential for their goals to be affected in a similar manner (Roseman & Smith, 2001).

Moana School's principal has been at the school for over fifteen years and is supported by an experienced group of senior and middle leaders who have also been at the school for considerable time. There are long-serving teachers and teachers who have only recently joined the school. Many of the more recent arrivals are beginning teachers, employed after completing a teaching practicum at Moana School. For this study, eight teachers volunteered to participate. The selection criteria required teachers to be considered reflective by school leaders and be current classroom practitioners. Participants are referred to by pseudonyms: Beth, Ana, Rory, Cat, Indie, Tai, Milly and Tina. They are introduced more fully in Chapters 4 and 5 but represent a relatively diverse sample of teachers that includes early career teachers, experienced teachers, middle leaders, teachers of varied ethnic backgrounds and different genders.

Research Methods

Semi-Structured Interviews

Educational research, "is an effort to make sense of the collective consequences of the actions of large numbers of wilful individuals" within highly complex societal systems (Labaree, 2003, p. 14). The interview is helpful in this endeavour because it "attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 1). Therefore, the interview has become a staple of research in social sciences such as education (Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, & McKinney, 2012, p. 1). A range of continua, on which interviews differ in their structure, purpose and style is identified in the literature (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Gubrium et al., 2012). As a data generation method, there is strength in the variety and flexibility this offers. Three overarching forms of the interview are described by Fontana and Frey (2000): structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. Semi-structured interviews were utilised in this research, meaning topics were provided to participants but questions were tailored specifically for each interviewee.

Strengths and Applicability of Semi-Structured Interviews

In keeping with the narrative methodology, semi-structured interviews were utilised as a data generation method because the conversations that occur within them can be excellent ways of eliciting stories (Holstein & Gubrium, 2016). A narrative approach also holds pragmatic implications for how to conduct an interview. There is, for instance, a focus on the collaborative construction of knowledge - something along the lines of what Bishop (1997) terms "collaborative storying" (pp. 28-45). As well as being important to the cultural context of New Zealand, privileging the collaborative construction of knowledge between researcher and participant is also highly relevant to the individual and cultural differences in how we experience emotion (Roseman & Smith, 2001; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In order to authentically articulate the emotional experience of an individual, it seems imperative to privilege the voice of that individual, working with them to represent reality as they experienced it. Helpful advice is provided by Riessman (2012) who suggests narrative interviewing "requires attentive listening and questioning", as well as a "receptive stance". This requires the interviewer to listen for stories and broader social context and to subtly prod the interviewee to say more or pause at "key points in the expectation that 'more' could be said" (p. 369).

Pitfalls of Semi-Structured Interviews

Research interviews are not simply a conversation but a highly complex interaction. In a research setting they have "the purpose of producing knowledge"(Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 2). There exists a vast literature facilitating and debating how knowledge is best produced by the interview, informed by the vast literature facilitating and debating knowledge itself (Gubrium et al., 2012; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016; Rooney, 2005). It is debated how knowledge is constructed through factors like interviewer subjectivity, participant-researcher collaboration, question development and transcription (Bishop, 1997; Fontana & Frey, 2000; Gubrium et al., 2012). Reflexivity is seen as an effective way to navigate these tricky issues, which are enhanced by the dynamic, momentary nature of dialogue within an interview. Transparent positioning by the researcher allows for the reader to understand the impact the

researcher may have had on the production of knowledge through interview (Cohen et al., 2018).

Application of Semi-Structured Interviews in this Research

In this study, the primary tool for data generation was the semi-structured interview, which sought to elicit stories about participants' emotional goals and happy experiences. Lasting between thirty minutes and an hour each interview took place after a two week 'self-study period' during which participants observed and recorded both their daily emotional goals and their happy experiences in a diary. Participants were also involved in focus groups: both methods are detailed in the following sections. Prior to each interview, I read through the participants' diaries in detail, pinpointing particular experiences I thought would be useful in answering the research questions, or that I wanted to hear more about. In this sense, I was aware that it was possible for me to have influenced the direction of participants' thinking, although a similar phenomenon may have occurred during the interviews themselves. While I aimed to remain mindful of allowing participants to lead the interaction (for example, I encouraged participants to select their own stories), this was not always the case. At times, I would become immersed in a participant's story and pose a spontaneous question that led the participant to a particular avenue of thinking.

Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews

The interviews were recorded using laptop and mobile phone audio technology. After a preliminary listening, in which I noted down the times of key stories that related to the research questions, I listened again to each recording, transcribing what I deemed to be the most relevant sections related to the research questions. Again, this clearly illustrates my own influence on the findings. My judgements, based on my worldview, led to some data being selected over other data. As I wrote my findings, the selective, somewhat arbitrary nature of this process continued as I wrote about and edited certain stories.

Focus Groups

This section begins by outlining focus groups, prior to an explanation of why they were appropriate for use in this research as well as how they were utilised in practice. Some of the limitations of focus groups are also identified. While focus groups are generally characterised as group interviews (Morgan, 1997), there is some dispute over the range of use of the term and employment of focus groups (Krueger, 1995). Some writers, for example, prefer an "inclusive approach that broadly defines focus groups as a research technique that collects data through group interaction" (Morgan, 1997, p. 5). Others argue for a more specific typology of group data generation methods – of which focus groups would be but one type (Khan & Manderson, 1992; Krueger, 1995).

Strengths and Applicability of Focus Groups

As was intended for this study, focus groups are often seen as a starting point to explore a concept (Fowler, 2009; Wilson, 1997). In this case it was the nebulous nature and infancy of work happiness as a concept for teachers. It was hoped the data generated would be scene setting – for both researchers and participants – in that each would provide the other with guiding perspectives on happiness in teaching work. Furthermore, gaining this knowledge should, in theory, allow the skilled and reflexive researcher to subsequently implement further data generation methods with maximum effect; for example, by refining the question wording in interviews. Even so, it is important to note that the place of the focus group in the overall research design was for the most part to provide supplementary data to that generated by the in-depth narrative semi-structured interviews (Morgan, 1997). As Cohen et al. (2018) identify, focus groups are "useful to triangulate with more traditional forms of interviewing" and this proved to be the case in this study (p. 436). Other strengths of a focus group interaction are seen to be: the empowerment of individuals, identifying consistency across group or sub group perspectives, generating a range of opinions and testing the stability of individual opinions (Fowler, 2009; Morgan, 1997; Newby, 2014). Analysis of group interaction is also able to tell the researcher about the way in which views are formed through

group dynamics (Smithson, 2000). Focus groups are also well known for being able to generate data quickly and cheaply (Wilson, 1997).

Weaknesses of Focus Groups

As with any data generation tool, there are limitations to the effectiveness of focus groups. Problems with focus groups tend to centre around dysfunctional group dynamics. For example, one or two participants may dominate or dynamics may supress controversial opinions resulting in normative data (Smithson, 2000). Success in moderating the discussion is said to depend on the skills of the facilitator in how they monitor and direct (Morgan, 1997; Newby, 2014). At times, there seems distaste for the use of focus groups from academics – perhaps a hangover from their origins in marketing and political polling (Wilson, 1997). Another weakness is around data type: it can be problematic, for example, to generate numerical data. Furthermore, the type of data created can be difficult to analyse (Cohen et al., 2018).

Application of Focus Groups in this Research

Two focus groups were used in the study, one at either end of the two-week diary period, described in the next section. The focus groups carried out in this study would likely fit with a more inclusive view of focus group experiences. Both Newby (2014) and Morgan (1997) stress the space for creativity in focus group design and, largely because of my skill and confidence as a teacher and facilitator of professional learning in schools, I took an activity-based approach with participants. I was also influenced in my design by a workshop methodology found in Participatory Rural Appraisal, a form of Participatory Action Research (PAR) evident in Development Studies literature and based on the contention of Freire (2015) that poor and exploited peoples should be empowered to analyse their own realities (Chambers, 2002). This workshop style manifested itself in the way participants were encouraged to physically record their own data in a number of activities, generating ideas individually, in small groups and as a whole group as is often the case in a workshop style (Chambers, 2002).

Although quite different in content and process, both focus groups were exploratory in nature with the purpose of establishing participants' perspectives on certain key concepts in the study. The first focus group was one hour in length with the aim of creating a shared understanding of key concepts and vocabulary in the study. It aimed to orient participants to ideas around emotional goals and teacher happiness as well as to my detailed thinking on the matter (Morgan, 1997). This initial session also provided me with orientation as to participants' comprehension and thinking about the topic (Fowler, 2009). A series of brainstorming activities took place, in which participants wrote the emotional goals they brought to a day of teaching and shared what happiness in teaching meant to them, working as part of small groups. A second aim of the initial focus group was to prepare participants to work alone on the two-week research period of the project; for example, a set of indicators were created by participants to support them in being mindful of their happy experiences as they entered this independent phase. In this focus group, participants agreed to record their emotional goals and happy experiences during the two-week research period, using a diary format which I suggested to them.

The second focus group shortly followed the two-week diary period and aimed to reflect on what, if anything, participants had learned from paying closer attention to their emotional goals and happy experiences. These activities were led by the research question: *what is the impact of teachers' happy experiences for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers?* On reflection, participants were only able to provide useful data about the impact on teachers and to a certain extent, students. In addition, there was also an activity in which participants revised their thoughts from the first focus group about the nature of teachers' emotional goals and happy experiences. The second session was influenced by the first focus group both in the content of the discussions and in that I attempted to learn from my mistakes as a moderator in the first. For example, in my efforts to avoid being overbearing in my moderation, I felt I had missed opportunities to challenge, provoke and even direct the conversation at certain points. The result was as Smithson (2000) warns that opinions and perspectives become described as normative with participants potentially restrained by the group context. Therefore, in the second focus group my approach as a facilitator was slightly more investigative in that I asked more questions during the discussion.

Analysis of Focus Group Data

The focus group data was utilised to triangulate the interview data, as suggested by Cohen et al. (2018). To do so, it was analysed in a more traditionally thematic manner than the semi-structured interview, which was analysed narratively, as described above. The process remained messy, reflexive and recursive with themes allowed to emerge from the data. Still, greater structure was deliberately applied; for example, by coding emotional goals and happy experiences by topic. During the analysis of the focus group data, I did not keep narrative structures of conventions in the back of my mind as I did with the teachers' interview data. Instead, I was seeking out patterns in a more deliberate fashion. Although data from the focus groups failed to align perfectly with the narrative approach, it proved a supplementary foil to interview data as intended.

Diaries

Diaries as a Research Method

Traditionally in research diaries seem to be associated with ethnographic methodologies in which the researcher makes 'field' notes (Cohen et al., 2018; Greenfield & Greener, 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Diaries in which participants record daily data have also been utilised though, as they were in this thesis. One approach to this method comes from documentary research and involves the soliciting of diaries to provide access to previously inaccessible or sensitive personal perspectives (Idris, Hong, & Mansor, 2012; McCulloch, 2004). A second way of using a diary as a data generation method comes from psychology and also aims to capture the inner emotions of an individual (Bolger, Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003; Gunthert & Wenze, 2011). In this style of implementation, participants are asked to enter data each day for a set period (often about the same issues) to allow for day to day variety in emotions to be compared (Neupert & Bellingtier, 2018). An obvious advantage of either style of diary method is that access is granted to contemporaneous records of daily life, taking in the spontaneous and private nature of emotion (Bolger et al., 2003; Idris et al., 2012). It has also been suggested

that diaries can be useful for participants to recall details of particular events in which a researcher is interested, another point applicable to this research (Fowler, 2009).

Happiness Diaries

After the first focus group, a diary was kept for two weeks by each participant. Participants recorded their emotional goals at the start of each day of teaching. At the end of the day they recorded any happy experiences from that day. Therefore, it served to provide a daily insight into the emotional state of the participant in much the same way as psychological research on well-being by Neupert and Bellingtier (2018). In addition, the data was aimed at supporting participants to remain mindful of their emotional goals and happy experiences, again in a similar manner to Neupert and Bellingtier (2018). The diary also ensured participants would be able to recall their experiences during individual interviews after the two week period (Fowler, 2009). Moreover, the diaries served as a stimulus to create semi-structured interview questions for the researcher (i.e. *'tell me about this experience in particular'*).

Analysis of Diary Data

The data from the diaries proved unsuitable for narrative analysis because of its lack of depth, so its use sits slightly aside of the primary methodology employed in this thesis. Entries tended to be only one or two sentences in length. This meant that any analysis was primarily thematic, as with the Focus Group data. I read through each entry about a happy experience or emotional goal and noted potential themes as they emerged based on topic. Upon re-reading, I decided on which themes best represented the content and began to group the experiences and goals based on these themes. At times, it was necessary to merge or separate certain groups to best reflect the intended meaning. These themes were presented in the findings and discussion chapters. Like the focus groups, the diary data should be viewed as supplementary to the interview data because of the narrative methodology of the study.

Reflexivity

Like all researchers, I bring a set of personal values to research that come from how I make sense of the world and the way I live within it. The way these personal values become integrated into all aspects of the research process are conceptualised by Guillemin and Gillam (2004) as reflexivity. Reflexivity can be related to ethics because the ongoing and all-encompassing nature of ethical challenges in research has led to ethical reflexivity being termed as *ethical mindfulness* (Farrimond, 2013; Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Hence, the researcher aims to remain alert to ethical conundrums from the very beginning of the research process, including the formulation of research questions (Agee, 2009).

By being authentically reflexive, a social science researcher also hopes to increase the trustworthiness of their research for the reader (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Validity is another term that is used with regard to the trustworthiness of research, but its use is debated in the social sciences because it is traditionally associated with positivist scientific methods (Teusner, 2016). Regardless, through transparency with regard to ethics or the research process, the writer hopes the reader will accept their competency (Mockler, 2014). Furthermore, reflexive transparency aids the reader in understanding the role of the researcher in their research with much the same effect as explaining a research philosophy or paradigm. Reflexivity covers all aspects of the research process, continuing through data generation into writing and beyond. Therefore, hopefully, on reading the proceeding chapters, the reader will find work containing self-awareness and reflection of both ethical and epistemological issues. In the examples below, I aim to be reflexive by demonstrating to the reader who I am as a researcher.

Choosing a Narrative Methodology

As explained elsewhere, early on in the reading for this thesis I came across the work of Kirk and Wall (2010) which dealt with resilience and loss for teachers using narrative. I immediately identified with it, finding the article emotionally-rich and overtly political – factors which appealed to my professional strengths and study interests respectively. To me,

the stories within the article were succinct, tragic portrayals of teaching lives written with notable tenderness and skill. I had never encountered narrative research before and was struck by the idea that I could attempt to complete a similar piece of research, instead focussing on positive emotions.

The purpose of the preceding anecdote is to reveal something about me as a researcher, the nature of the decisions I have made during this study and perhaps even something about the value of a narrative approach. Of course, as I have shown in the methodology section of this chapter, narrative seems an excellent fit for gaining insight into the emotional experiences of individuals. But I was also attracted to a narrative methodology because I valued the authentic manner of the communication with the reader about especially human issues. I felt as though I could communicate as a writer in a similar manner and also knew that a one to one interview would play to strengths which I had developed as a coach and teacher. For example, I am usually able to listen, prompt and relate to a speaker with a manner that encourages them to open up. Narrative and qualitative methodologies also suited me due to self-perceived weaknesses in quantitative methodologies. Finally, the story reveals my interest in the political role of education, which led to some over-emphasis of politics in the early stages of the study. In summation, a narrative approach suited me as much as it suited the research.

Passionate Practitioner but Novice Researcher

The research questions offer an example of the mistakes I made as a teacher-researcher coming to research for the first time. Firstly, their scope was far too broad. Their construction meant covering happy experiences, emotional goals, influences on emotional goals and the impact on pretty much all the stakeholders in education with the exception of parents and communities. With the benefit of hindsight, I would have focussed instead on the descriptive question: *How is happiness experienced by teachers in their work?* The emotional goals were a valuable focus also but something more descriptive would have sufficed with regard to them.

To be direct, the overarching research question was very difficult to gather meaningful data about, at least with the narrative methodology I enacted. It required an assessment of the impact of teachers' happy experiences on students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers when the reality was that no literature seemed to exist about teachers' happy experiences and until the exploratory focus group, the teacher participants did not seem to have considered the idea of a happy experience particular to teaching! That I was determined to assess impact to make a difference with my research is apparently typical of teachers who embark on research (Labaree, 2003). Labaree (2003), however, reminds the novice teacher-researcher that "the object of a particular foray into research, as a piece of scholarship, is not to fix a problem of educational practice but to understand more fully the nature of this problem" (p. 17). It is a sentiment which perhaps aligns more easily with the interpretive-narrative methodological paradigms which the research actually occupies.

Ethical Issues

Ethics is a vital facet of any research, contributing to its quality, validity and reliability (Cohen et al., 2018). In fact, Adams (2008) describes ethics as taking, "a caring, compassionate approach toward understanding what it means to be human and what it means to act morally" (p. 177). MacQueen (2008) is less poetic in identifying the importance of ethics but maintains that: "at a minimum, ethical researchers strive to leave people no worse off than they were before the research. Ideally, people should experience some improvement or benefit" (p. 22). The humanity of ethical research is perhaps better addressed in the section on reflexivity but procedural ethics certainly plays an important role in leaving participants "no worse off", especially when engaging with a novice researcher such as myself! Therefore, although this research proved low in risk (perhaps due to its focus on largely positive experiences) it seems important to outline how the ethics application process supported my thinking about the ethics of research and the two principal ethical issues in this study.

Access to participants

A slight concern existed for me around the potential coercion of participants into taking part. I liaised primarily with senior leaders at Moana School to plan the research and my previous relationship had been with them, as opposed to the classroom practitioners who would be taking part. In light of the study's topic, I did not want to add unnecessarily to a teacher's workload. In an effort to remove any undue pressure on participants, I provided them with an information sheet detailing what they would be doing with the expected time commitments involved. I stressed the option to withdraw, both during a meeting before the research and at focus groups and interviews.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

At times, the stories elicited, particularly in interview, were deeply personal with participants reliving childhood memories and revealing deeply held goals. Children, colleagues and leaders also featured in participants' stories. Harm could be caused to professional reputations or relationships within the school if, for example, a participant represented a child, colleague or themselves in an unfavourable manner. Therefore, with regard to this data, participants were asked to check the veracity of the transcriptions. Pseudonyms were also utilised to protect anonymity for anyone involved or mentioned in the research. Transparency of process was also important here. The researcher made it clear to participants both in person and in the information sheet that confidentiality could not be guaranteed.

Hopefully, reflexivity and the transparency of my positioning remains evident as the findings are shared and discussed in the following three chapters. This chapter presented the philosophies, methodology, methods and analysis employed in this research. Issues about ensuring the research's quality and ethical guidelines were discussed. Sitting in an interpretive paradigm, this research adopts a qualitative, narrative methodology to investigate teachers' emotional goals and their experiences of happiness. In this study I facilitated and participated in the participants' sense-making by means of semi-structured interviews, focus groups and a diary.

In Chapters 4, 5 and 6 the findings of the research are presented and discussed.

Chapter 4: Exploring Participants' Beliefs about their Emotional Goals and Happiness in Teaching Work

Introduction

This chapter explores participants' more general ideas and perspectives about their emotional goals and happiness at work. It primarily draws on data from in-depth interviews with individual participants and this data is collated into sections of narrative which also introduce each participant. As a part of the process of introduction, but also because the perspectives on happiness seemed to link to the broader life and goals of each participant, a certain amount of background to each teacher's professional life is included. Often, this background addresses their initial or ongoing emotional goals for teaching. The data included in these individual narratives was usually generated by participants responding to questions such as: *'Tell me about becoming a teacher'* and *'What are your expectations for happiness at work?'* Also included is data generated in the first focus group, which was exploratory and is therefore useful in reporting about the general perspectives held by participants about work happiness.

Exploring the Beliefs of Individual Teachers

Beth

Beth is an experienced teacher and leader at Moana School. Early in her career she found a particular passion for working in schools in low socio-economic settings and has spent her twenty-year career in similar contexts. Beth's core goals for teaching relate to helping children from disadvantaged communities and as she talks, a wider passion for social justice emerges. "It's one of the frustrations for me that the education system has let down a lot of people over time." Moreover, Beth's 'social utility values' seem to be traced directly to a deeply personal story from her life (Richardson & Watt, 2014).

> Most of my brothers got kicked out of school for various reasons…. if someone had actually given them a little bit of attention, in terms of identifying where those issues were coming from… 'cos they're all very, very bright.

When asked to talk generally about what makes her happy at work, Beth instead chooses to talk about the motivational power of her value set, pointing to an awareness of how these beliefs intersect with happy experiences for her. Sutton and Wheatley (2003) identify a similar pattern in the literature as Beth describes, explaining that teachers experience particular pleasure in seeing children, who struggled at first, succeed. Beth seems to enjoy the success of the underdog, a phenomenon repeated throughout the findings (Kim et al., 2008).

> I'm quite passionate about making sure my kids don't fall through those gaps…. it can be really patience testing in the early days but once they actually can get through all those little barriers that they've set up for themselves…. The excitement of seeing a kid get something is probably one of the reasons why most of us do what we do.

As Beth deconstructs what it is that makes her happy at work, the prominence and integration of goal-setting in school life is clear to see, as are the bursts of happiness which come with achieving goals for Beth.

> It's a regular sense of achievement. We're constantly balancing a whole lot of goals for a whole lot of little individuals as well as our own goals. And I think most of the happiness for me is helping them get to their goals because that in turn is helping me to achieve my goals.

In Beth's explanation, there are two types of happiness in evidence. There is a happiness that comes with meeting goals, which is perhaps best aligned with economic views on happiness (Dolan et al., 2008; Jayawickreme et al., 2012) Yet, also present, especially if we take into account the social utility values present in Beth's previous comments, is eudemonia. This is a happiness that comes from enacting something worthwhile to the person experiencing

happiness (Jayawickreme et al., 2012; Waterman, 1993). In Beth's case something worthwhile is 'the excitement of seeing a kid get something'.

Useful to describing how teachers experience happiness is the manner in which the two different types of happiness interact with one another for Beth. On the one hand, she is clearly driven by the external goals attached to the children, which seemingly come from a 'sense of achievement' within the framework of school. This schooling framework, as discussed in the literature review, is neoliberal and so what we see in Beth's words is a way neoliberalism is internalised by individuals. The individualism of Beth's statement about how the children achieving their goals are 'helping me to achieve my goals' illustrates this internalisation best. Yet, on the other hand, Beth's core personal-professional goals, articulated above, are pure and derived from deep personal values and experiences. They are altruistic and about preventing children from falling through 'gaps'. And it is these goals, around helping the children in her class, which she talks about explicitly. Beth does not, for example, talk explicitly about her children reaching a certain achievement standard, which would illustrate the prioritisation of goals derived from the structure around her. Moreover, there is more obvious joy for Beth in seeing 'a kid get something', which is embedded for her in the momentary experience, 'because that is a pretty exciting process to watch.' So, although Beth references the goal-setting cultures of schools and this external goal-setting is internalised to influence her emotional appraisal to an extent; in reality, the profundity of happy emotion is facilitated by emotional goals which are influenced strongly by her deep, personal beliefs around social justice.

Ana

Ana did not follow a direct route into primary teaching after leaving school herself. Instead, she worked in a number of roles in various industries, most significantly as a chef and manager of a successful café. In her early twenties, Ana worked as a teacher of Te Reo Māori (language) in a vocational business school and she began training as a teacher part way through her career as a chef. However, with a sick baby to contend with, she made the decision to put her

studies on hold. In her forties, after completing her teaching studies, Ana took up a position in the primary school in which she now works.

Ana holds strong, well-formed ideas about her emotional goals for teaching, attaching particular importance to helping Māori students: “Our Māori kids in urban areas, they have no idea who are they are…. My passion comes from just giving that identity to our kids because I know that when you don’t know who you are, you’re lost.” Ana relates these long-held emotional goals to research and to her personal history which includes a struggle with Māori identity:

> For a good, solid, I don’t know from 13 through to 20, for a solid what 5 to 8 years there was always that ‘Am I Māori enough? Have to prove myself, have to prove myself’…. I saw my daughter go through it at Intermediate and talked to her about it so she didn’t have to carry that same burden that I had.

Ana believes, and this is shown clearly in the stories in Section 2, that her happiness in teaching comes from realising long-held, personally important emotional goals. Her belief is consistent with seminal work by Brookhart and Freeman (1992), arguing intrinsic and altruistic goals were most significant for teachers. Moreover, meeting an altruistic goal is also consistent with definitions of eudemonia (Jayawickreme et al., 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2013; Waterman, 1993). While altruism is undoubtedly highly applicable in Ana’s case, it is also important to highlight that she denies utter selflessness, noting there is personal gain in the fulfilment of these long-term emotional goals.

> You don’t do anything without a payoff otherwise you wouldn’t do it… My payoff is seeing that glint in my kids’ eyes when you’ve succeeded…. And then my other payoff is instilling a sense of self-worth…. I see so many of our teenagers and young people who don’t have that, especially our Māori and Pāsifika kids.... So being able to break that cycle for them, that’s why I teach.

Metaphor is seen as a useful data type in narrative and interview based research because it brings data to life in a way which, to use metaphor, builds bridges between participant,

researcher and reader (Cohen et al., 2018; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Ana's desire to 'break that cycle' is similar to Beth's language for 'making sure kids don't fall through the gaps' and 'getting through barriers'. Their metaphors are utilised to describe an emotional goal to help children who are struggling. And below, in many of the stories in this section and the next, it is possible to observe participants applying metaphors to make meaning for the listener, particularly when dealing with 'underdog' students.

Rory

Rory has been teaching for twenty years. It is something he "always wanted to do". There are "moments" when Rory thinks: "I've had enough. I'm getting too old!" Yet, he continues because, "there's still challenge in it…. I'm still learning things!" Rory's exclamation indicates the pleasure he takes in professional learning and mastery of his work. Butler (2014) found 'task mastery' to be a common goal orientation among teachers while work by Bullough Jr. and Pinnegar (2009) and by Sutton and Wheatley (2003) identify cognitive challenge as a factor which brings happiness to teaching work.

As Rory tells stories of the happy episodes in his teaching work, neat narrative arcs emerge; in particular, the recurring theme of helping children to overcome adversity, of underdogs making progress despite personal and socio-economic barriers. In fact, Rory identifies this as a cause of work happiness himself. He explains that, in general: "I'm happiest when… and this is so clichéd… but I am really happy when…. you just reach one kid and you know that they're flying and you know that you've done that, actually." Again, metaphor drives descriptive data.

There exists a self-consciousness in Rory's words which reveal a connection between his narratives of happiness and the assemblage of his teacher identity. For example, when Rory talked about wanting to "save" particularly troubled or struggling children, it was revealed almost as some guilty pleasure would be – in confidence. If it is assumed then, that Rory is highly aware of the presence of the listener, it can be assumed also that he is constructing, through the social interaction of the story, a version of his teacher identity for that particular listener (Kirk & Wall, 2010; Mead, 1934; Mishler, 2004). If happy experiences represent an

emotional pinnacle in teaching, then narratives about that happiness could be seen to be a projection of participants' desired identity. In this sense, Rory's stories of happiness not only reinforce his own, desired version of his teacherly self; they also serve to facilitate happiness for Rory because they provide evidence that he is meeting an identity, which for him has been aspirational, something he "always wanted to do".

Cat

Cat has been a teacher for ten years, all of which she has spent at her current school. As she describes some of the general factors that make her happy in her work, the importance of community in her emotional goals quickly emerge: "I think, for me, I've lived in this area, I've grown up in this area, I wanted to teach here. It's just something to help." A part of this is Cat's relationship with the school's parents: "I get along with parents really well so I like to talk to them about how their children are going, about what's happening. It usually makes me have a good day." Another example is seeing old students in and around the community, a cause of teacher happiness also identified by Sutton and Wheatley (2003). Cat explains:

> They're always coming back to me and saying really good things about me, about what they're doing now and it's just something, like you've changed them in a way they remember you. I guess that's what I expected, to help, which makes me happy.

For Cat, becoming a teacher was something of an unexpected career choice given her own time as a student: "I didn't finish school and I was quite naughty. I was a leader but I just didn't like being told what to do." She relates her own negative experiences as a student to her goals for being a teacher: "I've always had a passion for the kids (who) were naughty. I think a lot of teachers forced me to go that way because the teachers either couldn't control me, couldn't keep me down or weren't interested in me, didn't know what would hook me into a lesson."

Cat's goals, like most other participants, are deeply personal. Her experiences of school give her motivation to teach and, in turn, form the sort of teacher she wants to be: a teacher who

is interested in her students and can hook 'naughty' children into a lesson. As O'Connor (2008) asserts, Cat's beliefs about her personal identity, like Ana and Beth, impact significantly on her professional self. Deeply personal emotional goals interact in the formation of teacher identity, as do Cat's beliefs about what makes her happy at work.

Indie

Indie has been teaching for about ten years. She recently joined Moana School and is full of excitement for her new context. In relation to her work happiness, she talks about the importance of the organisation in which she works and how things are done there.

> I do need it to be the right fit for my values, my humour, my ethics, for want of a better word, my pedagogy…. 'Cos it doesn't fit everywhere…. Different schools work differently and value different things and you need to find your fit. And so I'm happy if I fit and I feel like I fit here.

During my initial teacher training, a lecturer tried to impress upon my fellow students and I the idea that, in our impending job search, we should be interviewing the school, looking for what we wanted as well as the school interviewing us. In dire need of employment, I paid little attention and took the first job I was offered. Still, Indie's words highlight the importance for teachers' happiness in aligning personal values with those of their workplace. Fisher (2010) and Bullough Jr. and Pinnegar (2009) offer similar advice to that offered by my lecturer. Bridges and Searle (2011) suggest the problem of misalignment is macro: that New Zealand teachers, broadly leftist in politics, have been made unhappy implementing reform policies which do not align with their own worldviews.

Certainly, Indie is observing, as Richardson and Watt (2014) do, that differing school contexts can realise a teacher's emotional goals or obstruct them. Sergiovanni (2001) emphasises the role of context, arguing that although educationalists face broadly the same problems across systems, the solutions found tend to be local, meaning the manner in which work is carried out often varies from school to school. Such a view would seem to support writers such as

Ladd (2011) and Johnson (2006) in privileging the actions of school leaders with regard to the happiness of their teachers, even if the ability of leaders to actually manipulate context remains a matter for debate (Bottery, 2006; Seddon, 1995).

Continuing, Indie also highlights the relationship between her happiness at work and her general well-being: “my happiness in my work affects my entire life…. You’re never not thinking about aspects of the job, sub-consciously. There’s no clocking in and clocking out…. I can’t just compartmentalise that.” Indie’s inability to ‘compartmentalise’ is, again, illustrative of overlap in teachers’ personal and professional lives. She explicitly states that she is unable to separate these two spheres and that her happiness at work ‘affects my entire life’. Indie, in a few words about happiness, synthesises why work-life balance for many teachers is not possible, that her happiness and identity are contingent on teaching being in her life. An absence of boundaries between school and home is typical of the way teachers approach their jobs (Day et al., 2006; Hargreaves, 1998; O'Connor, 2008). Often, the literature has looked on this convergence (of the personal and professional selves of teachers via emotional labour) with a degree of concern (Hargreaves, 1998; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Zembylas, 2003). Essentially emotional labour is framed as draining, with strong links to burnout (Schutz & Lee, 2014). Hargreaves (1998) argues that school leaders and policy-makers deliberately utilise the emotional power of teachers’ values for the benefit of society. Certainly, in my own experience, an assumption underpins teacher discourse on subjects such as work-life balance that there exists a one-way flow of emotional resources from the personal to the professional selves. Indie’s language is reflective of such a cultural assumption among teachers: she talks, for example, about ‘not clocking in or clocking out’, highlighting the never-ending nature of the job and her effort. However, her tone is not especially resentful and, in fact, in the moment of telling she appeared energised by her commitment. She appeared accepting of the nature of teaching work and there was even a note of gratitude for the emotional resources (in this case, happiness) gained from her work. The absence of boundaries brings a whole-hearted, service-based work ethic: for example, the values which motivate Indie to align with and contribute to the future of Moana School’s children.

That is not to say school leaders and policy-makers should prey exploitatively on these goals. Instead, it seems those holding power could prioritise the ways in which teachers’ draw

positive emotions from their work and the impact of those positive emotions. To do so would be to recognise the unique nature of emotional labour in teaching. Reforms have meant cultures exist where the separation of teachers' personal and professional selves is highlighted by emphasis on professional standards and technical skill (Codd, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2008; Hargreaves, 1998). Instead, the irrepressible role of the personal self in the performance of teachers could be lauded, the importance of the professional sphere in framing personal identity and emotional well-being of teachers celebrated. Re-imagining the culture and identity of the 21st Century teacher would show a genuine commitment to addressing the globally documented retention and recruitment crisis in education.

Tai

Tai is in his second year of teaching, although it is his first year at Moana Primary. He qualified as a teacher with a Master's degree. Tai had been interested in teaching from a very young age. Although he notes that teaching was 'always a back-up plan', at the end of his degree Tai was left 'soul-searching'. He was inspired to enrol in a teacher training course by a contemporary comedian's appeal to young graduates: 'if you don't know what to do with your life then do teaching'.

Tai's perspectives offer a glimpse into the well-documented struggle which many early-career teachers face in mastering their profession and in understanding their corresponding professional identity (Alsup, 2006; Bullough Jr., 2005; Pearce & Morrison, 2011). He admits that teaching has been challenging and describes his decision to teach as: "a surprisingly light-hearted decision for what's been a momentous undertaking." It could be argued that his situation is illustrative of teaching's retention and recruitment problem and why it is important for school leaders and policy makers to pay attention to the happiness of teachers (Schutz & Lee, 2014).

Tai explains that being good at his job is important for him to feel positive emotion. However, his perspective on happiness comes with a grim assessment of his own performance, in which his frustrations are better revealed: "it's not usually something that I regularly experience

(being good at my job), which has made the last year and a half remarkably difficult." Like Indie, in the course of the interview Tai identifies how all-encompassing teaching can be and it seems highly emotional labour for him (Hargreaves, 1998; Hochschild, 2003; Schutz & Lee, 2014). Below, he explains how being a teacher strongly impacts his personal life and his general life happiness.

> I realised I'd been really resentful of the teaching and I'd been trying to not let it interfere with my personal life. I'd been trying to have a personal life…. I'm just kind of going to put all that social stuff to the side and I'm just going to give teaching everything that it needs even if it seems unfair on me. 'Cos this is just getting me down feeling like I'm such a failure constantly.

The moment of realisation described by Tai seems illustrative of an inner dissonance, characterised by Pearce and Morrison (2011), as being between the personal and professional selves of early-career teachers. Bullough Jr. (2005) conceptualises the different selves of teachers as 'situational' and 'core' identities and Alsup (2006) warns of the identity struggle faced by early career teachers when these two, different selves do not easily align, as in Tai's case. In turn, such struggles are linked to poor levels of retention for teaching graduates (Pearce & Morrison, 2011; Schutz & Lee, 2014). Forming a deeper understanding of these retention issues (through a focus on what facilitates positive emotion in teaching as opposed to approaching only negative emotion) is a central justification for this research and have been addressed in greater depth in Chapters 1 and 2.

Milly

Milly is in her first year of teaching. Although she had "always wanted to be a teacher", opportunities to live overseas, along with postgraduate study in a different field, came before teacher training. Earlier study prompted Milly to consider her deeper goals when becoming a teacher: "I got involved in thinking more carefully about structural inequality and I thought teaching actually sounds even better than I thought. That would be a great thing to do, a thing where you can actually do something!" Certainly, Milly's goals are altruistic and consistent

with traditional views of teacher motivation (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992). And, these long standing emotional goals for teaching (of wanting to 'do something' with regard to 'structural inequality') clearly interact with Milly's expectations for happiness in at work:

> I think in my work there's an expectation for satisfaction, which is, I think, what makes you happy in your life, doing things that you feel are worth doing. Maybe that doesn't mean you feel ecstatic in the moment but it's sort of a broader view of happiness from my job even if it's not day-to-day having fun every moment.

The recognition of struggle before a 'broader' happiness, of not 'having fun every moment', can be likened to the worthy travails of Ana, Beth and Rory. Milly, like Jayawickreme et al. (2012) and David et al. (2013) identifies clear distinctions between hedonic, momentary happiness and a longer term eudemonia. Yet, Milly's emphasis on struggle and her use of the term 'satisfaction' rather than 'happiness', provide a reminder of how emotional goals, experiences and the language around them are socially constructed by sets of learned rules and convictions (Cornelius, 1996; Roseman & Smith, 2001). Bertrand Russell (1958) critiques religion, industry and similar structures of power for propagating a conceptualisation of work where we tend to place a moral value on it, attaching virtue to the struggle that promises a reward of hard-earned satisfaction (Hodgkinson, 2005; Woodhouse, 2001). Such conceptualisations of work, along with the structural features built by this conceptualisation, provide the rules, convictions and culture to socialise the nature of emotion at work. Hence the historic prominence and benign mediocrity of the term 'satisfaction' to describe positive emotion at work (Fisher, 2010). And hence, perhaps, teachers such as Milly prioritising 'doing things that you feel are worth doing' over 'having fun every moment'. Moreover, the worthiness of work in the 21st Century has become tied to each person's worthiness as authenticity and meaning for the self is sought through the notion of the career – or, perhaps, a Master's thesis about happiness at work (Costea et al., 2008; Fleming, 2009)!

Tina

Tina is in her early twenties. After finishing university a couple of years ago, she has taught overseas and in New Zealand. Early in her interview, she describes a similar type of eudemonia to Rory, Ana and Milly. For Tina, the language of overcoming obstacles, of opening locked doors, is linked overtly to 'achieving'. "I think when you're with the kids, achieving things with the kids, that's what makes you happy." Tina was a child in this goal-focussed system, as well as a teacher, and it is known that early-career teachers quickly learn the value in applying competing educational discourses wisely, based on the social situation at hand (Alsup, 2006). In an interaction with a more experienced teacher-leader from a different school, someone in close contact with her own school leaders, it would seem entirely sensible to many that Tina would seek to emphasise her own efficacy.

Yet as Tina continues to talk, and this will be seen more clearly in Chapter 5 in her stories of happiness, it becomes relatively clear that, for Tina, 'achieving' is secondary to being 'with the kids'. Primarily, Tina stresses the importance to her happiness of the 'experiences' which emerge from the teacher-student relationship: "I think it's definitely the things that happen in the classroom that make you happy, the experiences that you get with the children." In spite of popular characterisations, it has been known for a long time that teachers simply enjoy working with children (Hatch, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Nias, 1989). In Tina's case, at least, little seems to have changed in the 21st Century because children remain a source of joy for her.

Exploring the Shared Beliefs of a Group of Teachers

The research for this thesis opened with an exploratory focus group comprised of activities (described in greater depth in Chapter 3). The exploratory nature of the focus group, aimed at orienting both researcher and participants, proved useful in generating general perspectives about emotional goals and happiness when teachers are part of a group. Below, the perspectives contributed by participants in these activities are explored in sections about emotional goals and happy experiences. As with the individual interview data presented

above, discussion is integrated with the presentation of findings although these findings are based on thematic rather than narrative analysis.

Examples of Emotional Goals

To support participants to independently diary their emotional goals, they were asked to think of examples of emotional goals they might bring to a day of teaching. After which, they were asked to sort the goals into personal goals, professional goals and personal-professional goals. The data generated a number of different types of goals and also suggests some potential influencing factors shaping goal formation for teachers.

In the most common goal type, participants aimed to manage their emotion during the course of the day, often in relation to children. Given the task, its vocabulary but also the highly emotional nature of teaching, this is unsurprising (Hargreaves, 1998; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Some of these goals aimed to encourage mindfulness in the emotional interactions of participants by taking a positive, aspirational approach. Examples of such goals included: 'Be patient', 'Maintain equilibrium, tone, appearance' or 'Make someone laugh'. Often, more negatively framed goals revealed the pressure teaching places on exerting control over emotion, which is well documented (Hochschild, 2003; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Zembylas, 2003). Examples of these goals included 'Not getting my back up', 'Try to stay positive before yelling', 'Keep personal-professional issues separate', and 'Take time for yourself'. Again, these example goals serve to emphasise the difficulty teachers have in separating their personal and professional identities and the subsequent impact on the emotional goals they bring to teaching (O'Connor, 2008). Furthermore, one such goal, if it was serious, 'Get to 3pm and I don't care what happens in between', seemed indicative of the stress and burnout described in some work on teachers' emotions (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Daniels & Strauss, 2010).

The emotional aspect of teaching is prioritised by Hargreaves (1998) as more important than the technical and rarely did these example goals focus on features of teaching work such as pedagogy. For example, there was little to suggest that appraisal or reflective practice goals

might influence daily emotional goals even though the researcher suggested this as a part of task instructions. The only such goals were to 'Give clear and concise instructions' and 'Ask open questions'. In a revealing insight into the work of a 21st century teacher, a number of goals addressed administrative features of the job. For example, 'Remember to hand out notices' and 'Get planning done during the week' are illustrative of why the impact of reforms on teaching work have been criticised (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Kirk & Wall, 2010). This could also be viewed as an illustration of what parts of the job are considered important and not important to teachers.

Overall, however, participants chose goals that were to do with the emotional aspect of the job and/or held a personal importance to them. Only three out of 24 goals could be described as wholly technical or administrative. The task and the term, emotional goal, likely played a part in directing such an outcome, as it was meant to. As with the individual interview data, this trend seems indicative of the importance of teachers' personal beliefs in their work, the importance of personal emotion in teaching practice. It is, again, illustrative of how, for teachers, the personal self encroaches on the professional self and vice versa (Day et al., 2006; O'Connor, 2008).

Participants' Initial Thoughts about Happy Experiences in Teaching

Participants were asked to describe what they might see, hear and how they might feel during a happy experience in teaching. Ostensibly, this activity was for the creation of a set of indicators to be used during the diary period. It was also explained to participants that I aimed to explore their initial thoughts about happiness so as to build thick description. It should be noted that the data from these discussions was recorded by participants as short, usually one-word answers by a scribe in small group sessions within the focus group. This is why in this section I use the term 'thought' as opposed to 'perspective', as the data does not really present as well-developed perspectives but as exploratory snap responses.

The responses to what participants might see or hear during a happy experience provide clear ideas as to how teachers, talking as part of a group, might explain the factors that make them

happy at work. All but three of the 29 responses refer to children or the potential actions of a child, revealing what is at the centre of teachers' thoughts about their work. There are no references to colleagues, administrative work, parents or professional learning meetings, which as well as classroom time with children make up a significant part of how a teacher spends their day. In their review of the literature on teachers' emotions, Sutton and Wheatley (2003) note that researchers such as Hatch (1993) and Nias (1989) cite children to be significant sources of happiness for teachers, so the trend among the responses from this study's participants fits with literature.

These responses about children can each be attributed to two principal groups. In the first, six responses suggested the learning and progress of children would elicit happiness for the teacher. The second, larger group of responses identified positive behaviours or dispositions in children as sources of potential happiness. Often, these responses referred to the positive work habits of children. Both positive progress by children and positive behaviour in children were identified as a sources of happiness for teachers in the review by Sutton and Wheatley (2003) and referred to throughout this thesis. The three responses which did not fit this trend refer to 'praise' (two responses) or 'feedback' for the teacher themselves as a stimulant for a happy experience. I have not come across this as a reason for happiness in the literature but it holds potential importance for school leaders.

The most striking feature of participants' responses to how they might feel during a happy experience at work was that for six out of 14 responses, happiness was described to be related to a feeling of usefulness or similar emotions such as 'self-worth'. Kelchtermans (1996) argues that teachers are subject to moral and political vulnerability at personal, local and societal levels. That feelings of 'usefulness' and 'relevance' were intermingled with participants' happy emotions suggests happy experiences might act to mitigate the personal-professional vulnerability which teachers apparently feel. These responses can also be related to the fulfilment of altruistic goals for teachers (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Han & Yin, 2016). In turn, they reveal that participants expect to experience a eudemonic type of happiness based on the fulfilment of altruistic goals (Jayawickreme et al., 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993).

Chapter 5: Stories of Emotional Goals and Episodic Happiness in Teaching Work

Introduction

Both teaching and emotion are dynamic and highly subjective experiences (Hargreaves, 1998; Roseman & Smith, 2001). They are composed within a wide range of social interactions by the widely varied interpretations of the people involved. In Chapter 4, it was possible to see how reflecting on what makes up their positive emotional experiences can play an important part in how teachers compose their identities.

This chapter aims to concentrate attention on fleeting moments of happiness themselves, their salience and teachers' interpretations of them. Participant voice remains prominent and essential so as to capture the subjective nature of happiness. Yet, in contrast to the previous chapter, the intention is more about portraying the circumstances surrounding teachers' episodes of happiness and what facilitates these experiences. Focus is on the realities themselves (albeit subjective realities) as opposed to what teachers *think* makes them happy.

A range of happy stories are presented so as to represent the variety in how happiness is experienced by teachers. Like the data in Chapter 4, these stories are drawn from in-depth interviews with individual participants. When reading, it is important to remember that each story sits within the broader 'work-life history' of each participant presented in this thesis. Hence, at times reference is made to points from previous or proceeding chapters. The stories of the participants are interspersed and surrounded by discussion, which draw on the views, theories and evidence of other authors while prioritising the narrative of the individual. Each story is dealt with individually and so points of analysis recur as the reader moves through the stories. The intended effect is one of transparency of approach: the reader is able to follow the interpretation of each narrative by the researcher, reducing detached and disembodied analysis (Maclure, 1993).

In the final part of this chapter, data from the diaries is drawn upon with the aim of thickening description about the interaction between participants' daily goals, long term goals and their salient happy experiences presented in the bulk of this chapter.

Stories of Episodic Happiness in Teaching

In the following sections each participant tells a story of happiness from their teaching work. For ease of reading, participants are introduced in the same order as Chapter 4. Although each story is briefly foreshadowed with a reminder of participants' general perspectives on their emotional goals and happiness, the reader may find it useful to move between Chapters 4 and 5 to fully engage in the work-life history of each participant.

Beth

When Beth and her general perspectives on work happiness and emotional goals were introduced in Chapter 4, it was discussed that she held a set of wider beliefs for social justice which influenced her emotional goals in teaching. The story below, about a whānau hui (family meeting) to deal with male students' behaviour issues, illustrates to the reader how Beth's beliefs about community drive emotional goals which interact with experiences of eudemonic happiness. Also prevalent is the influence on Beth's emotional goals of her own brothers' difficulties at school: evidently, she is driven to help boys succeed, in particular. I would argue Beth's focus on helping boys represents a poignant example of how teachers' personal selves impact their professional identity (Day et al., 2006; Nias, 1989; O'Connor, 2008). Further, Beth's story shows the impact of her personal self on her professional episodes of happiness.

> I had a hui with a pack of Mum's in here…. I actually had a few ideas rattling around in my head but my big thing was … I'm not actually applying my ideas onto their group. …. So they actually got into some quite intense discussion and came up with a whole lot of really cool ideas around developing a Mum's support group to go beyond what we're actually doing with the boys…. coming from a very culturally based background

> with school, that engagement of whānau, particularly with our boys, is massively important…. some of the things they're going through in order to try to raise functional young men…. For a lot of our boys who don't have those positive male relationships, there does actually need to be something else happening to help make them into the people they can be rather than follow the same mistakes of some of their older siblings

If the story above illustrates a type of happiness that emerges from long-held personal-professional goals about profound issues of social justice, below, Beth describes a more irreverent episode. She touches on hedonic, temporal pleasures (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Although, the emphasis on community connection remains:

> I enjoy the human contact. Our families do make me laugh. We have some very entertaining people so laughter is always a good thing. That makes me happy… There's the ability to take the piss out of themselves and other people in a way that is highly entertaining. I really like hanging out with our families. Good people. And funny.

Ana

As was explained in Chapter 4, Ana holds deep, long-standing goals to support Māori students in locating their cultural identity. We also know these emotional goals are influenced by a struggle in her youth to find her own Māori identity. The story below represents a realisation of these long-term, altruistic goals, influenced by a set of social utility values (Han & Yin, 2016; Richardson & Watt, 2014). Note that Ana chose to recount a story from her time as a student teacher as opposed to the two-week diary period. She was undertaking a teaching practice at a school with only a small proportion of indigenous Māori students.

> All I did was read them a story of Patupari, Hunua and the Waitakare Ranges…. At the end of the day, this little red head boy came up to me and he said: "Kōkā Ana… I'm Māori too." And I could have broken, even now I'm tearing up. And I thought that's why. That's why I'm doing this because there are so many of our kids that don't have Māori role models…. And that's why I do it.

Ana's story is illustrative of how emotional goals and experiences of happiness can interact in teachers' stories to aid identity formation. In her personal life Ana's Māori identity is highly prominent and I would suggest that she is happy when this identity (and its associated emotional goals) is realised professionally because she is realising a version of her true self. Therefore, the happiness is eudemonic and the eudemonic experience fuels Ana's ongoing identity formation as a teacher.

Writers such as Nias (1989), O'Connor (2008) and Day et al. (2006) highlight the importance for teachers of being able to bring their personal selves to their professional identities although they do not make any link to eudemonia. Further to this, Zembylas (2003) describes how emotions play a key role in the construction of teacher identity. I would argue that Ana's story allows a glimpse into how two different but connected ideas conflate. For Ana the emotion of eudemonia serves to validate the introduction of her personal self into her professional identity. Moreover, the validation she receives reinforces the use of her personal self professionally. Eudemonia serves as a crucible in which Ana's initial goals to teach, her personal identity and her professional identity are fired to create the drive to continue teaching.

Also of note is the intensity of emotion Ana felt, both in the moment and during her retelling; she was 'broken' and is 'tearing up'. In fact, from her description, the happy episode might not seem especially happy at all to some people! Of course, appraisal theories conceptualise emotional experience as highly subjective (Lazarus, 1991; Roseman & Smith, 2001). Physiological responses (in this instance, crying with happiness) vary from individual to individual while the manner in which Ana defines happiness is, of course, unique to her lived experience.

Rory

In Chapter 4 Rory was introduced as a teacher who was able to describe, with slight self-consciousness but a great deal of pride, how he generally experiences happiness in teaching work by 'saving' struggling students facing adverse conditions. Below, Rory details a specific example in which he played a part in helping an underachieving child to make progress. Rory offers thick description of an emotional phenomenon which numerous other participants also talked about and which has been referred to in psychological literature as 'rooting for the underdog' (Kim et al., 2008).

> C came to me last year as a Level 5 in Reading…. Then at the end of last year he was Level 15…. He came back from the holidays at Level 20. I did a test on him and he passed a 9.5 years reading age…. His whole personality has changed now…. Now his writing has barely a spelling mistake in it. He said to me in the test… it's about the cheetahs and it says: "what does combine mean?" And he said to me: "it means fused together". And I said to him: "What child? What child?" I've never had a child in 20 years that's ever said that to me!" I mean, my god! So, I am part of that. Also, he's had a lot of help at home and lots of people working with him but that means to me… on my worse days…. I think, well, that is my thing that I'm most proud of!

Clearly, Rory derives joy from pride in his own teaching performance. Although this pride remains strongly related to the performance of the student, it seems the happy episode partially originates from an emotional goal to master his teaching work. Evidence of Rory's mastery is provided for him in the progress of his pupil so he feels happy about that. Butler (2014) also found teachers to hold emotional goals around task mastery.

Again, Rory's emotion is best described as eudemonic because of his altruistic goals. The happy episode is arguably accentuated by the fact that C's progress exceeded Rory's expectations. As he narrates the story, the teacher repeats twice how he 'never thought' such progress was possible. To use the conventional approach to narrative analysis made by popular by (Labov, 1972), Rory is very obviously emphasising his story's 'complicating action' so as to emphasise the magnitude of the achievement (Thornborrow, 2012). Rory views the

cause of positive emotion as highly meaningful and, consequently, the happiness is profound for him:

> I was very emotional. I was almost crying and I had to call the Deputy Principal (D.P.) down to the classroom to sit with me while I went through the test with him because I didn't want to think I was bias. So, I sat with the D.P. with C there and I got her to just check that I had done everything right…. I had a little tear in my eye cos it was very emotional. I never thought we'd get to this point…. (I thought) he would be another Pāsifika kid that fell through the gaps but he's not going to be.

In this instance, the role of the Deputy Principal (D.P.) can be seen to represent the influence of neoliberal education policy on the emotional goals and happy experiences of teachers. The entire episode is framed by performative achievement goals for both child and teacher, established by macro-political structures (Apple, 2004; Codd, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2008). Even though Rory requests the presence of the Deputy Principal, it can be assumed there must be a degree of managerial action by school leaders because it appears an overtly performative culture exists, at least in Rory's reality. That Rory requests external validation of C's progress also illustrates how vulnerable his emotions are to influences such as policy measures, school cultures and power dynamics. While Rory's desire to seek approval could well be rooted in his own psychological needs, it has been argued that teachers' self-doubt about their moral and professional integrity has its roots in broader moral and political societal values (Kelchtermans, 1996).

Cat

Cat's story of happiness is framed by two clear emotional goals. Firstly, there is a strong personal interest in school basketball tournaments: she played at school and draws parallels, like Ana, to 'when I was young'. Cat's experiences of happiness as a child then, seem involved in happiness for her as an adult. She observes children enjoying similar experiences to those she found joy in her own youth.

> Basketball was my sport so I have a big thing about basketball…. We trained half-court, there's no key painted down. They didn't really learn hard-core rules. We didn't have time. It was pretty hard training.… I don't teach the seniors either. I taught them when they were five. So to see these kids that I taught at five, these seniors, go on to something when they were pretty nervous…. the girls couldn't play at all, they were shooting at the wrong hoop! They couldn't dribble the ball. But by the end they knew how to play, they knew how to drive, work together as a team. They got excited. They weren't down if they failed, lost. And then the boys did really well, won the grade. But to watch them grow…. They listened, they stuck together…. To see these children who just had one hoop. They didn't have shorts but they had the skills…. You know they're not going to start a team; they can't afford fifty bucks. But yeah, they all loved it.

For Cat, hers is an underdog story about a group of athletes with talent but without the resources that tend to support success: 'They didn't have shorts but they had the skills.' In this sense, Cat's story represents a popular cultural theme in which success emerges from adverse conditions (Kim et al., 2008; Prestin, 2013). Also found in Rory's story (and others'), such narratives of underachieving children are described by Sutton and Wheatley (2003) as a common cause of positive emotion in teachers. Underdog stories seem to be highly relatable for teachers because they can be seen to redress the unfairness of society (Kim et al., 2008).

Also important in Cat's happy episode is her long standing relationship with this group of students. The tournament is an opportunity for Cat to engage with their growth over time. There is tender recognition that the five year-olds she nurtured have moved on yet an affection for the relationship remains. A number of writers, in addressing positive emotions in teaching, attempt to describe a type of caring love that can exist between teacher and student (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009; Hargreaves, 1998; Nias, 1989; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Woods & Jeffrey, 1996). Cat's is perhaps the most touching, if understated, example of that facet of happiness found in this research.

> On the playground they will always say hi to me but you obviously don't have that same relationship. They've changed, they're getting older. They're never rude or anything to me. They love me asking about them but that bond isn't there as much. But it was really cool to spend a day with them. And it didn't take long for them to feel that bond again, I guess.

Indie

When talking about her general emotional goals and views on happiness at work, Indie described the importance to her happiness of the context surrounding her. The story describes the happiness that comes with being a "part of something". Indie talks about happiness coming from "communal" action and "togetherness" in a strike by teachers. Therefore, her emotion is best described as being eudemonic because Indie's story evidences relatedness strongly (Jayawickreme et al., 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Explaining how she "wants to get the best for my kids", Indie reveals a set of altruistic, social justice goals driving both her strike action and her personal experience of happiness.

> For me it's that whole side-by-side, I'm taking some kind of action to try and get the best for my kids…. That's why I was walking. I was walking for them. But then you're surrounded by everyone else that's walking too and that's that collegial uprising of we're doing something. We can now moan and complain about everything because we turned up! You don't turn up, you don't get to complain! And so for me, I got these waves of emotion during the day like just because it would catch me that we're in this huge crowd, chanting and walking to try and make a difference.... That makes me happy – not being silent, and not lying down. You are taking a stand, you are doing something, not nothing and so that makes me happy…. To be part of something… I like being part of action…. Communal, people…. Having that togetherness. You're there for the same reasons and that makes me happy.

Indie's story is overtly political in that it is focused on "not lying down". It seems possible that Indie's happiness is stimulated by a feeling of "action" against years of reforms which did not align with the majority of teachers' educational values (Bridges & Searle, 2011). As discussed elsewhere, teachers have been exposed as emotionally and professionally vulnerable to these reforms (Kelchtermans, 1996). Indie's joy at "taking a stand" is about empowerment and worthy of further exploration in future research.

Tai

Tai's job performance is important to him: his goals being strongly oriented to task mastery (Butler, 2014). In Chapter 4, it is possible to observe his reflections on what he deems to be his poor performance. The story below features learning which many teachers could relate to. It is about an incident in the behaviour of a child who Tai had previously found some difficulty in managing. Tai's response to manage the incident initially provokes further self-criticism but, as the situation evolves, he experiences happiness at the unexpectedly positive outcome.

> J. was in the reading group with me and some of the other kids in the class who were not in the reading group were being a bit loud. One of them said something rude but funny but rude and J. laughed at it, which really wasn't that big of a deal. But because I was feeling a bit frustrated with the class, I kind of reacted too quickly and I sent him outside as a "let's have a bit of calm down and think about what you've done." And I immediately knew I'd done the wrong thing. After I'd sent him outside, I actually verbalised out loud to the group: "Actually, I don't think I should have done that. I think that was a bit unfair of me." And then one of the boys in the group said: "teaching must be a bit hard, eh, managing all these kids." And I was like: "Yeah. Yeah. It is quite hard. There's lots of things to be mindful of. Alright, can you guys wait here and I'm just going to go and apologise to J. and we'll try and bring him back into the group". And yeah, I did exactly that, I went outside within thirty seconds and said: "J., I'm sorry. I shouldn't have sent you outside. That was me reacting badly…. That just annoyed me a bit but that was unfair of me to send you out so look if it's okay, I'd really appreciate it if you can come back in and join the group. That'd be cool. Yeah?" And he did! Which is a miracle because normally when you wrong him in some sense, if you treat him unfairly, he will get really upset. He will often be kicking things and trees, ripping plants up and it will take him a long time to calm down. But I think because I was being genuine with him and he believed that and because we had had some good experiences earlier in the week of me being honest with him, I think he really did have that trust in me that I was being sincere and yeah, he came back in and joined the group and I told him how amazing that was of him and he had a great time…. I was really proud of him for managing his emotions so well. And proud of me, in my own way, for taking the time to fix that so quickly and in a really down to earth way which obviously worked with him 'cos that's often really hard to get to that place where you can actually connect on level with the kids even if you want to, even if you know you've made a mistake and so that was me managing my emotions, I think, quite well. 'Cos that's not easy to do.

On reading Tai's story, it is easy to be reminded of the words of Hargreaves (1998) who describes schools as being 'full' of emotions. The peaks and troughs of emotion for both the student and the teacher are evident. By the end of Tai's telling, it seems as if Tai's happiness is mixed with relief at having negotiated a tense situation in which all involved retained a degree of calm.

Milly

Milly, when giving her general perspectives about happiness in teaching work, talks eloquently about the importance of 'doing things that you feel are worth doing', describing also how struggle leads to satisfaction. In essence, she defines eudemonia (Jayawickreme et al., 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993). Unsurprisingly then, her goals are classically altruistic (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Han & Yin, 2016). They stem from a desire to address 'structural inequality'. Milly told stories about making a difference, about helping children who had overcome difficulty in their learning. I have chosen instead, however, to highlight a story recounted by Milly in which happiness emerged with lightness from watching the play of children. In this choice, I am perhaps taking some liberties as the researcher, certainly privileging my own subjectivity and voice. By making this choice, I do not wish to disrespect Milly's perspectives. It seems important to be honest by saying that the emergent, joyful nature of Milly's story suits my purposes. The story serves as a neat juxtaposition to what I viewed as the pervasive influence of certain dour, cultural norms of work on Milly's emotional goals and expectations for happiness (found in Chapter 4).

> Have you heard about the Magic Box? It's this big, I guess it's like an apple crate or something full of bits and pieces from someone's garage…. It's like ropes and crates and buckets and old cooking stuff…. So they're playing with all this stuff and it's meant to be this really free play… the kids were having such a good time. And I didn't have to do anything - they just played so nicely for 40 mins…. they needed a lot less teacher intervention playing that way than when they play on the playground. They were able to share and take turns. There were lots of kids playing with different people that they wouldn't usually play with – like lots of girls and boys playing together which doesn't

> happen so much on the playground. It was so simple but they were just ecstatically happy so it was just super fun to watch them. See, the thing is, you don't tell them what to do. You just see what they do with all the parts. So it was super interesting to see what they came up with. There was lots of tying ropes to crates and pulling each other around and stuff which was super fun and some of them kind of made a band. They had some drums and they found some pipes which they managed to blow into and make noises - stuff like that. It was super creative and super fun. They were just exhausted afterwards…. It was an ideal of what play should be…. they were just so engaged.

Milly is quick to recognise the simple pleasure of the experience. As she recalls the creativity with which her class played, it is easy to understand how their happiness must have been infectious. It has long been recognised that teachers experience happy emotion from just being with children (Hatch, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Nias, 1989). Also of note is that the experience came during an intense period of assessment, meaning perhaps that the fact Milly "didn't have to do anything" amplified the positive emotion for her and the children too.

Tina

Tina's general beliefs about her happiness in teaching seemed to be centred around two points: "achieving" and her relationship with the children. The happy story which Tina tells encapsulates both points. It illustrates how they interact for her in an experience involving one child in her class. W. is a child who finds learning difficult and who, consequently, is a "big focus" for Tina. Initially, her happiness is framed by W.'s long-awaited achievement in a Mathematics assessment – the happiness is economistic (Dolan et al., 2008). Yet quickly, the importance of the relationship with the child becomes prominent in the story.

> I have W. in my class and quite a few of my goals and happy experiences were related to him. Just because he is a big focus for me this year. I felt really happy when I did this: I did a maths assessment on him. And obviously because he's ADHD, he can't focus for longer than like two minutes…. An assessment takes like 10-15 minutes and I was just amazed that he could sit there and focus for that 10-15 minutes. I was just blown away with his results as well.

As she continues, it is possible to observe the depth of Tina's emotional investment in her relationship with W., built through the struggle to help W. learn and to fit into class life. Tina's happiness is intense: she is "amazed" and "blown away", emphasising the resolution of the story so as to emphasise the magnitude of their shared action (Labov, 1972; Thornborrow, 2012). The intensity of her happiness is likely increased by the level of emotional investment.

> Last year he started at school but…. he wasn't actually doing much learning, he was getting to grips with being at school and transitioning into school but this year he's just completely different. He's in class. He's learning. He's doing the things that the other children are doing. At the start of the year we had a lot of issues with him being aggressive and none of that is happening anymore.... We've never done any testing on him and we've been at school almost a whole year now…when I initially went into it, I was like: "this could go really bad" because he gets very anxious about things like testing…. I literally went around telling everyone that I'd done an assessment on him and I was just so proud of it…. I was just screaming the room down!

Given the intensity of Tina's emotion, it is easy to understand why she might have chosen to tell such a story in the interview. In the following section, the relationship between such salient episodes of happiness, long term goals and short term emotional goals is examined in greater detail.

The Relationship between Participants' Stories of Happiness, their Long-term Goals and their Daily Emotional Goals

From the findings presented in Chapter 4, it emerged that participants' believed their happy experiences in teaching were driven by long held emotional goals, which, in turn, were often related to profound personal experiences in their pasts. Consequently, I was interested in scrutinising participants' beliefs by examining the interaction between their day to day goals, their long-held goals in teaching and the self-identified happy stories presented in this chapter. For instance, daily goals may be more prominent in framing the happy stories than

participants realised. Such analysis would also be useful in dealing with research question: '*Do the daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' of teachers interact with their happy experiences? How?'* Therefore, data is drawn from the daily diaries about teachers' day to day emotional goals and analysed in a comparative fashion against the stories of episodic happiness recorded above.

Five teachers recounted salient experiences of happiness which could be related by topic to the daily emotional goals they had recorded in the diary. In the example with the most direct link, Beth recounts a story about a restorative meeting with family over some behaviour issues with boys in her class. In the story her happiness seems to emerge from the realisation of two main goals: excitement at her own performance in the meeting and the feeling of helping a group of disenfranchised people. On the day of the meeting, her emotional goal in the morning was written as such: "Anxious, excited about engaging whanau hui. Want to engage Mums and balance personalities." In effect, it could be argued that, because Beth's daily goal matched closely to her most salient happy experience, the short term goal served to facilitate Beth's positive episode through its realisation.

Yet, despite this correlation, it is important to note that Beth's short term goal is closely aligned with her longer term goals for teaching as well. In Chapter 4, it is identified that Beth draws motivation from a set of social justice and community focused values, just as the short term goal above is drawn from these values. Moreover, this same phenomenon, of daily emotional goals being foreshadowed by deeper, long held goals occurred for the other five participants whose short term goals could be linked to their salient happy experiences. And, perhaps more pertinently, *all* participants recounted salient happy experiences which could be related to deep, long-held goals. The conclusion can be drawn then, that at least for teacher participants' happy experiences to become salient, their emotional goals must be drawn from deeply held, long term goals as opposed to daily goals. Nor do their salient episodes of happiness tend to be random or emergent in that they stem from long term goals, making these episodes more likely to be eudemonic than hedonic in nature.

In the Chapter 6, the effect of the research on participants is examined and the diary is considered as a key part of paying attention to happiness and emotional goals.

Chapter 6: Being Mindful of Teachers' Emotional Goals and Happy Experiences

Introduction

The principal purpose of this small chapter is to address the impact of the research on the participants, in particular the impact of keeping a diary of emotional goals and happy experiences at work. Therefore, it deals initially with the research question: *What are the effects for teachers of paying closer attention to their happy experiences?* To do so, the chapter presents and discusses data from two sources, the diary data and data from the second focus group. The chapter sits outside the narrative methodology applied to most of the thesis because as explained in Chapter 3, data from these sources proved unsuitable for narrative analysis due its lack of depth.

In the first part of the chapter, data from the second focus group is examined. In this group, participants were asked about the effects of paying closer attention to their happiness and their responses are presented and discussed. It emerges that being a part of the research proved useful as an intervention to encourage positive emotions about teaching work. In the second part of the chapter, data from the diary, which groups the topics of participants' emotional goals, is described for two reasons. The first reason relates back to the outcome above: a picture is given of how participants engaged with paying attention to their emotional goals and happy experiences. Secondly, some clues are provided about the topics which influenced participants' emotional goals and state of mind. This allows the chapter to additionally address the research question: *Are there influences on the formation of daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' for teachers? What are they?*

Reflections on Paying Closer Attention to Happiness in Teaching

As explained above, in the second focus group participants were asked about the effects of paying closer attention to their emotional goals and happy experiences. The question did not solely address the diary activity but referred to the research as a whole, also inquiring as to participants' reflections on being part of the focus groups and interviews. In considering the data, it is important to note that although the question was posed to the group as a whole, I asked participants to record an individual response on paper. Responses were written in a quiet atmosphere and there was no pressure to share verbally to the group. Responses were visible to the group at the end and some participants conferred, so although social dynamics remained a factor in responses, they were perhaps reduced slightly. With one exception, the responses of participants were overwhelmingly positive. As I did not ask participants to differentiate their responses in any way, some chose to report on the impact of their happy experiences while others chose to focus on the effects of being emotionally mindful. It seems likely that the choice participants made reflected which of the facets of the process was most prominent or impactful for them individually.

One group of responses suggested that focussing on happiness meant participants noticed and were seemingly able to appreciate the happy experiences in their work lives more acutely. Examples of these responses included: 'Happy breeds happy', 'You make happiness happen' and '(I) became more aware that there *are* happy experiences'. These responses, especially the last, document moments of realisation which can be considered emblematic of what this thesis hopes to contribute to teacher development. By this, I mean that it does not take a particularly complex cognitive journey to focus on positive as opposed to negative phenomena. Even so, responses suggest it is a journey that participants might not have made but for taking part. Nor, as has been shown elsewhere, is such a connection made often in the literature about teacher emotions (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009; Price & McCallum, 2014; Schutz & Lee, 2014). The semantics of educational research ask researchers to approach phenomena of interest negatively – as problems (Cohen et al., 2018; Newby, 2014). Prior to the inception of positive psychology, the same view prevailed in psychology but, as is shown in Chapter 2, positive approaches to psychological constructs now flourish (David et al., 2013; Jayawickreme et al., 2012).

A second group of responses described the effects of paying attention to their emotional labour through a positive lens. One participant wrote: “I felt better about my teaching, more aware of what is going well.” For some participants, paying attention to their happiness was perceived to directly impact their classroom practice and their students. These responses suggested that a ‘happier’ or ‘calmer’ environment emerged or that they were ‘more positive with the kids’. Certainly for some, keeping a diary meant they focussed attention on their own ability to regulate emotions with one participant explaining how they were: ‘focussing on the goal rather than getting distracted.’ Effective regulation of emotion, reducing stress and increasing self-efficacy has been shown to improve teaching practice (Emerson et al., 2017). Some participants then, deliberately utilised the daily goal setting activity as a tool to refine elements of their practice. Of course, the diary held the purpose of gaining insight into the daily variance of participants’ emotions (Bolger et al., 2003; Gunthert & Wenze, 2011; Neupert & Bellingtier, 2018). Yet, it also emerged as a potential type of mindfulness-based intervention because it encouraged emotional self-awareness and self-compassion in participants. Even if it did not feature meditation there were the attached experiential group discussions (Emerson et al., 2017). Mindfulness in teaching is a recent but quickly expanding area of study (Emerson et al., 2017; Low, 2019; Molloy Elreda, Jennings, DeMauro, Mischenko, & Brown, 2019). Initial research suggests mindfulness-based interventions can be useful in reducing stress for teachers by encouraging emotional regulation and self-efficacy (Emerson et al., 2017). The evidence provided here suggests that tools which promote a positive focus on emotions could be a useful contributor to such interventions.

Topics influencing teachers’ emotional state of mind

The diary was kept by participants for the two weeks between the first focus group and the second focus group and individual interviews. As explained in the Chapters 3 and 5, the data from the diary proved useful in a manner of ways. For instance, examining the diary entries:

a) Provided insight into the types of goals participants chose, demonstrating how participants chose to utilise the diary as way to be mindful of their emotions

b) Added to thick description of participants' day to day emotional goals, giving clues to the influences on their goals and therefore the emotional circumstances participants negotiated to pay attention to their emotional goals and happy experiences. By identifying the themes which emerged from the daily goals of participants, it is possible to gain some ideas about the parts of teaching work which are most prominent in influencing their emotional goals; i.e. which parts of their work are prominent emotionally at the beginning of a day of teaching?

Often participants recorded more than one goal for each day. As I read through participants' diaries I categorised each goal based on the element of a teacher's work which I felt it referred to. For example, it was decided that Cat's goal, 'to have the paperwork ready for reports', fit with a group of *Task-Focussed and Administration* goals, a category in which the goals largely related to work for summative assessments and, less occasionally, planning. The *Task-Focussed and Administration* topic accounted for by far the most emotional goals for participants. Other examples included: 'Check all my emails before I leave school', 'Get lots of testing done' and 'Get some 1:1 assessment done'.

I termed the second largest category of goals *Personal and Emotional Mindfulness*. These goals seemed to be deliberately chosen by participants to directly impact their emotional state through the course of a day's teaching. Participants were attempting to emotionally regulate, an idea which was expanded upon in the preceding section. An obvious example of this type of goal came from Tai, who described an emotional goal to 'maintain a calm and mindful state'. Several participants held similar goals. For some, these goals revealed their attempts at resilience; one participant held an emotional goal to 'get through the day' four times in the two week period. Some participants encouraged themselves to acknowledge positive emotions: 'Enjoy the progress my kids are making on their project.'

The final topic with a notable number of goals assigned to it can be closely related to *Personal and Emotional Mindfulness* but was more directly concerned with relational aspects of teaching work; hence, was termed as *Behaviour and Relationships*. Primarily, these goals referred to children but occasionally peers. Often, goals in this category related to specific

children: such as ‘be nicer to T.’ Or, they regularly referred to a strategy the participant wished to enact to impact the whole class; for example, ‘make sure the whole class engage’ or ‘say more positive praise’. The other themed groups of daily goals related to the following topics: *student teachers*, *events* and *pedagogy*.

The next and final chapter aims to synthesise the data from Chapters 4, 5 and 6 and draw some conclusions in relations to the research questions.

Chapter 7: A Place for Happiness in 21st Century Teaching?

Introduction

In the previous three chapters, the perspectives and happy stories of participants are relayed in a manner designed to socially situate the experiences as they were in the realities of participants. The problem with these realities is that the findings from them are messy, especially when considered together. The findings do not emerge neatly grouped or patterned to directly answer a research question. Therefore, to give a clearer view on the topics in this chapter, the findings and discussion from Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are synthesised in direct response to the study's research questions. Conclusions are drawn in relation to the research questions with each question addressed in turn and emergent themes titled to support clarity of thought for the reader. After dealing with each research question, the chapter then outlines some ***Limitations*** of the thesis before concluding by explaining the ***Contributions and Implications*** which the study holds for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers.

How is happiness experienced by teachers in their work?

Eudemonia, Altruism and Rooting for the Underdog

The teachers who took part in this study believe they generally experience happiness at work in a manner best described as eudemonic (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993). Emotional investment, often over a prolonged period of time, is rewarded with a sense of happiness at their own meaningful action. Milly captures this best when she states: "I think in my work there's an expectation for satisfaction, which is, I think, what makes you happy in your life, doing things that you feel are worth doing." Teachers' stories from the classroom also bore out the idea that the salient happy experiences of teachers in the 21st century are generally eudemonic, validating the beliefs of participants and traditional perspectives from the

literature about the rewards of teaching (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009; Lortie, 1975; Nias, 1989). In the focus groups, and also in the individual interview data, children and their actions were thought by participants to be significant sources of happiness for teachers. There is longstanding evidence of this phenomenon in the literature (Hatch, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Nias, 1989; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In addition, altruistic goals seem a necessary precursor to eudemonia given how this type of happiness is often described as containing a virtuous element (Bullough Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2001). In part, the participants' experiences were described as eudemonic because the deeply held emotional goals which facilitated happiness in their stories were usually altruistic (Han & Yin, 2016; Richardson & Watt, 2014).

Many of the teachers told some form of 'underdog' story. Participants like Rory, Beth and Tina grounded their eudemonia in helping students overcome difficulty when they had struggled at first, a source of positive emotion in teachers also identified in the review of literature on teacher emotions by Sutton and Wheatley (2003). Beth extends this phenomenon to disenfranchised parents, Cat to the school basketball team and Indie to the teaching profession itself, 'taking a stand' in strike action against the vast and powerful engine of the state! Underdog stories are appealing because they place the protagonist in adverse conditions, provoking sympathy and creating drama (Kim et al., 2008). The *complicating action* in a story is a necessary narrative feature, likely exaggerated by the presence of an underdog (Thornborrow, 2012). Of course underdog tales are familiar cultural narratives, especially in the media of the meritocratic West where the American Dream of struggling to heart-warming success against all odds is pervasive (Kim et al., 2008; Prestin, 2013). It seems there exists something particularly appealing to teacher participants about the underdog. I would speculate this is related to the altruistic social utility values many of them have been shown to hold. Social utility or social justice values can be linked to a belief in fairness and as Kim et al. (2008) articulate, "if people perceive rooting for the underdog as just or fair, doing so may satisfy their need for fairness or equity". In addition, underdog stories provoke hope, a positive emotion which has been shown to motivate sustained commitment towards emotional goals and dispel stressors (Lazarus, 1991; Prestin, 2013). By invoking hope in their

underdog stories, participants are perhaps triggering resilient coping mechanisms so they can continue to support their students in a challenging socio-economic setting.

Eudemonia and Teacher Identity

Eudemonic approaches to happiness focus on self-actualisation, on being true to oneself (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2013; Waterman, 1993). The episodes of happiness in teaching presented in Chapters 4 and 5 and also the narratives themselves, contribute to how personal-professional identities are formed because identity formation occurs in moments when emotion connects with self-understanding (Zembylas, 2003). Therefore, because eudemonia by its very nature stimulates a state in which one cannot help but be true to oneself, each story features moments in which the amalgamation of personal and professional self occurs. The long-held emotional goals and experiences of eudemonia are fused to project what Kirk and Wall (2010) describe as the *teacherly self*. In the moments of happiness and by their retelling, participants reflected on their beliefs about education and their aspirations for the types of teachers they wanted to be.

For Milly this occurred mildly, watching the children in her class play in an empty pool – enjoying the simple pleasure of positive emotion within a professional setting lead her to reflect on the varied ways children interact and learn. For Ana, her experience of helping a child locate their indigenous identity is profound and enhanced by her own life history so that the associated emotion is intense. In fact, all but one participant described long held emotional goals which could be traced in some way to deeply personal topics, although, these topics differed from community-mindedness to personal performance. Striking examples of how personal goals provided professional goals came from Beth who seemed to want to right the wrongs of her brothers' educational misfortunes, and Cat who wanted to support children in a way which she did not experience herself when at school.

Research suggests that for teachers, combining personal and professional identities is essential for their practice and ongoing well-being (Day et al., 2006; Hargreaves, 1998). Yet paradoxically, managing the tension between these aspects of self is notoriously difficult and

contributes to recruitment and retention crises in the profession (Day et al., 2006; O'Connor, 2008; Pearce & Morrison, 2011; Schutz & Lee, 2014). Indie explained this directly and best, describing how she was unable to 'compartmentalise' professional and personal emotions.

Are there influences on the formation of daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' for teachers? What are they?

Emotional Labour and Adminstrivia

The emotional goals recorded by participants in the diaries, when grouped into themed topics, give some clues as to the principal influences on teachers' emotional states of mind. None of the principal goal topics were surprising given what we know from literature. Firstly, *Personal and Emotional Mindfulness* goal topics as well as *Behaviour and Relationship* goals were frequent in the diaries of participants. For example, many of these goals were utilised as reminders to implement a certain relational strategy with regard to a particular child's behaviour or their own well-being. Teaching is described as emotional labour because the highly relational nature of the work requires teachers to exert tight control over their emotions when relating to their students (Morris & Feldman, 1996; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Zembylas, 2003). In addition, students and their behaviours are known to be influential on the goals and emotions of teachers (Butler, 2014; Jiang et al., 2016). Therefore, the prominence of the above two topics is to be expected, indicative as they are of the influence of emotional labour. It can be concluded that the emotional and relational nature of teaching strongly influences the construction of teachers' daily goals.

Secondly, *Task-focussed and administration* goal topics predominate in the diaries with many of these goals related to assessment procedures, which were taking place in the school at the time of the research. Again, there exists a body of literature predictive of such findings. This literature describes the emotional burdens heaped on teachers by administration and assessment tasks due to performative school reforms in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Bridges & Searle, 2011; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Stress and burnout is an obvious and well-documented product of the intensification of teaching (Schutz

& Lee, 2014). The sheer weight of these administrative tasks represents a challenge to teachers' capacity to emotionally regulate effectively because, as mindfulness research is beginning to show, emotional clarity in the classroom requires one to be present (Emerson et al., 2017).

The Influence of Long-held Personal-Professional Goals

The perspectives of the participants emphasised the importance of long-held beliefs to the emotional experiences of teachers. The participants believed that when their deeper emotional goals were realised, they experienced positive emotion. In Chapter 5, in participants' stories of happy experiences, the important role of these long term goals in stimulating eudemonic happiness became clear - Tai's affirmation of his own performance while teaching for example. It should be recognised, however, that a narrative approach perhaps prioritised long-term, identity-centric type goals because of conscious identity presentation by the participants in their stories (Mishler, 2004). By this, I mean that when an individual tells a story, it can encourage them to view an experience with a meaning or profundity, a connection to their broader life, that is not necessarily present (Frosh & Emerson, 2005). If this was true for participants it does not make their emotional reality any less real for them or pertinent to the outcomes of the study. The reader, however, should be aware that there may have been other emotional goals that realised other episodes of happiness which were simply not highlighted in participants' salient narratives.

It is important to note too, that there was a difference between the way teachers spoke about their emotional goals in private and the way they spoke about them in the focus group with their colleagues. In the individual interviews teachers showed passion and positivity whereas the examples of emotional goals that teachers generated as a group included a number of negative statements. Bottery (2003) talks about 'cultures of unhappiness' among teachers and in this instance it seemed being in a group potentially provided a moderating influence on teachers' emotional goals as they reduced the positivity of their statements.

Do the daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' of teachers interact with their happy experiences? How?

The daily personal-professional emotional goals of teachers did, to some extent, interact directly with the happy episodes described in the stories. Yet daily goals, when revisited in interviews, seemed generally unimportant to participants. They rarely mentioned the content of their short term emotional goals and generally struggled to remember them, even when prompted. Of the daily goals that did relate to participants' most salient happy experiences, all were foreshadowed by the long term goals of participants and all salient happy experiences were associated in some way with long term goals.

As discussed in Chapter 6, daily emotional goals were useful for providing an insight into participants' emotional state to provide an overview as to the influences on teachers' emotional goals. Moreover, they were useful for supporting teachers to be mindful of their emotions and their role in the research. However, at least in the context of a narrative approach, the focus on *daily* emotional goals seemed distracting and the data from two different approaches proved difficult to coalesce.

What are the effects for teachers of paying closer attention to their happy experiences?

The effects of teachers paying closer attention to their happy experiences was positive. The teachers reported that because of their participation in the research they experienced heightened emotional self-awareness. Given the positive emphasis of the research this enabled them to appreciate the occurrence of happy experiences in their work. Such appreciation seemed to be novel and somewhat refreshing. The process of keeping a diary of positive emotions was likened to a mindfulness-based intervention in that the self-awareness and self-compassion it encouraged led to improved emotional regulation in participants. The notion that emotional regulation holds the potential to reduce stress and foster self-efficacy is supported by research (Emerson et al., 2017) and is worthy of further investigation among teachers. Given that teaching is an emotional practice, it seems that improving the emotional

regulation of teachers, or focussing on teachers' emotions with a positive lens would improve teaching practice (Emerson et al., 2017; Hargreaves, 1998).

What is the impact of teachers' happy experiences for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers?

Participants' identity narratives shaped and were shaped by their deeply-held emotional goals and their related experiences of eudemonic happiness. Their perspectives suggest that happy experiences in teaching have a significant impact on teachers' emotions about teaching and their personal-professional identity. The importance of happy episodes in teaching are raised by the self-actualising nature of eudemonia (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2013; Waterman, 1993). This is because, as Zembylas (2003) asserts, identity formation occurs in moments when emotion connects with self-understanding: i.e. in moments of eudemonia. Certainly, participants believed happy experiences give them, to use the words of Ana, an emotional 'pay-off'. I would argue it was more than that. Happy experiences seemed to help the participants understand who they are, why they engage in teaching work (at times reminding them why they entered teaching initially) and why they continue teaching.

Policy-makers and school leaders are responsible for dealing with the crisis in teacher retention and recruitment that spans Western countries (Franks, 2018; Schutz & Lee, 2014). Formation of a positive teacher identity through self-knowledge and conscious identity work has been linked to early-career resilience and endurance in teachers (Pearce & Morrison, 2011). The older or more experienced teachers - Beth, Cat, Rory, Ana and Indie - were able to outline a clear understanding of their teacher identities and demonstrated this, through their self-knowledge of what motivated them (their emotional goals) and what made them happy at work. Clarity of identity for experienced teachers likely comes about because of well-practised self-composition via the telling and retelling of stories about the teacherly self: the stories we tell ourselves construct our past and our current realities (Kirk & Wall, 2010). Identity composition is ongoing (Day et al., 2006; Erikson, 1959), therefore it continues in a perpetual cycle of emotional goals and experiences. It seems to follow then that if the

emotional experiences are happy, identity formation is positive whereas if the experiences are negative, negative identity formation will occur. While the teacher identity literature is well-developed and related to emotions, I could not locate an obvious connection to happy episodes and so identity was not a topic deeply reviewed in Chapter 2, emerging only in the course of narrative analysis. A point of further interest for policy-makers and school leaders aiming to solve the ongoing teacher shortage might be to investigate the interaction of emotional goals, identity formation and happy experiences. Perhaps it is this which has the potential to impact longevity in teaching careers.

That participants believed they experienced eudemonic happiness and that their long-term emotional, often ideological, goals were of importance to them, is impactful to students because it demonstrates that the altruism in their work is motivating to teachers. All participants repeatedly described emotional goals that could be designated as altruistic (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Han & Yin, 2016). Provided altruistic goals are well directed, students are the beneficiaries of motivated teachers. That the participants in this study were particularly motivated by students who struggled initially and were then rewarded with happiness when such students succeeded, suggests the manner in which teachers experience eudemonic happiness is impactful to those who require it most of all.

Limitations of the Study

The most significant limitations of the study are related to its overarching research question: *What is the impact of teachers' happy experiences for students, teachers, leaders and policy-makers?* The research design did not generate data which could meaningfully assess the actual *impact* of teachers' happy experiences on anyone other than teachers themselves because it only drew data from teachers. That is not say the findings are not valuable to other stakeholders in schooling and the impact on these stakeholders can be and is discussed in the preceding and proceeding sections. A second limitation to the study posed by the research question(s) was their breadth. This can be explained by two factors: the inexperience of a novice researcher but more specifically, the exploratory nature of the topic. The result has

been that certain research questions received rather more attention than others. For example, I feel as though the question, "*How is happiness experienced by teachers in their work*?" was answered with some thoroughness. On the other hand, less attention was devoted to: *"Do the daily personal-professional 'emotional goals' of teachers interact with their happy experiences? How?"* In part, this was due to the narrative methodology which suited the descriptive nature of the first of the examples, above.

The narrative methodology and prioritisation of salient experiences likely favours certain interpretations of teachers' realities. The individual vanity of Western cultural norms in the 21st Century encourages a tendency to believe in the profundity of our own life projects; our careers being the vehicles through which we seek self-actualisation (Costea et al., 2008; Fleming, 2009). Perhaps this limits the research most obviously in the way long-term goals were prioritised by participants over short-term goals in facilitating specifically eudemonic happy experiences. It could be argued that, sub-consciously, participants emphasised the significance of their long-term goals, the significance of their happy experiences or the relationship between the two. Such a portrayal would serve to validate earlier goals and life choices – such as the decision to become a teacher in the first place! A participant could, unintentionally, privilege their long term goals to maintain or emphasise a desired identity (Mishler, 2004). The obvious rejoinder lies in the study's epistemology: that narrative interpretation provides unique insight and depth about the subjectivity of individuals. It is an example of the strengths but also the limitations of an interpretive paradigm.

Even so, greater balance and knowledge with regard to the day to day nature of happiness for teachers could be located in a more detailed analysis of the short-term goals and the non-salient happy experiences (the daily experiences). In this regard, the diary data represented an opportunity to give a broad overview of how teachers experience happiness by topic. In particular, the diary data could have been investigated to show how teachers' goals interacted with *daily* episodes of happiness. The realisation of the daily goals could have been tracked against the daily happy episodes.

Finally, the small size and the nature of the sample limits the scope of the research. The research took place in just one urban primary school. Secondary school teachers are not

represented at all, and neither are practitioners working in tertiary education. Moreover, participants who work in a school serving a low-SES community may hold especially altruistic emotional goals, therefore potentially framing their happy experiences in a certain way. An example of this is the prominence of underdog stories which may be related to teachers' choice of workplace, whereas a teacher working in a wealthier or rural environment may hold different goals and experience different types of happiness. In psychological studies of well-being in teachers, methods of self-reporting are a popular manner of data gathering. These could be utilised to increase sample size and give a wider overview of happiness for teachers (Duckworth et al., 2009) although depth and thick description are easily lost with such methods.

Contributions and Implications

At the outset of this thesis I held personal aims to investigate the human obsession with goals and achievement - how this obsession is fostered and perpetuated within our educational systems, and the interaction between achievement and moments of happiness. I wondered somewhat hopefully if professional happiness might not emerge more sedately or romantically than via the mechanical process of goal achievement. I examined the happiness of teachers, because I am a teacher and because my degree topic was education. I also felt there were intriguing paradoxes between the educational philosophies of many teachers and the type of edu-cultural objectives they are paid to implement. In particular, managerialism and performativity had intensified goal-setting educational cultures since neoliberal reforms swept through schools in the final years of the 20th century (Apple, 2004). I wondered if being a child and a teacher in such goal-focussed environments had altered my emotional responses, narrowed them in a manner which seemed at odds with the richer, gentler conceptualisations of happiness, learning and teaching to which I related (Hargreaves, 1998; Hodgkinson, 2005; Noddings, 2015).

To direct this personal interest a set of research questions was devised which inquired into how happiness was experienced by teachers: the nature of their emotional goals, the impact

of happy experiences and the effects of paying attention to positive emotion for participants. The research was guided by humanist research philosophy and an interpretive paradigm. A narrative methodology was selected because I felt the stories of individual teachers would best investigate and communicate the inherent subjectivity of emotional experience, as conceptualised by appraisal theory (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Lazarus, 1991; Roseman & Smith, 2001). Semi-structured interviews led the data generation process to elicit teachers' narratives of happiness while exploratory focus groups and a diary to document daily emotions supported the thick description provided in the interviews.

The participants' stories showed that teachers' experiences of happiness were almost always eudemonic and connected strongly with their teacher identities. In fact, it is argued that teachers' episodes of happiness provided opportunities for their personal and professional selves to connect in a "teacherly self" (Kirk & Wall, 2010). This is because participants experienced happiness eudemonically. That is, they experienced a type of happiness stemming from long-held, altruistic goals in which they felt they were being true to themselves (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993). Participants constructed their teacherly selves via these long-held goals. But also, the versions of participants' teacherly selves which emerged in the stories of happy episodes were positive and aspirational narrative constructions borne out of the realisation of these goals (Mishler, 2004). An additional feature of the eudemonia experienced by participants was that it was often associated with an 'underdog' narrative arc (Kim et al., 2008). There exists a well-developed literature about teachers' emotions which makes strong connections between emotion and identity but generally deals with negative emotions (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Schutz & Lee, 2014; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Within this literature, important groundwork for my assertions about happiness and identity is laid by Zembylas (2003), who asserts that identity formation for teachers occurs in moments of self-actualisation. Moreover, Bullough Jr. and Pinnegar (2009) theorise the intersection of teaching and eudemonia in important depth.

The implications of these findings applies to the ways teachers approach their work and the ways teachers, leaders, policy-makers, and teacher educators develop teachers within educational cultures. A strong recommendation that has emerged from this study is that greater emphasis should be placed on making the happy experiences of teachers important

because positive teacher identity and emotions improve teaching practice (Emerson et al., 2017; Hargreaves, 1998). A key part of this would seem to be about making space for happiness in school cultures and teacher education. Interestingly, when teachers discussed work happiness together in the focus groups, their responses were more cynical, potentially indicative of a wider culture in teaching which negates happiness. Given the dominant influence on participants' emotional goals was administrative work, this type of work could be minimised. Although it should be noted that testing (assigned as an administrative task) did frame happy experiences for some teachers because it provided them with evidence of students' success and therefore improved self-efficacy. Further research would be useful to understand the impact of teachers' happiness on students and their progress. Work could also be done to directly and deeply elaborate on the relationship between teacher identity and episodes of work happiness as well as to see if other researchers observed similar phenomena in other settings and cultures.

Conscious identity work with early-career teachers is advocated by Pearce and Morrison (2011) and it would be wise for teacher educators, leadership practitioners and researchers, to consider how happy episodes might sit within such initiatives. Guidance may be provided by the diary tool and the group discussions which were utilised as data generation methods in this thesis. Participants reported that paying attention to positive emotions in their work via these methods was useful and positive to their emotional state of mind and their practice. Mindfulness provides an intriguing avenue for further study about teaching and positive emotion (Emerson et al., 2017; Low, 2019). Innovation in approach is certainly necessary to address the negative implications of emotional labour and the global crisis in teacher recruitment and retention (Morris & Feldman, 1996; Schutz & Lee, 2014).

While the spectre of neoliberal managerialism and performativity likely contributes to this crisis, it lurked in the distant background of participants' happy stories. It was not to the fore as I expected it to be. Instead, participants own experiences shaped their beliefs and their goals, and in turn their happy experiences in teaching. These experiences came from childhood, from early-career altruism or were responses to their current context. Importantly, Hargreaves (1998) warns teachers that altruism can lead to over-exertion, burnout and enacting politicised educational values that do not necessarily align with teachers' or

students' own values and interests. Ironically though, many participants held perspectives suggesting that the eudemonic happiness on offer in teaching work is in fact derived from this over-exertion, from overcoming difficulty, from over-commitment and through service to others. It seems the fruits of emotional labour in teaching are a happiness made sweeter by the struggle.

"Did you think you could snap your fingers and have it as a gift? What is worth having, is worth working for."

From 'The Amber Spyglass' by Phillip Pullman

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