

Connecting Professional Orientation to Professional Community

A Dissertation  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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October 2015

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## **Acknowledgements**

My work was inspired and supported by many important people in my life, but none was more supportive than my wife, Ann. Without her, I never would have had the energy or perseverance necessary to finish this project. She is my best critic, confidante, proofreader, and friend.

My parents, my first teachers, taught me everything I need to know. They taught me the value of hard work and education and how to combine them.

Thank you to my advisor, Karen Seashore, who understood my vision and goals, at times, better than I did. She was my constant guide without ever telling me what to do.

Thank you to the members of my committee, Peter Demerath, Deb Ingram, and Katie Pikel, and to my readers along the way. Many hands strengthened this project. A special thank you goes to Mickey Bebeau, who was indispensable to this project.

Thank you to the teachers and administration at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School. I found a professional community there like no other. It continues to be a source of inspiration.

Thank you to the principals and teachers who participated in this research.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this project to my son. I wrote this while you were asleep, so I did not have to miss out on time with you.

## **Abstract**

This study measured teacher professional orientation with a new instrument and investigated connections among teacher professional orientations and professional community. The data collected in a survey of teachers (n=185) from one U.S. school district indicated five factors of teacher professional orientation: agency, authority (local), authority (state), autonomy, and deep knowledge. The data further indicated significant links between professional community and teacher professional orientation. In particular, responses indicating robust professional community connected significantly with responses indicating teacher agency.

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## **Chapter 1: Professions, Professionalism, and Teaching**

A professor for my colleague's teacher education program admonished his class, "Once you are a teacher, you cannot go to the grocery store in your pajamas...it's just not *professional!*" While there are a number of reasons why my colleague should not go to the grocery store in his pajamas, the risk to his professional status is not first among them. Teachers, who have struggled for myriad reasons to claim the same professional status as doctors and lawyers, have tried various ways, from degrees to dress code, to improve their status. For all of their efforts, however, teaching, in the eyes of most, remains unmoved from its traditional status as a semi-profession. While few think achieving professional status is as simple as dressing the part, many have been surprised at how difficult it has been for teachers to gain the same respect granted professions.

Professions, which originally included physicians, lawyers, and the clergy, are often thought of as occupying a distinctive niche within the occupational structure of modern societies. Many occupations, ranging from stonemasons to farmers, have historical roots and long-standing traditions that offer a sense of belonging and pride among those who follow them. Professions are, however, often viewed as distinctive because of the kind of work that they entail. They hold a place within society set apart from—some would even say above—the other occupations. In particular, society trusts members of a profession to perform essential work that involves specialized knowledge in service of people who are often in a vulnerable position, and society trusts them to do that work within an acceptable ethical code and with considerable autonomy (Welie, 2004).

Many, including Welie (2004), believe teachers fit the definition of a professional, but teaching has long been held as something less than a profession, a semi-profession, as Hall (1975) and Lortie (2002) called it. Teachers in K-12 schools have a great deal of responsibility, but they operate within bureaucracies that historically were designed, because of a lack of trust in the expertise of teachers, to remove instructional decisions to higher levels of district or state administration (Tyack, 1974). Lortie (2002) saw teachers as lacking the essential authority those professions are granted. Instead, that authority lies with the citizenry operating through local governing boards and state legislatures. While Lortie (2002) acknowledged some smaller changes to the power structures within schools during the later decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he noted that teaching still answers to the citizenry. Teaching has maintained a status in the eyes of the general public consistently below the occupations most often called professions (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2014).

Today, nearly every occupation claims some level of professionalism, but few have all of the marks theorized by philosophers and recognized by sociologists as attributes of professionals. Hall (1983) pointed out a “vast gulf” between the sociological use of the term and the popular usage of the word (p. 13). The word—professional—has been applied variously and vaguely to all kinds of work. There are professional chefs, professional athletes, and hair care professionals. The project of teacher professionalization can be seen as the effort to move beyond these semantics and have teachers more widely regarded as professionals by society. Currently, teacher professionalism is poorly defined (Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop, 2004). With that lack of clarity comes a poor understanding of what expectations society would have for a professional teacher. A first step in teacher professionalization is to better understand the

ways in which teachers are or are not living up to marks of a professional or the expectations that flow from those marks.

A more professional teaching corps is desirable not for the selfish gain of teachers. It is likely that all of society, starting with society's youngest, would gain from a more professional teaching corps because teaching will have to professionalize, as Glazer (2008) put it, from the inside out, meaning only when teachers have thoroughly improved and refined their practice will they achieve a higher status. The process of teacher professionalization, then, is parallel to the process of teacher improvement.

A traditional route to professionalization requires association among professionals—what May (2001) referred to the organizational mark of a professional. Whether through professional organizations, collegiality, or professional communities, professionals cannot be alone or isolated and maintain their professional status. Often, this is for formal reasons related to licensing and self-monitoring, but there is a more subtle way this association supports professionalism. When professionals come together to collaborate and self-regulate, they augment their knowledge base without waiting for others outside the profession to do so. In this way, professionals reinforce their claim to exclusive jurisdiction over the problems society trusts them to solve when society is convinced that only that occupational group can solve those problems.

While teachers struggle for professional status, many teachers excel at collaboration and collegiality. Adler, Kwon, and Hecksher (2008) identified teaching as a field that has embraced collegial professionalism ahead of other professions. Previously, Talbert and McLaughlin (1994) showed provided evidence learning communities among teachers played a role in shaping teacher professionalism by promoting “shared norms of

practice” and enhancing teachers’ professional commitments to care for students and have high expectations for them. There is preliminary evidence that professional communities may enhance or at least influence the professional orientation of teachers. Further investigation of the relationship between community and professionalism could clarify their relationship.

Professional communities in schools have proven beneficial by a number of standards, and professional communities may be benefitting the professionalism of teachers, as well. Despite having the word ‘professional’ in its name, professional community has not been clearly connected to professional status. I propose that professional communities affect professionalism in teachers and could be key to raising teacher professional status.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Professions are part an ecological system of pressures that support or diminish their professional status. As Abbott (1988) explains, “The tasks of professions are human problems amenable to expert service” (p. 35). He goes on to say, however, “The degree of resort to experts varies from problem to problem, from society to society, and from time to time” (Abbott, 1988, p. 35). This variation comes with an expansion or contraction of professional jurisdiction. As teachers attempt to gain professional status, they need to convince larger number of people that teachers should have exclusive jurisdiction over a set of problems.

Professional community, an established feature of many teachers’ practice, could be a key factor in enhancing teachers’ professional status. This chapter examines the competing pressures that undercut professionalization and the features that support

professionalism broadly and in teaching. At the end of this chapter, I propose two research questions about teacher professional status and the role professional community has in supporting it.

### **De-professionalizing Factors**

Professions, even at their most elite levels, are part of a larger society and economy. They are subject to the same simple economic principles—supply, demand, and utility—and the same organizing principles as the other occupations. Sometimes society or the economy force changes on professions from the outside. While these changes often challenge the professional status of professions, sometimes they support it. Adler, Kwon, and Heckscher (2008) noted that changes to the professions make three organizing principles more salient: community, hierarchy, and market forces. While market pressures and hierarchy often undermine the core of the professional model, community often supports it. For example, doctors who work in large hospital systems may find their medical decisions questioned by management teams looking to keep costs down. This diminishes the power wielded by doctors and threatens their professional autonomy. On the other hand, doctors in hospital systems have more opportunity to form informal communities with other doctors for the purposes of disseminating and sharing best practices. This knowledge exchange supports the relational and knowledge-building aspects of professionalism. There is a tension between professionalizing and de-professionalizing factors that, held in balance, can stabilize professionalism despite the presence of disruptive ecological factors.

As the professional organization comes under divergent pressures, the collaborative community becomes an essential element preserving the main attributes of

professional work, which Adler et al. (2008) define as: expertise, occupational monopoly, and ethical responsibility. Collaborative or collegial communities help professionals “mobilize power” and assert jurisdiction over their tasks (Adler et al., 2008, p. 361). Further, communities aid in self-governance and in setting the normative environment (Adler et al., 2008). According to Adler et al. (2008), what was changing for the professional was not the underlying theoretical model of professionalism. What was changing was the environment in which professionals perform their work and how professionals exhibit their professional commitments in this new environment. As Hall’s (1983) observations predicted, the settled theory on professionalism needed new complexity that took into account the ecology of the organization: how professionals gain resources and assert their power. There are hints from Adler et al. (2008) and Glazer (2008) that professional community may be important in helping professions contend with de-professionalizing ecological pressures.

The same ecological factors that are undercutting professionalism also make professional communities more unlikely. In the U.S. K-12 education system, for example, there are increasing demands for accountability. These demands require professionals to seek new knowledge, skills, and technologies (Glazer, 2008). While professional community can help build that new knowledge, the demand for accountability can create a high-pressure environment in which there is no time for professionals to meet in genuine communities. This situation exemplifies one of the paradoxes of professionalism: often, the greater the demands on professionals’ skills, the less opportunity professionals have to build them.

As more professionals operate within bureaucracies, professionals can enhance their power by gathering into communities and collecting their individual power (Adler et al., 2008). At the same time, bureaucracies might co-opt these communities to serve their own purposes (Hargreaves, 1991). Again, these competing forces create a challenge for teachers that they can meet by collaborating to implement best practices.

### **Responding to De-professionalizing Factors**

Teachers may be an unlikely place to look for lessons on professionalism. After all, decades of scholars have long dismissed teachers as being less than professionals. The organizational features of teaching, both Hall (1975) and Lortie (2002) contended, impede teacher autonomy to a degree that keeps them from being professionals. Hall's (1975) characterization of teaching is helpful for understanding one of the central challenges for professionalism: How can any one person have a professional level of autonomy while operating in a bureaucracy? The question has implications beyond teaching because, increasingly, all professions have large numbers of people who work for bureaucratic organizations that intentionally limit individual autonomy to conform to some greater organizational goal, often profit generation or cost-reduction (Adler et al., 2008).

Teachers have been dealing with these pressures for decades, so their efforts professionalize, however insufficient, inform other professions that face the similar pressures. One of the ways teachers have counteracted the bureaucracy that limits their professionalism is by banding together in communities built on trust. These professional communities are not study groups or mandated meetings. Rather, they are communities

that have a set of normative practices and behaviors, many of which support teacher improvement (Louis, 2007).

Professional communities could support professionalism by enhancing the intellectual, moral, and organizational marks of teacher professionalism. York-Barr, Sommers, and Ghore (2001) noted the ability for reflective dialogue, a key part of professional community, to support the on-going construction of professional knowledge. These communities have the capacity to enhance professionalism, not just for teachers, but for all professions, as external factors threaten it. The precise interaction between professionalism and professional community can be understood. Professional community may prove essential to the enhancement and even the survival of professional work.

### **Professionalism and Related Terms Defined**

Words often have an everyday or colloquial use that differs from the technical use of that word. Many of the words central to this study fall into this confusing category. As I define these words, I endeavor to make definitions clear, to distinguish the technical use from the colloquial, and to give a full picture of the scholarly roots of my definition.

**Professional.** For the purposes of this research, I use a definition of professional synthesized from two main sources, one philosophical (May, 2000) and one sociological (Hall, 1975). Additionally, I attempt to integrate this model with ecological theories on professionalism. In particular, I include Abbott's (1988) theories on the system of professions. This synthesis is representative of a wide range of thought on the topic, and it represents many of the viewpoints on professionalism expressed during the last fifty years.

Put simply: *professionals are people entrusted by society to perform essential work requiring special knowledge*. That trust between society and professionals implies both that the work is done, often, for vulnerable citizens, and also that professions monitor themselves and each other in that work. The special knowledge professionals have has traditionally been about school-based learning, but increasingly implies continuing education or collaborative learning because the complex tasks professionals do change as knowledge grows.

**Professionalism.** The literature on professionalism does not agree to one definition, but for the purposes of this study, professionalism is the degree to which people perform their work in a way that merits society's trust to perform an essential task requiring special knowledge. Abbott's (1988) theory on jurisdiction helps put this definition into context: a society decides whom to trust with their essential work. New professions can supplant old ones, and new technologies can undermine old professional monopolies. Society decides which occupational groups will be granted the trust perform the essential work they need done.

**De-professionalizing factors.** De-professionalizing factors are those factors which keep professionals from living up to their definition. They may be factors that diminish the trust society has in certain professionals, as bureaucratic hierarchies often do. De-professionalizing factors may be forces that inhibit the dissemination of special knowledge necessary for the work, or as the Internet has done, make the knowledge so accessible that it ceases to seem special. De-professionalizing factors may be limits put on professionals about how they use their time in performing their essential work.

Doctors, for example, may have to see a certain number of patients a day, while teachers increasingly must commit class time to activities mandated by the state or local district.

**Authority.** One of the factors often identified with professional work is authority (Bebeau, Born, & Ozar, 1993; Forsyth & Danisiewicz, 1985; Hall, 1975; Ozar, 1984). Because I used the Professional Role Orientation Index (PROI) as a model for instrument development, I rely heavily on the definition provided by Bebeau, Born, & Ozar (1991): “The notion of authority refers to the degree to which a professional sees himself or herself and his/her profession as being a knowledgeable, a good judge of outcomes, respected and deferred to for expertise” (p. 1). Teachers with a strong sense of authority would believe they know what is best for their own classroom and students. They would be less willing to believe that parents or administrators should have a say in how they run their classroom. Teachers with a strong sense of authority link their ability to make good decisions about instruction to their specialized or deep knowledge of content and instructional matters, and they do not believe that non-teachers have that same specialized knowledge.

**Responsibility.** Responsibility refers to how much a person feels an obligation or commitment to others. Bebeau et al. (1991) wrote, “A person with a strong sense of responsibility would typically see his/her role as including some direct or indirect ‘caretaking’ of the disadvantaged and the public ‘at large’” (p. 1). While it is to be expected that teachers feel responsibility for the students in their own classroom, teachers with a strong sense of responsibility expand their commitment outside their own classroom to the whole school, parents, community, and society.

**Agency.** Agency refers to how much a person feels powerful to effect change in his or her professional life. As Bebeau et al. (1991) defined it, “A person with a strong sense of agency, then, would feel that he or she can control his/her own destiny, can effect significant changes in the course of the profession, can play an active role in making things happen” (p. 1). While all teachers operate within bureaucratic constraints, their sense of agency depends on much power or control they feel to influence those constraints and practice their profession in their chosen way. A teacher with a strong sense of agency does not see these constraints as controlling her ability to benefit students.

**Autonomy.** A sense of autonomy is a sense of freedom or independence. Bebeau et al. (1991) wrote, “A person with a strong sense of autonomy is self-assured and comfortable acting on his/her own judgments with little concern for approval of patients or peers. In contrast, a person with a low degree of autonomy would feel most comfortable operating with organizational support...” (p. 1). Autonomous teachers do not look for input on instructional decisions and feel free to make those decisions without consulting administrators or colleagues.

**Professional Community.** As it is described in the seminal literature (Little, 1993; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001), professional community means informal collaborations among colleagues. These collaborations are notable for their ability to rapidly disseminate knowledge and support on-going improvement among professionals. The term professional community has come to mean a variety of factors and practices in schools, but most include the development of shared norms and values, collaboration, a consistent focus on the consequences of practice

(student learning), open sharing and critique of professional practice. When I refer to professional communities, I am referring to this kind of joint work among teachers. It can exist with or without formal structures to support it, and it may exist without ever being named or noticed. Ultimately, it is a pattern of behavior and attitudes that can be detected by observation or a survey instrument but may not be labeled as such by the participants.

### **Research Purpose and Questions**

The changing professional environments noted by Glazer (2008) and Adler et al. (2008) offer new opportunities to understand the role communities play in supporting teacher professionalism. Adler et al. (2008) argued that while the bureaucratic pressures on physicians and lawyers are new to those professions, teachers have felt those pressures for decades. The response in schools has been an emphasis on professional communities. If professional communities are an organic response to de-professionalizing forces that break trust between society and professionals or inhibit professionals' essential work, research should be able to link professionalism and professional communities.

I focus my research on teachers because teachers have long done their essential work as part of large bureaucracies. The interaction between professionalism and professional community could offer insight to other professions or semi-professions that are increasingly part of large bureaucracies.

I propose the following questions for further investigation:

- *Can existing measures of professionalism be used with teachers?*
- *Do teachers who participate in professional communities have differing professional orientations with respect to their sense of*

*authority, responsibility, agency, or autonomy than those who do not?*

Research into these questions can help determine how professional communities connect with professional orientation. While this one study will be insufficient to say if professional communities have professionalizing effects on individuals and organizations, the study can make this connection for future studies.

### **Significance of the Study**

There are two significant gaps in the literature that this study addresses. Firstly, the study of teacher professionalism lacks clarity. The instrument developed for this study is rooted in literature on professionalism and could provide a new, clearer way to think about teacher professionalism. In a comprehensive literature review on teacher professional identity, Beijaard et al. (2004) noted an utter lack of clarity in “what counts as professional in teachers’ professional identity” (p. 126). Some of this lack of clarity comes from the tendency for studies to allow professionalism to be defined by the participants rather than external definitions. Beijaard et al. (2004) showed that in many of the studies they reviewed teacher professionalism was either “defined differently or not defined at all” (p. 125). By creating and testing a new instrument for measuring teacher professional orientation, this study could offer new clarity in the study of teacher professionalism.

Secondly, the literature on professional community, while robust, does not address effects professional community has on professionalism and vice versa. Originally, the connection between professionalism and professional community was a clear part of the theoretical model behind professional community (Kruse & Louis,

1993). The original connection, however, has not been thoroughly investigated. Drawing a more solid connection between the professionalism of teachers and the professional community at their workplace could provide an additional tool for leaders who hope to improve professionalism or professional community in their schools. This research could establish a link between professional community and the professional orientation of teachers. Ultimately, such research could yield new ways to improve work life, professional community, professionalism, teacher preparation, and student outcomes in schools.

## **Chapter 2: Review of Relevant Literature**

This chapter offers a review of literature on professionalism, teacher professionalism, and professional communities. Because this review covers three thoroughly researched areas, it is broken down into four parts: (1) the roots of professionalism, (2) literature on teacher professionalism, (3) measurement of professionalism, and (4) professional community as collective professionalism.

### **Part I: Roots of Professionalism**

Across all professions, professionals share certain marks. These, according to May (2001), can be summarized as intellectual, moral, and organizational marks. Professionals make commitments. They commit to use a body of knowledge on behalf of others, and they make this commitment as a collegial group (May, 2001). Professionalism can be outlined by these three marks and their correlative commitments. When professionals act in ways that fulfill these commitments they embody professionalism, when they fail to meet these commitments, they act less professionally.

Sociologists have identified the ways in which professions are set apart from other occupations by particular markers. Hall (1975) reviews the literature on the professions and elaborates on them to create a model that emphasizes autonomy as the primary marker. Hall (1975) bases his model on Greenwood's (in Hall, 1975) and it includes five attributes. The first attribute is the use of systematic theory, or knowledge, to solve problems. The second is the authority, or power, to dictate to a client in matters that affect the client's life. The third attribute is community sanction: the community allows these professionals to self-govern and self-monitor through professional organizations. Greenwood's (in Hall 1969) fourth attribute is a code of ethics. Finally,

professionals have a professional culture that distinguishes members and non-members. Hall (1975) goes on to say that this list of attributes is not absolute. It is not meant as a “scorecard” (Roth, in Hall 1969, p. 80). Rather, the list of attributes is what the public thinks about as marks of professionals when they do their own assessment. Additionally, people operating in professions think about these attributes as ways to attain higher levels of professionalization (Hall, 1975). Here, Hall acknowledges the inside/outside nature of professionalism. Professionalism comes from the way people outside the profession think about it and the way the professionals think about themselves. Society has certain expectations for professionals, and the professional status of their occupation depends on their meeting those expectations.

Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) proposed a framework of professionalism that begins with a service task. They observed that professions are those occupations that perform a service that is essential and complex, and the occupation itself is exclusive (1985). They theorize that the degree to which professionals perceive themselves to be autonomous correlates to the level of professional status society grants them.

Scott (2008) offered a more complex model of professionalism that is not about internal marks or attributes but rather the role of an occupation as an institutional agent in society. Early literature, he (2008) argued, applied a functionalist lens to professionalism that examined how professionals completed their work. Key factors in that model were autonomy and service. Later scholars turned to a conflict model that defined professionalism more by its elite status and knowledge (Scott, 2008). This model of professionalism relies on the interactions between professionals, clients, and the state to define it. Finally, Scott (2008) proposes an institutional model of professionalism that is

social constructionist. Scott (2008) offers this succinct definition of professional work: “More than any other social category, the professions function as institutional agents—as definers, interpreters, and applicers of institutional elements” (p. 223). Professions, then, are defined by their ability to set rules, prescribe ‘appropriate’ behavior, or create schemas for social behavior. It is not enough that professions must have knowledge, power, and relationships; they must also use that knowledge, power, and relationships to shape social life. Professionalism, as defined in the institutional model, requires interaction with the larger society.

One way to think about the complexity Scott’s (2008) argument added to the traditional understanding of professionalism is to think about the difference between a two-dimensional painting and a four-dimensional reality. Whereas Hall (1975) depicted professionalism having a relatively stable definition imposed from the outside, Scott (2008) argued that part of professionalism is the ability to reshape their own definition by influencing society. Professions interact with the rest of society in a ceaseless creation and recreation of themselves.

From these descriptions, a picture of the professional in society begins to emerge, but the picture could be criticized for being impersonal or theoretical. These depictions of the professional seem to happen in vacuum, away from practical interactions. Ozar (1984) recognized that a doctor’s professional identity is not created alone but rather in the encounter between doctor and patient. The encounter is shaped by presuppositions, or models, that are related to the doctor’s professional concept. Practice is the heart of Ozar’s (1984) theories. These theories acknowledge that professionalism is a concept that plays out in the interactions of real people in context, and these interactions are diverse.

Ozar (1984) proposed three models of interactions doctors and patients might have. The first of these models of professionalism is the Guild Model in which the profession is paramount (Ozar, 1984). Those duties associated with being a professional and representing the profession well take precedence in interactions with patients. This model is marked by a “sharp contrast between the professional and the layperson” (Ozar, 1984, p. 62). Doctors who presuppose this model assume they are experts and laypeople are not, so laypeople are recipients of medical decisions, not active participants in the process.

The Commercial Model includes both patients and doctors in decisions making (Ozar 1984). In this model, medicine is a commodity; patients are consumers, and doctors, the producers of this commodity (Ozar, 1984). In this model, Ozar (1984) explained, doctors give the advice and offer the medical care for patients that will maximize the profit for the doctor. Ozar (1984) identified three problems with this model. Firstly, doctors may struggle to communicate medical information to laypeople in a way that allows them to make good decisions, and in this model, they are the primary decision makers. Secondly, there is nothing in the model that assures that decisions are made in the best interest of a patient’s health. Thirdly, people facing illness may not be in the best position to make decisions for themselves.

Noting weaknesses in both the Guild Model and the Commercial Model, Ozar (1984) advocated for what he called the Interactive Model. In an Interactive Model, doctors and patients operate as equal partners in the decision making process. Their equality is derived from separate sources of moral status. Patients are in the moral position to make decisions because it is their own health that is at stake (Ozar, 1984).

Doctors are in a moral position to make decisions because of their expertise (Ozar, 1984). In this way, the Interactive Model draws on the best of both the Guild Model, which emphasizes the doctor's moral status, and the Commercial Model, which emphasizes the patient's.

Ozar's (1984) argument has profound implications for professional work. Firstly, he implied that relationships or interactions can mitigate the knowledge and power differentials between professionals and non-professionals. Secondly, he implied that the knowledge and power differentials *should* be mitigated. While knowledge and power are essential elements of professional work, relationships are key to managing that knowledge and power.

### **Problems with Professionalism**

When Ozar (1984) noted a disconnect between physicians and patients that had to be mitigated through interactions, he identified one of the problems central to professionalization efforts: If professionals are in service to society, ought they be separate from society? Baizerman (2013) pointed out that professionalism does not necessarily enhance a youth worker's ability to improve outcomes for clients. Perhaps the most cogent caution came from Langerock (1915), who called professionalization "deformation." He argued that professionalization creates such a repetitious unity of thought that it undercuts logic. Further, he argued, "Professionalism, in the more limited sense of the word, results in the production of certain definite idiosyncrasies, illogical in fact, which are, however, the outcome of a slow process of deformation of which the individual is not conscious" (p. 31). The more unity a person's work has with their life,

the more that person becomes institutionalized, thinking with a logic that is limited to the professional understanding of problems.

Others, however, emphasize the moral mark of professional work. At the heart of professionalism is a commitment to put the interests of other people before one's own interests: "an unusual commitment," according to Welie (2004, p. 530). Bebeau (2006) argued, "If professional practice is essentially a moral enterprise...we must be as concerned about the development of professionalism and character as we are about the development of technical expertise" (p. 48). All professions, by definition, serve people in fulfilling some essential good for society. In particular, people often seek out professionals in moments of extreme vulnerability. Not all people granted professional power, however, live up to society's expectations. When practitioners fail in their professional duties, the failure is not just a professional failure; it is often a moral failure.

Each attempt at defining professionalism emphasizes some aspects and downplays others, and each profession itself holds certain aspects of professionalism to be more important than others. Researchers have attempted to turn these theories and frameworks into empirical tests. A later section deals with those tests.

### **Pressures on Professionalism**

Professions do not exist as isolated modes of work. They exist as part of an ecosystem of interacting pressures (Abbott, 1988). They, at all times, must respond to external and internal pressures that shape their tasks and society's perception of their worth. At the heart of professionalism, according to Abbott (1988), is the concept of jurisdiction. Professionals are granted some level of deference by society to deal with particular problems, and as other professions or technologies impinge on a profession's

exclusive jurisdiction, that profession is weakened. Abbott's (1988) explanation of the system of professions clarifies how professions gain and lose their status: professionalism is a function of external pressures and internal responses that expand and shrink jurisdictions. Abbott (1988) saw technology and large organizations as the primary drivers of expanding professionalism, and he acknowledged their ability to also shrink professional jurisdiction. Meanwhile, in the years since Abbott argued that technology and organizations altered professional jurisdictions, both forces have grown in their prevalence and influence.

As Abbott (1988) originally intimated, professionalism may be untenable as a mode of work. Economic and societal pressures seem to be conspiring against the autonomous professional who works alone or in a small group. In medicine, physicians often operate in non-professional settings as employees where their decisions may be evaluated by administrators who are not physicians (Leicht & Fennell, 1997). Adler et al. (2008) noted that medicine increasingly is under pressure to improve patient outcomes and decrease error. This pressure implies dissatisfaction with physicians' work and erodes their jurisdiction. In the law, attorneys now often work as part of a legal department in a large corporation in which managers often are not themselves attorneys (Leicht & Fennell, 1997). Economic pressures cause previously autonomous professionals to be subject to scrutiny from outside the profession in the spirit of cost control, and in settings where professionals manage other professionals, the collegiality usually associated with professional work is undermined by hierarchy and segmentation (Leicht & Fennell, 1997). Meanwhile, competition from non-professionals and technology force professionals to defend their areas of expertise and prove their worth

(Glazer, 2008). For example, psychiatrists have had to contend with societal dissatisfaction, and librarians have contended with rapid changes in technology (Glazer, 2008). These challenges to professional jurisdiction can lead to changes to the profession, to the profession losing status in the eyes of the public, or in some cases, professions ceding jurisdiction to other professions.

These external pressures undercut the autonomous power professionals enjoy and can disrupt professional relationships. If those two areas are disrupted, the ethical commitments and covenantal relationship professionals enter with their clients are, at very least, disrupted with them, and at worst, lost. Professionalism plays an important role in disseminating knowledge and promoting ethical obligations. Yet, in light of current pressures, professionals who strictly adhere to old models of work may find themselves unemployed.

Leicht and Fennell (1997) concluded by calling for more research into professionalism as it rapidly changes its face. Instruments and methods that detect the marks of professionalism will be essential to this research. If professionalism is succumbing to market pressures and bureaucratization, society will want to study the professions to see if the altruistic service associated with professionalism is disappearing with it. Likewise, research could show if bureaucratization necessarily ends professionalism, or if other structures, such as professional communities counteract bureaucratization.

An alternative perspective is that professional status is a fixed and uniform attribute of all people in an organization or occupational group. Rather, all individuals, occupations, and organizations could have differing professional orientations. Hall (1975)

supported a scalar conception of professionalism both for individuals and organizations. He noted that some individuals may be “highly professionally oriented” and others, presumably, are not (1975, p. 101). The idea that professionals or professions might be more or less professional, particularly in the face of organizational pressures concurs with more recent theories on professionalism (Abbott, 1988; Adler et al., 2008). Abbott (1988) pointed out that professions evolve over time depending on how society responds to its problems and how that profession competes for jurisdiction over these problems. Adler et al. (2008) pointed out how ecological pressures, often market-driven, are reshaping some of the key aspects of professionalism. These ecological pressures operate in relation to the traditional core of professionalism. The pressures are observed as they reduce, enhance, or complicate the moral, intellectual, or organizational marks of professionals. An ecological model explains how some professions increase their jurisdiction, gain the resources necessary for their work, and expand their power and influence.

As professions evolve on a societal level, the professionals who practice them undergo individual changes. Bebeau and Monson (2012) found that students’ professional identities change even during their, relatively, brief professional training. They put forth evidence that incoming students are less and less ready to be the “other-centered” professionals society needs. (p. 159). They argued that professional schools must direct, through curricula and culture, pre-service professionals toward a professional identity that incorporates the important moral marks of professionalism. This identity formation does not stop upon graduation from professional school, of course. Professionals continue to form and reform their identity in the same way that all adults do, and professionals need opportunities to reflect on their professional identities

(Bebeau, 2006). As individual professionals evolve and develop in their identities, their work environment plays a role. Some professionals have communities around them that encourage learning and reflection, and some professionals are isolated by choice or circumstance.

Decades later, Hall's (1983) call for more complex models of professionalism seems prescient. At the core, professionalism can be theorized as having the same attributes as ever, but scholars are increasingly aware that many of those attributes depend on interactions and pressures that often come from outside the profession itself. Market forces and technology force changes on professions from the outside. From societal expectations to individual professional identities, professions are not fixed models for work. They are complex constructs that can be molded for better or worse.

## **Part II: Professionalism in Teaching**

Any public school is part of a multi-layered bureaucracy that flows from the federal government all the way down to the classroom. This bureaucracy was designed, in part, because central government did not trust local people or the teachers they hired to have the requisite knowledge or responsibility to perform their work with fidelity (Tyack, 1974). Teachers have long engaged in efforts to professionalize within a bureaucratic organizational structure. Other professions that are currently adapting to increasingly bureaucratized environments might look to teachers to see how professionalism survives in large hierarchical organizations.

### **The Question of Professionalism in Teaching**

Until the early 1960s, there is little discussion of professionalism in teaching in the literature, which would have been reinforced by the limited training required of

teachers and the very high turnover within the occupation. As Dragoo (1963) pointed out, every person who went to school believed that they understood what it took to be a teacher.

Professionalism in teaching has never been succinctly or clearly defined, but in recent years teachers increasingly refer to themselves as professionals. The literature on professionalism in teaching has often presupposed that teaching fits definitions of professionalism that apply to other professions. Much of it asks teachers about their own professionalism without offering a definition of professionalism (Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop, 2004). Some investigations ask teachers if they feel like a professional or think of themselves as professionals. This mode of research, however, does not clarify if teachers are behaving in professional ways as much as if they conceive of themselves as professionals.

The questions this section hopes to answer are:

- Is there a definition of teacher professionalism that is widely used?
- Does teacher professionalism connect to other definitions of professionalism used by other fields?

Whether philosophically or sociologically defined, professionalism is marked by a combination of knowledge, power, and relationships. As I discussed the previous sections, different professions tend to emphasize particular parts of the knowledge-power-relationships framework, but all aspects are always present in the definitions of professional work. Professionals must have esoteric knowledge acquired through training and experience (May, 2001; Hall 1975; Welie, 2004). Professionals must be granted power by the society in which they work (Abbott, 1988; Hall, 1975; May, 2001; Welie,

2004). Professionals must enter into collegial relationships that enhance and govern their profession (May, 2001; Hall, 1975; Welie, 2004). These elements are pervasive in the literature on professionalism, and the literature on teacher professionalism is no exception. The literature on teacher professionalism discusses how teachers use their power or are inhibited from doing so. It talks about how teachers gain and use their knowledge, and it talks about how they form professional relationships with each other. Teachers, however, are not widely regarded as being professionals in the way that doctors and lawyers are.

Whether or not teaching is a profession or a semi-profession depends on where one looks: on a societal and organizational level it is difficult to see teachers as professionals, but professionalism is not strictly societal. Hall (1975) suggested that people, regardless of organizational pressure, may act and think in professional ways. So while some people are acting less professionally, others are acting more professionally. Identifying those who are more professional may give insight into how others in the occupation might think and act more professionally.

On the issue of teacher professionalism, Lortie (1975) suggested a four-item rubric that he used to conclude that teachers are semi-professionals. The first item on the rubric is the authority structure of schools. Unlike the liberal professions, teachers do not oversee their own work. Instead, control lies with a governing board made up of what Lortie (2002) derisively called “part-time citizens” (p. 5). In remuneration and entry, Lortie (2002) saw strong indications that the work of teachers is not sufficiently exclusive to call itself professional work. He concluded that teaching does not have the social status of other professions. It is an occupation caught in paradoxes: “It is honored and

disdained, praised as ‘dedicated service’ and lampooned as ‘easy work.’ It is permeated with the rhetoric of professionalism, yet features incomes below those earned by workers with considerably less education” (Lortie, 2002, p. 10). Lortie (2002) noted a trend, however, toward increased collaboration among teachers. He noted that teachers used their relationships to leverage or “bootleg” more freedom in their roles (2002, p. 209) While he clearly labeled teaching a semi-profession, he identified collaboration as a way teachers gain additional authority not initially granted by the organization.

Hall (1975) found teaching to be lacking in two key ways. It was not intellectually demanding enough to be considered a profession, and teachers had too little power with their organization. While his first claim is untenable, his second is literally the law of the land. Organizationally speaking, schools answer to the public by way of school boards. Lortie (2002) had similar observations on teaching and likewise concluded that teaching was a semi-profession. Lortie (2002) did note, however, that collaboration among teachers increased their power by decreasing external control of their work. Hall (1975) suggested this very mode of professionalization for teachers: “increased professionalization should be accompanied by reduced external controls” (p. 102). Collaboration is the bright spot for those who want to see teachers increase their professional status.

### **The Project of Teacher Professionalization**

The trend in teaching, according to Ornstein (1985), is toward more professionalization. Moreover, the path to professionalization, Ornstein (1985) noted, was through greater collaboration among teachers that allows for more control, particularly in the area of professional development. Ornstein (1985) lamented that

teachers do too much learning by trial and error. New teachers are poorly prepared and the period of induction is too long. Glazer (2008) echoed this complaint when he asserted that a lack of teacher professionalism is an internal problem with an internal solution—teachers need to be more systematically effective. If they were, society would grant them more power, prestige, and jurisdiction.

On the one hand, Hall (1975), Lortie (2002), and Onrstein (1985) all point out the ways in which teaching lacks professional status. On the other hand they also note the changes happening in teaching. From greater collaboration to increased power, teaching has been trending toward professionalization. The deficiencies they pointed out decades ago have been the attention of reform movements and research ever since. For example, Firestone and Bader (1991) noted that many of reform efforts in schools were driven either by efforts to increase professionalization by granting teachers greater autonomy and power to use their knowledge or by bureaucratic efforts to decrease teacher professionalism and institutionalize teaching. Both efforts respond to paradigms of professionalism. Either teachers are professionals and need to be liberated from bureaucratic control to exercise their craft more fully, or they are semi-professional workers who require close management. This debate is at the forefront of the school reform (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Some advocate for more rigidly systematizing schools, while others look to empower teachers as professionals (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Others have focused on professional communities and how communities of teachers can be more professional in collaboration with each other than they are when they are isolated. I discuss professional communities in detail in a later section.

Labaree (1992) situated the efforts to professionalize teaching that started in the 1980s in a political and historical context. He showed that the effort to professionalize teaching comes from a bias toward pre-existing power structures. By following the genealogy of the professionalization movement, scholars can better understand the competing motives and biases that shape teacher professionalization. He claimed that the professionalization movement has the potential to do “more harm than good” (1992, p. 124).

The model for these professionalizing reforms comes from medicine (Labaree, 1992). He defines the professional bargain in this way: “[T]echnical competence is exchanged for technical autonomy, practical knowledge for control over practice” (Labaree, 1992, p. 125). This definition, though elegant in its simplicity, does not address directly the importance of professional relationships. Other definitions, such as May’s (2001) and Welie’s (2004), also include that professionals must engage in relationships that enhance knowledge and check individual autonomy against institutional restraints.

Some see the benefits of professionalization on both the side of teachers and society. Teachers gain more prestige, and society gains a more competent teaching force. Labaree (1992) saw, danger, however, in the professionalization movement. In particular, he saw the possibility that higher levels of professional status will encourage elitism and further divide parents from teachers. The difference between teaching and surgery, he noted, is that teaching has political implications in a way that removing a spleen does not (Labaree, 1992). Because it is political, Labaree (1992) argued society should be careful about any move that separates citizens from the education process. Indeed, professionalization does require granting more power to those who serve in professional

roles. Welie (2004) noted, however, that this additional autonomy is granted in the hope that professionals will use it to serve society.

This concern, that professionals would be raised up so high above those whom they serve that they would lose their sense of connection and responsibility, troubled scholars in other fields as well. Ozar (1984) theorized this problem among doctors and suggested a balance that would keep professionals grounded in their responsibilities to society. Bebeau et al. (1993) later confirmed that this balance is, in fact, beneficial.

The skepticism that Labaree (1992) voiced shows one of the ways in which professionalism in teaching differs from the other professions. In other professions, professionalism is universally lauded and pursued. Teaching, however, may be different, and some teachers may reject a claim to an elitist posture. Those who teach from a critical posture may see professional status as a replication of the very societal structures they labor against in their classrooms. Furthermore, racism could find a legitimized cover if teaching were widely regarded as a profession, as an often-white teaching corps privileges their own knowledge over that of increasingly non-white parents and students. The project of professionalization, then is not without controversy. Professionalism, like many aspects of teaching, has political and social implications that quickly remove it from high-minded theory.

### **Descriptions of Teacher Professionalism**

The view from outside the teaching profession is much clearer than the view from inside. The general public looks at teachers and ranks their professionalism as someplace between clergy and librarians (Ingersoll & Merrill). Salaries for teachers remain far below the mean salaries for the traditional professions. Teachers rarely have authority

over important aspects of their work. In sum, these factors leave teaching with less societal prestige than the other professions (Ingersoll & Merrill). Teaching continues to be a semi-profession in both the eyes of the general public and many scholars.

The view from inside the occupation is not as simple. Scholars and teachers see teacher professionalism as multi-faceted and diverse. Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) attempted to catalogue the faces of teacher professionalism. They began by observing a model of professionalism that follows law and medicine as exemplars of classical professionalism. In classical professionalism, professions have a shared technical knowledge, a strong service ethic, and are self-regulated (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). They noted that teaching has often been held against classical professionalism and been found “largely wanting” (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996, p. 5). Teachers lack a shared technical knowledge, they argued, to be sufficiently separate from other occupations. They go on to note, however, that experienced teachers do have significant practical knowledge, and one of the efforts to professionalize teaching seeks to name and codify this practical knowledge so it might be recognized readily as technical (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). An additional strategy to address a deficiency in shared technical knowledge is to encourage more collaboration among teachers. This collaboration increases the sharing of technical knowledge associated with professions. Rather than a unified scientific understanding of professional practice, teachers can construct localized communities that have “situated certainty” (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996, p. 10). In this model of professionalism, teachers collaboratively construct professional knowledge that applies directly to their school.

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) saw this “Flexible Professionalism,” rooted in professional communities, as a viable alternative to the classical professionalism that has excluded teachers (p.10). They noted, however, that school bureaucracies could co-opt these professional communities and turn them into little more than “contrived collegiality” (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996, p.10). Communities can also be too weak to achieve a level of sharing that can be called professional. This model of professionalism depends on the structure of the work within the school and how teachers engage their colleagues.

Rooted in personal professional knowledge, practical professionals often engage in reflective practice to improve themselves. “Practical professionalism” puts reflection “at the heart of what it means to be a professional.” (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996, p. 12). While reflective practice aids improvement, Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) cautioned that there must still be an external check on the biases that might be misinforming one’s own reflection. Further, the emphasis on the day-to-day challenge can take attention away from the broader moral implications of their work unless that is intentionally part of the reflection.

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) describe two other discourses of professionalism, “extended” and “complex,” that both point to the growing number of responsibilities teachers take on as evidence for level of professionalism. In addition to instruction, teachers engage in complex and diverse tasks that range from writing and planning to management and collective decision-making. The complexity of these tasks, and the necessity of them, argues for the professionalism of teacher work.

Because teacher professionalism does not fit into one single model, the field of research on teacher professionalism and professional identity is often disparate. In a comprehensive literature review on teacher professional identity Beijaard et al. (2004) noted an utter lack of clarity in “what counts as professional in teachers’ professional identity” (p. 126). Teacher professional identity suffers from this lack of clarity. In many studies Beijaard et al. (2004) reviewed, the concept was “defined differently or not defined at all” (p. 125). Teachers seem to be developing a professional sense of self, but this sense is highly personal and not necessarily tied to what other fields might understand as professionalism. Beijaard et al. (2004) argued that the methodology employed by many who study professional identity in teachers is especially good at capturing “personal norms and values teachers themselves find important” (p. 125), but these studies did not necessarily take into account concepts of professionalism legitimated outside of teaching. One area where they do find consistency is in the emphasis of professional knowledge in professional identity. In most studies they found professional identity to be a “process of practical knowledge-building” done both individually and collectively (p. 123). Professional identity, as they describe it, has clear connections to professional community and reflective dialogue, which will be discussed in greater detail later.

Beijaard et al. (2004) lamented a lack of consistent definitions of professionalism, and they are not able in their review of the literature to identify consistent features of a teacher professional. When researchers investigated professional identity in teachers, they found, researchers did not use a consistent definition of professionalism, and some used no definition of professionalism at all (Beijaard et al., 2004). Of the eleven articles on the

characteristics of professional identity, only five of those articles gave an explicit definition of professional identity and only one of those was tied to theories on professionalism (Beijaard et al., 2004). The review implied that teacher professional identity has been researched as a phenomenon unto itself, separate from theories of professionalism recognized in other fields.

Beijaard et al. (2004) did mention knowledge as one feature that appears multiple times in the literature on teacher professional identity, and in their conclusion they propose a framework for thinking about professional identity that implied certain characteristics of a professional. They suggest that teacher professional identity be conceived as (a) an ongoing process that (b) involves a person (including knowledge and attitudes) and that person's context (c); it consists of sub-identities, and (d) requires agency on the part of the teacher (Beijaard et al., 2004).

Research on teacher professional identity may lack clear definitions of what makes a professional, but that does not mean that research on teachers does not demonstrate the features of professionalism. The features of teacher commitment and the features of teacher professionalism overlap considerably. Louis (1998) summarizes the literature on teacher commitment as showing four main commitments: (1) to the school as a social unit; (2) to the academic goals of the school (3) to students as individuals; (4) the body of knowledge necessary for teaching. These commitments have are clear connections to the literature on professionalism. Teachers who make these four commitments are enhancing the moral, intellectual, and organizational marks of the professional. While the literature refers to these as teacher commitments, they might also be indications of a teacher's level of professionalism. Likewise, Louis (1998) goes on to

define the criteria that can be used to define the quality of work life for teachers. These criteria are (a) “respect from relevant adults,” (b) “participation in decision making,” (c) “frequent and stimulating professional interaction,” (d) “structures and procedures that contribute to a high sense of efficacy,” (e) “opportunity to make full use of existing skill and knowledge,” (f) “adequate resources,” (g) “congruence between personal goals and the school’s goals” (Louis, 1998). These features clearly align with the necessary elements that foster professionalism. By granting teachers respect and power and allowing teachers to use their considerable knowledge to make decisions, school leaders treat teachers as professionals.

One of the difficulties in defining teacher professionalism may be because the day-to-day lived experiences of teachers can vary so much from organization to organization. Louis (1998) found that the structure of teacher’s work may affect teacher commitments, yet schools vary in the way work is structured and the way teachers are treated. In short, teachers may be more or less professional depending on their school environment. This observation on teacher commitment matches what Hall (1975) predicted and Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) found to be true about teacher professionalism: structural conditions inhibit teacher professionalism.

These working conditions, the amount that external factors control the working life of teachers, is precisely why Hall (1975) finds teaching to be a semi-profession. This bureaucratic constraint on autonomy inhibits teacher professionalism. Teachers must operate within norms set by society, not by their own profession, Hall (1975) argues, and teachers do not control even large details of their work such as what or who they teach. The truth of these claims, however, varies from school to school, district to district, state

to state and sometimes even teacher to teacher. Rather than a monolithic semi-profession, teaching can take on various expressions. He notes, “teachers who are highly professionally oriented are usually militant in their professionalism. They want to change the system” (1975, p. 101). Professionalism, by this description, appeared to be a personal attribute as much as one determined by structural conditions. Later he added, “a high level of professionalism is dysfunctional for the smooth operation of the organizations involved” (1975). Here is the rub. Teacher professionalization is inhibited because the public wants oversight, yet the public benefits from having teachers with a high level of competence and commitment to the students and public, e.g. professionalism. Hall (1975) concludes, “Procedures have yet to be developed that will allow the maximization of both sources of control” (p. 101). Ideally, teachers would have professional levels of competence while still being committed to the best interests of the public.

### **Summary of Literature on Teacher Professionalism**

The above sections hoped to answer two questions:

- Is there a definition of teacher professionalism that is widely used?
- Does teacher professionalism connect to other definitions of professionalism?

The answer to the first question is no. The literature on teacher professionalism lacks coherence. In their review of the literature, Beijaard et al. (2004) found no consistent definition of what makes a professionalism means in teaching. Hall (1975), Lortie (2002), Ornstein (1985), and Ingersoll and Merrill (2014) all found teaching lacking in professionalism. Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) described six different

discourse of professionalism in teaching, each equally valid. There are competing definitions and frameworks. As Hall (1975) theorized, the level of professionalism in teaching appears to be scalar with some teachers having a higher level of professionalism and some having a lower level of professionalism. The level of professionalism may vary from person to person or school to school, and bureaucratic structure appears to be a strong factor in determining professionalism.

The answer to the second question is yes. Even though definitions of teacher professionalism tend to be diverse, there are clear connections to the framework used to describe other professions. Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) argued that classical professionalism is but one of many discourses on teacher professionalism. Louis's (1998) research demonstrates that when teachers use their professional knowledge and relationships to wield power, they have higher levels of commitment. This research implies that classical professionalism is applicable to teaching. There are still intellectual, moral, and organizational marks one would expect to find in professional teaching, but there is not a consensus on what expectations society has for professional teachers or what the three marks of professionals look like in teaching.

### **Part III: Measuring, Qualifying, and Quantifying Professionalism**

Professionals operate in the real world. If there is such a phenomenon as professionalism in society, there should be ways of defining, detecting, and verifying it empirically. Researchers have put theories to the test by transforming the philosophical and sociological frameworks into instruments designed to measure, qualify, and quantify professionalism. Their attempts have been successful (Forsyth and Danisiewicz, 1985; Bebeau, Born, and Ozar, 1993; Hall, 1975; Talbert, 1994).

Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) argue, drawing on Hall (1975), that the level of autonomy workers perceive themselves to have can index to their occupational group's professional status such that those with the highest professional status would also have the highest scores on the autonomy scale they created. They began by surveying workers in multiple occupations, particularly those traditionally held to be examples of professions, such as medicine and law, and those occupations that are sometimes called semi-professions, particularly teaching. Their instrument asked questions regarding how much autonomy workers felt from their clients and the organization in which they worked. They found that doctors and attorneys showed the greatest amount of autonomy, and therefore, in their model, the highest level of professional status (Forsyth and Danisiewicz, 1985). Further, teachers showed high amounts of autonomy from clients, but lower amounts of autonomy from their organization (Forsyth and Danisiewicz, 1985). Their results were exactly as they hypothesized: semi-professions would show lower autonomy and professions would show more. Additionally, teaching showed to be a semi-profession for precisely the reason Hall (1975) declared it so. Teachers are part of a bureaucratic structure that makes exercising professional levels of autonomy difficult.

When they researched professional status and autonomy, Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) found confirmation for Hall's thoughts on teaching. Teachers scored just below the mean in "Organization Autonomy" and just above the mean on "Client Autonomy" (Forsyth & Danisiewicz, 1985, p. 72). Their research shows teachers to have just as much client autonomy as doctors, yet far less organizational autonomy. One could argue that if teachers were able to have more autonomy within an organization, they may be more perceived as more professional and vice versa. On the other hand, in the years since

Forsyth and Danisiewicz's (1985) study, physicians have less and less autonomy as hospitals, insurance companies, and government regulators seek tighter controls over their work (Adler et al., 2008). Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) acknowledge in their research that their instrument measured only one of the elements in their total model of professionalism.

Bebeau et al. (1993) developed an instrument, a 40-item survey, that showed different professional role orientations among dentists. When they used other methods to test role orientations, they found very little variation (1993). They theorized that other testing methods allowed dentists to recognize and select the role orientation that was most socially acceptable (1993). This instrument, the Professional Role Orientation Index (PROI), showed role orientation with four dimensions.

The PROI uses two scales. The first of these scales measures dentists' orientation toward authority and responsibility. Bebeau et al. (1993) write that authority "refers to the degree to which a person sees the self as knowledgeable, a good judge of outcomes, respected, and deferred to for expertise" (p. 27). Responsibility generally refers to one's commitment to others. Additionally, the scale measures "caretaking of the disadvantaged and the public at large" (Bebeau et al. 1993, p. 28). A person scores highly on the responsibility scale for feeling obliged to care for one's own patients and also for many in the public.

From these two axes, Authority and Responsibility, Bebeau et al. (1993), determined four possible orientations that they labeled using some of the theories existent in the literature at the time. These orientations were the Guild Model, the Commercial Model, the Agent Model, and the Service Model (Bebeau et al., 1993). The Service

Model describes those professionals who see their role as mostly about serving humanity. These professionals sacrifice their own needs in selfless service to others, and they are more likely to want to have an active role in determining policies and regulations that relate to their profession (Bebeau et al., 1993). The Agent Model is one in which professionals see their role as a person with “skills and knowledge for hire” (Bebeau et al. 1993, p. 28). It differs from the Commercial Model in that dentists oriented toward the Commercial Model look to maximize profit, and those oriented towards the Agent Model look to maximize the interests of their individual patients even at the expense of society’s interests.

The second scale in the PROI measures ideas of autonomy and agency (Bebeau et al., 1993). While dentists, they contend, may have different orientations, they may not act on these orientations if they felt constrained by outside forces. The Agency scale “refers to the extent to which an individual feels a sense of control and power in his/her life as a practicing professional” (Bebeau et al., 1993, p. 29). The Autonomy scale refers to how much freedom a professional feels (Bebeau et al., 1993). A professional who feels autonomous does not, for example, look for approval from peers and patients. These scales are continuums with either extreme, low or high, likely being undesirable orientations for a professional.

The initial test of the PROI showed variability among four different samples. One sample was drawn from first-year dental students, one sample from fourth-year dental students, another sample was drawn from practicing dentists in the Upper Midwest Region of the American College of Dentists, and one sample was drawn from dentists and ethicists who were selected to be ethics seminar leaders.

Since the development of the original PROI, others have adapted the framework to be used with other professions. It has been used successfully with physical therapists (Swisher, Beckstead, & Bebeau, 2004) and researchers (Bowler et al., 2010). In cases where the PROI was adapted, the original items were rewritten for the new context, but the format of the survey remained largely the same.

While the PROI tested 4 dimensions of professionalism, the survey instrument developed by Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) tested only the autonomy dimension. These two tests, however, showed that dimensions of professionalism can be measured. Additionally they showed that there is variability within professions, and there are differences between occupations.

Instruments similar to the PROI could be created for other professions to learn about the work environments that correlate to differing professional orientations. Instruments of this kind have not been applied to teaching, and they may help identify ways teachers are responding to changes in education policies. Additionally, instruments of this kind have not been used across multiple organizational structures where the results could be used to analyze how those structures affect professional orientations, a question that is increasingly pertinent as more professionals work in large organizations.

### **Summary of Literature on Measuring Professionalism**

Scholars (May, 2001; Hall, 1975; Ozar, 1993; Forsyth and Danisiewicz, 1985; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996) agree on some aspects of professionalism. Broadly, they recognize professionals as having moral, intellectual, and organizational marks, though not all use those exact words. Professionals engage in complex intellectual work with an obligation to serve society and self-monitor through professional associations. While each

scholar describes the professional in slightly different ways, this general pattern remains the same. There have been successful efforts to measure dimensions of professionalism (Forsyth & Danisiewicz, 1985; Bebeau et al., 1993). While Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) showed the professions to be markedly different in their perception of autonomy, Bebeau et al. (1993) showed variability for each of the dimensions measured with the profession of dentistry. From these studies, one can conclude that there is empirical evidence that models of professionalism described by philosophers exist in practice, and that the models represent different conceptions of the profession's role and responsibility.

#### **Part IV: Professional Communities as Collective Professionalism**

Professions rely on professional communities to organize, regulate, and educate themselves (Adler et al., 2008). The nature of this community is not constant. While professional communities have roots in a guild-like or a *Gemeinschaft*-like structure requiring direct interaction among members, increasingly there are market pressures and hierarchies that influence professionals via indirect or *Gesellschaft*-like associations (Adler et al., 2008). Rather than being mutually exclusive, these two ways of organizing professionals have begun to blend into collaborative communities of professionals (Adler et al., 2008). Collaborative professional communities emerge in response to a societal demand for greater accountability and faster dissemination of knowledge, and because they feel these pressures acutely, teachers often organize themselves into collaborative professional communities (Adler et al., 2008). Collaborative professionalism has advantages that make it a possible successor to the professional models that have dominated in the past.

The term professional community has come to mean many factors and practices in schools. At the core of professional communities are teachers who support each other through reflective dialogue, who share values and a common focus, and who collectively take responsibility for student learning (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2012). Originally, the idea literally meant combining the established understanding of professionalism with the established understanding of community (Kruse & Louis, 1993). The framework proposed by Kruse and Louis (1993) has been rigorously tested. Researchers have found that the framework describes a phenomenon that exists in schools, contributes to the schools' culture, and boosts student achievement (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2012). This phenomenon, however, is not universal. It does not appear in all schools, and even concerted efforts to create professional communities sometimes fail (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006). Additionally, schools can set out to intentionally create professional communities but end up with little more than polite conversation among teachers or communities that are co-opted by the bureaucratic structures of a school (Hargreaves, 1991). Some schools organically create and sustain professional communities, some create them through intentional efforts, and some intend to create professional communities but end up with communities that are less than professional. The purpose of this part of this review is to:

- Examine some of the factors that aid in the creation and maintenance of professional communities, and
- Determine to what degree those factors connect to the established literature on professionalism.

Because the concept of professional community was born out of the literature on professionalism, there should be clear connections between professional communities and

professionalism; however, the literature on professional community rarely mentions specific frameworks of professionalism. Professional community has become such a well-recognized and well-researched phenomenon in itself, its theoretical roots have faded into the background. Researchers have found that some combination of structural, cultural, and leadership factors enable and encourage professional communities in schools. In this section, I will identify those factors that have been found to enable and encourage professional communities, and I will tie these factors back to the marks of a professional discussed in the previous section. Closing this circle may show a clearer view of how the research on professional communities remains rooted in theories on professionalism.

### **Structural Factors in the Formation of Professional Communities**

Many leaders employ structural factors to encourage professional communities because these factors are often within the direct purview of the formal leader. A leader, for example, can dictate when meetings happen and who attends. A leader controls, to some degree, how an organization uses the scarce resources of time and money. A school's principal or director often can decide how to spend some financial resources, how to schedule the school day, and how to evaluate the employees of a school. These structural factors determine much of the behavior of the people in the school, including to some degree their engagement in professional communities. As Senge (2006) writes, "We must look into the underlying structures which shape individual action and create the conditions where types of events become likely" (p. 42). Researchers have studied these factors as ways to encourage professional communities and have found them to have some utility.

Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas, Wallace et al. (2005) identified four processes a leader uses in the operation of a professional learning communities (PLCs), a specific kind of professional community that is often formalized into a teacher's duties. These processes are optimizing resources, encouraging learning, evaluating PLCs, and managing PLCs. These structural factors fall within the direct purview of a school's leader. Bolam et al. (2005) used surveys and case studies to determine that these structural factors were present in schools that had functioning PLCs. Under the first process, optimizing resources, they report that "[t]he two main facilitators and inhibitors to both developing and sustaining a professional learning community in the view of survey respondents in all phases were time and resources" (Bolam et al., 2005, p. 139). Time, in this case, refers to scheduled time during which teachers can meet to collaborate. Bolam et al. (2005) use the term *resources* to mean both physical space and financial resources. The second process, "[p]romoting individual and collective learning," draws directly on the first process (Bolam et al., 2005, p. 139). Many of the ways leaders encourage professional learning was by allowing for "dedicated or protected time" or providing support for professional learning (Bolam et al., 2005, p. 139).

The next two processes, promoting and managing PLCs, create a virtuous circle that feeds the first two processes. In this way, the processes outlined by Bolam et al. (2005) are not linear steps but interconnected processes, each succeeding because of the success of all of the others. In the third and fourth processes, evaluating PLCs and managing PLCs, Bolam et al. (2005) identify internal inhibitors and external inhibitors as well as internal and external facilitators. Many of these inhibiting and facilitating factors are structural factors under direct control of a school leader. For example, under internal

facilitators they note student behavior management, strong leadership, and an adequate budget as factors that sustain PLCs. Bolam et al. (2005) place much of the power and responsibility to encourage PLCs in the hands of the principal or head of school. All of these processes, as described by Bolam et al. (2005), are primarily structural factors that fall within purview of a school's leader.

When these structural supports to organizational learning disappear, their utility becomes clearer. Giles and Hargreaves (2006) followed three innovative schools to investigate the sustainability of their innovative status. Innovative schools, they contend, “historically contained some (but not usually all) of the properties of learning organizations and professional learning communities” but have difficulty sustaining these properties over time (Giles & Hargreaves 2006, p. 124). They note three factors contribute to this lack of sustainability, all of them related to structure. Innovative schools tend to structure themselves in unusual ways and initially have additional resources to sustain this structure. As these resources disappear and as external pressure to conform build, schools slowly revert back to a more traditional structure (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006). Additionally, schools have to respond to changes in faculty and fluctuations in school size. Schools sometimes respond to these changes in ways that revert back to a more traditional structure (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006). Finally, schools exist in an ecosystem of external pressures. These pressures such as changing policies, reductions in resources, and outside reform efforts (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006).

These changes in structure can have damaging effects on professional community. In this case, it is not that structural factors encourage professional community; they impede professional community for the very reasons Bolam et al. (2005) find them so

useful. Giles and Hargreaves (2006) note that at one innovative school, the changes in structural factors hindered professional community. They write, “Perhaps more seriously for a learning organization and professional learning community, work overload, brought about by loss of time and the scope of reform, has seriously affected the nature of social interaction at [the innovative school] Blue Mountain” (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006 p. 146). They found that teachers were “working more independently rather than collaboratively” and that meetings were “periodically cancelled because staff are tired.” As demands on time, a scarce structural resource, increased, behavior associated with professional community decreased.

Giles and Hargreaves (2006) go on to give another example of the power of structural mechanisms. They show that mandated reforms imposed by outside pressures “strained the connections and communications among teachers” (p. 149). These reforms forced changes in personnel. Further, teachers began to compete for resources that were becoming scarcer. This competition impeded their willingness to collaborate (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006). Giles and Hargreaves (2006) conclude that while these factors, common to just about any organization, make it difficult to sustain an innovative school, one school was more resilient because of cultural factors. Blue Mountain school, they said, had a “self-conscious identity as a learning organization” and “evidenced more resilience in withstanding the usual internal and external difficulties” (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006, p.151).

Like Giles and Hargreaves (2006), Scribner, Cockrell, Cockrell, and Valentine (1999) examined schools undergoing a school improvement process (SIP) to see how structural factors contributed to the creation of professional communities. During a two-

year qualitative case study, they asked how the SIP and other structural factors contributed to the creation of the professional communities. Scribner et al. (1999) focus on three schools and follow them through the SIP. The SIP, they found, contributed to the creation of professional communities by granting structured time for teachers to meet. Scribner et al. (1999), like Bolam et al. (2005), identified time as one of the resources important in encouraging professional communities. The SIP conferences, meetings held apart from normal teaching duties, allowed teachers to “escape the frenetic pace of classroom work” (Scribner et al., 1999, p. 140). These conferences allowed both time and a physical space that was designated for the purpose of having collaborative conversations. Scribner et al. (1999) found that creating this designated forum encouraged many of the characteristics of professional community. The fruitful discussions and collaborative behaviors Scribner et al. (1999) observed in these designated forums, however, did not result in a change in behavior outside of these forums. They note, “discussions concerning student learning began via SIP conferences, collaborative activities designed to bring this knowledge and change back to the faculty did not materialize” (Scribner et al., 1999, p. 143). On this point, an additional structural factor, staffing, proved important. In those schools with a grade-level representative in the SIP conferences, the faculty was more aware of the process.

In this case, as in Bolam et al. (2005), structural factors do matter in forming the conditions necessary for professional community (Scribner et al., 1999). These factors, however, seem to have a limited ability to bring about the professional community desired in the SIP. Scribner et al. (1999) conclude that the structural factors legitimized pre-existing communities and provided the “organizational architecture” that led to

professional communities (p. 157). They acknowledge, however, that many more factors than those directly linked to the SIP contributed to the relative success in the establishment of professional communities.

A leader may play two roles in encouraging and sustaining professional community. Firstly, the leader may use structural factors to provide time and resources that encourage professional community. The leader, additionally, may need to shield the organization from external pressures that threaten professional community. All of these researchers acknowledge that structural factors are not alone in encouraging professional communities. Perhaps their methodologies opened them to see structural factors as part of a context. All of these researchers who examined structural factors in encouraging professional community employed qualitative methods. Giles and Hargreaves (2006), for example, saw identity, and Bolam et al. (2005) saw leadership, as important factors in sustaining professional communities. These structural factors, then, do not alone encourage or sustain professional communities but, rather, are part of system of factors.

### **Leadership Factors in the Formation of Professional Communities**

Personal leadership style refers to the way in which a leader, particularly those in a formal leadership position, uses her or his authority. Researchers in this area examine how leaders distribute or share power, where leaders expend focus, and what forms of capital a leader uses. Leithwood and Louis (2012) note that “Leadership can be described by reference to two core functions: providing direction and exercising influence” (p. 4). The ways leaders undertake these two tasks, consciously or not, affect how a professional community forms within an organization. Leithwood and Louis (2012) note also that leadership styles are not exclusive. Leadership styles overlap and some of the defining

features of one style appear in descriptions of another style. For this reason, and what Leithwood and Louis (2012) characterize as a lack of “a sustained line of inquiry,” no one style of leadership can be said to be better than the next at promoting professional community (p. 6). Yet, the evidence does point to leadership style as a factor in promoting professional community, overall.

Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010) analyzed a variety of leadership styles. Their analysis of what they call shared leadership serves as an example of how the personal leadership style of a principal affects the professional community within a school. They found that leadership practices in which principals share leadership responsibilities with teachers improved student achievement, the key indicator of mission effectiveness (Louis et al., 2010). Leadership style accounted for unique additional variance in the model (Louis et al., 2010). Shared leadership combines with two other variables, instructional leadership and trust in the principal, to increase student learning (Louis et al., 2010). The way leadership style affects student learning is complex, but the study concludes that leadership style clearly matters. Additionally, a principal’s power does not diminish when it is shared with other groups. Louis et al. (2010) concluded that leadership style has an indirect effect on student achievement through relationships with other variables, including how teachers organize themselves into professional communities and engage in reflective discussions.

There are strong indications that leadership style could affect teacher professionalism. For instance, Ross and Gray (2006) focused on a personal leadership style they term “transformational leadership” (p. 179). Transformational leadership was equated, in their study, with items measuring teacher perceptions that their principal

“leads by developing capacity of the organization and its members to adapt to the demands of a changing environment” (Ross & Gray, 2006, p. 187). They explore two relationships between leadership style and professional community based on previous research and their own study. They hypothesized a model in which the leadership and efficacy variables work in tandem to influence professional community (Ross & Gray, 2006).

Ross and Gray (2006) found that transformational leadership has both direct effects on professional community and also effects that operate through the teacher efficacy variables. They conclude that initial research that modeled leadership as contributing to teacher outcomes, including professional community, is more complex as the leadership variable has many mechanisms by which it influences teacher outcomes (Ross & Gray, 2006). They conclude that teacher efficacy variables have a mediating effect on professional community and recommend that principals exert influence over teacher efficacy by trying to influence interpretations of school achievement data (Ross & Gray, 2006). They imply that if principals can make teacher feel more effective in their work, they are more likely to engage in professional community. The totality of Ross’s and Gray’s (2006) work indicates that principals can encourage or inhibit professional communities in schools.

Leadership aids in the creation of professional communities (Louis et al., 2010; Ross & Gray, 2006). The exact mechanisms by which leaders exert influence on professional communities are less understood. Leadership style has the potential to touch on all aspects of professionalism in the knowledge-power-relationships framework. Firstly, shared leadership increases the power teachers collectively hold. Secondly,

teachers who feel more efficacious are more likely to engage in the professional community, an important professional relationship for teachers.

### **Cultural Factors**

If leaders hope to encourage professional community, cultural factors contribute to this promotion both directly and indirectly. Directly, leaders may use cultural factors to explicitly speak to professional community as an organizational value. Indirectly, leaders may use cultural factors to ensure the presence of some of the necessary preconditions, such as trust, for effective collaboration.

Kofman and Senge (1993) embraced the cultural factors that encourage professional learning. They recognized that beyond the structural factors that may facilitate organizational learning, “Building learning organizations...requires basic shifts in how we think and interact,” (p. 5) and structural factors may be too specific tools for such broad work. “The changes,” they wrote, “go beyond corporate cultures, or even the culture of Western management; they penetrate to the bedrock assumptions and habits of our culture as a whole” (Kofman and Senge 1993, p. 5).

The work of encouraging organizational learning, Kofman and Senge (1993) argued, is about building commitment. Beyond a commitment to their own organizations, Kofman and Senge (1996) see a need for learning organizations to build a commitment “to changes needed in the larger world” (p. 7). This commitment may seem beyond the scope of encouraging organizational learning, but Kofman and Senge (1993) countered that only by engaging body, emotions, and spirit will organizations undertake the reflection that leads to meaningful action. Their argument, that organizational learning begins with broad commitment, fits with a framework of professionalism that includes

the covenant that professionals have with those they serve. In such a covenant, professionals engage in professional learning because they have a commitment to the broader society to be excellent in their work.

Such global thinking has advantages over an organizational mindset rooted in time-sensitive goals. An organization that meets its goals may be tempted to repeat rather than newly create. An organization that builds a commitment to the larger world will be, as Kofman and Senge (1993) put it, “in a continual state of becoming” (p. 15). This state of becoming is fertile ground for having “generative conversations” (Kofman and Senge 1993, p. 16) in which people connect and invent. This state of becoming is a model of what professional learning must look like. Professionals must always be looking for ways to enhance their knowledge through their relationships. Only when they are constantly improving do they deserve the unique power society grants professionals.

Kruse and Louis (2008) depict professional community as the core of a school’s culture with layers of organizational learning and trust encircling it. This depiction implies that professional community is a subset of the larger school culture. Kruse and Louis (2008) write, “leading culture requires targeting three critical components of school culture: professional community, organizational learning, and trust” (p. 30). By this prescription, professional community is one of the drivers of school culture, not, as Hord (1997) saw it, a result of school culture. Kruse and Louis (2008) see the role of principal shifting from “gatekeeper” to one who promotes “freer consideration of ideas” (p. 34). This kind of professional community and organizational learning happens in a trusting context. They (2008) write, “Trusting relationships inside the school...are a foundation,” and they allow the principal “to maintain overall responsibility for the change effort

while giving teachers the freedom to design and carry out the work” (p. 34). With this trust comes tangible power sharing.

Kruse and Louis (2008) attributed the success of the principal in their case study to his ability to balance his role as leader of culture and manager of existing culture. The principal fulfilled this balance of leadership and management using structural tools, such as rearranging schedules and allowing for meetings, and his ability to gain more trust from teachers by sharing power. This case study offers an example of a synthesis of the three areas of leadership for professional community I have discussed here. Excellent leaders use structure, leadership style, and culture to balance the roles of management and leadership for professional community. Furthermore, this case study serves as an example of how professional community and professionalism are intimately linked.

### **The Professional in Community**

Professionalism requires knowledge, power, and relationships, yet teachers often face strains on these very aspects of professionalism. Adler et al. (2008) note that the age of the autonomous professional in teaching “inhibited innovation by impeding the diffusion of superior practices” (p. 369). Pressures for more accountability and faster improvement have pushed teachers to seek out more collaborative models of professionalism, but York-Barr, Sommers, Ghore, and Montie (2001) pointed out some of the dilemmas that face teachers seeking reflective dialogue. They note, “Most educators experience a continuously hectic pace in their daily professional lives” (2001, p. 2). This pace limits their opportunities to form professional relationships and add to their professional knowledge (York-Barr et al., 2001).

Teaching requires knowledge-building reflection that goes outside of oneself and joins a community of learning (York-Barr et al., 2001). In this environment, knowledge connects tightly with relationships. If one is diminished, the other will suffer.

Professionalism and professional communities form a sort of symbiosis: each is enhanced by the other. If knowledge and relationships are tightly coupled in schools, it holds that the total level of professionalism perceived by teachers in a school may depend on the amount of professional community and collective reflective practice happening in that school. York-Barr et al. (2001), note, “Education is about learning—not only student learning but also staff learning. Learning is a function of reflection” (p. 19). That learning is a function of the total professional knowledge a staff has, and that knowledge is a key part of being professional. Unsurprisingly, teachers who reflect on their practice and enter into these knowledge-building relationships improve their practice and student outcomes (York-Barr et al., 2001). What is unknown is if these teachers also have an improved sense of professionalism.

No sooner was collegiality identified in the literature as an important factor, than scholars noted its imperfections. Hargreaves (1991) observed, “Teacher empowerment, critical reflection, commitment to continuous improvement—these are claims that are commonly made for collegiality in general, but that in practice apply only to particular versions of it” (p. 1483). The professional communities that enhanced professional power and knowledge benefitted schools, but those that did little more than satisfied requirements imposed from administration created patterns of contrived collegiality (Hargreaves, 1991). Collaboration that results from micropolitical pressures could not be described as a meeting of professional minds. Rather, contrived collegiality would

undermine the benefits of forming relationships with other professionals because rather than enhancing professional power and knowledge, the meeting would devalue the knowledge and power the teachers have by making them subject to administrative goals. So teachers could be engaging in what appears to be similar work, but the structure of that work results in different levels of professionalism. The question of whether or not professional communities enhance professionalism likely depends, therefore, on the nature of the professional community.

These communities of contrived collegiality fail to create the authentic reflective practice described by York-Barr et al. (2001). They exemplify one of the obstacles teachers face to professionalization. Because teachers operate in a highly structured, bureaucratic system, the micropolitics of that system can creep into their professional relationships and threaten their usefulness. If professional communities do not function, teachers are isolated and unable to create knowledge and wield power in professional ways.

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) propose a “postmodern” approach to professionalism that has professional communities as a core feature. This model shows how professionalism build around professional communities might be more resistant to bureaucracy and external pressures.

Postmodern professionalism is marked by seven features. Teachers should have:

- Discretionary judgment
- Moral and social purposes
- Collaborative cultures
- Heteronomy over autonomy
- Care as a form of service
- Continuous learning
- Recognition of the complexity of their work (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).

While this framework draws on the classical framework, some of the features have different emphases. There is an emphasis on caring, for example, that suggests a more reflective and relational posture than the word covenant, used by May (1975). Likewise, autonomy, which is clearly an individual power, is replaced by heteronomy, power that flows from collaboration.

The framework of professionalism proposed by Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) focuses on the aspects of teaching that are within the four walls of schools. Others (Hall, 1975; Lortie, 2002; Ornstein, 1985) have pointed out, however, that much of what keeps teachers from professionalism is outside of the four walls of the school. The context and bureaucratic structure of education, the societal view of teaching, and the policy mechanisms that recruit, pay, and manage teachers currently inhibit professionalization.

The project of professionalization may depend on professional communities. When Glazer (2008) proposed an “inside-out” approach to professionalization he argued that teacher professionalization begins by improving practice. The main obstacle to professionalization is that teachers cannot reliably do what society expects them to do. That is, there is not sufficient codified knowledge to move high percentages of children through to graduation with the basic skills they need to be successful (Glazer, 2008). Professions only maintain jurisdiction over their expertise by responding to clients’ needs, Glazer (2008) argued, and as society demanded more proficiency from more students, signaled in part by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, teachers were slow to respond. Adler et al. (2008) also noted these changing external factors and suggested that

professional communities in schools are a natural response to them because professional communities are good at disseminating new information and practices.

The established research on professional communities shows that they improve outcomes for students (Louis & Marks, 1998). Moreover, the collaboration of teachers to exert more power and build knowledge is a way for teachers to become more fully professional. Professional communities provide a way to build the knowledge Glazer (2008) saw lacking. Lortie (2002) predicted that collaboration would enhance professionalism. Glazer (2008) called for “opportunities for teachers to learn how to apply [detailed classifications]” to support “effective and consistent practice” (p. 181). Many professional communities are doing precisely that: they are providing teachers the opportunity to improve their practice. According to Glazer (2008) this internal focus can improve the professional practice of teachers enough that external structures (i.e. pay, social status, power) follow.

### **Summary of Literature on Professional Communities**

The research on professional community creates a picture of teacher professionalism that necessarily includes community. While some may think that professional community happens when professionals get together in communities—that professionalism exists separately from the community—it seems that teachers cannot be professional without communities. Teachers are not merely professionals in communities; they are professionals *because* they are in community. All professionals have an organizational aspect to their work, and professional communities may serve a similar role to the professional organizations other professions have. Professional communities enhance teachers’ knowledge and serve to hold teachers accountable to high standards.

More research is needed to understand the exact effects professional communities have on teacher professionalism.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter summarized the literature in four broad but related areas of research: professionalism, teacher professionalism, the measurement of professionalism, and professional community. The research reviewed here focuses on how professionals define, maintain, and execute their honored occupational status.

The research points to four conclusions. Firstly, professionalism is definable. While the definitions are not uniform across time or profession, the definitions follow general themes related to the professional's use of knowledge, power, and relationships. Secondly, professionalism is measurable. Thirdly, teacher professionalism is poorly defined, but definitions from other professions can be applied to teaching. Fourthly, professional communities, common among teachers, likely have connections with teacher professionalism.

## **Chapter 3: Study Design and Methods**

### **Introduction**

This study utilizes quantitative methods to explore a connection between professional orientation and professional community. This chapter discusses why the specific methods and instruments were chosen, developed, and implemented in a survey of approximately 180 teachers. Because the focus of this study is an exploration of the nature of professionalism among teachers, I chose to adapt existing survey items that had previously been used with different occupational groups. The development process was part of the research design, and is reported in greater depth in Chapter 4. The results of that survey, which are reported in Chapters 5 and 6, were analyzed to discover connections between professional orientation and professional community.

I approached this study as an opportunity to explore both the concept of professionalism among teachers and the potential for assessing it using survey instruments. I approached professionalism and professional community as part of the ‘real’ world, but I understand my attempts to describe it are fallible and subject to improvement. As Scott (2005) puts it, “belief that an independent reality exists does not entail the assumption that absolute knowledge of the way that reality works is possible” (p. 635). So, while my goal in this study is to generate a description of the nature of professionalism in teachers, my emphasis is on the usefulness of that description more than its infallibility. Theories on professionalism abound, but many of the theories on professionalism were written to describe other occupations. In this study I take theories of professionalism and test their usefulness as a conceptual tool for describing teachers.

Further, this study connects professional community to professionalism in a quantifiable way.

I am a teacher as well as a researcher, and I approach this research topic as a participant in an active professional community and a teacher forming a professional identity. I believe, on a personal level, in the importance of both of the variables I am studying. Phillips and Burbules (2000) challenged educational researchers to hold beliefs that “(1) have been generated through rigorous inquiry and (2) are likely to be true” (p. 3). So, while my experience informs me of the importance of professional community as an asset to my professional identity, this study will apply more rigorous inquiry to those beliefs. My approach is consistent with that of critical realists, who, upon seeing an unmet need in society, “develop ‘a priori’ hypotheses (using appropriate explanatory theory) about the underlying mechanisms generating these patterns, analyze whether the hypotheses provide adequate explanations of the phenomena under scrutiny,” and adjust hypotheses as they are tested and assessed (Houston, 2001, p. 851). My experience as a teacher combines with established theories on professionalism and professional community to lead me to my hypotheses. In the end, part of the validity of the research will come from its usefulness. Critical realists call this the “practice validity” (Houston, 2001, p. 857). I chose to study professional community and teacher professionalism because they continue to show promise as theories that connect directly to improved results for schools. I hope a rigorous inquiry into these theories can help teachers accomplish their important work. My dual role as teacher and researcher influences both the design of this study and my analysis of the results. As I began, I was inspired by what I saw in practice, and my analysis will pass through the same critical perspective. I

examine my results as a teacher and researcher hoping to find useful explanations to inform practice.

### **Instrument Development**

This section briefly explains the source of the items included in survey instrument (Appendix A) used to gather data in this study. The instrument is a combination of established items used in previous studies and newly crafted items designed for the purposes of this study. The study is designed around two main variables: professional orientation and professional community.

#### **Professional Role Orientation**

The Professional Role Orientation Index, the development of which is detailed in Bebeau, Born, Ozar (1993), served as inspiration for the first part of the survey instrument. The PROI has been used with dentists and adapted for use with physical therapists. It has face validity for use with dentists, as items have been tailored for that profession and are grounded in theories of professionalism. It has concurrent validity, as it was showed significantly different scores among dentists in different stages of professional formation (Bebeau et al., 1993). As the PROI instrument had never been used with teachers, I detail my process for adapting it in Chapter 4. The adaptation involved rewriting items, writing new items, and using factor analysis to develop new variables. This section of the instrument contains 29 rating-scale items that ask teachers about their professional orientation.

#### **Professional Community**

Professional community is its own field of inquiry I reviewed in Chapter 2. Professional community (PC) for the purposes of this study combined items around four

theorized aspects of professional community: trust, deprivatized practice, reflective dialogue, and shared values. The items on professional community gauge the degree to which teachers form supportive communities among each other. The items have been extensively used, come from established literature on this topic, use the wording and scales used previously, and have applied in other countries (Lomos, Hofman, & Bosker, 2011; Louis et al., 2010). While many of the items used in this study have been used for years in numerous studies, nearly all of them were recently used in Louis et al. (2010), which was the primary source of the items. That 2010 study administered those items to 138 schools around North America. The items for these variables were additively combined to form one PC variable. Measures of teacher sense of efficacy were based on the seminal work of Bandura (1997) and validated in multiple studies by Hoy and his colleagues (see Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993).

### **Methods**

This study was conceptualized in a quantitative, critical realist framework, a key variant on more extreme versions of postpositivism, which sometimes claim that reality is “unknowable.” Critical realism, in contrast, directs researchers to study those tendencies or mechanisms that can help them understand reality (Houston, 2001). I chose a survey it is commonly used for studies in which one of the goals is theory verification (Creswell, 2013 p. 18). Surveys can provide a “numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions” (Creswell, 2013, p. 13). As my study hopes to clarify, validate, and connect theories on teacher professionalism and teacher professional community, a survey suits this study. I chose this methodology because I want to learn about a large number of teachers, and surveys remain a “remarkably useful and efficient tool” for learning about a group of

people (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009, p. 1). Because this study hopes to discover connections among a variety of factors, a survey allows multiple factors to be examined with relatively few resources.

This study draws on a number of previous studies almost all of which use a survey instrument to collect data. The original PROI (Bebeau et al., 1993), the adapted PROI-PT (Swisher, Beckstead, & Bebeau, 2004) and other studies of professionalism (Forsyth & Danisiewicz, 1985; Hall, 1975; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994) that informed this study all used a survey in the collection of their data. Further, many of the studies on professional communities have used surveys as a means of learning about teachers and schools. In particular, Louis et al. (2010) employed a survey instrument to confirm some of the same factors addressed in this study. Nearly all of the items used to measure professional community come from the Louis et al. (2010) study.

### **Sample**

The study sample was drawn from a large school district in a southern U.S. state. I applied to conduct my research in this district using their own application process. I simultaneously applied for approval from the University of Minnesota's Institutional Review Board and the research department of the school district. Once I had received approval from both reviews, the district's and the university's, I was granted permission to survey a limited group of teachers. The district employs over 5,000 teachers but my sampling was limited to 453 teachers. The district put out an invitation to principals to participate in the study, and respondents to the survey are from only those schools whose principals accepted that invitation. I had no role in the selection of the schools. In all, three elementary schools, five middle schools, and one high school participated in the

study and 40% (or 184/453) of teachers invited completed the survey. All teachers in participating schools were invited and reminded to participate. Every effort was made to include as many teachers as possible in each school.

There are clear advantages to the resulting sample. Because all participants are in one district and state, they all operate in one policy environment. The disadvantage of selecting a sample in this way is also clear. This study is limited in its generalizability because all participants come from one district. Ideally, a randomly selected pool of participants across a national sample would have been used. But time, access, and resources constrained this study. Further, for an instrument that is yet unproven, it is appropriate to start with a smaller sample and scale up as evidence warrants. This sample may contain a bias due to the way the district solicited participants. Principals chose whether or not to participate; teachers, themselves, individually chose to participate. These layers of selection may have biased my sample, but this study primarily examines the interaction between two broad variables: professional orientation and professional community. There is no theoretical reason to believe that the *interaction* would be different among those surveyed and those who chose not to participate.

### **Survey Administration**

The survey was administered via Internet and utilized the University of Minnesota's Qualtrics system. Invitations and reminders were sent via email and email trackers allowed me to verify response rates.

### **Analysis**

The statistics package SPSS was used to analyze the survey data in three steps: (1) using exploratory factor analysis to determine factor variables; (2) bi-variate analysis of

the relationships among variables; and (3) regression analysis to examine how professional community is related to professional orientation.

### **Chapter Summary**

This study utilizes a survey instrument to gather responses from practicing teachers on their professional orientation and the professional community in their school. The study focuses on teachers in nine schools in one district. The data collected from the survey will be analyzed to show the connection between professional orientation and professional community.

## **Chapter 4: Adapting the PROI for Teachers**

### **Introduction: The Choice of the PROI**

My interest in the PROI began with my interest in professionalism. While professionalism is widely studied there are no instruments that measure teacher professionalism in the multi-faceted way that the PROI does for dentists. It was designed to measure individual responses in four domains: authority, responsibility, agency, and autonomy. Moreover, it had been adapted for use with distinct occupational groups, from physical therapists to researchers, but always within traditional professions. As such, it required adaptation for use with teachers, who, as noted in Chapters 1 and 2, are often called semi-professionals.

This new instrument would not be the first time a survey instrument attempted to capture data on teacher professionalism. Hall (1975), Talbert and McLaughlin (1994), and Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) all used survey instruments, the latter focusing exclusively on professional authority. Hall (1975) used his instrument to measure professionalism even though he clearly categorized teachers as semi-professionals. This instrument, which I will call the Teacher Professionalism Questionnaire (TPQ), differs from these others in both the aspects of professionalism it measures and the specific items it asks.

I chose the PROI as the inspiration for my instrument development for a number of reasons: it had been successfully adapted for other professions previously; the theoretical dimensions were well-rooted in the literature on professionalism; and it was relatively compact. The PROI offered a multi-dimensional look at professionalism in a

relatively short survey. Further, the aspects of professionalism it measured aligned well with both the literature on professionalism and the literature on professional community.

### **The Need for Adaptation**

The PROI was initially designed for administration with dentists, who differ from teachers in two important ways. Dentists are typically autonomous in their work (many still work in small, independent practice settings) while teachers almost always work in a bureaucratic hierarchy, and dentists are usually considered professionals while teachers are most often considered semi-professionals. Teachers rarely work as autonomous practitioners. Instead, they primarily work as the core of a large government bureaucracy charged with educating children. While dentists are able to decide many of the factors that affect their work, such as how, when, and with whom it will be done, teachers rarely get to decide when and with whom their work will be done. Teachers usually get to decide how their classroom will run, but even this is constrained by state and district curricula expectations, which are not established by teachers but by elected officials and administrative agencies.

Teachers also differ from dentists in the way that society perceives their level of professionalism. As Ingersoll and Merrill (2014) note, teachers still occupy a semi-professional status while doctors and dentists are perceived as more professional. Their study does not show a sharp divide between professionals and semi-professionals. In fact, their study shows perceptions of various professions changing over time and moving up and down a continuum. While the PROI was designed for professionals, it may still be appropriate to use it as a theoretical basis for a semi-profession. Its use may even be informative as to some of the empirical differences between the two.

While it was initially designed for dentists, a professional group who works in a setting rather different from public schools, I saw potential for its use with teachers. To adapt it, however, some items would have to be rewritten and new ones, created altogether. The development of the TPQ included item creation, cognitive interviews, expert review, and an administration of the survey to nearly 200 teachers.

### **Instrument Development**

This instrument was designed to measure professional orientations in the four areas theorized in literature: authority, responsibility, agency, and autonomy. Items were written to the theoretical descriptions of these four orientations. Because the PROI was originally developed to be used with dentists (and has subsequently been adapted for other professionals), many items had to be reworded to fit the work that teachers do and the organizational setting in which they do that work. Because of differences in context, some items had to newly created.

Before I began the adaptation process, I first examined an adaptation of the PROI that was used with physical therapists (PROI-PT), another group that could be classified as a semi-profession. In that study, the researchers (Swisher et al., 2004) developed an adapted instrument, administered it to 503 subjects, and analyzed the results using both exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. The adaptation of the instrument happened in consultation with one of the original authors of the PROI, Professor Muriel Bebeau. The authors attempted to retain or adapt all of the original items, and many items had to be rewritten in the process. The exploratory analysis showed the same four-factor solution as the original PROI although it accounted for only 21.8% of the variance in the model and only 26 out of the original 40 items were

retained. The confirmatory analysis also showed the same four-factor solution, but there were strong correlations between autonomy and agency that left them to wonder if one broader category might work better than a two smaller ones. Overall, Swisher et al. (2004) found their draft of the adapted instrument useful but in need of further development. They conclude, “With further alignment, the PROI-PT could provide valuable information about how physical therapists view their professional roles” (Swisher et al., 2004, p. 795). Their study demonstrated that the original PROI could be adapted to settings that are not among the traditional professions.

### **The PROI and Its Adaptation**

The dimensions of the PROI (authority, agency, autonomy, and responsibility) are grounded in theory and clearly appropriate constructs to examine professionalism. While the status of teacher professionalism is still being debated, even semi-professionals would have authority, agency, autonomy, and responsibility. So their exact status professional or semi-professional does not preclude the instrument from being adapted. Further, using an instrument that aligns with theories on professionalism could give insight into the ways teachers differ from more traditional professionals.

I followed a process similar to that of Swisher et al. (2004). I examined each item and assessed its appropriateness for teaching based on my experience as a teacher and a student of education. I began adapting the PROI for teachers by thinking broadly about how professionals, who often work autonomously, interact with the forces that constrain their autonomy. While their work environments differ, teachers and dentists alike have to practice their professionalism in an environment in which external forces can constrain or influence otherwise autonomous work. For many of the items, the adaptation of questions

was as simple as equating outside regulators in dentistry (i.e. insurance providers, state licensing regulators) to outside regulators in teaching (i.e. district and state administrators). Additionally, I wrote items on what I saw as three separate levels of bureaucracy that affect teacher work environments: the school, the district, and the state. This coincides with the question in the original PROI that ask about the immediate work environment (the practice), the regulatory environment (governmental and professional regulators), and third party regulators (insurance carriers). For teachers, each of these bureaucratic levels affects their daily work, and in most cases, teachers have at least some influence on decisions that happen at those different levels.

The original PROI was a forty-item survey used to measure four orientations. Each orientation had ten items. Respondents rated items from one to six and scorers totaled their rating on each dimension for total of ten to sixty. The resulting scores were graphed on two four-quadrant Cartesian planes. The first plane graphed results from the authority (on the y-axis) and responsibility (on the x-axis). The second plane put agency by autonomy in the same way. These two visual representations allow for striking visual comparisons among groups of dentists or dental students. It was not my goal to keep this same structure or scoring procedure, so some scales ended up with more items than others.

Many of the items were so general in their phrasing, they could asked of people in nearly any occupation. For example, one of the items in the PROI states, “Every time I turn around, there are more and more constraints placed on my profession.” In the same section it states, “I’m the best judge of my own work.” Statements such as these were adopted into the TPQ without adaptation.

I left as many items as possible unchanged, but, of course, some items had to be adapted in ways that are not trivial. For example, “Third party carriers rarely listen to the private practitioner,” a statement in the section measuring agency, had to change because teachers are not private practitioners, at least not in the way this item implies, and teachers do not work with insurance carriers. The spirit of this question, however, is about how influential an individual feels when dealing with powerful external force. A person with low agency would feel controlled by those external forces. This one item became two in the TPQ: “District administrators listen to teachers” and “School administrators listen to teachers.” Both of these levels of administration are external to the daily practice of teaching, yet a teacher might feel like these external forces are controlling their work in an way analogous to the way dentists feel about insurance carriers.

The other two factors in the PROI, responsibility and authority, likewise had some statements that were easily adopted into the TPQ and others that required adaptation. For example, the item, “My first professional obligation is to myself,” was an item adopted without changes. Others, however, had to be rewritten to apply in the world of teaching. The item, “I believe third party administrators should have no role in reviewing dentists’ treatment plans” became “I believe state administrators should have no role in reviewing teachers’ instruction.” As was the case in other adaptations, I replaced the “third party administrators” with administrators that are a normal part of the educational bureaucracy.

Some items were adopted without adaptation, some were adapted, and some were left out of the TPQ altogether. The first reason items were omitted was because an adaptation did not seem authentic or appropriate for the world of teaching. One item from

the responsibility scale asks about “other dentists’ advertising.” While yet another asks about competition in the “dental marketplace.” Even in states such as Minnesota where school choice does inspire some competition and advertising among school districts, very few teachers would see that as a central issue in their professional responsibility. The competition and advertising happens at the district level; teachers would not feel the need to advertise to fill seats in their own classroom.

The second reason items were removed was purely practical. While the 40-item PROI is often administered as a stand-alone inventory, I intended it to be only half of the instrument I was to use with teachers. I wanted a briefer version of the PROI so that I could ask other questions about professional community and working conditions without it becoming too long. As I cut items, I was mindful of which ones were least amenable to adaptation.

At the beginning of my process, and at various times as I created or adapted items, I had to interrogate what the four factors, authority, responsibility, agency, and autonomy mean in the context of teaching. More practically, this thinking resulted in analogies for the internal and external pressures on the work. The PROI asks about internal pressures such as patients who question a dentist’s recommendations. The TPQ asks about parents instead of patients since the immediate clients, the students, are often too young to advocate for themselves. The PROI asks about the internal work environment such as the problems that arise from managing staff or setting prices. These issues are analogous to work environment issues such as working with colleagues and setting school policies. Finally there are the external pressures, such as regulations and professional standards that influence dentistry. These pressures are analogous to the

pressures, whether from the administration, parents, or the community, that influence daily classroom instruction for teachers.

These internal and external pressures exist for anyone engaging in complex work. The four factors that make up the PROI get at how professional dentists perceive their role in this network of pressures and how they deal with those pressures. Their perception and response to these pressures define much of their professional orientation. Likewise for teachers, their professional orientations depend on how they respond to these unavoidable pressures:

- Teachers who perceive the external pressures as insurmountable are going to show low agency.
- Those who prioritize authority of teachers over those external pressures are going to show high authority.
- Those who perceive the internal pressures as irrelevant to their work will show high autonomy.
- Those who contextualize those internal and external pressures as part of their caretaking will show high responsibility.

While almost all items in the TPQ were adaptations of original PROI questions, I also added some new questions that were not strictly derived from the PROI. Upon the suggestion of Professor Bebeau, these additional items were most often written for the authority and responsibility factors. Two of the items came from suggestions I received during cognitive interviews. Those questions, which ask about “deep knowledge,” align with research noted in Beijaard et al. (2000). Teacher professional identity, Beijaard et al. (2000) argued, is rooted in their knowledge of their subjects and practice.

The purpose of my process was to use the PROI as inspiration but to create something appropriate for teachers. At all times I sought to balance the concepts in the PROI with the contexts of teachers. The next steps on my process were a series of interviews and expert reviews that shaped the final instrument.

### **Interviews and Review**

During the development of the survey instrument, I conducted interviews and expert reviews that helped create and refine it. Cognitive interviews with teachers allowed me to refine the items I developed in the draft of the survey. I started with informational interviews with teachers and an administrator who work in the district where the instrument was to be used first. The purpose of these interviews was to learn more about the district, the professional development climate, and language used to talk about professional development. Next, I had two experts in the field consult on my items. Finally, because I was creating new items and adapting others, I wanted input on those items from currently practicing teachers. These interviews allowed me: insight into authentic language and phrasing; feedback on the items and structure of the instrument; and insight into the mental connections and interpretations teachers might have as they interact with the instrument. I did one round of informational interviews before completing two rounds of expert review and one final round of cognitive interviews. The following sections discuss the interviews and expert review.

### **Informational Interviews**

While teaching largely has uniform language for various features of their work, there remain some regional and local differences. These informational interviews conducted before drafting the items for the TPQ allowed me an opportunity to learn more

about the district where I planned to conduct my investigation. These interviews were unstructured conversations designed to learn more about the district where data would be collected and to know what phrases best fit their context.

Teacher 1 is a middle school special education teacher with five years experience. Teacher 2 is a middle school language arts teacher with more than five years experience. Teacher 1 and 2 talked about the professional development opportunities available to them. Teachers have to earn “clock hours” to keep their certificate current with the state. Those hours can be earned by attending training sessions offered by the district. At the time of the interview, many of these hours were related to changes the state mandated to align with the Common Core curriculum. According to these teachers, the training sessions are generally regarded as helpful in that they provide the hours one needs for recertification at no cost.

I learned from these interviews that teachers in this district largely sees professional development as a top-down process in which the state and district set priorities and offer workshop-type trainings. Teachers see professional development mostly as a process of fulfilling state certification requirements. I learned that administrators in their district do not formally impose anything called a professional community, so those words are free from any association with a mandated meeting.

After these interviews I wrote a draft of the items that would become the instrument. These items were reviewed by experts and three more teachers with whom I conducted additional interviews.

## **Expert Review**

After the informational interviews, I drafted the items for the instrument with considerable consultation with Professor Karen Seashore Louis. Professor Seashore has written a number of instruments that measure professional community, including the items used in the second half of this instrument. Professor Seashore and I reviewed the items for the TPQ item by item. Some items were eliminated and some were changed based on our discussion. Professor Seashore recommended some items that have been previously tested as possible additions to the survey instrument. Many of these items were included in the second half of the survey instrument.

Once a preliminary draft of the instrument was set, I consulted with Professor Muriel Bebeau, one of the original authors of the PROI. She read a draft of the items, and she recommended additional cognitive interviews on the merits of the autonomy and agency items. Additionally, she recommended cognitive interviews that ask how teachers distinguish professional from non-professional work in teaching. This suggestion led to my second round of cognitive interviews discussed below. Professor Bebeau also suggested a full pilot for this instrument, which, undoubtedly, would have benefited its refinement. A full pilot was omitted, however, because of time constraints placed on the study by the cooperating school district. The final draft of the instrument had to be submitted along with the application to conduct research.

## **Pretest Interviews**

As was suggested by Professor Bebeau, I conducted interviews with three teachers of various levels of experience. The participants were asked to walk through the instrument item by item and think out loud about what connections or thoughts the items

inspired. In this way, I gained insight into the authenticity of the instrument and any misunderstandings it might create.

I interviewed three teachers in this process. Teacher 3 is a high school social studies teacher with four years experience. Teacher 4 is a high school English teacher with four years experience. Teacher 5 is a science teacher with more than fifteen years experience at both the high school and middle school level.

Teacher 3 recommended changes in the order of questions. Specifically, she felt that certain questions on more sensitive topics should be later in the survey. I took that suggestion and reordered the questions. As she read some items, she expressed confusion about where to locate the question. She asked, “Is this asking about just in my school, or in general?” She suggested I alter the instructions to make clear that the items ask teachers to think both at a school and a societal level. Overall, Teacher 3 believed the four factors were an appropriate way to get at teacher professionalism.

Teacher 4 expressed some concern over the complexity of the questions and the openness of interpretation. Teacher 4 tended to think about the questions in a school-specific way. Teacher 3 and 4 both recommended adding instructions that specifically open the questions up to a district and state policy level. This suggestion was incorporated into the instructions. Teacher 3 suggested rewording one of the items to use the language “deep knowledge of instruction.” This suggestion was incorporated and two new items were created. The overall framework, the four factors, was appealing to Teacher 4 as a valid framework for approaching professionalism.

Teacher 5 had a reaction to the item that listed other professionals. She said she could not help but think about the “dollar signs” that go with those other professions. She

suggested a change to the question that lists professionals to include lower paid professional such as a social worker. Although social workers are often considered semi-professionals, I incorporated her suggestion because I did not want that item to strictly be about earnings. Teacher 5 questioned the two other items and suggested that they may be measuring how much a teacher feels “resigned” to the status quo more than the targeted factors. I did not make any change to those items, but I did note her concern for their interpretation. She implied that the work environment might influence teacher responses, and this investigation seeks to verify that theory. Her concerns were in line with the design of the instrument.

In general, the feedback I received in the pretest interviews was usually incorporated by rewording or reordering items. For example, the item “My job is to help all students reach their full potential” was moved to be the first item because Teacher 3 suggested it is the least threatening of all the items. Most of the rewordings were minor. For example, “Every time I turn around...” became “Increasingly.” This change was suggested by Teacher 4 both for brevity and clarity. Other changes ended up creating items. What was one, double-barreled item about “community and parents,” became two items, one that asked about community influence and another that asked about parents. This change came from Teacher 5 who was confused about which to think about while responding.

Those teachers interviewed believed that the items represented the four intended factors. Furthermore, they saw all four of those factors as valid aspects of teacher professionalism. All of the teachers interviewed regarded teaching as professional work, though they recognized that society does not esteem it as high as other established

professions. Professional work, according to Teachers 4, 5, and 6, was not about pay or public perception. Instead it was distinguished largely by a teacher's own actions at work. A professional teacher has the knowledge to do their work and is able to get that work done. Additionally, their work environment, they agreed, affected their professionalism. They stated that the way state-, district- and school-level administrators treated them affected their ability to do work as professionals. Teacher professionalism, then, in their view, was created both by individual actions and by a work environment that allowed for a professional expression of their work. What separated professional teachers from unprofessional teachers, according to these practitioners, was individual differences, work environment, or some combination of these two factors.

### **Testing the Instrument: Sampling**

While focusing on one district limits the generalizability of this study, there are distinct advantages to using a single policy environment when developing a major modification of an established instrument for use with a new population. Work life varies from school to school and district-to-district, and regulatory policies vary from state to state. Even in one study that sought schools with similar characteristics, there was a notable degree of variation among schools (Louis, 1998). By focusing on one district, I remove some of this district-to-district variability that is beyond the scope of this study.

### **Policy Context**

Teachers who participated in this study work in a multi-layer policy environment, but much of the power to influence policy remains with the state. One district official interviewed for this study characterized school districts as powerless to influence legislative policy-making. Districts then must implement those policies, though they may

not have had a large role in their creation. For example, when this state adopted the Common Core standards, it determined the professional development agenda for districts and schools, which needed to rapidly adapt to new standards. The state has since considered changing the state standards, and the standardized tests to assess them, once again. Teachers have some influence over school level decisions through site-based management committees, usually populated by department chairs or grade level lead teachers.

Finally, much of the professional development in the sampled district is determined by principals. Principals determine the topics and delivery of more than half of the roughly 30 hours of professional development required by the participating district. The district provides the rest through evening and summer workshops. Some principals organize teachers into formal professional learning groups where the teachers might share best practices or develop and analyze common assessments, but some schools in this district have no designated time or structure for teachers to meet in small groups.

### **Participants**

A large district in a southern U.S. state was selected so that comparisons among schools would be possible. The district has approximately 70,000 students and 5,000 teachers. Like many districts, the teaching workforce is mostly female and mostly white. Their levels of experience range from first-year teachers to end-of-career veteran teachers. As is the case in many southern states, the state where these participants teach does not have a strong union presence, and teachers do not collectively bargain. The participating teachers represented a variety of grade levels and a diverse pool of perspectives and experiences in teaching (Table 4.1, Figures 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5).

*Table 4.1 Characteristics of responding teachers.*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number of years teaching	183	0	30	15.24	8.535
Number of years at current school.	182	0	30	9.02	7.236

*Figure 4.2 Bar chart showing the distribution of ages of respondents.*

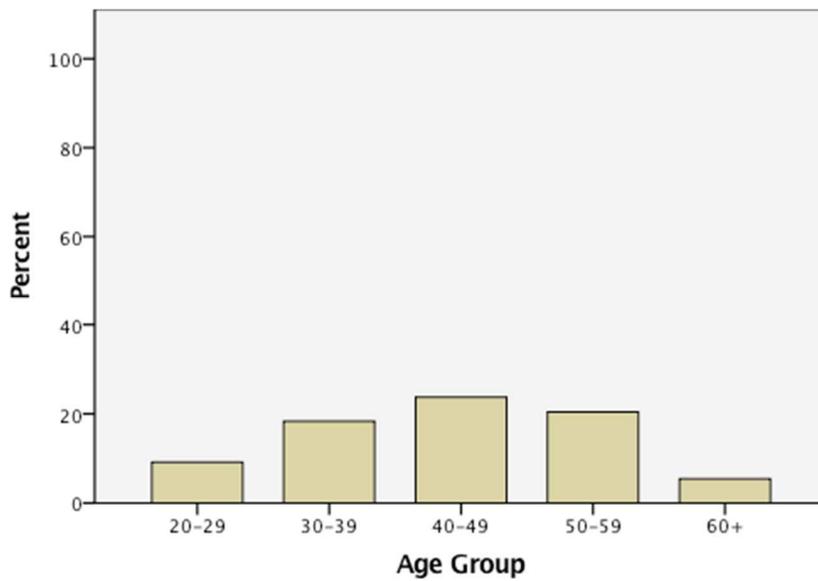


Figure 4.3. Bar chart showing gender identification of respondents.

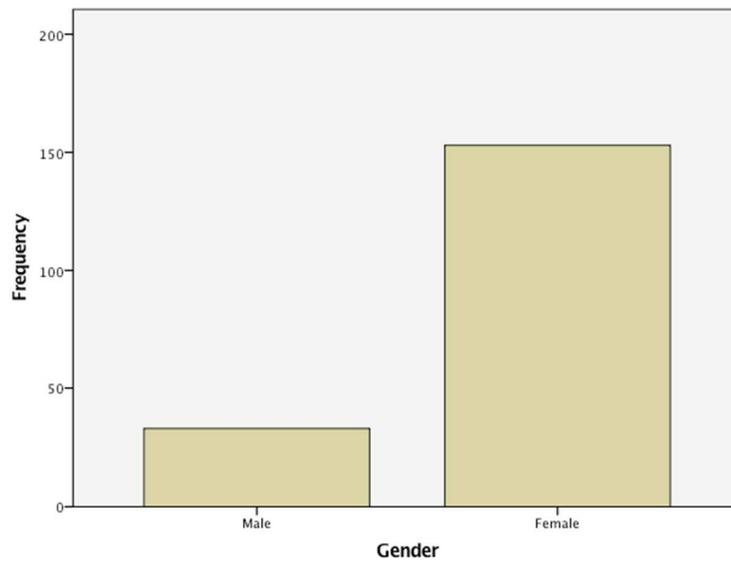


Figure 4.4 Bar chart showing the level of education of respondents.

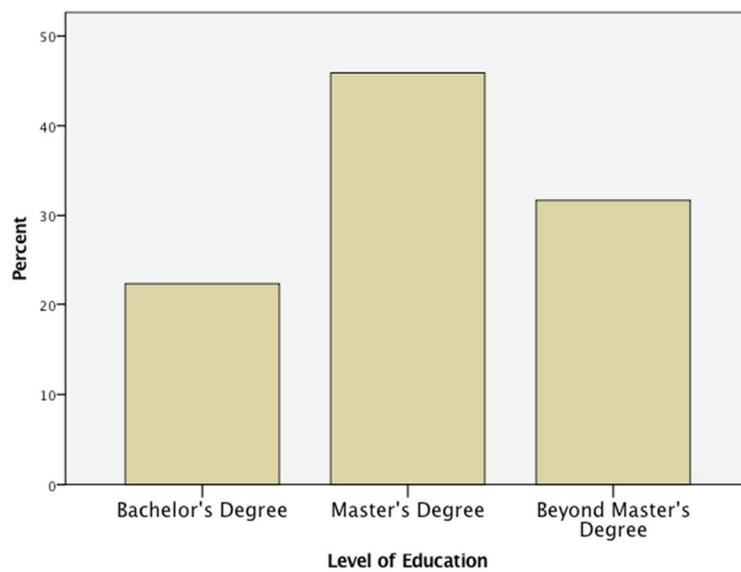
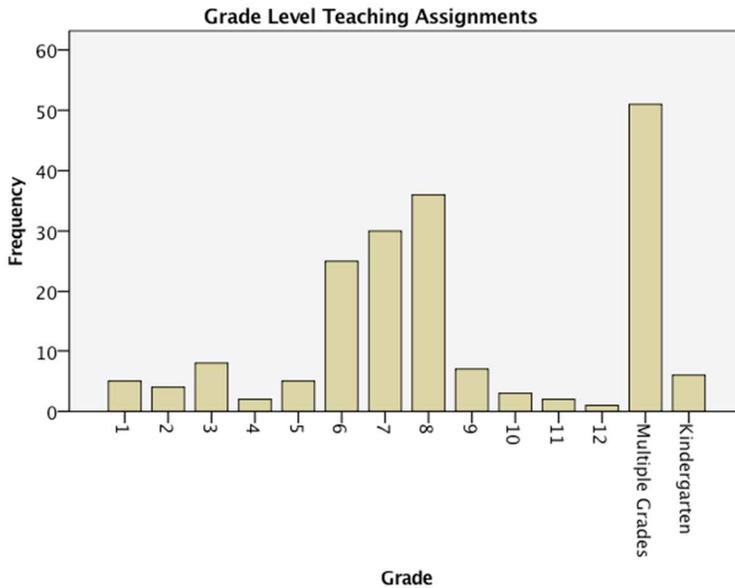


Figure 4.5 A bar chart showing the grade level teaching assignments for respondents.



The population for the study included all teachers in the district. Not all teachers in the district could be contacted for the study due to policies of the district. Instead, the district's research office sent out a general call to principals, and those who wanted their teachers to participate responded. Within each cooperating school, the entire population of teachers was invited to participate in the study.

### **Data Collection**

The survey was administered using the University of Minnesota's Qualtrics online survey tool. All teachers in participating schools received an invitation and reminders via email. A total of 198 completed the survey, with approximately 196 completing all of the items on the TPQ. The survey contained 54 total items, 29 of which were the TPQ.

The link to the survey was individualized, so I could track each school's level of participation. The first page beyond the informed consent notice asked the TPQ items. The second page of items asked about professional community, organizational learning, and administrative leadership. The final page asked some basic demographic questions. A complete text of the instrument as it appeared on the Qualtrics system is included in the appendix.

## **Chapter 5: Analysis of Teacher Professionalism Questionnaire**

### **Introduction**

Once the items were finalized, the Teacher Professionalism Questionnaire or TPQ, was administered to approximately 200 teachers. The results of that survey were analyzed using SPSS in three stages. First, I examined descriptive statistics from the results. Next, I used eigenvalues and a scree plot to determine the number factors in the factor analysis. Finally, I used factor loadings to eliminate items and finalize the factor structure.

### **PROI Descriptive Statistics**

Of the 472 teachers who were invited to complete the survey, 198 completed at least one item of the TPQ portion containing 29 items. Nearly all teachers who began the survey completed it. All but one of the items has a range that includes the entire item rating scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Some items had low variability indicating that the teachers who took this survey were mostly in agreement on those items. For example, the statement “My job is to help all students reach their full potential” had a mean of 4.8 and a standard deviation of .553. Such high levels of agreement and low levels of variability indicate that nearly all teachers surveyed agreed with the statement. Most of the statements, however, show (Table 5.1) a standard deviation above 1.0 indicating that the teachers surveyed have some variability in their agreement.

**Table 5.1** Table showing descriptive statistics of all items on the TPQ.

Descriptive Statistics					
Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My job is to help all students reach their full potential.	197	1	5	4.80	.553
I believe state administrators should have no role in reviewing teachers' instruction.	197	1	5	2.94	1.114
District administrators listen to teachers.	196	1	5	2.99	1.072
My profession should not be viewed any differently than other professions (doctors, social workers, attorneys, etc.).	196	1	5	4.05	1.229
Decisions about the teaching profession should be made only by teachers.	196	1	5	3.05	1.140
I should be able to make decisions about my instruction without input from administrators.	196	1	5	2.90	1.018
The effectiveness of my teaching depends on my deep knowledge of the subjects.	196	1	5	3.95	1.034
My first professional obligation is to myself.	195	1	5	3.46	1.113
If I really wanted a school policy changed, I could make that change happen.	197	1	5	2.32	1.017
I feel that I have an obligation to intervene if I feel another teacher's work is not up to professional standards.	197	1	5	2.82	.967

I feel free to practice my profession in my own style and according to my own preferences.	196	1	5	3.21	1.183
In my teaching I answer to no one other than myself.	197	1	4	1.49	.620
Increasingly, there are more constraints placed on my profession. (Reverse coded).	197	1	5	1.45	.811
Teachers ought to lobby for education services for disadvantaged students.	197	1	5	3.52	.924
State-mandated standards or tests interfere with my teaching. (Reverse coded)	197	1	5	2.07	1.016
I work best alone.	197	1	5	2.34	1.000
Policies make it nearly impossible to teach as I wish. (Reverse coded)	198	1	5	2.78	1.072
The community should have more influence over school-related policy. (Reverse coded)	197	1	5	3.24	1.026
It's my job to make sure students are learning, even if those students are not in my class.	198	1	5	3.27	1.031
I'm the best judge of my own work.	198	1	5	3.04	.992
I feel that policy pressures from above pretty much dictate the way I teach. (Reverse coded)	197	1	5	2.58	1.111
I am effective in resolving problems at my school.	195	1	5	3.56	.861
School administrators listen to teachers.	197	1	5	3.57	.985

Parents should have more influence over school-related policy. (Reverse coded)	196	1	5	3.47	.947
Parents should have more influence over my curriculum decisions. (Reverse coded)	197	1	5	4.09	.748
The administration has no role in deciding what should be taught in my class.	197	1	5	2.20	.884
I have an obligation to use my knowledge and skills to help students learn.	197	1	5	4.75	.559
The effectiveness of my teaching relies on my deep knowledge of instruction.	197	1	5	4.19	.898
Teachers alone should determine the requirements for teacher certification.	197	1	5	2.62	.954

### **Exploratory Factor Analysis**

I chose to do exploratory factor analysis (EFA) as opposed to confirmatory. While I did have the four factors in mind when I wrote items, I did not know if the items could be assumed to align with the four factors, or that a four-factor solution would best fit the experiences of teachers. Instead, an exploratory study allowed factors to emerge from the data. EFA is often preferred early in the development of a line of research while confirmatory factor analysis is often applied later in that same line (Hurley et al., 1997).

Beginning with an exploratory factor analysis, the statistics package SPSS was used to analyze the survey data. The exploratory factor analysis follows the recommendations in Costello & Osborn (2005). They recommend maximum likelihood

above principal components unless item response is severely non-normal. None of my item responses included in the final factor solution severely violate normal distribution. They also recommend an oblique rotation when factors may be related to each other. I theorized that the resulting factors may be related, so I chose the oblique rotation direct oblimin with the default delta (0) and kappa (4) settings. Finally, while the number of extracted factors is often set using Eigenvalues above 1.0, Costello and Osborn (2005) note that there is wide consensus that this is “*among the least accurate methods* for selecting the number of factors to retain” (p. 2). Instead, I used a scree plot as described by Costello and Osborn (2005). A scree plot indicated a five-factor solution even though six factors had Eigenvalues above 1.0. There was a clear break after five factors, so I set SPSS to retain five factors.

Of the original 29 items, 9 were eliminated because they did not load on any of the factor at 0.32-level or higher. This minimum was adopted because it was recommended as a rule of thumb by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) (in Costello & Osborn, 2005). After the item with the lowest factor loading was eliminated, the analysis was rerun. I repeated this process 9 times until no items loaded below 0.32. In total, the five factors account for less than half of the variance (Table 5.2), indicating that there may be other factors left unmeasured by this instrument. The pattern matrix and structure matrix indicate nearly identical factor loadings for the five factors.

**Table 5.2** Table showing variance explained by the five factors.

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.558	17.792	17.792	2.859	14.296	14.296
2	2.526	12.631	30.423	1.911	9.555	23.852
3	1.993	9.966	40.389	1.493	7.465	31.317
4	1.639	8.194	48.583	1.361	6.807	38.123
5	1.371	6.853	55.436	.934	4.669	42.793

**Table 5.3** *The pattern matrix showing the factor loadings of 20 variables and 5 factors of the TPQ.*

<b>Pattern Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>					
	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
School administrators listen to teachers.	.875	-.056	-.040	-.049	-.105
I am effective in resolving problems at my school.	.654	.098	-.028	-.037	-.021
District administrators listen to teachers.	.447	-.096	.153	-.031	.093
If I really wanted a school policy changed, I could make that change happen.	.363	-.037	.088	.115	.224

Parents should have more influence over school-related policy. (Reverse coded)	.001	.844	.038	.059	-.043
The community should have more influence over school-related policy. (Reverse coded)	.001	.736	-.005	-.029	.005
Parents should have more influence over my curriculum decisions. (Reverse coded)	-.008	.716	.033	-.051	.035
The effectiveness of my teaching relies on my deep knowledge of instruction.	-.014	.017	.861	-.033	-.028
The effectiveness of my teaching depends on my deep knowledge of the subjects.	.053	.057	.849	.070	-.052
Decisions about the teaching profession should be made only by teachers.	.013	-.103	-.067	.663	-.153
Teachers alone should determine the requirements for teacher certification.	-.012	-.152	-.007	.644	-.053
I believe state administrators should have no role in reviewing teachers' instruction.	-.033	.111	-.287	.426	-.015
In my teaching I answer to no one other than myself.	.011	-.004	.077	.414	.223
My first professional	-.039	-.038	.105	.399	.046

obligation is to myself.					
I should be able to make decisions about my instruction without input administrators.	-.069	.026	-.079	.379	-.124
I work best alone.	.021	.072	.021	.347	-.032
State-mandated standards or tests interfere with my teaching. (Reverse coded)	.047	-.057	-.037	-.094	.707
I feel that policy pressures from above pretty much dictate the way I teach. (Reverse coded)	.085	.047	-.072	-.211	.649
Policies make it nearly impossible to teach as I wish. (Reverse coded)	-.086	-.019	.052	.020	.513
I feel free to practice my profession in my own style and according to my own preferences.	.246	.015	-.023	.130	.435
Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.					
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.					
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.					

### Calculating Variables

The results of the exploratory factor analysis were used to create summary variables reflective of the five dimensions that emerged. The items that went into factors had a large range of factor loadings, so I used a method of calculation, Bartlett, that took this range into account. In this method, those items that load more strongly count more strongly in the final resulting factor variable. Further, Bartlett is a refined method of calculation, which, according to DiStephano, Zhu, and Mindrila (2009) , has the

advantage of maximizing validity while retaining relationships among factors. These variables are analyzed in conjunction with variables related to professional community in Chapter 6.

### **An Interpretation of the Factor Results**

These resulting factors are not the same as the four-factor structure of the original PROI, but they have similarities.

The first factor contains items that were based on questions from the agency scale of the PROI. These ask questions about one's ability to be heard, to effect change, and to resolve problems. A person who is high on this agency scale feels confident that her workplace is responsive and she has a control over the direction of the school. Because these items closely align with items that were part of the agency scale on the original PROI, it is appropriate to continue to call factor 1 'Agency.'

The items in the second factor measure one aspect of authority. A teacher with a strong sense of authority believes she knows what is best for her classroom and school. The items that make up this factor ask teachers to agree or disagree with parents and the community having influence on school and curriculum decisions. The items were reverse coded so who disagree with these statements score high on this scale. Teachers who score high on this scale privilege the decisions of those who work at the school above the parents and community who are the primary clients of the school. It is appropriate to call factor 2 'Authority' as it relates to local decision-making, or "Authority (Local)."

The items that make up the third factor contains wording suggested by one of the cognitive interviews and supported by literature on teacher professionalism. They are not based items from the original PROI. They ask teachers about their "deep knowledge" of

subjects and instruction. A teacher who agrees with the statements in this factor believes she is effective because of this knowledge. Factor 3 can be called “Knowledge.”

Factor 4 contains statements that were based on statements from the authority, autonomy, and responsibility portions of the PROI. While such cross-loading can make interpretation more difficult, the three statements that load most strongly were all written to measure an aspect of authority. Teachers who agree with these statements privilege the authority of teachers over state regulators when it comes to education. Whereas the other factor on authority privileged teachers over local forces, this factor indicates authoritative attitudes toward state-level decisions. This factor can be called “Authority (State).”

Factor 5 contains items that were written to indicate autonomy. Teachers who agree with these statements tend to believe they can teach they way they choose despite pressures from outside forces. This factor can be called “Autonomy.”

A test of reliability shows a range of alphas from .665 to .825 (Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4** *A table showing Cronbach's Alpha for the five factors.*

Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Agency	.692	4
Authority (Local)	.799	3
Knowledge	.825	2
Authority (State)	.665	7
Autonomy	.683	4

## **Discussion**

This instrument is a step forward in the research on teacher professionalism. It takes an instrument that has been successfully used and adapted to measure professional role orientation in a number of professions and adapts it for the first time for teachers. In doing so, it captures aspects of teacher professionalism that are a part of the general literature on professionalism but are noticeably absent in other survey instruments used to measure teacher professionalism.

While this instrument and many of its items were based on the original PROI and informed by other adaptations of the PROI, there are clear differences. For one, an exploratory analysis resulted in a five-factor structure that did not include all of the four factors in the PROI. This difference could be due to the obvious differences between dentists and teachers. But the differences are illustrative of some important issues in education.

Agency emerged as a cohesive factor in this study, and while the original PROI also showed dentists think of agency as part of their professional role orientation, agency is a defining factor for teacher professional identity. Professionals need to be able to solve problems. If they cannot solve problems, they cannot perform the essential task the community trusts them to do. Teachers, however, must operate in a larger bureaucracy that diminishes their personal autonomy, so agency within that bureaucratic context is a necessary part of a professional identity.

The factor structure indicates teachers think of their authority in at least two different ways. Some teachers believe they should have authority to make local decisions about their classroom and school without interference from local forces such as parents

and the community. Additionally, some teachers see their authority as having a larger jurisdiction over statewide decisions about education. This divide between local and state decisions matches a divide in the nature of the work teachers do. Their day-to-day work is done in a hyper-local context—their classrooms—but there are distant legislative and administrative forces that affect that work.

The items on “deep knowledge” were intended to be part of the authority scale, but in the exploratory analysis, they formed their own factor. This factor aligns with the literature on teacher identity summarized by Beijaard et al. (2000). Their theory and study shows expert knowledge in subject areas and instruction as important aspects of teachers’ professional identity. While a two-item factor is less than ideal, these two both load strongly with the same factor. Additional items could be written to more fully capture this factor.

One of the factors named in the original PROI is noticeably absent from this factor structure. Professionals with a strong sense of responsibility see their role “as including some direct or indirect ‘caretaking’ of the disadvantaged and public ‘at large’” (Bebeau et al., 1991). There are a number of reasons why responsibility may not have emerged as a factor, only some of which would suggest that teachers do not have a sense of responsibility. One reason is that some of the items that were written to capture responsibility had very low variability and a high mean. For example, one of the statements was “My job is to help all students reach their full potential.” Nearly every teacher who participated in this study strongly agreed. The mean was 4.8 out of a maximum of 5, and the standard deviation was .553. Another statement about responsibility had similarly low variability. Such low variability resulted in that item

loading onto multiple factors weakly, and ultimately, these items written about responsibility were eliminated. A challenge for future research would be to discern whether responsibility is truly not part of the professional orientation for teachers or if there are differently worded items that can capture it.

In conclusion, the PROI could be adapted and used for teachers, but this adaptation is not fully refined. There may be factors and aspects of teacher professionalism, such as responsibility, that are not yet included in the instrument. The survey, however, does capture much about teacher professionalism. It identifies five elements of teacher professionalism, all of which are identified in other professions. It also parses the authority orientation into two parts that match the hierarchical work environment teachers navigate. Finally, none of the data generated by this survey is prescriptive. While it seems logical to want teachers who have strong senses of agency, authority, and autonomy, these factors would need to be tested against important outcomes to know their value to education.

## Chapter 6: Connecting the TPQ to Professional Community

The second research question addresses the connection between professional community and professional orientation. The question comes from the idea that social interaction increases professionalism. This idea is old and well established, and it is still finding supporters. My research question brings together professionalism and professional community to see if there is a specific empirical connection for teachers. It asks:

*Do teachers who participate in professional communities have differing professional orientations with respect to their sense of authority, responsibility, agency, or autonomy than those who do not?*

I begin by showing the correlational data establishing connections among the TPQ and these other variables, and I will then show regression models that indicate the relationship between professional community (PC) and professional orientation. I chose a regression analysis instead of a dichotomized test of mean differences because it preserves statistical power and is less prone to spurious significance. These advantages were pointed out by Maxwell and Delaney (1993).

One issue with using regression is that the models presume a causal relationship. I have taken the somewhat unusual step of carrying out regression analyses that examine the potentially multi-directional relationship that may exist between these two concepts. One could argue that particular professional orientations stimulate teachers to participate more fully with colleagues in sharing and discussing their work in classrooms. In Chapters 1 and 2, I argued that it is more likely that, given the nature of teacher

preparation and socialization, that engaging in professional collaborative work contexts would increase the underlying components that are part of the common definition of professional work, but it is clearly possible that there are also reciprocal relationships. For example, increasing professional identity that emerges from engaging with a professional community may then cause a teacher to engage with others in a deeper or more active way. In other words, I use regressions to establish the significance of the relationships between Professional Community (PC) and the factors of the TPQ, but I do not presume to argue that there is a clear unidirectional relationship.

Three underlying components, deprivatized practice, reflective dialogue, and trust and respect, were summed to create the PC variable. The items that made these components were drawn largely from an instrument detailed in Leithwood and Louis (2012). The deprivatized practice scale asks about the degree to which teachers in a school observe each other and open their practice to each other. For example, one of the items on the deprivatized practice scale is “How often in this school year have you visited other teachers’ classrooms to observe instruction?” The reflective dialogue scale asks about the frequency with which teachers talk about their practice with one another. One of the items from the reflective dialogue scale asks, “How often in this school year have you had conversations with your colleagues about what helps students learn best?” The trust and respect scale gets at the relationships teachers have with each other. A typical item on that scale is, “Even in a difficult situation, teachers in this school can depend upon each other.” The PC variable is the sum of these scales, so a teacher who scores high on these scales will score high on the PC variable, indicating that teacher experience more deprivatized practice, more reflective dialogue, and more trust and respect than a

teacher who scores low on those scales.

I performed the regression analysis in three parts. Firstly, I tested a composite variable (TPQ). This composite variable was created by summing the five factor scores that are a part of the TPQ. This composite variable serves only as a starting place for analysis. It is, in itself, not interpretable. Secondly, I regressed each of the five factors (Agency, Authority-Local, Knowledge, Authority-State, and Autonomy) individually onto PC. Finally, I drilled down into the three smaller factors that were summed to make the PC variable to see if certain aspects of professional community had greater effects on orientation than others.

### **Results: Correlations**

Table 6.1 shows connections among the variables that make up the TPQ and PC. Agency and Knowledge both have significant correlations with PC. Authority has no significant correlation with PC whether at the local level or the state level, nor does Autonomy. These data suggest that professional community connects to the professional orientations of teachers in a specific way that is almost exclusively about agency and knowledge.

**Table 6.1.** A correlation matrix showing the five factors from the TPQ with professional community (PC).

		Agency	Authority (Local)	Knowledge	Authority (State)	Autonomy	PC
Agency	Pearson Correlation	1	-.035	.174*	-.074	.294**	.483**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.628	.016	.309	<.001	<.001
	N	189	189	189	189	189	174
Authority (Local)	Pearson Correlation	-.035	1	-.127	-.026	-.083	-.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.628		.083	.723	.258	.954
	N	189	189	189	189	189	174
Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	.174*	-.127	1	-.007	.230**	.167*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	.083		.923	.001	.027
	N	189	189	189	189	189	174
Authority (State)	Pearson Correlation	-.074	-.026	-.007	1	-.010	-.100
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.309	.723	.923		.892	.188
	N	189	189	189	189	189	174
Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.294**	-.083	.230**	-.010	1	.098
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.258	.001	.892		.197
	N	189	189	189	189	189	174
PC	Pearson Correlation	.483**	-.004	.167*	-.100	.098	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.954	.027	.188	.197	
	N	174	174	174	174	174	182

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## **Results: Regressions**

A regression analysis confirms that a teacher's experience of professional community has significant predictive value for the TPQ composite variable (Table 6.2) and two out of the five factors in the TPQ (Tables 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7). The composite professional community score accounts for over 25% of the variance in the TPQ. The largest among these is the predictive relationship between PC and Agency (Table 6.3). The responses on the professional community portion of the survey accounted for nearly 23% of the variance in responses on the agency portion of the TPQ. This indicates that those teachers who participated in more robust professional communities did have a significantly higher sense of agency. A smaller, yet still significant link exists between professional community and knowledge (Table 6.4). Those teachers who participated in robust professional communities also responded more positively to items measuring their sense of having "deep knowledge." The amount of variance accounted for by the model, however, is small, around 3%.

**Table 6.2.** *Regression of TPQ on Professional Community*

Model	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)		-3.642	<.001
Professional Community	.271	3.686	<.001
F= 13.586781			
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.270573			
N=174			

**Table 6.3.** *Regression of Agency on Professional Community*

Model	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)		-7.136	<.001
Professional Community	.483	7.238	<.001
F= 52.394			
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.233490			
N=174			

**Table 6.4.** *Regression of Knowledge on Professional Community*

Model	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)		-2.187	.030
Professional Community	.167	2.227	.027
F=4.960762			
R <sup>2</sup> =0.028033			
N=174			

**Table 6.5.** *Regression of Authority (Local) on Professional Community*

Model		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		.079	.937
	Professional Community	-.004	-.058	.954
F=0.003317				
R <sup>2</sup> =0.000019				
N=174				

**Table 6.6.** *Regression of Authority (State) on Professional Community*

Model		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		1.232	.220
	Professional Community	-.100	-1.321	.188
F= 1.746158				
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.010050				
N=174				

**Table 6.7.** *Regression of Autonomy on Professional Community*

Model		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		-1.257	.210
	Professional Community	.098	1.296	.197
F= 1.679953				
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.009673				
N=174				

The other three variables that make up the TPQ had no significant correlation with professional community, and the regression analysis bears this out in greater detail (Tables 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7). These tables show that the scores on the professional community cannot be said to have either positive or negative effects on the participating teachers' orientations with respect to their sense of autonomy or authority at a local or state level. Another way of thinking of these results is to note teachers who experienced robust professional communities did not tend to have significantly higher levels of authority. Likewise, teachers who reported robust professional communities indicated about the same amount of autonomy as those who, through their responses, indicated less robust professional communities.

### **Regressions: Understanding the Elements of Professional Community**

The PC variable used for this study was summed from three factors that were established in the research literature: deprivatized practice, reflective dialogue, and trust and respect. Among these more granular variables, all showed significant correlations with the TPQ composite variable, agency, and knowledge (Table 6.8). Regression models show that while none of the aspects of professional community by themselves add significantly to the prediction of TPQ, trust and respect narrowly misses the traditional threshold of  $p < .05$  (Table 6.9). Likewise, deprivatized practice is near significance. Furthermore, a separate regression model (Table 6.10) shows both trust and respect and deprivatized practice predict some amount of agency. The data show that, for the teachers who responded to this survey, the two out of the three elements of professional community—deprivatized practice and trust and respect among their colleagues—contributed to agency. None of these three elements of professional community

significantly added to predicting the knowledge variable.

**Table 6.8.** *Correlation matrix of the three variables that make up professional community and the five variables that make up the TPQ.*

		Agency	Authority (Local)	Knowledge	Authority (State)	Autonomy	TPQ
Trust and Respect	Pearson Correlation	.401**	-.030	.129	-.046	.033	.204**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	<.001	.690	.090	.545	.665	.007
	N	174	174	174	174	174	174
Reflective Dialogue	Pearson Correlation	.243**	.007	.128	-.061	.094	.172*
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.001	.930	.089	.417	.214	.022
	N	177	177	177	177	177	177
Deprivatiz ed Practice	Pearson Correlation	.421**	.014	.116	-.139	.074	.204**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	<.001	.848	.123	.065	.328	.006
	N	177	177	177	177	177	177

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 6.9.** *Regression of TPQ on Three Aspects of Professional Community*

Model		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		-3.292	<.001
	Trust and Respect	0.147	1.919	0.057
	Reflective Dialogue	0.101	1.285	0.200
	Deprivatized Practice	0.139	1.740	0.084
F=4.769805				
R <sup>2</sup> =0.078				
N=173				

**Table 6.10.** *Regression of Agency on Three Aspects of Professional Community*

Model		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		-6.533605	<.001
	Trust and Respect	0.300	4.431	<.001
	Reflective Dialogue	0.079	1.136	0.258
	Deprivatized Practice	0.333	4.737	<.001
F=22.691				
R <sup>2</sup> =0.286				
N=174				

**Table 6.11.** *Regression of Knowledge on Three Aspects of Professional Community*

Model		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		-2.092	0.038
	Trust and Respect	0.097	1.230	0.220
	Reflective Dialogue	0.084	1.036	0.302
	Deprivatized Practice	0.057	0.697	0.487
F=1.701				
R <sup>2</sup> =0.029				
N=174				

### Chapter Summary

The answer to the second research question is, yes. Those teachers in this study who participated in more robust professional communities did have professional orientations that are significantly different from those who did not. The primary way their orientations differed was in their sense of agency. A regression analysis shows that increased scores for professional community predict increased scores for agency and knowledge. Professional community is not significantly associated with any of the other professional orientations.

Another way of thinking about the regression results is to note that, when it comes to these teachers' senses of agency, it appears to matter how robust and active their professional community is. On the other hand, active engagement in a professional community does not seem to affect whether these teachers feel professionally authoritative or autonomous. Finally, two elements of professional community support agency, indicating that those two aspects, trust and respect and deprivatized practice, may be associated with a teacher's enhanced professional orientation.

## Chapter 7: Conclusions

This study began with a desire to learn about how professional communities in schools interact with teacher professionalism. While research into professional communities has generated clear ideas and concise measurement tools, research into teacher professionalism has not created equally concise or clear instruments. I chose to adapt an instrument originally developed for dentistry, and my research questions became twofold:

- *Can existing measures of professionalism be used with teachers?*
- *Do teachers who participate in professional communities have differing professional orientations with respect to their sense of authority, responsibility, agency, or autonomy than those who do not?*

### Purpose and Significance of the Study

The first purpose of this study is to test an adaptation of an existing instrument that can be used to understand teacher professional orientation. This instrument could be useful to other researchers who want a concise multifaceted way of measuring teacher professionalism.

The second purpose of this study was to investigate the link between professional communities and teacher professional orientation. While professional communities are theoretically rooted in professionalism, the role they play in shaping, advancing, or preserving teacher professionalism is not well understood.

## **Summary of the Findings**

This study furthers the research on professional community and teacher professionalism. It shows the potential for instruments used with other professions to be adapted for teachers, and it shows how professional community influences teacher professionalism. The results showed that participating in a professional community accounted for 23% of the variance in responses on teacher agency. This connection between professional community and agency indicates yet another positive effect of professional community.

By replicating a factor structure similar to other versions of the PROI, the TPQ further confirms the usefulness of this framework for understanding professionalism across various professions. The TPQ shows that authority, agency, and autonomy are useful, measureable constructs in thinking about teacher professionalism. Responsibility, a fourth factor that appears in the original research on the PROI, does not appear as a factor in the TPQ, but a separate factor about deep knowledge does appear. Instruments like the TPQ are a starting place to understand teacher professionalism in a larger ecosystem of professions.

Professional community already has a robust literature supporting its benefits. This study adds to that literature and further details how professional community influences the teachers that make up that community. In this study, professional community showed significant connections to teacher agency. Moreover, all of the measured aspects of professional community—deprivatized practice, reflective dialogue, and trust and respect among teachers—contributed to agency. This finding connects professional community to teacher professionalism among the teachers who participated

in the study. While professional community has always been associated with professionalism—it is right there in its name—this study helps detail one of the ways these communities support professionalism itself. The effects of professional community are both outward, toward improved student achievement and improved work climate, and also inward on the teachers' attitudes. This study investigates this dual role of professional community; its reflexive quality ensures that while professionals come together to make communities, those communities also support professionalism.

### **Importance of the Study for Research and Theory**

The TPQ shows the potential to use existing measures of professionalism that are used in other professions to test aspects of teacher professionalism. Most often, teacher professionalism is studied either by a generic instrument that measures multiple occupations using some general standard by which to rate them or by an instrument created exclusively for teachers. This study shows the possibility and value of spanning the space between these two options because it is not generic, but it is adapted from other instruments. Adapted instruments can have theory rooted in more established professions, professions held with greater esteem by the public, yet they can have the specificity of an instrument created exclusively for teachers. By adhering more closely to exogenous theories of professionalism, scholarship on teacher professionalism can gain credibility and context.

*Professional Community and Professionalism in Teaching.* One of the secondary purposes of this study was to investigate whether professional community contributes to a much larger project of professionalizing teaching. If, as the answer to the second research question indicates, professional community can influence professional orientation, it may

be affecting the larger project of teacher professionalization, but I approach this inference cautiously. The data presented in this study establish a significant relationship between professional community and professional orientation, but only additional research could establish the nature of that association. It is possible that professional community and professional orientation interact in a complex, reciprocal way. It is beyond the scope of this study to say that professional community enhances agency. The results of this study, however, do show that professional community is positively associated with agency, and, based on some existing research, I speculate that increased agency can be a professionalizing factor.

Glazer (2008) argued that the jurisdiction of teachers was threatened by an ongoing mismatch between society's expectations education and teachers' work. Bransford et al. (as cited in Glazer, 2008, p. 175) explained that society now expects all students to learn challenging material, a shift from expectations a generation ago. In an ecosystem of competing professions, teachers must align with society's expectation to maintain their jurisdiction. Otherwise, society will turn to another profession or technology to solve its pressing problem (Abbott, 1988). Society can seek out another profession or other means by which to accomplish their education goals: tablet computers and massive online open courses are steps in that direction. It is in this turf war for jurisdiction that professional community shows usefulness. As society expects *all* students to learn challenging material, teachers can be, understandably, daunted by that task. Daunted as they may be, teachers who are not aligned with society's expectations risk losing jurisdiction for their profession. By raising teachers' agency, professional community decreases the likelihood that teachers will shrink from the expected task of

educating all students with challenging material. In this way, professional community, and the resulting increase in agency, helps preserve or even expands the jurisdiction of teachers, thus preserving or increasing teacher professionalism in the ecosystem of professions. Glazer (2008) refers to this process as professionalizing from the inside out.

The importance of agency and connected factors has been established in previous studies. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), for example, argued that “the sense of agency permitted by [teachers’] identities can be a powerful force for good” (p. 184). Agency, measured as the inverse of “teacher powerlessness,” was found to be part of overall teacher efficacy by Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000). Teacher efficacy, in turn, showed positive effects on student achievement. Though it is beyond the scope of these data to say so, these connections point to higher teacher agency being a positive factor for student achievement. The finding, that PC is linked to agency, is neither surprising nor unimportant. It furthers evidence that professional community strengthens a web of positive factors in schools.

Adler et al. (2008) proposed that communities help professionals maintain their professionalism by disseminating knowledge. There is some preliminary evidence that professional communities do enhance knowledge. This professionalizing effect can be seen in the small but significant connection professional community has with the knowledge variable in the TPQ. This variable, as items are currently worded, asks about “deep knowledge.” More study could ascertain whether professional communities support practical knowledge in a way that is distinguishable from the deep knowledge studied here. These could be separate variables, and professional community could influence them differently. Additionally, more study could determine if there are other

workplace factors, such as serving in formalized leadership roles, do a better job of bolstering a sense of deep knowledge.

The environment around professionals is changing, and some have pointed to professional communities as a counterbalance to these rapid changes (Adler et al., 2008). Adler et al. (2008) propose that rapid dissemination and enhancement of professional knowledge by way of a collaborative community will act as the counterbalance as increasing hierarchy and ecological pressures threaten professionalism. While this study gives preliminary evidence to theory proposed by Adler et al. (2008), the data indicate that, for these teachers, communities supported agency more than knowledge. They proposed that more collaborative communities would “give rise to new identities” (p. 371) among individuals in organizations. This study shows that those who participate in more robust professional communities do orient themselves differently. Additionally, the particular way in which those orientations differ aid the larger project of professionalizing teaching.

The relationship PC had with agency is just as interesting as the *lack* of relationship it had with other factors, such as autonomy and authority. For example, there is no detectable predictive relationship between professional community and autonomy. It is possible that professional communities in schools do not raise autonomy but, rather, heteronomy, a factor this instrument was not designed to capture. Public schools have been previously classified as heteronomous organizations (Hall, 1975). Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) explained that heteronomy was a feature of postmodern teacher professionalism. Still, it is surprising that professional community has no association with autonomy. As teachers interact and rely on each other, it is conceivable for professional

community to even decrease autonomy, but the data show no effect at all.

Authority, as measured by the TPQ, has a certain adversarial aspect to it, prioritizing an individual's knowledge and expertise over that of some other group. In the various ways of thinking about professionalism, authority is depicted as part of a conflict model of professionalism, as opposed to a functional or institutional model (W. R. Scott, 2008). The items that measure authority ask teachers to give privilege to certain groups when it comes to making decisions. The logic behind the question is that teachers with a strong sense of authority will privilege the decisions of teachers above those of parents or the outside community. The items on agency, in contrast, are much more about empowerment. "If I really wanted a school policy changed," one statement says, "I could make that change happen." Professional communities seem to resist a zero-sum game in which teachers gain power only at the expense of others. Professional communities support teachers in their own empowerment, but it does not encourage privileged thinking that places teachers above parents or community members. In this way, professional communities can be seen as increasing professionalism without some of the detriments put forth by Baizerman (2013).

Teachers who participate in professional communities seem thoroughly focused on the work that is right in front of them, that is, the day-to-day work of teaching children. While some administrators may worry that professional communities will distract teachers with statewide or district-level political issues, the evidence does not show that. The picture these data paints is one of teachers encouraged and supported to do their work by their professional community.

The other variables that make up the TPQ, authority (local), authority (state), and autonomy, are also important aspects of a professional identity. To be sure, no one wants professionals to feel they have *no* authority or *no* autonomy. Any of these professional identities could be detrimental in the extremes of presence or absence. These data indicate, however, that professional communities did not connect to these aspects of professional identity. Further research could determine whether training or experience have significant effects on these aspects of professional orientation.

*Rethinking Teacher Professionalism.* Much of the literature of teacher professionalism deals with whether or not teachers are professionals. Lost in that debate is the variety of ways teachers express their professionalism. This study found five identifiable factors in teachers' professional orientation, and there may be more. These factors were similar to those found to exist for dentists (Bebeau et al., 1991) and physical therapists (Swisher et al., 2004). These similarities are not altogether surprising, but they give support for the idea that professionalism has common markers across occupations, even those that may be semi-professions.

The differences, as much as the similarities, tell us about the work teachers do. Authority, a factor that is commonly associated with professionalism, split into two factors in this study. This split reflects the multi-layered bureaucracy teachers navigate from federal law to the micropolitics of the teachers' lounge. Teachers seem to think of their authority in layers, and the authority they feel over their classroom does not necessarily extend to other layers of bureaucracy. Lortie (2002) saw teachers as lacking the essential authority that professions require. Many teachers may agree with this sentiment, but Lortie (2002) spoke of authority as one monolithic idea, lacking context,

nuance, or complexity. Researchers and practitioners need to approach teacher authority as something that has layers, location, and reach. More research could explore how this understanding of authority affects teacher professionalism and performance.

This study does not explain why professional community and authority do not appear to be associated while it clearly connects to agency and knowledge. One possibility is professional community privileges a different kind of thinking among teachers. Rather than moving teachers to believe their own thinking should be valued above others, professional community values others' thinking as well. Additionally, trust and respect is a key element of professional community. When schools have robust amounts of trust and respect in their community, teachers may be less concerned with asserting their authority above those outside forces that influence their work. In short, if teachers have a community, power struggles are less important.

This study gives a hint as to what kinds of professionals professional community promotes. Teachers in schools with robust professional communities tended to have greater agency and knowledge, but no more authority or autonomy. These results indicate that the route to greater professionalization for teachers may pass through professional community, but not in the way that Glazer (2008) and Adler et al. (2008) previously presumed. Professional communities are less about building the hard skills or knowledge of professional practice and more about enhancing a soft skill, agency.

This study found a connection between the work environment of teachers and their professional orientations. Professionalism, as a field of study, has traditionally focused on individuals or, at times, whole occupations. This study indicates there is rich research to be done between these extremes, at the intermediate level, to study

professionalism on an organizational level. Professionalism, often conceived as an individual trait that may increase as a person grows, could also be an organizational trait that ebbs and flows with organizational features such as professional community, leadership, or structure. Likewise, professionalism on an occupational level has often be portrayed as fixed, such that doctors are always seen as professionals, but it is likely that the professionalism of doctors depends, at least in part, on their work environment. As professionals increasingly work in organizations, those organizations influence the kind of professionals they become.

Professionalism itself is at a crossroads. Increasingly, even traditional professions such as dentistry, medicine, and law must compete with new challenges that undermine aspects of their professionalism. These challenges come from economic changes, technological changes, and organizational changes, as formerly autonomous professionals increasingly join corporations. While professional community cannot be the panacea that saves professionalism from these external pressures, community has a role to play. In addition to building knowledge, that role appears to be about increasing agency among despite increasing challenges.

### **Further Research**

More research could bring context to the study of teacher professionalism. This study brought research and theory from outside of teaching to investigate teacher professionalism. If more studies apply theory and instruments across occupations, researchers could begin to contextualize and compare teaching to other occupations on an empirical level. The context would clarify where teaching excels and where it lags in regards to society's expectations for professions. For example, the TPQ shows promise as

an instrument that could be used with pre-service and practicing teachers to gain insight into what others call teacher identity. Teacher identity is not always clearly defined, and there is a need for more empirical tests of the concept (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2000; Beijaard et al., 2004). Research on teacher identity, and by extension, teacher professionalism tends to rely on interviews and self-reporting that limits conclusions beyond an individual level. In particular, there is a need for instruments that could be paired with self-reporting or interviews. Such instruments, especially if used across multiple occupations, could give insight into teacher identity as it compares to the identity of those in other occupations.

The project teacher professionalization has moved so slowly that Lortie (2002) saw no reason to change his assessment nearly three decades after he labeled teaching a semi-profession. More research could help clarify why teaching appears so resistant to professionalization. Is it, as some have proposed, merely because of the bureaucratic limitations placed on teaching? Or is there something about the way teachers approach their work that misses one of society's expectations? Such a mismatch of expectations and results could be an identifiable de-professionalizing factor.

One way teachers could gain clarity is to look to other, more established professions. In dentistry, for example, the expectations are established and understood. Bebeau and Monson (2012) synthesized six expectations for dentists: to abide by a code of ethics, to engage in life-long learning, to place the interests of patients before the self, to place society's interests before the interest of the profession, to acquire the knowledge of the profession to an external set of standards, to self-monitor and self-regulate the members of the profession, and to serve society. Just as society has expectations for

dentists, society has expectations for teachers, but more research is needed to understand what those expectations are and to what degree teachers are meeting those expectations.

The TPQ itself needs improvement. Some factors, such as the knowledge factor, contain too few items to be reliable. Additional items need to be written. Also, the responsibility factor, one of the four factors from the original PROI, did not appear in the factor structure of the TPQ. More research could determine whether this is a weakness of the instrument or an indication of teacher professional orientation.

The TPQ does not indicate a normative good. No one orientation can be assumed to be better than another as each of the various role orientations could be seen as having benefits and detriments. Researchers could learn, however, which orientations aid the central mission of schools. If teachers of particular orientations have more success educating students, policy makers and teacher educators should know that.

Finally, it is appropriate at this point to return to the observation that there is likely to be a reciprocal relationship between professional community and all aspects of professional orientation. This study is both small and cross-sectional because it was designed to explore both the instrument and the relationship. In order to determine any causal or reciprocal patterns in the relationship, it would be appropriate to conduct longitudinal research in settings where there were concerted efforts to increase teachers' engagement with each other in professional community settings. Given the prevalence of initiatives to promote professional learning communities across the United States, finding appropriate sites in natural settings is realistic.

## **Policy Implications**

The benefits of professional communities are well established. Policy makers can add this study to a long list of others that indicate positive effects of professional communities. In particular, this study indicates that professional communities are positively associated with teachers' sense of agency. There are times in schools when teacher agency might be particularly wanting. During a divisive transition, for example, or the implementation of a new policy from above, teachers could experience a particularly low sense of agency. At those times, professional community could bolster agency. While most principals see professional community as an unmitigated good, there are some who may be nervous about having teachers coming together in supportive ways. Teachers in community, after all, have more power than isolated ones. The data from this study should relieve their fears. Professional community improved agency and knowledge without any indication that the teachers' attitudes on the more politically charged variables changed at all. In practical terms, communities of teachers support each other's *teaching* not their plans to occupy the statehouse. Additionally, this instrument could help teacher educators understand how professional orientations changes during a teacher's career. Teacher educators could then adjust pre-service and professional development curricula according to the professional orientations of teachers.

## **Critique of the Study**

This study, like any study that is done in the real world, faced practical challenges that resulted in limitations. Some of these limitations stem from commonplace realities and others came from methodological choices. Regardless of their source, they are important to understand and address.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Portions of the survey instrument used in this study are newly adapted for this purpose. The TPQ has not been validated for use with teachers. Previous versions of the PROI have been tested for validity and reliability. Multiple steps were taken to mitigate this limitation including cognitive interviews and expert review. Further, this survey was given at one point in time. Teacher responses may have been different if it were administered early in the school year or during the summer.

### **Limitations of the Sample**

Generalizability is limited by the sample that was selected for this study. All teachers who participated in this study teach in the same district. While this simplifies some interpretation because all teachers in the study work in the same state and district policy environment, it limits how generalizable the results can be. All interpretation of the data must be taken with the caveat that what the data indicate for the teachers in this study cannot be said of all teachers everywhere. Furthermore, no data was gathered outside of the survey instrument. With no qualitative or explanatory data to complement the survey results, the results must be interpreted without a rich context.

### **Conclusion**

This study began with a desire to understand the professionalizing effects of professional communities. As a teacher and a student of education leadership, I saw professional communities as an organizational feature that enhanced professionalism. As I began designing my study, however, I found that professionalism, as a concept, is difficult to define and, therefore, difficult to measure. Ultimately, I adapted an existing measure of professional role orientation because it most closely aligned with the aspects

of professionalism suited to teaching and concisely measured multiple aspects of professionalism.

What I found in my survey of nearly 200 teachers in a large district in the southern United States was fruitful. Higher levels of professional community were associated with higher levels of agency. This finding gives credence to the view that professional community positively affects overall professionalism. Teachers with more agency are more likely to engage in the kinds of problem solving expected of professionals. These teachers who participate in professional communities are more likely to see themselves as people who can get their important work done.

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## Appendix

### A. Survey Instrument

You are invited to complete a survey on professionalism in teaching. This survey will help researchers compare the professionalism teachers bring to their jobs to other professions, such as medicine and law. You were selected as a participant because you are a teacher in [the school district], and you meet the qualifications. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to complete the survey. By completing this questionnaire, you will provide valuable information about how teachers view their work and their professional development. Information from teachers at your school will be combined with other schools in this study. Background Information: The purpose of this survey is to learn about how teachers view their work and their professional development. Procedures: If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a short survey. The survey should take about 15 minutes. Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study: There are no immediate or expected risks for participating in the survey. The survey is completely anonymous. There are no immediate or expected benefits for you for participating in the survey. Confidentiality: Results from this survey will appear in summary or statistical form only, so that individuals and schools cannot be identified. Voluntary Nature of the Study: Your decision to participate in this survey is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships. Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Andrew Barron. If you have questions, you may contact him at [barro186@umn.edu](mailto:barro186@umn.edu). You may also contact his advisor, Karen Seashore, at [klouis@umn.edu](mailto:klouis@umn.edu) or by calling 612-626-8971. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researchers, contact Research Subjects' Advocate line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware Street S.E., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; telephone (612) 625-1650. You may have a copy of this form to keep for your records.

This survey will ask you about how you view your work and your professional development. Your responses are anonymous and voluntary. Mark the responses based on your knowledge and experience. If there is a question you would prefer not to answer, you may skip it, although we hope you will respond to all of the questions in this survey. Remember, your responses are confidential. Individual teachers will not be identified in any reports.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My job is to help all students reach their full potential.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe state administrators should have no role in reviewing teachers' instruction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
District administrators listen to teachers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My profession should not be viewed any differently than other professions (doctors, social workers, attorneys, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decisions about the teaching profession should be made only by teachers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I should be able to make decisions about my instruction without input from administrators.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The effectiveness of my teaching depends on my deep knowledge of the subjects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My first professional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

obligation is to myself.					
If I really wanted a school policy changed, I could make that change happen.	<input type="radio"/>				
I feel that I have an obligation to intervene if I feel another teacher's work is not up to professional standards.	<input type="radio"/>				
I feel free to practice my profession in my own style and according to my own preferences.	<input type="radio"/>				
In my teaching I answer to no one other than myself.	<input type="radio"/>				
Increasingly, there are more constraints placed on my profession.	<input type="radio"/>				
Teachers ought to lobby for education services for disadvantaged students.	<input type="radio"/>				
State-mandated standards or tests interfere with my teaching.	<input type="radio"/>				
I work best alone.	<input type="radio"/>				
Policies make it nearly impossible to teach as I wish.	<input type="radio"/>				
The community should have more	<input type="radio"/>				

influence over school-related policy.					
It's my job to make sure students are learning, even if those students are not in my class.	<input type="radio"/>				
I'm the best judge of my own work.	<input type="radio"/>				
I feel that policy pressures from above pretty much dictate the way I teach.	<input type="radio"/>				
I am effective in resolving problems at my school.	<input type="radio"/>				
School administrators listen to teachers.	<input type="radio"/>				
Parents should have more influence over school-related policy.	<input type="radio"/>				
Parents should have more influence over my curriculum decisions.	<input type="radio"/>				
The administration has no role in deciding what should be taught in my class.	<input type="radio"/>				
I have an obligation to use my knowledge and skills to help students learn.	<input type="radio"/>				

The effectiveness of my teaching relies on my deep knowledge of instruction.	<input type="radio"/>				
Teachers alone should determine the requirements for teacher certification.	<input type="radio"/>				

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Most teachers in our school share a similar set of values, beliefs, and attitudes related to teaching and learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Even in a difficult situation, teachers in this school can depend upon each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers in this school respect the professional competence of their colleagues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My school administrator clearly defines standards for instructional practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers have an effective role in school-wide decision making.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My school's principal ensures wide participation in decisions about school improvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers have significant input into plans for professional development and	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>growth.</p> <p>Teachers here are confident they will be able to motivate their students.</p> <p>Teachers in this school have what it takes to get the children to learn.</p> <p>Teachers in this school are able to get through to difficult students.</p>	<input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/>				
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Answer each question with your best estimate.

	Never	Once	Twice	3-4 Times	5-9 Times	10 Or More Times
How often in this school year have you visited other teachers' classrooms to observe instruction?	<input type="radio"/>					
How often in this school year have you received meaningful feedback on your performance from colleagues?	<input type="radio"/>					
How often in this school year have you had conversations with your colleagues about what helps students learn best?	<input type="radio"/>					
How often in this school year have your exchanged suggestions for curriculum materials with colleagues?	<input type="radio"/>					
How often in this school year have you had conversations with colleagues about the goals of this school?	<input type="radio"/>					
How often in this school year has	<input type="radio"/>					

<p>your administrator discussed instructional issues with you?</p> <p>How often in this school year has your administrator observed your classroom instruction?</p> <p>How often in this school year has your administrator attended teacher planning meetings?</p> <p>How often in this school year has your administrator made suggestions to improve classroom behavior or classroom management?</p> <p>How often in this school year has your administrator given you specific ideas for how to improve instruction?</p>	○	○	○	○	○	○
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Answer each question with your best estimate.

	None	Some	About Half	Most	Nearly all
How many teachers in this school show initiative to identify and solve problems?	<input type="radio"/>				
How many teachers in this school share current findings in education with colleagues?	<input type="radio"/>				
How many teachers in this school seek out and read current findings in education?	<input type="radio"/>				

## Your Background

What is your age group?

- 20-29 years old
- 30-39 years old
- 40-49 years old
- 50-59 years old
- 60+ years old

How many years have you been teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Years

How many years have you been at your current school?

\_\_\_\_\_ Years

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What grade do you primarily teach?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- Multiple grade levels
- Kindergarten

Which subject area do you primarily teach?

- Multiple Subjects
- Math
- English
- World Languages
- Music
- Art
- Physical Education
- Social Sciences (including consumer sciences and business)
- Science
- Special Education
- Other Subject Not Listed

What is your highest completed level of education?

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Beyond Master's Degree

Is there anything else you would like to add or share with us that we did not ask?