An evaluation of the Three Step Consultative Model of service delivery within an Educational Psychology Service.

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Abstract

This study is an evaluation of the author's use of the Three Step Consultative Model of service delivery within an Educational Psychology Service (EPS) in the East Midlands. The first step of the model involves selective assessment and/ or observation. The second step entails providing usually the teacher with initial feedback. The third step involves having a consultation (Wagner, 2000) with the teacher to develop agreed actions/ to develop thinking about the child's needs. This study focused on evaluating a unique model, as it incorporated a consultation step (Wagner, 2000) as part of standard professional practice. The use of this model is mainly offered when a teacher requires support to clarify a child's special educational needs (SEN) and/ or to more effectively meet the child's needs.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model in supporting teachers' active involvement in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews. Much of the data was analysed (by hand) using a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). A small number of responses required basic quantitative analysis and the outcomes of this are presented as averages and percentages (in tables, graphs and pie charts).

The findings are grounded in the views of teachers who experienced each step of the Three Step Consultative Model. The author made a decision to use Pidgeon and Henwood's (1996) term of focused concepts as well as Glaser and Strauss' (1967) term of middle range theories and combined them to coin the emerging concepts as 'middle range theoretical concepts'. (See section 3.14.1, Grounded theory analysis, Chapter Three – Methodology.) The fourth middle range concept to have emerged, that captures the essence of the main outcomes was "supporting teachers' active involvement:" The outcomes of the research suggest that combining

steps one, two and three by using the Three Step Consultative Model is an effective way of supporting teachers to change their practice. Step three is a particularly important element, so much so, that an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four), similar to the third step would serve the function of continuing to support teachers' active involvement to make changes to their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children.

Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) and the behavioural/ eco-behavioural models of consultation together help to explain how teachers are able to change their practice, in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. So, the Three Step Consultative Model seems to need multiple aspects of existing models to provide middle range theoretical concepts consistent with the reactions of the teachers evidenced in this study.

The implications of the findings for the author's EPS, schools and the local authority (LA) are discussed.

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Outline of the stages leading to the use of the Three Step Consultative Model in all of the author's schools

- **Autumn term 2001: I began my career as an educational psychologist (EP) in Nottingham EPS.**

- Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) was the model of service delivery in place (described in Chapter Two – Literature Review, section 2.8.7, Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)).

- **Spring term 2003**: I started work as an EP in Leicester EPS.

- An eclectic model of service delivery was in place.

- **Spring term to the end of the summer term 2003**: I responded to schools' requests and worked in a traditional manner (e.g. one-to-one assessment followed by a report).

- **Summer holiday 2003**: I participated in a consultation working group in Leicester EPS. I also joined a regional collaborative exchange network.

- **Autumn term 2003**: I began to promote Wagner's model of consultation (2000) in my schools as my main way of working (e.g. selective one-to-one assessment and/ or observation followed by a consultation with the teacher). The inclusion of an observation, however, was a difference from Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000).

- Most schools agreed for me to use Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) for some cases, but a few schools did not.

- **January 2004**: The schools that had experienced Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) were positive about the use of this model.

- **February 2004**: I promoted the use of a Three Step Consultative Model in all of my schools for some cases:

  -Step one: Selective one-to-one assessment and/ or observation

  -Step two: Providing initial feedback

  -Step three: Consultation (Wagner, 2000) to develop agreed actions/ to develop thinking about child's needs

- **End of the summer term 2004**: All of the schools were very positive about the Three Step Consultative Model.

- **Autumn term 2004**: I decided to use the Three Step Consultative Model as a permanent way of working in each of my schools for some cases.

Chapter One

Introduction

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The development of my interest in consultation

I began working as an EP at the start of the autumn term 2001, at Nottingham EPS. The model of service delivery was characterised by Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000). The underlying principle is that consultation is a voluntary, collaborative, non-supervisory approach, established to aid the functioning of a system and its inter-related systems (Wagner, 2000). The key process in a consultation for EPs is a meeting of peers over school-based concerns. In this case, the peers are the EP and the teacher most concerned – that is, the teacher with the professional responsibility to be concerned. The contribution of each peer has equal value. It is a process that is intended to achieve jointly agreed actions and outcomes. When consultation works as it is intended, a greater capacity develops in the system for developing solutions.

The main positive outcome of this method of working was that ways forward were agreed with teachers at the time of my involvement. The implication was that teachers did not need to wait for a report that included detailed recommendations. Furthermore, teachers often began to consider the first steps linked to the agreed actions during the consultation session. This observation revealed that participating in the consultation session led teachers to feel empowered to begin to do things differently, in order to be able to better manage a child's needs. Consequently, by participating in consultation sessions I felt that I was able to make a difference, in terms of enhancing a teacher's ability to meet a child's needs.

It is, however, important to highlight the two main critical points about Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000). First, as Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) assumes that the EP does not need to have had any direct involvement with the child prior to the consultation, the teacher and the EP will not have a common visual referent as the basis for the consultation (Wagner, 2000) (see section 2.14, Findings from research evaluating consultation (outcomes) in the UK, Miller (1996), Chapter Two – Literature Review). This may lead the teacher to feel that the EP will be unable to participate fully in the consultation (Wagner, 2000) as he/ she would not have seen the child. This factor could contribute to feelings of resentment in the teacher, which is likely to affect the quality of the consultation (Wagner, 2000). It is also possible that the EP may feel that his/ her knowledge and/ understanding of the child's needs could have been clearer if some direct work had been done, which in turn could affect the EP's level of confidence during the consultation (Wagner, 2000). So, the absence of the EP's involvement before the consultation (Wagner, 2000) could affect the effectiveness of the discussion, in terms of supporting the teacher to be better able to manage the needs of the child.

A second criticism that could be levelled against Wagner's (2000) model of consultation is that some teachers may prefer to receive an EP's report with detailed recommendations, so that they can select which ones to follow, rather than to participate in a consultative process that achieves fewer jointly agreed actions and outcomes. Teachers who share this view may also wish to read an EP's recommendations in their own time, which would be less time consuming than taking part in a consultation (Wagner, 2000). It is possible these teachers are keen advocates of the medical model who place considerable importance on a child receiving s Statement or a diagnosis, and believe that a detailed EP report will accomplish this goal.

I started work as an EP at Leicester EPS half way through the spring term 2003. This EPS promotes an eclectic model of service delivery. EPs are encouraged to use consultative approaches as part of their delivery. This is partially due to the fact that there remains an expectation in schools that EPs will engage in a traditional way of working (i.e. psychometric assessment followed by a report that includes detailed recommendations).

In the interest of establishing myself as the EP in my patch of schools, I responded to my schools' requests regarding the nature of my involvement during the remainder of the academic year 2002-2003. The requests were primarily for me to work in a traditional manner. However, at times I was uncertain as to whether recommendations were followed, or even whether reports were read. Opportunities to gather such information, for example, by attending Individual Education Plan (IEP) Review Meetings, often revealed that advice was not being implemented.

Given that consultation was fast gaining popularity as an approach to service delivery, a consultation working group was created at the start of the summer break 2003, to complete a range of tasks such as producing frameworks for EPs to use to support the process. Several EPs with a keen interest, including myself, in consultation also became involved in a regional collaborative exchange network that was established for EPs to share ideas regarding their consultative models of service delivery.

At this point I was eager to find a way of using consultation to improve the existing patterns of working. I wanted to involve teachers more to empower them to continually adapt their practice to meet the needs of individual children. My goal was captured by Wagner and Gillies (2001) who describe consultation at a super-ordinate level as:

> "The solution to the central problem of many educational psychology services. That is, how to shift their practice from the crisis work of individual assessment and diagnosis to collaborative work and preventative work." (p.149)

By the start of the autumn term 2003-2004 I felt confident enough to promote Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) in my schools as my main way of working. This tended to entail observing a child, followed by a consultation with the teacher. The inclusion of an observation, however, was a difference from Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) (to be discussed further below and in section 1.2, Detailed description of Three Step Consultative Model). A few schools were very interested in this way of working and agreed for me to work in this manner. The majority of my schools acknowledged the potential value of this approach, but were apprehensive about its effectiveness in practice. Nevertheless, this group of schools also agreed for me to adopt this approach. Unfortunately, a few schools were adamant that they wanted me to continue to work in a traditional way.

Towards the end of January 2004, discussions with special educational needs co-ordinators (SENcos) regarding my involvement revealed that most schools responded favourably to Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), with the addition of an observation component. I continued to use this model at those schools. However, the schools that expressed some initial reservations felt that they would still value me undertaking some psychometric assessment work with children.

At the start of February 2004 I promoted the use of a Three Step Consultative Model in my schools, which was my pragmatic solution to responding to the expectations of a few schools that EPs will engage in a traditional way of working (i.e. psychometric assessment followed by a report that includes detailed recommendations), but also taking into consideration that staff in the majority of schools had liked Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), with the added observation element. The first step involves selective assessment and/ or observation. The second step entails providing usually the teacher with initial feedback. The third step involves having a consultation with the teacher. This step is referred to as a detailed discussion. Most of the schools in my patch were eager for me to adopt the Three Step Consultative Model, particularly, with

cases where staff needed support to clarify a child's SEN and/ or to more effectively meet the child's SEN.

At the end of the summer term 2003-2004, the discussion with SENcos regarding my involvement since February 2004 was very positive. Consequently, I decided to use the Three Step Consultative Model as a permanent way of working with my schools.

1.2 Detailed description of Three Step Consultative Model

1.2.1 Step one

Without a doubt step one is an imperative element of the Three Step Consultative Model as the information generated enables a clearer picture of the child's needs to be developed. To account for the first criticism of Wagner's model of consultation (2000) (as outlined above) the Three Step Consultative Model includes a first step, which entails direct EP involvement (i.e. selective assessment and/ or observation). The inclusion of step one is a difference to Wagner's model (2000). This means that the EP and the teacher will have a common visual referent as the basis for the consultation (Wagner, 2000) (see section 2.14, Findings from research evaluating consultation (outcomes) in the UK, Miller (1996), Chapter Two – Literature Review). This should help the teacher to feel more comfortable and the EP to experience an increased level of confidence during the consultation. The result should be that the effectiveness of the consultation (Wagner, 2000) is enhanced. Furthermore, as explained above (in section 1.1, The development of my interest in consultation) in the author's EPS there remains an expectation in schools that EPs will engage in a traditional way of working (i.e. psychometric assessment followed by a report that includes detailed recommendations). This implies that teachers view the activities undertaken as part of step one as work unique to EPs.

So, the main purpose of step one is to develop a better understanding of the child's needs. This is normally achieved by undertaking a combination of individual assessment work and observing the child in different contexts. Based on the initial concerns raised at the Planning Meeting with the headteacher and/ SENco and the information provided on the Request for Involvement Form the most relevant assessment materials are selected (e.g. tests to find out more about a child's language skills). Following the assessment a discussion with the child also takes place to obtain his/ her views about their school and home experiences. At those when the child's difficulties are most prominent a decision is made regarding when to observe the child (e.g. in a literacy lesson).

Step one usually involves between two to three hours work.

1.2.2 Step two

In the continued response to the first criticism of Wagner's model of consultation (2000), the inclusion of a second step in the Three Step Consultative Model (like step one) is in contrast to Wagner's model (2000). The key reason for incorporating step two into the Three Step Consultative Model is to maximise the value of the work carried out during step one. The implication being that step one not only provides the EP and the teacher with a common visual referent as the basis for the consultation (Wagner, 2000), but that the EP's involvement adds to the joint understanding of the child's needs, which takes place in step two. The traditional model of working (i.e. psychometric assessment followed by a report that includes detailed recommendations) does not necessarily include providing the teacher with initial feedback from the assessment either, which means that he/ she has to wait until the report is received. Implementing the Three Step Consultative Model does include giving the teacher some feedback (step two) after step one, which means that the teacher's learning, can begin immediately following EP involvement.

Step two entails providing the teacher with a summary of results from the assessment accompanied with a clear explanation of what they mean. It also includes outlining the most pertinent reflections from the observations of the child. The final part of the feedback involves giving the teacher the opportunity to share his/ her reflections from the feedback. Often, at this point the teacher and the EP together contribute to highlighting the profound points that help to understand the child's needs. From this final part of the discussion, the teacher and the EP are able to establish the main difficulty to be addressed first in step three.

Taking into consideration the second criticism of Wagner's model of consultation (2000) model (as mentioned above), the fact that by the end of step two the teacher would have already engaged in a collaborative discussion with the EP related to the outcomes of step one, and will know what will be discussed initially in step three, implies that the teacher will be motivated to participate actively in step three. This transparency will help the teacher to approach step three in such a way that he/ she will be less reliant on the medical model. It is unlikely that the teacher will be concerned about the quantity of the actions and outcomes to be agreed in step three and that he/ she will view spending time participating in step three as more productive than reading detailed recommendations in an EP's report, which can be quicker.

Step two takes about fifteen to twenty minutes.

1.2.3 Step three

It is crucial to clarify that it is only step three of the Three Step Consultative Model which can be likened to Wagner's model of consultation (2000). Step three was added to steps one and two because (as mentioned in section 1.1, The development of my interest in consultation) it allows for the possibility of developing ways forward at the time of EP involvement. The implication being that a teacher does not need to wait for a report that includes detailed recommendations. Also, in the author's experience,

sometimes she was uncertain as to whether the recommendations were followed. Participating in a consultation session can lead a teacher to feel empowered to begin to do things differently, in order to be able to better manage a child's needs.

Step three is implemented between one to four weeks following steps one and two. This time gap allows the teacher and the EP to reflect on the outcomes of steps one and two, so that they approach step three in a focused way. However, a gap of longer than four weeks might mean that some of the clarity gained from the earlier steps is lost.

As mentioned later (in Chapter Two – Literature Review, section 2.8.7, Wagner's model of consultation, Wagner, 2000), consultation as practised in the author's LA is based on Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), which also includes the use of solution-focused procedures (see Chapter Two – Literature Review, section 2.10.4, Solution focused perspective). So, in step three Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) is used, which involves working with the teacher on the context in which the problem has arisen in order to see how together the EP and the teacher can work out how to bring about change. Also, as explained in Chapter Two – Literature Review (in section 2.12, Use of consultation in the author's LA) the author's interpretation of Wagner's model (Wagner, 2000) primarily takes into consideration the social constructionism theory of psychology, and in particular Macready's (1997) work. Meaning is regarded as a continually emerging outcome of interactional processes. Possibilities for change occur when individuals become connected to their own meaning making abilities and when they experience greater choice in the meanings available to them.

Thirty five to forty five minutes needs to be allowed for step three to be implemented thoroughly.

1.3 Research questions

The present study is an evaluation of the author's use of the Three Step Consultative Model. The research questions (see section 3.1.4.1, Grounded theory analysis, Chapter Three – Methodology) are included here because they express the purpose of the study clearly.

1. What are teachers' reactions to the Three Step Consultative Model?

Step one:	Selective one-to-one assessment and/ or observation
Step two:	Providing initial feedback
Step three:	Consultation (Wagner, 2000) to develop agreed actions/ to develop thinking about the child's needs

2. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors supporting them in changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

3. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors that reduce the likelihood of them changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

4. Do teachers prefer the Three Step Consultative Model or the traditional model (i.e. one-to-one assessment followed by a report)?

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Background to the literature review

This review of literature discusses a range of issues influencing the use of consultation by the author. In the present study, the new element was the inclusion of a consultation (Wagner, 2000) step (step three) as part of standard professional practice. Therefore, this chapter will concentrate on providing an entire review of consultation as used to assist in problem-solving.

Conoley and Conoley (1982) provide a generic definition of the consultation process:

> "Consultation is a voluntary, non supervisory, relationship between professionals from differing fields established to aid one on his or her professional functioning." (p. 11)

To ensure that consultation is effective, the consultant and the consultee have to fulfil their respective responsibilities (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999). First, consultants must create a consultation context that encourages consultees' development. Second, consultants are also responsible for leading the progression of the problem-solving processes during consultation. Third, both consultant and consultee are responsible for sharing their individual expertise in the consultation situation. Fourth, consultees have the responsibility of implementing the intervention plan that is developed from the consultation discussion. Both consultants and consultees share the responsibility for the outcomes of the intervention plan (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999).

So, consultation is important as a way of helping to support schools to be able to better manage the needs of children with SEN.

The context of the development of this approach by the author has been described in Chapter One - Introduction. The current chapter discusses the historical role of EPs and the main explanations for the change in practice to more collaborative and preventative work. It describes the local area and the local context. It puts forward a range of definitions of the process of consultation and presents an overview of the key characteristics for effective consultation. A review of the models influencing the development of consultation by EPs is provided together with a detailed discussion regarding the main models currently underpinning consultation. The outcomes of evaluative research that has taken place in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) is critically considered. Implications for EPs are included. The main shortcomings of the research reviewed are highlighted and the requirements for future research are outlined. Research related to consultation that also has implications for EPs is discussed. An evaluation of several theoretical models of the consultation process is put forward. The final section is the conclusion to this chapter.

The literature review focuses on school based consultation with teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs), although it is acknowledged that consultation will also take place with families and in pre-school settings.

2.2 Historical role of EPs

The 1981 Education Act described the multi-professional assessment of individual children. Wagner (2000) states that the Act inadvertently amplified an EP focus on individual assessment using psychometric tests and led to an increase in "statementing." The 1988 Act created fears about the delegation of funding from LAs to schools. Schools thought that they would have less funding than would have been available from the LA. The implication being that they would struggle to meet the needs of children

with SEN. These fears affected many schools and EPSs, and also led to an increase in formal assessments and statementing.

Furthermore, Wagner (2000) argues that the implication of referral systems is that EPs have been handed over cases to work on, which are no longer the school's responsibility in the same way as prior to the referral. Schools wanted advice to add to their understanding of a child's needs, but that would also serve the purpose of leading to additional resources. This system placed minimal emphasis on the EP working jointly with the school to help them to be able to better manage children's needs.

For some time EPs have felt dissatisfaction with their role (Wagner, 2000). Wagner (2000) maintains that EPs questioned refer to the lack of creative and imaginative work with teachers, of preventative interventions in schools and of joint school-family work. They feel that the educational psychology they are using is not making a difference in improving the development and learning of children and their schools.

All schools (and EPSs) are required to "have regard to" the CoP: On the Identification and Assessment of SEN (DfE, 1994)/ revised CoP: On the Identification and Assessment of SEN (DfEE, 2000a). One of the key aims of the 1993 Education Act and the CoP documents is to reduce the amount of inappropriate statementing. Schools are clearly required to work more systematically and to focus on more preventative work, thus reducing the "gate-keeping role" of the EP. Wagner (2000) emphasises that schools which have grasped the potential value of the CoP in improving teaching through increased differentiation are seeking change. The consultation model offers a change that can make a difference.

2.3 Change in practice

Larney (2003) states that consultation is fast emerging as a popular alternative to the traditional referral-driven models of working, which are characteristic of most EPSs in the UK. The evidence of the growth in popularity of consultation as an approach to service delivery in the UK is abundant: a collaborative exchange network has recently been established for EPSs to share ideas regarding their consultative models of service delivery; in-house development sessions on consultation offered in LAs have expanded in number; national workshops on consultation have increasingly become available and the majority of training courses now address the development of consultation practice as part of their overall training programme (Watkins, 2000).

The introduction of the document: Every Child Matters (DfE, 2003) is likely to further encourage the use of the consultation model. For example, it states that,

> "Our aim is to ensure that parents have the confidence that their children's needs will be met quickly and effectively throughout their education without feeling that the only way to achieve this is through a statement." (p. 28)

The introduction of the document: Removing Barriers to Achievement: The Government's Strategy for SEN (DfEE, 2004) will no doubt contribute to the increased use of the consultation model. For example, it states that,

> "Reducing reliance on statements is a long-term (i.e. four to five year) change process, requiring a cultural shift, extensive capacity building, a realignment of advice and support services." (p. 22)

Consultation contributes to extensive capacity building, as its aim is to enhance teachers' skills to manage similar difficulties in the future. It is intended that teachers in a school will share and apply the skills learnt, which will improve the whole school's capacity to deal with problematic situations.

2.4 The local area

Leicester is an urban and multi-cultural city. It is made up of a number of communities. An increasingly prominent issue for schools is meeting the needs of newly arrived children from countries such as Mozambique, Poland, Somalia and Turkey. Schools have the responsibility of identifying whether the main objective is for the child to learn English as a second language or whether he/ she also has SEN. If the latter is also the case, schools have to follow the graduated response outlined in the revised CoP (DfEE, 2000a). There are times when the process has to be fast-tracked if a school is finding it extremely difficult to meet the child's SEN.

The structure of the author's EPS is described as it was at the start of the research cycle (autumn term 2005). The EPS was led by one principal EP. Five EPs had senior management roles. A senior EP provided the service's lead on Assessment, Achievement and Inclusion (i.e. children with statements and those undergoing statutory assessment). A senior EP co-ordinated the service's response to children who represent corporate priorities or who are in particular need because their circumstances place them under particular stress. This EP's management work included issues relating to Looked After Children (LAC), the service link with the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and providing specialist advice on Child Protection. A senior EP provided the service lead on Development, INSET and preventative work. An acting senior EP was taking the lead responsibility for the Child Behaviour Intervention Initiative (CBII) (schools, community, multi-agency links). A senior EP took the service lead on Early Intervention (i.e. children at Early Years/ School Action Plus). This EP was to be managing the School Anxiety Project (SAP) during 2005/6.

Two EPs had predominantly senior consultant roles. One (part-time) had responsibilities for LAC and the other for speech and language. Eight EPs (three part-time, of which one was a locum and one was currently on maternity leave) had a combination of CBII senior consultant and liaison EP responsibilities.

One EP was an associate tutor for the MSc (Educational Psychology) course at the University of Nottingham, and also had some liaison EP responsibilities.

Two EPs mainly had liaison EP responsibilities, and also had some LAC responsibilities. Two EPs (part-time, locum) had predominantly YOS responsibilities. Two EPs had liaison EP responsibilities (part-time, of which one was a locum).

The service had appointed three assistant EPs for the academic year 2005/6.

2.5 The local context

Before April 2001, the LA held a single budget for providing support to statemented children. Support for children with SEN without statements was the responsibility of schools. A notional five per cent of schools' budgets was expected to be set aside for providing support to these children. However, LA officers and school staff agreed that this percentage took no account of the level of need in individual schools.

The LA decided in April 2001 to delegate the vast majority of funding for supporting children with SEN to schools, so that it could be used flexibly without the need for bureaucratic systems of allocation. In 2002 the LA also issued the Meeting Individual Needs (MIN) of Children guidance for schools, which recommends ways to best meet children' needs. (The system used to allocate this funding has been kept under constant review, and changes were introduced in April 2005.)

Most schools welcomed the greater flexibility that delegation has brought about, meaning that they are able to provide support to children without waiting for a statement to be issued.

A noticeable feature of delegation was a large increase in the number of children receiving high levels of support, i.e. twenty-five hours or more LSA support. The increase is largely a result of the LA's inclusion policy, meaning that many children who might otherwise have gone to special schools are now attending mainstream schools, but with these high levels of support.

During 2004-05, the delegation model was reviewed and a revised model was introduced in April 2005 for 2005-06, in order to distribute the funding more fairly. The revised formula does not separate funding for non-statemented children from statemented children. This is because many children who would previously have been statemented now remain at School Action Plus, due to the funding already being available whether a child is statemented or not. This means that the school has responsibility for meeting the child's SEN, without input from the LA.

The financial delegation model used locally is designed to provide funding for the vast majority of children with SEN in mainstream schools. However, it is recognised that there are a small number of children whose needs are such that the cost of providing support is very high (e.g. statemented children who receive twenty-five hours or more LSA support per week). The LA will provide additional funding to schools for these children.

The revised DfEE CoP (2000a) expects schools to provide a graduated response to meeting any child's needs. The MIN guidance states that in providing for individual children it is necessary to address three factors which require regular review if a graduated response is to be provided: The child's needs, the arrangements put in place for the child and reviews of progress and arrangements.

In making whole school arrangements and providing for children at School Action and School Action Plus, the responsibility falls, primarily, upon the school. A range of services is available to provide support and advice.

For the child whose needs can only be met by arrangements being made beyond School Action Plus, the statutory responsibility requires the LA to take key decisions whilst schools provide information and oversight of the day-to-day arrangements.

In 2004 the LA produced guidance: MIN of Children in the Early Years. This publication provides guidance to support the LA's SEN policy as it applies to:

- maintained schools with Foundation stage provision;
- all settings in the private, voluntary, independent, social care and health sectors registered to provide early education and
- the range of LA services to children and parents.

It complements the LA's MIN of Children guidance (2002) (referred to p.12), which is used to for all children in education beyond the Foundation stage.

The MIN of Children in the Early Years guidance describes practices and protocols, which will assist schools and their governing bodies, and settings and their management groups, to fulfil the responsibilities placed on them by the revised DfEE CoP (2000a). It will also guide practice in meeting individual needs through networks of children's services that are being developed through Leicester City Council's plans for Children's Centres.

National changes have also had an impact on Leicester EPS's model of service delivery. The EPS promotes an eclectic model of service delivery. EPs are continually encouraged to use consultative approaches as part of their delivery. Indeed, during the summer of 2003 a consultation-working

group within the EPS completed a range of tasks to facilitate a consultative way of working for EPs to use if interested, including, for example, the development of frameworks to be used in schools.

2.6 Definitions of consultation

The literature reveals many interpretations of the concept of 'consultation'.

For example, Aubrey (1990) describes consultation as an indirect service, which takes place between individuals of comparable status where the consultee may seek to gain an objective end external point of view, increase their skills of problem-solving, increase the freedom of choice in terms of action or increase the resources to deal with persistent difficulties. A key element of Aubrey's (1990) definition is the consultees' freedom to accept or reject advice offered.

From fairly recent literature by practising U.K EPs, Wagner and Gillies (2001) describe consultation at a super-ordinate level as:

> "The solution to the central problem of many educational psychology services. That is, how to shift their practice from the crisis work of individual assessment and diagnosis to collaborative work and preventative work." (p. 149)

Wagner (2000) provides a detailed description of consultation as a:

> "Voluntary, collaborative, non-supervisory approach, established to aid the functioning of a system and its inter-related systems." (p. 11)

Wagner (1995) explains consultation further by describing it as a:

> "Collaborative process which involves working with the person most concerned since the person most concerned is the person who, by definition, is motivated towards some change. Consultation works at three different levels: the individual, group and organisational levels." (p. 2)

2.7 Key characteristics for effective consultation

If consultation is to be an effective approach to achieving change, then it must be practised in a way, which is conducive to change taking place. Although terminology varies, Larney (2003) describe some of the key characteristics of effective consultation under the headings of: consultant-consultee relationship; consultant-consultee responsibilities and entry processes. The author has used these characteristics as a hook to explain how consultation can be an effective approach to achieving change.

2.7.1 Consultant-consultee relationship

The consultant-consultee relationship is considered to be pivotal to effective consultation practice (e.g. Bramlett and Murphy, 1998). There are several key dimensions of the consultant-consultee relationship, which need to be addressed in order for conditions to be optimal for success.

First, the consultant-consultee relationship should be collaborative, as in such a relationship, the consultant and consultee share equal power in the decision-making process. The need to be collaborative has been found to be critical in the success of consultation (e.g. Gutkin and Curtis, 1999; Wagner, 1995, 2000). However, some researchers have presented evidence that consultants tend to be more directive during consultation (Erchul, Hughes, Meyers, Hickman and Braden, 1992), that consultants and consultees do not behave in the same way during consultation (e.g. Erchul and Chewning, 1990) and that consultees are passive during consultation (Erchul, 1987). Gutkin and Curtis (1998) emphasise the possible different functions and behaviours of the consultant and consultee within the consultation process, with consultants asking more questions than consultees and consultees talking more than consultants, especially during the problem identification stage of the process.

Gutkin (1999a, 1999b) defends the need for consultation to be collaborative by pointing out that consultation can be collaborative and directive at the same time. Gutkin (1999a) proposes a useful model of the consultation relationship as lying along two key dimensions: collaborative-coercive and directive-nondirective. The optimal conditions for successful consultation are a collaborative and directive combination.

Second, for the consultant-consultee relationship to be positive in nature, the consultee should be participating on a voluntary basis. The initiation of the consultation should ideally come from the consultee, since this suggests that the consultee recognises that a problem exists and is motivated to address it (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999).

Third, the consultation relationship should involve active participation by the consultee throughout the process. In this way, there is greater likelihood that the consultee will feel 'ownership' of the strategy (Miller, 1969).

2.7.2 Consultant-consultee responsibilities

For the effective practice of consultation, both consultant and consultee have respective responsibilities (Gutkin and Cutis, 1999). First, consultants are responsible for the process elements of consultation, that is, those parts which assume common knowledge of procedures. They are required to ensure that the consultation context supports and encourages consultees' growth and development. Second, consultants are also responsible for the progress of the problem-solving processes during consultation. Third, both consultant and consultee are responsible for bringing their content expertise to the consultation situation. Fourth, consultees are responsible for taking action on the intervention plan that emerges from the consultation discussion. Finally, both consultants and consultees are responsible for the successes and failures of the intervention plan they jointly design for clients (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999). Furthermore, Conoley and Conoley (1991) discuss the maintenance of

confidentiality as an essential responsibility for consultants and consultees.

2.7.3 Preparing schools for consultation: use of entry processes

First, there is a need for school staff to understand the consultation process. Consequently, consultants need to communicate the core characteristics of consultation, first to headteachers, then to senior staff and the SENco and finally to teachers as a whole. Indeed, Wagner (2000) argues that transparency helps to promote skill transfer. When EPs clarify what is appropriate to their role in the system and work out ways of explaining it carefully to a range of role partners, they increase the engagement and contribution of those partners.

2.7.4 Essential components of consultation

Conoley and Conoley (1991) emphasise the need for the service delivery to be cost effective. It is important that there is a shared meaning with teachers and LA administrators in regard to the concept of consultation. It is necessary to deconstruct the notion of collaborative working, one of the key elements of the consultation approach.

Second, entry processes are necessary in order to allow potential consultees to get to know the consultant as a person (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999). Third, the consultant must get to know the individual consultees, the structure of the school and the school climate in advance of initiating consultative approaches to working (Turner, Robbins and Doran, 1996).

Apart from the preparation for schools to use consultation effectively, the consultants need to be clear as to which of the various models influencing consultation approaches are likely to be effective in schools. Consultants also need to establish how to ensure the proper implementation of them. The main models are reviewed below.

2.8 Review of models influencing consultation approaches in the UK

2.8.1 Mental health model of consultation

An important influence on the development of consultation used by EPs is the model of mental health consultation (Caplan, 1970). This model has had particular influence on consultants using groups as the basis for consultation (e.g. Hanko,1999, Newton, 2000 and Bozic and Carter, 2002). This was one of the first consultation models to be articulated in detail (Gutkin and Curtis, 1998). It has the longest history and is based on the most traditional understanding of human behaviour (Conoley and Conoley, 1991).

Caplan (1970) maintains that the term "consultation" refers to a process of interaction between two professional persons – the consultant, who is a specialist, and the consultee, who invokes the consultant's help in regard to a current work problem which he/ she is having some difficulty with (e.g. related to a client) and which he/ she has decided is within the other's area of specialized competence. The consultant accepts no direct responsibility for implementing remedial action for the client, and professional responsibility for the client remains with the consultee. The consultant engages in the activity in order to add to the consultee's knowledge and to lessen areas of misunderstanding, so that he/ she may be able in the future to deal more effectively on his/ her own with this category of problem.

Caplan's (1970) definition of mental health consultation is the use of this method as part of a community programme for the promotion of mental health and for the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of mental disorders. In this case, the consultants are those with a specialized knowledge of the issues involved, such as EPs. The consultees are care-giving professionals who have a key role in preventing or treating mental disorders but who have no specialised training in psychiatry, such as

teachers. The consultees may experience work problems, which result from the behaviour of a client that exceeds his/ her knowledge of psychology. The amount of time allocated by a consultant to helping a consultee must be relatively short.

The four types of mental health consultation are client-centred case consultation, consultee-centred case consultation, programme-centred administrative consultation and consultee-centred administrative consultation. The main goal of client-centred consultation is for the consultant to communicate to the consultee how the client can be helped. Consultee-centred case consultation is most relevant to EPs and will be described in detail below. The main goal of programme-centred administrative consultation is to prescribe an effective course of action in planning the programme. The main goal of consultee-centred administrative consultation is the elucidation and remedying among the consultees of difficulties and shortcomings that interfere with their understanding of their tasks of programme development and organisation.

Consultee-centred case consultation is considered, by many school psychologists, as the most important model (Gutkin and Curtis, 1998). The primary goal is for the consultant to focus his/ her main attention on trying to understand the nature of the consultee's difficulty with the case and in trying to help him/ her to resolve this. The consultee's difficulty may be due to either a lack of knowledge, a lack of skill, a lack of self-confidence or a lack of professional objectivity due to the interference of subjective emotional complications with his/ her perceptual and planning operations. The aim is that the improvement in professional functioning will enable the consultee to solve the problems of the client, and that this improvement will be maintained in relation to future clients with similar difficulties.

Conoley and Conoley (1990) emphasise that Caplan's (1970) most important mental health consultation intervention, aimed at reducing the problem of losses of professional objectivity, was theme interference reduction (enabling the consultee to realise that the syllogism "All A imply

B" is not inevitably nor invariably valid), which is from the psychodynamic framework. Caplan (1970) used this term to describe the consultee's unconscious links with particular cases causing unusual ineffectiveness. A core element of this intervention is that the consultant does not have to know the details of the consultee's inner conflicts in order to invalidate the theme.

However, techniques from personal construct psychology (Kelly, 1963) could, however, equally be used to elaborate and loosen consultees' constructs. The use of techniques from solution focused brief therapy (de Shazer, 1985) could be used in a similar way to explore exceptions and look for preferred futures.

Conoley and Conoley (1990) state that Caplan (1970) suggested that consultees would benefit from a relationship with a mental health expert that was collaborative rather than hierarchal, voluntary rather than supervisory, based on the consultees' specific needs rather than didactic and supportive rather than evaluative. These relationship components remain the basic elements of all consultation approaches. Caplan (1970) highlights that consultants readily perceive the need to provide support and guidance but find it difficult to realise the extent of their real dependence on the consultees. This is particularly relevant in achieving the consultant's fundamental community health goals relating to the long-term continuation of the effects of the consultation, through the integration of new knowledge and skills within the functioning of the consultees.

In recognising, within the context of the model of mental health consultation, that the behaviour of a consultee may be irrational or influenced by unconscious motives (note the influence of a psychodynamic framework) there is some recognition about the need for some consultees to have personal emotional support rather than a plan of action or an intervention programme.

Within the consultation process it is clear that those consulting with EPs in schools, primarily teachers and LSAs, will have personal needs. Gutkin and Curtis (1998) argue that the personal needs of the consultee are a legitimate focus only to the extent that these personal needs have an impact on the client.

Within the context of 'Best Value' reviews (DfEE, 2000b) and the plethora of target setting and accountability measures there may be difficulties in advocating a system of mental health consultation as this does not sit easily with an administrative definition of consultation which requires outcome measures such as the number of cases discussed or links with reduction in statutory assessment. Conoley and Conoley (1991) discuss how an administrative view of teachers' problems is more likely to lead to suggested strategies of in-service training or supervision to improve the performance of teachers rather than a consultation system that takes into account their emotional lives.

Larney (2003) maintains that in spite of the fact that mental health consultation is amenable to adaptation to school contexts, it has not enjoyed broad application by consultants within school psychology. One reason for this pattern is that many school psychologists find the approach too pschodynamically-orientated (Watkins, 2000). More importantly, there has been a lack of supporting empirical evidence for the success of this approach (e.g. Gutkin and Curtis, 1999), which has contributed to its lack of popularity within school psychology as a whole.

2.8.2 Consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959)

Consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) was widely used by EPs in the past as a model of providing professional support. The model requires implementation of three distinct attitudes: congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding. Rogers (1959) maintains that a crucial condition of the Roger's (1959) therapeutic

process is that the therapist experiences at least to a minimal degree, the unconditional positive regard of the therapist for him/ her.

These genuine attitudes must somehow be perceived by and ultimately have a positive effect on the client. Colvin (1999) describes them as: (a) Congruence as the quality of "transparency," a kind of honesty that is more perceived than proven. (b) Unconditional positive regard is a prerequisite whereby clients' actions, feelings and the persons themselves, are positively accepted as they are. (c) Empathic understanding is a fundamentally subjective experience extended by therapists to, and felt (or not) by, their clients. Wilkins (2000) states that the inter-relationship of the conditions of congruence, empathy and unconditional positive regard is so high that they are inseparable in theory, and practice.

Colvin (1999) surveyed practising school counsellors in the USA to determine their level of support for the basic tenets of consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959). The findings provide support for such essential therapeutic values as congruence, empathy and unconditional positive regard, the traditional cornerstones of the model. Additionally, the most positive school counsellor responses indicated an esteem for counsellor objectivity, congruence, avoidance of prejudging and using themselves as instruments of change.

The aim of consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) is to enable clients to think through their problems. Colvin (1999) maintains that Rogers (1942) based his approach on the view that clients themselves were in the best position to know what their problem was and what they would like to achieve in therapy. For that reason, this model is the least interventional orientation, that is, therapists do not assume to interpret, explain, impose or otherwise direct clients into a specific direction or pattern.

Colvin (1999) states that consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) is a non-directive approach. Directive therapists deliberately steer individuals in a specific way, according to some theoretical assumptions. Examples of directive behaviours include asking questions, offering treatments, making interpretations and diagnoses. Almost all forms of counselling other than this model are to varying degrees directive.

Corey (1996) states that there are some limitations to exclusively using a non-directive approach. Many individuals seeking help tend to want more structure than is provided by this approach. Some clients seek professional help in dealing with a crisis, or learning skills for coping with everyday problems. When they finally seek help, it may be as a last resort after all other resources have failed. They expect a directive therapist and can be turned off by one who does not provide what they perceive to be sufficient structuring.

Furthermore, Colvin (1999) argues that in the past some therapists practising using consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) have tended to be very supportive of clients without being sufficiently challenging. Out of their misunderstanding of the basic concept of this approach, they have restricted their responses and counselling styles to reflections and empathic understanding. Although these responses have value, therapy involves much more than this. Corey (1996) states that some therapists become 'client-centred' to the extent that they diminish the value of their own power as a person and thus lose impact of their personality on the client. This is certainly a crucial point. Corey (1996) suggests that rather than emphasising the therapist as a person, it would be solving specific problems.

Colvin (1999) maintains that consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) views that all people possess an inborn tendency to move toward growth and healing, as well as the capacity to find their own answers. This innate characteristic is referred to as the "actualising

tendency". This tendency or potential is aided by an accepting and understanding climate, which the therapist seeks to provide through the non-directive approach.

However, Cain (1988) following a "round table" discussion in an attempt to discover why there appeared to be so few therapists using consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) in spite of thousands around the world attesting to the enormous impact of the approach on their lives, states that an outcome was that it is not necessarily true that individuals have within them a growth potential or an actualising tendency. Moreover, Rogers (1959) maintains that the main source of incompatible evidence is a clinical point of view. Rogers (1959) continues that by and large the psychoanalytically oriented Freudian group has developed, out of its rich clinical experience, a view that is opposed to the hypotheses regarding the tendency toward actualisation.

Consultation based on Roger's principles (Roger's 1959) places value on the interpersonal relationship. Rogers (1959) advocates the importance of mutual willingness to be in contact and to receive communications. This will lead to a greater communication of congruence of experience, awareness and behaviour on the part of each individual. It is likely that the more ensuing the relationship, the more there will be a tendency toward reciprocal communication with the same qualities, mutually accurate understanding of the communications, improved psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties, and mutual satisfaction in the relationship.

2.8.3 Behavioural model of consultation

The model of behavioural consultation is rooted in social learning theory. Social learning refers to a rapidly growing body of knowledge dealing with behavioural changes occurring as a function of contingencies that characterise social interaction (Keller, 1981). The main goal of this model is to work with consultees to identify and manipulate relevant person-environment variables to improve, eliminate and/ or prevent problems

(Zins and Erchul, 1995). The approach of this model involves the consultant leading the consultee through a structured problem-solving process. There is a range of problem-solving models in use by behavioural consultants. For example, Bergan's (1977) four-step model has received a lot of attention in the USA. This involves: (i) problem identification; (ii) problem analysis (hypothesis selection and information gathering); (iii) plan implementation and (iv) treatment evaluation.

Sibley (1986) emphasises that the model of behavioural consultation has consistently positive outcomes.

The behavioural model of consultation assumes that individuals have the potentiality for development or change in personality and behaviour. Keller (1981) refers to the importance of facilitating maintenance of behaviour change across time and the transfer of behaviour change across settings. Trying to systematically investigate and enhance transfer and generalisation is a key aim of this model.

Keller (1981) states that the use of observational assessment would seem to facilitate transfer and generalisation. Self-monitoring is an area of observational research receiving increasing attention. Teachers might be trained in observational procedures that do not interfere with their teaching. Positive involvement in the assessment process for problem identification and analysis should enhance teachers' involvement in subsequent interventions. Karoly (1977) highlights that self-monitoring has the added potential benefit of facilitating self-control and the maintenance and generalisation of intervention effects.

Keller (1981) stresses that issues of transfer (across settings) and maintenance (across time) are so pertinent, that efforts must be made to directly assess the long-term and cross-situational effectiveness of the model of behavioural consultation. Marholin and Siegal (1978) refer to conditions for enhancing generalisation. For example, training other

people in the client's life in the use of intervention and generalisation procedures, and self-control strategies.

Keller (1981) emphasises that research into the interactional processes involved in implementing and conducting behavioural interventions by consultees in collaboration with consultants is needed. Furthermore, Larney (2003) states that a criticism of the model of behavioural consultation has been its lack of focus on the nature of the consultant-consultee relationship, and how the nature of this relationship can determine whether a favourable outcome will be achieved.

Bergan and Tombari (1975) have investigated systematically verbal interactional parameters of the consultation process, particularly with respect to the assessment interview. A main finding was that consultant variables had their greatest impact at the problem identification phase. When the consultant lacked sufficient skills, there was a high probability that problem-solving would not be initiated.

Cooper, Tompson and Baer (1970) have found that consultant praise and frequent feedback to teachers has shown to effectively increase appropriate use of behavioural interventions.

Increasing emphasis within the literature has been placed upon social validation in determining the efficacy of interventions (Kazdin, 1977). That is, do the consultees and clients agree that desirable changes have taken place and that they are satisfied with the changes and the processes by which they are attained and maintained? It is essential that consultants and consultees have ongoing conversations in relation to processes that lead to changes as a result of interventions as well as the actual changes.

An increasing amount of research over the last ten years, in particular, has begun to seriously address the issue of the impact of the consultant-consultee relationship on the effectiveness of outcomes (e.g. Erchul and Chewning, 1990; Gutkin, 1996), with the result that behavioural

consultation continues to be the model chosen by most consultants (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999).

2.8.4 Eco-behavioural model of consultation

Gutkin and Curtis (1998) have suggested that the behavioural model of consultation be renamed the model of eco-behavioural consultation. With an ecological approach, the consultant not only takes account of the immediate antecedents and consequences of behaviours, but also the multi-layered ecological systems within which the client exists and interacts (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999). For example, factors relating to teacher expectations, class variables, school and LA policies and family factors together with the interaction between these factors. This model also takes the structure of Bergan's (1977) problem-solving model.

The eco-behavioural model of consultation described by Gutkin and Curtis (1998) resonates with the interactionist approaches noted as important in the development of consultation in the UK (e.g. Wagner and Gillies, 2001). Conoley and Conoley (1991) also discuss problems with a pure behavioural approach where consultees may see this approach as being based on a reductionist understanding of human nature, and discuss how some teachers experience difficulty in introducing complex behavioural programmes into their classrooms. Nevertheless, the use of behavioural approaches is well documented in EP practice as an important technique employed in work with schools in a wide range of situations.

2.8.5 Process and organisational/ systems models of consultation

These two models are discussed jointly as they share many features in common. They are rooted in the psychology of groups and organisations. Typically the client is a group within an organisation or an entire organisation system itself (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999). In the model of process consultation (Schein, 1988), the aim is to make people more aware of the events or processes in their environments and the ways in

which these affect their work. The aim of the model of organisational/ systems consultation described by Gutkin and Curtis (1998) is to work towards changing schools at the organisational/ systems level.

Larney (2003) states that both models are potentially useful approaches to consultation in school contexts, but have not enjoyed huge popularity. One of the main reasons for this has been that these models are more alien to teachers than behavioural approaches. Process/ organisational approaches require detailed training input for teachers if they are to succeed (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999), and this has been a barrier to EPs adopting them on a large-scale basis. However, providing relevant training to teachers and giving them regular supervision could support the implementation of these approaches. Furthermore, incorporating the use of these models in school development plans will contribute to making sure that the commitment to supporting their implementation is sustained.

2.8.6 Ecological model of consultation

Conoley and Conoley (1991) discuss the importance of three theoretical perspectives in the development of consultation: mental health, behavioural and process consultation. They describe possibilities for unifying these models in a process of ecological consultation.

Conoley and Conoley (1991) discuss how these three basic theoretical perspectives relating to consultation differ according to whether the focus of consultation relates to internal forces such as attitude and motivation (mental health model of consultation) or external forces, for example, environmental conditions that are important in promoting or inhibiting behaviours (behavioural model of consultation), with the model of process consultation somewhere mid way between these two positions and focusing on interactive forces such as communication and interpersonal relations.

The model of ecological consultation can be seen as unifying mental health, behavioural and process models of consultation by drawing on aspects from each model. Ecological consultation is viewed by its proponents as seeing behaviour as determined by a mixture of individual and environmental characteristics and sees clients as being part of a social system. This links with social interactionist approaches underlying many of the models of consultation currently in use within EPSs in the UK.

2.8.7 Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)

Consultation, as practised in the author's LA, is based on Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) commonly used by EPs. This model has primarily drawn on the work of Wagner (2000).

In Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) the key process is a meeting between the EP and the teacher most concerned – that is, the teacher with the professional responsibility to be concerned. The offer is to work with the teacher on the context in which the problem has arisen in order to see how together the EP and the teacher can work out how to bring about change. The consultation involves a process in which concerns are raised, and a collaborative and recursive process is initiated that combines joint exploration of the teacher's concerns, the strategies that have been tried and their effectiveness; assessment; intervention and review.

During conversation, the specific processes assisting change are as follows (Wagner, 2000). By helping the teacher to externalise the problem (concern), the person tends to see it differently and, therefore, will tend to act differently towards it. Joint exploration of the teacher's concerns enables a more detached and comprehensive (meta, helicopter) view to emerge of the roles in relation to the concerns, so that the person may start to access their own problem-solving skills. The paradigm shift then takes place as the teacher shifts their view of the concern from within the person to the interaction of the person and the situation. This, in turn,

leads to the emergence of keys to change, both direct with the person (teacher) and indirect with the situation. During the consultation the teacher engages in self-reflexivity, which assists the person to recognise their own role, so that possibilities for change develop through taking different actions.

Ideas are used from, for example, the solution focused perspective and interactionist psychology to aid the process of enquiry in the consultation. This process is supported by having frameworks and scripts. The frameworks support the EP to be creative and imaginative in his/ her work, so that there are no prescriptive steps to follow but rather a structure which helps the EP to keep on track, without being restrictive or inflexible. Kerslake and Roller (2000) explain that scripts are the clusters of key words and phrases that we use to explain the ideas, thinking and principles underlying our practice.

Psychological processes are intrinsic in all aspects of the functioning of the organisation (Wagner, 2000). Therefore, EPs have a contribution to make, not just at the individual level, but also at the class and whole-school levels. For this, they need ways of making sense of the school as an organisation. EPs are most effective when they work with teachers collaboratively and with a sense of the school as a whole organisation. To do this, they need to be clear about how to work collaboratively, and sometimes how to help teachers make connections in their own organisation. When consultation works as it is intended, a greater capacity develops in the system for developing solutions to future similar problems.

The process of review is crucial to the development of practice (Kerslake and Roller, 2000). For example, at annual meetings with a headteacher/ SENco), we would revisit the role of the EP and analyse ways that we can work at individual, group and organisational levels, how that balance has assisted school and how it might develop. Furthermore, it is essential to review actions and outcomes that are planned with teachers. Dickinson (2000) maintains that if we are clear about the planned actions and

outcomes, then we can have a purposeful conversation with the consultee when we review the outcomes of our involvement.

2.9 Concluding comments about the models influencing consultation approaches in the UK

It would seem that while an EP may identify with a certain model of consultation, it is possible that aspects of several models could be used simultaneously. Alpert (1982) emphasises that there is a commonality among the models. For example, the development of a relationship between the consultant and consultee is a core element of all the models. Alpert (1982) suggests that responses to a consultee's concerns may be more of a function of the consultant's identity than the model they identify with. Furthermore, it is possible that there are times when the consultant endeavours primarily to respond to the consultee's thinking rather than trying to work within a particular model. The choice of model to use is also likely to be influenced by the situation in which the consultation is taking place.

When consciously aiming to work within a particular model the most comprehensive approach of first choice currently in use may be to use Wagner's model (Wagner, 2000) by incorporating to a greater extent solution focused procedures. Such an approach seems to be the most practical, particularly for EPs relatively inexperienced in using consultation because Wagner's (2000) frameworks provide a high degree of structure combined with the use of solution focused questions which can be asked with ease. Rhodes (1993) maintains that a reason for this is that, de Shazer (1985) actively tried to find the simplest methods that 'worked' and did not rely on theories of pathology, personality or development. Furthermore, such procedures involve working with clients' frames of reference as these are considered the most important resource in the solution-building process.

2.10 Psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)

The psychological models referred to most frequently in the literature are described below.

2.10.1 Symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism (e.g. Hargreaves, 1972) helps us to focus on how meanings are negotiated and conveyed in social interaction, especially the meaning that a person constructs for themselves of self, others and behaviour. This framework highlights the way that understandings are particular to situations, as are the possible keys to change. This perspective is of particular relevance in understanding behaviour in a social setting such as schools. This approach highlights the need to understand the person within their particular situation. Wagner (1995) emphasises the need to consider a range of processes within a school context, which influence behaviour and views of the self. For example:

- the child's view of 'self';
- teachers' perceptions of children and childrens' perceptions of teachers;
- the importance of expectations and attributions in understanding behaviour;
- the importance of understanding reputation and audience effects in influencing behaviour and
- styles of teaching and learning influences on behaviour.

This approach also highlights a consideration for the EP role: whether working with the child or young person will contribute to possible imputations of deviance (Hargreaves, 1978). By working collaboratively with the significant others – teacher and then jointly with parents – ideas for making a difference to the situation develop.

2.10.2 Systems thinking

Systems thinking from the family therapy field (e.g. Burnham, 1986) contributes ideas about repetitive patterns in social contexts, how they develop over time and how they connect to belief systems. Wagner (2000) emphasises that change occurs when individuals in the system make a paradigm shift from a within child perspective to an interactionist and systemic viewpoint, so that the view of the problem changes from within the person to something that happens between people and, in this way, more possibilities emerge. This perspective also highlights the interaction between the members of such systems as school, home and the members of professional systems, and the processes that can occur as a feature of that interaction. Wagner (2000) maintains that consultation using systems thinking might highlight the developmental stage of the school, stressors on the school, changes in the organisation, as well as to illuminate the relations between the EP and the school.

2.10.3 Personal construct psychology

Personal construct psychology (e.g. Ravenette, 1997) contributes ideas of how to understand an individual's meaning of self and situations, and is especially helpful when an EP is thinking about how to elicit a person's constructs.

This framework assumes that an alternative construction can always be offered (Banister, 1981). Within the structure of personal construct theory is the idea of constructs having a range and focus of convenience (Kelly, 1963).

These two notions of:

- constructive alternativism and
- constructs as well as ideas having a range and focus of convenience

provide a rationale for creative and open discussion within consultation meetings, with the possibility of reframing and re-construing problems.

2.10.4 Solution focused perspective

De Jong and Berg (1998) maintain that the overriding goal of the helping professions is to empower clients to live more productive and satisfying lives. Saleebey (1992) believes that empowering clients, means helping people discover the considerable power within themselves, their families and their neighbourhoods. Saleebey (1992) believes that clients' frames of reference and perceptions about what would be most useful to create more satisfying lives for themselves should count for as much – if not more – than scientific expertise about problems and solutions. Using a solution focused perspective, consultation with teachers is often viewed in terms of conversations whose focus is to help in making sense of what is happening and in exploring solutions (Wagner and Gillies, 2001).

The solution focused perspective uses consistent procedures such as questioning to establish well-formed goals and to explore exceptions. Well-formed goals are important to the client. When goals are small and concrete they tend to represent the beginning of something different rather than the end. Exceptions are those occasions in clients' lives when their problems could have occurred but did not – or at least were less severe.

De Jong and Berg (1998) state that once we accept that clients' problems are a function of their current definitions of reality, it clearly follows that different clients build very different solutions to what seem to be the same problems. Essentially, it seems that clients' capacity to reshape and shift

their perceptions and definitions of reality is a critically important resource in their efforts to deal with their problems. Building solutions needs to begin by developing and expanding clients' definitions of what they want. This is likely to be challenging as clients will no doubt vary considerably in their understanding of what it is that they want. So, consultants will need to adopt a highly individualised approach. Clients' capacity to do this more easily will aid the solution-building process.

Vinter (1985) maintains that clients can take what they have learned about resolving their problems during a consultation(s) encompassing solution focused procedures and apply it to other problems. Vinter (1985) calls this idea transferability. By consistently asking clients to explore and trust their own perceptions about what they want and how to make that happen, solution focused consultants give clients the opportunity to sharpen their awareness of their past successes and strengths, that is, inner resources. These inner resources can be used to deal with current and future problems.

De Jong and Berg (1998) argue that respect for human dignity through acceptance and the non-judgemental attitude is the foundation for the development of trust in the client-consultant relationship. Furthermore, Rhodes (1993) suggests that from the beginning of a session the consultant should try to construe the client's attitude to change and to the consultant. Some clients are not interested at all and have been called 'visitors'. Another group are willing to give a lot of information, but do not believe their actions could have any effect. This group is called 'complainants'. The third group believe that their actions could bring about change and are called 'customers' (de Shazer, 1985). Rhodes (1993) emphasises that it is crucial that the consultant works by only suggesting tasks and ideas which 'fit' the client's construed expectations.

2.10.5 Social constructionism

Within this framework it is considered that a person's understanding of the world is influenced by social processes and interactions. Social constructionism (e.g. Macready, 1997) draws on themes that help to clarify the importance of language in the construction of meaning. It supports us in avoiding the language of deficit, and motivates us to find interactional accounts for the phenomena we encounter. Macready (1997) talks about the relevance of social constructionism for EPs in providing counselling and consultation services.

The use of narrative metaphor (stories about the world, which we tell ourselves and each other) and the use of questioning from a range of therapeutic approaches, for example, solution focused approaches (de Shazer, 1985) in order to help clients tell different stories or live different stories is discussed above (in section 2.10.4, Solution focused perspective). The importance of the context in which participants feel that they are engaging in consultation is emphasised and the search for some consensual view about this is required. It is prudent to begin the conversation with a consideration of the possible determining contexts. Once something is said, it may be understood differently. Hence, creating a context of 'listening' may make a helpful difference. At other times, it may be more helpful for the EP to contribute to a change in the meaning of the problem.

2.11 Reflections regarding the psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)

The psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) share three kinds of similar characteristics. First, all of the models place emphasis on the meanings that a person has developed, for example, of themselves or of situations. Second, inherent in the models is the belief that the consultation process

allows for positive changes in meanings to take place, which leads to ways of dealing with problems more effectively. Thirdly, all four of the models highlight the role of the EP as critical in the consultation, given an EP's knowledge and understanding of school processes. It is worth noting that the goal of the solution focused model, to empower clients to discover the considerable power within themselves to develop solutions to problems is unique, in that, so much value is placed on clients' frames of reference as a resource.

2.12 Use of consultation in the author's LA

As mentioned above (in section 2.8.7, Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)), consultation as practised in the author's LA is based on Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), which also includes the use of solution-focused procedures. The author's interpretation of Wagner's model (Wagner, 2000) primarily takes into consideration the social constructionism theory of psychology, and in particular Macready's (1997) work. Meaning is regarded as a continually emerging outcome of interactional processes. Essentially, consultation may be described as a conversation, which aims to bring about some change in the completion of a task, or in the fulfilment of a work relationship. EPs may reflect on a range of conversational options, which are associated with different therapeutic approaches. For example, the EP may choose to ask questions which help to make new connections in meaning (e.g. Tomm, 1987), or to talk about solutions (e.g. Rhodes and Ajmal, 1995), or to engage in a conversation which 'externalises' the problem (e.g. White and Epston, 1990). Possibilities for change occur when individuals become connected to their own meaning making abilities and when they experience greater choice in the meanings available to them. A solution focused approach favours talking about solutions to help bring them about. White (1995) has contributed many examples of altering the context of meaning by engaging in 'externalising' conversations. Macready (1997) advocates that within a social constructionist perspective, EPs will be

concerned to evaluate the effects of the individuals involved, and on the social networks of the participants.

2.13 Evaluation of consultation approaches as an effective means of delivery of psychological services for schools

It is clear that the practice of consultation as a model of service delivery is gradually becoming more popular among many EPSs in the UK (Larney, 2003). Furthermore, over the past two decades, consultation has emerged repeatedly as the activity most preferred by school psychologists (e.g. Reschly and Wilson, 1995, 1997). However, it is important to question the degree to which this growth in popularity is justified. Is consultation really effective?

In evaluating consultation, researchers have focused on assessing the outcomes and the process of consultation. The outcomes of consultation have mainly been evaluated using qualitative techniques (e.g. semi-structured interviews). The processes of consultation, conversely, have tended to be evaluated using quantitative techniques, in combination with qualitative data. A key quantitative technique employed to evaluate the processes of consultation is the systematic analysis of the verbalisations of consultant-consultee dyads using communication-coding systems (e.g. Erchul and Chewning, 1990). Larney (2003) emphasises that neither the quantitative nor the qualitative techniques are sufficient on their own for the evaluation of consultation. It seems logical that it is necessary to employ a broad range of both quantitative and qualitative techniques, and to triangulate data from a range of sources and contexts in order to gain reliable data on the effectiveness of consultation. However, this has not been a characteristic of much consultation research to date.

2.14 Findings from research evaluating consultation (outcomes) in the UK

This section will discuss the findings from research evaluating consultation (outcomes) in the UK. Section 2.15 will provide an overview of the shortcomings of these research studies evaluating consultation. In section 2.16 the findings from research evaluating consultation (processes) in the USA will be outlined and considered. Section 2.17 will discuss the future research needed to address methodological flaws and to focus upon a broader range of issues relevant to consultation.

Aberdeen City EPS evaluated its consultative approach to service delivery (MacHardy, Carmichael and Proctor, 1997). The service carried out a pilot consultation model in two secondary and four primary schools over a school session. Evaluation of the pilot study involved a pre-post test non-equivalent groups design (questionnaires, semi-structured interviews). Overall, there was a relatively good response rate (sixty-five per cent). The findings relating to teacher perceptions of consultation revealed that, for example: they indicated that consultation would affect how they would handle a similar problem in the future and they felt more supported by the EP. Two-thirds of parents reported positive changes in their child since the meeting. The EPs involved in the consultation approach reported that the model helped them to use a greater range of psychological skills than had previously been the case.

Pitfield and Franey (1999) give an account of the introduction of consultation in Bristol schools. They note that their evaluation concludes overwhelmingly that schools give a high level of support to the newly established consultative framework. However, it is possible that this outcome reflects a novelty effect, in that, schools are initially eager to support EPs to improve the way in which they work. It is worth questioning whether this level of support would be sustained when the consultation framework had been in use for a few years.

The Consultation Development Network (1998) reported details of presentations from a number of EPSs (Buckingham, Wandsworth, Kensington and Chelsea, Surrey and Lincolnshire). The principal findings arising from evaluation of consultation within these services are that, for example: positive evaluations of the consultation model by teachers, parents and other professionals were reported in all services; there was a reduction in statementing rates and time spent on statutory assessment in some services and EPs report a higher level of satisfaction with their work and the ability to use psychological skills within their role. It is important, however, to raise the possibility that EPSs are likely to portray a positive picture of the outcomes of consultation in their presentations at the Consultation Development Network. Presenting a glowing picture is no doubt, a way of gaining support for the service.

Thomas (1998) undertook an exploratory and descriptive study in which the EPS in one LA in England developed a consultation model of service delivery. Results of the study demonstrate general consistency between the theoretical models (mental health and process) and the principles underpinning the organisation of EPSs and the actual delivery of the service. However, there were differences identified particularly relating to EP beliefs about the principles thought to be characteristics of the consultation model. Thomas (1998) suggests that, in order for there to be uniformity of approach across the county, the service should engage in a programme of whole service training in which the principles underlying the consultation model can be explored and reiterated, and agreement reached on what principles do underlie the model. This is really just good practice for any systematic change.

The results revealed that there was generally less consensus among SENcos regarding what the consultation entails, and in some cases a lack of understanding of the principles, which underlie the model. This points to the need for further training for SENcos to enable them to better understand and use the services offered by EPs. The possibility of this training could be discussed by EPs with SENcos at twice yearly Planning

Meetings. The training itself could be delivered to a SENco in a follow-up meeting (of an hour's duration).

In Miller's (1996) study teachers judged the behavioural interventions devised with the EP during a consultation to have had positive outcomes. Twenty four teachers were drawn from eight LAs spanning an area between the Midlands and the Scottish border. The children were drawn from the full primary age range.

In relation to the role and behaviour of an EP during the consultation process, Miller (1996) concludes that specialist knowledge is attributed to the EP, but then not valued in comparison to actual examples of interventions that have been devised by the EP and proved successful. Furthermore, Miller (1996) stated that strong resentment was felt towards EPs who had not witnessed the child in the classroom, which emphasises the need for a common visual referent as the basis for discussions. In this way the temporary system is initially legitimised, while sustained participation is subsequently encouraged by personal qualities and aspects of the role of the EP. For example, Miller (1996) maintains that an important personal quality is the EP's ability to act as a facilitator of social interactions, especially in meetings that also involve parents. In terms of the EP's role, Miller (1996) highlights that a characteristic of an EP being in a more detached position is that it allows basic information-seeking questions to be asked.

Miller (1996) advocates that a greater insight into teachers' responses to strategies for child management maybe obtained from an analysis of teachers' attributional processes. Miller (1996) found, for example, that parents were seen as being about two-and-a-half times more implicated in the origins of problems, as compared to their solutions, than are children. Thirty seven per cent of teachers did not see themselves as having had any involvement in the origin of the problem but still saw it as their responsibility to effect a solution (and having achieved one). Miller (1996) emphasises that the attributions teachers make for child behaviour are

likely in some instances to remain considerable stumbling blocks to any form of intervention unless they are incorporated more explicitly into the legitimate domains for EPs' enquiries and action (e.g. during consultations with teachers).

Miller (1996) confirms that there is a need for EPs to consider setting up clearer expectations at the outset of consultations with teachers. This could be achieved by EPs making explicit that mechanisms must exist so that lessons learned during an individual intervention can be generalised within the school. In particular, EPs will need to make sure that opportunities will exist for the teachers they work with to have time to consider and correctly attribute the causal factors at work during interventions. Essentially, teachers need an opportunity to reconsider attributions for the origins of difficult behaviour and the mechanisms underlying possible changes. Similarly, time will need to be made available so that teachers can also be supported while they clarify the generalisable skills and knowledge that they have learned and the ways they might use them with other children in the future. An exposure to strategies that incorporate equitable commitments to small steps on the part of both teachers and parents is paramount.

Farouk's (1999) study investigated the effectiveness with which EPs currently consult with teachers in relation to children who display emotional and behavioural difficulties. In Farouk's (1999) study, effective consultation refers to the extent to which teachers follow strategies or try out new approaches agreed upon during consultation.

In order to obtain data from a wide range and a large number of EPs, questionnaires were used as the most efficient way of collecting data. It is important to note that before designing the final copies of the questionnaires a pilot study was carried out. A positive point is that after the pilot study changes were made to the questionnaire both in terms of its content and in terms of its layout. In order to survey a large number of EPs, questionnaires were sent out to sixty two EPs in England and Wales.

The response rate was just below fifty per cent. Although the replies came from all over England and Wales, there was a larger number from Greater London. This may have been the case because EPSs in Greater London were trying harder to use consultation than in other areas.

In relation to the data analysis, Farouk (1999) discussed that the responses to the scaling questions were easily analysed, but the responses to the open-ended questions needed substantial data reduction. The question needs to be raised as to whether this approach may have suppressed the richness of data obtained.

Farouk (1999) commented that it was apparent from the returned questionnaires that a similar approach had been adopted by the EPs in some services. This would indicate that some EPSs have an overall policy on consultation. In retrospect, Farouk (1999) acknowledged that unfortunately, the questionnaire did not ask whether there was a consistent approach to consultation within the same service. From most of the replies, Farouk (1999) stated that most of the comments relate better to EPs working with teachers in primary schools, which he thought probably reflected the greater amount of individual consultation work that takes place in primary schools.

The findings illustrate that EPs see themselves as working in a collaborative way alongside teachers, adopting many of the personal qualities and features that are important for effective consultation, such as adopting a joint problem-solving approach, building on the teachers' own existing strategies and the importance of following up and reviewing progress. EPs also commented on the need to acknowledge and accept teachers' concerns, competency and commitment.

However, the findings show that only rarely are either written or verbal agreements drawn up between teachers and EPs (twenty-five and thirty per cent of the time). Farouk (1999) stresses that these agreements set the scene for consultation and define roles. Farouk (1999) continues that a

likely reason for this low level of agreements is the limited amount of time to meet with teachers to establish constructive consultation.

EPs commented on the need for teachers to own and feel responsible for changing the situation. Farouk (1999) discusses that whilst the EP is writing may lead the teacher to think that ownership is passing to someone else, making it more likely that they will adopt the role of information giver. Farouk (1999) suggests that to increase feelings of ownership, the teacher should be encouraged to make his/ her own working notes.

The most glowing comment that came out of Farouk's (1999) study was the extent to which EPs involve parents in consultation with teachers (about fifty-five per cent). These findings, alongside the extent to which EPs mentioned parents as important for effective consultation, confirm that EPs are aware of the importance of involving parents in consultation.

Overall, Farouk (1999) is very concerned that there was no evidence of a coherent approach for effective consultation. The most relevant concern that EPs expressed related to the insufficient time available for consultation in schools, which makes many important features of consultation such as the clarification of roles and problem clarification difficult to implement. Farouk (1999) highlights that a change in practice that allows for more time for consultation is required. Farouk (1999) proposes that EPSs develop a consistent-wide approach to a specific form of consultation which becomes part of working practice such as is described by Wagner (1995).

Redpath and Harker (1999) have explored the application of solution-focused approaches to, for example, teacher consultation. They maintain that the principles underlying solution focused brief therapy can be usefully applied to EPs' consultation time with teachers.

There is often an expectation in this context for advice to be given by the EPs and received by the teacher. Redpath and Harker (1999) suggest that observational tasks are given rather than advice. Doing this acknowledges that the situation seems too complicated for simple answers. For example, a teacher could be asked to look out for any small improvements in the classroom that might suggest that things are starting to work. This kind of observational task should help the teacher to identify meaningful exceptions to the problem behaviour or situation. The aim is to help the teacher refocus upon their areas of competence and the child's strengths.

Evaluation of the Surrey EPS consultation model focused upon the use of consultation among one hundred and forty Surrey teaching staff (primary, secondary, special education) that had previously attended consultation workshops presented by the EPS (Gillies, 2000). There was only a thirty-seven per cent response rate, perhaps indicating that the sample may not have been representative. Among these participants it was reported that consultation made a difference to them in four main ways: (a) The development of problem-solving skills; (b) the development of confidence; (c) supporting others in finding the 'answers' to problem situations and (d) providing a focus for meetings.

In Buckinghamshire EPS, the service have recently introduced a 'three hundred and sixty degree' appraisal of consultation which involves qualitative evaluation by self, peers, administrative support staff, schools and parents. Munro (2000) noted that schools particularly valued immediate feedback from EPs and increased EP involvement in the classroom. EPs expressed satisfaction with the reduction in report writing and the increase in systemic work. In addition, EPs expressed great satisfaction with the increased amount of time spent on preventative work in schools.

Hymer, Michel and Todd (2002) attempted to apply the theoretical principles underpinning dynamic assessment to the process of solution-focused consultation with teachers (at School Action/ Action plus) in Cumbria. Hymer, Michel and Todd (2002) saw, in Vygotskian terms, value in embracing a theory that understands human development as being simultaneously the tool of developmental activity. The concept of mediation, the need for another person to scaffold the development in thinking of another, emphasises cognitive challenge as a collaborative activity. Applying a dynamic assessment framework to consultation emphasises the process of learning rather than product.

Process questions based on dynamic assessment were used within a semi-structured framework in order to challenge thinking, to explore meanings, to mediate learning and to plan interventions. Data were collected at three phases: the input level, the elaboration level and the output level. These categories were adapted from Feuerstein's Learning Potential Assessment Device (LPAD) (Feuerstein, Rand and Hoffman, 1979). In the teacher-EP's interaction, this might translate into questions about what are the barriers to learning and teaching that are contained in this situation (referral, problem, predicament) and what are the mechanisms that could remove them?

Hymer, Michel and Todd (2002) state that although no formal evaluation of the system has taken place early informal feedback from the schools has been positive. Feuerstein's LPAD (Feuerstein, Rand and Hoffman, 1979) assumes that mediated learning that involves the use of his framework leads to some kind of structural cognitive change. Hymer, Michel and Todd (2002) question: What is the nature of any cognitive change that is actually happening for teachers – and the EPs using this? They are of the view that some evaluation of this would be valuable.

Aberdeenshire EPS's main goal is to work with others to enable children and young people to fulfil their educational, social and emotional potential. Service delivery is based on a consultation model, which means that the EPS values seeking the views of parents and carers and children and young people about their level of satisfaction with the consultation meeting and its outcomes.

At the close of a formal consultation meeting, agreed actions are summarised and a date for the follow-up meeting is set. Discussion and evaluation of the actions at the follow-up meeting allows participants to have a clear view of the key issues and of the success of the action plan agreed at the formal consultation meeting. It was decided that this would be the best time to gather the views of parents and carers and of children and young people (2006 to 2007).

The questionnaires were included with the record of the follow-up meeting with a letter requesting parents and carers and children and young people to take part in this survey. They could respond anonymously if they wished. Ten evaluative questions were presented to parents and carers and to children and young people. Thirty one parents and thirteen children, who attend Aberdeenshire primary and secondary schools, took part.

The outcomes of the questionnaire returns from parents and carers and also from children and young people who were involved in follow-up formal consultation meetings in primary and secondary schools during the academic year 2006 to 2007 were largely positive. Of the thirty one parents and carers in the sample, a large percentage were positive about the consultation process Strongly Agreeing or Agreeing with the questionnaire's ten evaluative statements. Many also provided additional positive comments relating to their experience of the meeting and the outcomes for the child. However, parents and carers were less satisfied that the actions agreed at the meeting had been carried out. The level of Strongly Agree/ Agree fell at eighty seven per cent on Question eight (I am

satisfied that the actions agreed at the meeting were carried out), the remaining thirteen per cent being split between Don't Know and Disagree.

Thirteen young people from a variety of primary and secondary schools in Aberdeenshire completed the questionnaire. The majority of respondents Strongly Agreed or Agreed with the ten evaluative statements. Some provided additional comments about their feelings about the meeting and its outcomes. A small proportion of participants (four out of thirteen) disagreed with some of the statements. For example, one young person made reference to being unclear about what the consultation meeting would be about.

In terms of the implications for Aberdeenshire EPS, it was decided that EP and school practice regarding implementation of the actions agreed at formal consultation meetings would need to be reviewed to ensure that parents and carers are better informed about what has been done. It was also felt that ensuring that parents and carers receive appropriate information about the follow-up consultation meeting – its aims, process and their role in this – would also help to increase parental satisfaction. It was considered important to review EP and school practice to ensure that children and young people are prepared for a consultation meeting to enable them to have a full say. Those children and young people who were dissatisfied were to be contacted by their EP to try to resolve the issues which were raised.

It was confirmed that the process of gathering stakeholder views would continue in line with the follow-up consultation meeting.

It is worth noting that the questionnaire method might have generated more reliable information, as the participants could remain anonymous if they wished, which is likely to have encouraged greater honesty. However, the closed-ended evaluative questions may have had had different meanings for different people, and without opportunities for clarifying each person's interpretation of the questions, the data obtained may have

reflected different understandings of the questions. Nevertheless, including an open-ended question asking for additional comments provided some rich information.

It is impressive that Aberdeenshire EPS have recently sought the views of parents and carers and children and young people about their level of satisfaction with the consultation meeting and its outcomes and will continue to do so. Gathering the views of the consultees would have been beneficial and should be incorporated as part of the evaluative research in the future. Also, exploration of the impact of the consultation on client outcomes did not take place. Efforts should be made to investigate this area in the future.

2.15 Shortcomings of research studies evaluating consultation

It is crucial to emphasise again (as mentioned in section 2.12, Use of consultation in the author's LA) that most of the studies described above (in section 2.14, Findings from research evaluating consultation in the UK) have restricted their evaluation to the effects of consultation on consultees (process evaluation) (and to a lesser degree, the effects on clients), rather than examining the effects on clients (product evaluation – actual demonstration of some improvement in performance or outcomes for clients). This has been highlighted as a significant flaw in consultation research (e.g. Bramlett and Murphy, 1998). A study that serves as an exception is that of Dickinson (2000) who discussed reduction in rates of statutory assessment in Lincolnshire as a result of the introduction of a consultation system. Dickinson (2000) also indicates that the database introduced to record consultation outcomes helped in dealing with issues of accountability. Evaluation in Chelsea and Kensington (Wagner, 2000) has also made reference to child outcomes. Wagner (2000) states that requests of statementing have dropped but requests for EP involvement have not.

2.16 Findings from research evaluating consultation (processes) in the USA

Some key findings arising from US research studies evaluating the process of consultation will be outlined. Direct transference to the UK context is difficult due to different cultures and educational settings.

In terms of consultation process variables research, those studies based on direct experience with various consultation models have concluded that teachers significantly prefer a collaborative consultation model (similar to Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)) for problem-solving. For example, the findings of Babock and Pryzwansky (1983)'s study indicate that the education professionals surveyed rated collaboration over the three other models (medical, mental health and expert) in their consultee role vis-à-vis school psychological services.

However, Babock and Pryzwansky (1983) point out that preference for a consultation model should not be considered a unitary concept. Other situational, organisational, consultee and consultant characteristics could also be influential. Furthermore, Babock and Pryzwansky (1983) suggest that the interactive effects of variables such as the nature of the problem presented and the nature, frequency and duration of prior consultation be investigated to determine their relationship to consultation model preferences within and across various stages of the consultation process. It is important for future research to consider whether different models of consultation may be more effective at different stages of the problem-solving process.

The interaction between consultant and consultee is crucial to the success of the consultation process. Erchul et al (1992) gathered quantitative data on the interaction of consultant-consultee dyads. Findings showed that the more that the consultants and consultees agreed on their respective roles, the nature of the consultation processes and the goals for consultation, the

more positively consultees rated consultation outcomes and the consultant's effectiveness.

Second, the role played by the consultee is also crucial. Erchul et al (1992) in the above study found that when consultees came to the consultation setting on a voluntary basis, the outcome was significantly more likely to be positive. If the consultee is unmotivated and unwilling to participate in consultation, then success will be hindered (Conoley and Conoley, 1992).

Third, the consultee's perception of a consultation is critical to achieving a positive outcome. Gutkin (1986) developed a consultation feedback questionnaire, which was completed by teachers at twenty four schools who had experienced a consultation model of service delivery over a period of six years. Findings showed that consultees' perceptions of consultation were significantly related to, the consultant's enthusiasm; the consultant's content skills and the consultant's process skills.

It is necessary to note that the sample size of schools in Gutkin's (1986) study is relatively small, which means that the generalisability of the findings is limited to the wider population of teachers. The outcomes are most relevant to the sample from which the data was drawn.

Nevertheless, Erchul et al's (1992) findings and those of Gutkin (1986) are consistent with Larney's (2003) view who highlights, for example, the consultant-consultee relationship and consultant-consultee responsibilities as two of the three characteristics necessary for effective consultation (see section 2.7, Key characteristics for effective consultation).

2.17 Future research needs

There is a clear need for research to attempt to address methodological flaws and to focus upon a broader range of issues relevant to consultation. Larney (2003) states that the following areas need to be addressed in consultation research: the need to study client outcome variables; the need for follow-up of consultation outcomes; the need for use of both quantitative and qualitative research techniques in evaluating consultation outcomes; the need for further research on the consultation process and the need for research with groups/ teams.

In terms of the interactive/ communicative process of consultation, carefully designed, descriptive and observational research must be done to better understand the ways in which people interact to solve problems. Subsequent applications must be developed into measurable and observable consultative skills, which can then be included in training curricula.

The methodology and instrumentation used in applied consultation studies should reflect the complex interaction that takes place during the consultation process. More appropriate research designs and techniques should include, for example, intensive, controlled single-case studies or smaller *n* experiments, consultant-consultee interaction analyses within and across various stages of the consultation process. The need for longitudinal studies to ascertain the impact of consultation on child outcomes is substantial. For example, from a social learning theory perspective, changes in child achievement and attitude resulting from indirect service delivery may be expected to take considerably longer than changes in student behaviour.

Further study of the consultation process is likely to be enhanced by more open methods of investigation that seek to describe the range of variability within the phenomenon under study, such as grounded theory.

2.18 Research related to consultation that has implications for EPs

MacGregor (1990) suggests specifically that EPs working within a consultancy model should carefully address the issue of evaluation if it is to be meaningful. MacGregor (1990) explores the concept of what is meaningful evaluation and how it can be applied to the consultancy role of EPs.

MacGregor (1990) maintains that research in the paradigm of co-operative inquiry involves the participants in the research process. This in itself enables the EP to adopt what can more honestly be interpreted as a consultative role since the relationship becomes a two-way phenomenon. MacGregor (1990) argues that in order to adopt a truly consultative role it is necessary to work within the paradigm of co-operative inquiry and, additionally the role itself can only be evaluated meaningfully within such a paradigm. The responsibility for the meaningful evaluation of consultancy rests therefore with everyone who is involved with any inquiry. If this is not clearly established by the EP from the outset then the research will lapse into the differentiation between the researcher and the participants. MacGregor (1990) emphasises that in co-operative inquiry the researcher interacts with the participants so that they contribute directly to the hypothesis making, to formulating final conclusions and to everything that goes on in between.

When questioning where does the role of evaluation of the consultancy role come into the equation MacGregor (1990) states that the research and evaluation become intrinsic parts of each other. The very nature of the co-operative inquiry and the consultancy role within it allows constant multi-directional feedback. Evaluation becomes an ongoing process.

MacGregor (1990) emphasises that a main benefit of a consultancy role within a co-operative inquiry is that recommendations are far more likely to be put into practice. A further benefit is that the learning of those who take part (e.g. assimilation of information) is enhanced by the very act of their participation.

MacGregor (1990) asserts that the efficacy of the consultancy role is dependent on the co-operative nature of the relationship between the EP and the teachers. An important aspect of the role is to establish through consultation the role definitions of all those involved in joint working.

Evaluative loops should be built into each stage of the process. This might involve setting aside time at regular intervals to evaluate progress as a result of the consultation(s). MacGregor (1990) mentions that this has the effect of enabling reflective thought as an ongoing process.

2.19 Evaluation of theoretical models of the consultation process

West and Idol (1987) examined the literature on consultation from an interdisciplinary perspective (e.g. special education, guidance and counselling) for several purposes: (a) To raise the question whether a theoretical base exists for understanding and applying models of the consultation process, (b) to examine the efficacy of using consultation across various related professions, and (c) to examine the use of consultation as a means of facilitating effective instruction for children.

The first step was to determine how the term consultation was defined across and within special education and the related professions. Pryzwansky (1974) indicated that consultation is traditionally viewed as a process in which an expert is involved to solve an existing problem. Pryzwansky (1974) suggested that school support personnel (e.g. psychologists) are likely to encounter little success using this traditional, expert-based (prescriptive) concept, and instead advocated a consultation relationship based on collaboration. Pryzwanski (1974) proposed that

consultation involves (a) mutual consent on the part of the two professionals involved, (b) mutual commitment to the objectives and a means of resolving an agreed upon identified problem, (c) joint development of an intervention plan and (d) mutual responsibility for implementation and evaluation of that plan. West and Idol (1987) maintain that in some instances these principles are similar to the kinds of human interactions which EPs have described as being important to the consultation process (Conoley and Conoley, 1982). For example, the above principles share common features with Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000).

West and Idol (1987) state that there are differences in how consultation is conceptualised and delivered. These differences were examined by comparing various models of consultation. It was found that the collaborative model emphasises the importance of solving immediate problems as well as teaching the consultee to solve those likely to appear in the future. It also has roles and responsibilities described for both the consultant and the consultee, with the focus being on parity and equality, as well as co-operative problem- solving.

The most essential point to result from the comparative analysis is that there was a large difference between applying a theoretical base to problem-solving in schools and applying theory to the communicative/ interactive process of consultation (West and Idol, 1987). There appeared to be no single, underlying theory for guiding consultants in the communication process of consultation. However, it could be argued that consultants are likely to construct their own theory.

Tindal, Parker and Hasbrouck (1992) investigated the construct validity of stages and activities in the consultation process. Problem identification activities appeared sporadically throughout each case; programme planning and development was simply not confined to the middle phases of the process and evaluation activities often occurred concurrent with

data collection. This finding suggests that there is a need for the nature of the consultation process to be more fully explored and mapped.

Leadbetter (2004) investigated how conversations between EPs and teachers are influenced by the mediating artefacts that are used. Sociocultural and activity theory is used and more specifically, approaches based on Engestrom's (1999b) conceptual models form a basis for analysing different types of artefact occurring within conversations and consultation meetings.

Engestrom (1999b) conceptualises four different types of artefacts in terms of the different processes they represent. 'What' artefacts are used to identify and describe objects. 'How' artefacts are used to guide direct processes and procedures on, within or between objects. 'Why' artefacts are used to diagnose and explain the properties of objects. 'Where to' artefacts are used to envision the future or potential development of objects.

The artefacts are further considered in terms of the levels of activity system that are operating. These are defined using Engestrom's (1999b) notion of co-ordinated, co-operative and communicative systems. In interactions that are termed 'co-ordination', the various actors are following scripted roles and each is concentrating on the successful performance of assigned actions. Co-operation occurs when different actors focus upon a shared problem or object and try to find ways of solving it or conceptualising it. Communication is used to describe interactions in which the actors focus on reconceptualising their own organisations and interaction in relation to their shared objects.

Findings suggest that the type of artefact used does vary between levels and that these can be predicted to a certain extent. At the co-ordination level, the highest group of artefacts used was the 'What' artefacts (e.g. SEN). Therefore, a co-ordinated conversation might include such terms as those being used to identify or describe objects. Within co-operative

activity, 'How' (e.g. referral process) and 'Where to' objects were mainly used, suggesting that process issues are important when activities are co-ordinated and working together towards common goals. Within communicative activity the highest group of artefacts used was the 'Why' group. This confirms that in activities where there is more open discussion about all aspects of role, tend to use more questioning artefacts, widening the discussion to incorporate aspects of role and reasons behind actions.

Leadbetter (2004) concludes that the findings have relevance in terms of planning and structuring meetings in the future and in terms of enhancing the communicative potential of working practices. The fact that there are certain high-usage, broad-based terms, or mediating artefacts that can be identified, suggests that they are used across all three levels of working; from co-ordinated, through co-operative to communicative. In situations such as these, in order to improve and progress the activities, it might be possible to make various parts of the meeting, the script or functions of the script more explicit. Thus, by agreeing content areas ('What' artefacts) beforehand or at the start of the meeting, then more attention could perhaps be paid to process issues ('How' artefacts) and also to issues around values, causal relationships, the nature of the activity and the longer term goals.

Other theoretical models and approaches could be drawn on to facilitate discussion about 'Why' artefacts, in order to result in more effective outcomes. In particular, using techniques derived from Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1955), a sharing of constructs could be facilitated in a non-threatening way. Thus a teacher and an EP might use a series of techniques to discuss their views and ways of alleviating the difficulties. However, this may expose differences in beliefs and values between the two parties. A challenge then, would be for the pair to accommodate these differences within the activity systems within which they work.

Overall, the importance of cultural artefacts within activity systems is crucial. Macready's (1997) work on counselling and conversations arrives at the same conclusions as he suggests that,

> "In all interactions, it is prudent to begin the conversation with a consideration of the possible determining contexts. Maintaining a consensual view of the context of the conversation will help to ensure that each of the participants in the conversation continues to share common assumptions." (p. 131)

While there are many theoretical models of consultation underpinning service delivery in EPSs, there has been limited research conducted on the application of these models to EP consultation practice with teachers in schools. At the onset of their research, Kennedy, Frederickson and Monsen (2008) thought that a useful tool for analysing the relationship between guiding conceptualisations and actual practice procedures is the "espoused theory" and "theory-in-use" framework developed by Argyris and Schon (1974, 1996). Argryris and Schon (1974) emphasise that actual behaviour may or may not be congruent with a person's espoused theory. The purpose of Kennedy et al's (2008) study was to explore the espoused theory of consultations of ten EP consultants, their theory-in-use and the degree to which there is a mis-match between the two.

The ten EPs completed a pre-consultation questionnaire which asked about, for example, theoretical models that informed EPs' practice and for their working definition of consultation. Each EP audio-taped at least one initial teacher consultation, generating seventeen case studies. The contents of the questionnaires and consultation transcripts were analysed using WinMax qualitative data analysis software. Kennedy et al (2008) acknowledge that although this approach utilises actual accounts or observations, and to that extent is "grounded" and inductive, it starts deductively from an *a priori* framework. The initial version of the framework was trialled on the twenty three per cent of the sample of the consultation transcripts by two researchers independently and amended as a result. In particular, categories were added to ensure that the framework provided a

comprehensive account of consultants' verbal behaviour. Agreement between the two researchers in the initial use of second level codes ranged from eighty per cent to ninety five per cent across the four transcripts. Differences in interpretation were discussed and resolved.

The data analysis indicated that EPs' espoused theories were based on three models: solution-focused, systemic practice and problem-solving. Most of them went through at least once cycle of a problem-solving process (e.g. Bergan (1977), see section 2.8.3, Behavioural model of consultation, Chapter Two – Literature Review). In this respect, EPs' theory-in-use would appear to match espoused as eight of the ten included problem-solving in their definition of consultation. The first phase of problem-solving – problem identification – was the most frequently coded of all. Kennedy et al (2008) are of the view that this may reflect the fact that EPs were asked to select an initial teacher consultation to audio-tape.

Kennedy et al (2008) highlight that intervention proved to be a comparatively difficult concept to define and code. It was very hard at times to distinguish between Actions, Intervention Possibilities and Intervention Planning, especially the latter two. There were not many occasions when EPs clearly stated an intervention strategy supported by evidence and the "checked out" commitment to action with the consultee.

Kennedy et al (2008) discuss an example where evidence-informed practice in intervention could have been more widely applied was in relation to treatment integrity. Gutkin and Curtis (1999) define this in terms of the degree to which the consultee is aware of and is able to implement the agreed intervention following initial consultation. Gutkin and Curtis (1999) suggest that there is often a training need to ensure such integrity is not compromised. None of the EPs discussed any possible training needs arising from the interventions suggested; even when it was clear that intervention would include work by another adult (e.g. parent).

In relation to the limitations of this study, the size of the sample was small. However, it is worth noting that the aim of the study was to generalise to the psychological theories surrounding consultation and its practice, rather than to all consultations conducted by all practitioners. Furthermore, the use of case studies allowed for more in-depth investigations of the verbal interaction between consultant and consultee in the context in which it normally occurs. Kennedy et al (2008) state that the implication is that the outcomes of this study are more likely to apply to practice. In terms of the data analysis, the data were coded by one author with cross-checks being conducted by a second author on only four of the seventeen transcripts. As a way of minimising bias, efforts were made to achieve clarity of code definition (e.g. operationalising each code), but the success of such techniques is unclear. The use of audiotapes meant that the impact of non-verbal communication was not considered. Finally, the study did not investigate whether there was any impact of the consultation on consultee and client outcomes. This remains an issue that warrants further research.

Also, in terms of future research needs, the way in which consultation effectiveness research is applied by practitioners, also merits more extensive consideration at initial and in-service training (Kennedy et al, 2008). EPs need to be aware of the importance of issues such as treatment integrity and be capable of intervening in a way that addresses this kind of issue competently. Another avenue for future enquiry is to determine to what degree of accuracy and consistency each part of the intervention plan has been implemented.

Kennedy et al (2008) conclude that this study indicates a high degree of coherence between theory, research and practice at least in the early stages of the consultation process. It recommends that further research on the intervention phase and evaluation of outcomes is necessary. The framework that has been developed for analysing the content of consultations can be used as a valuable tool for further developing the professional knowledge base in this area of practice.

2.20 Conclusion to Chapter Two – Literature Review

The development of the author's interest in consultation (see Chapter One - Introduction, section 1, The development of my interest in consultation) arose from her experiences of working at two contrasting EPSs. In the first EPS the author worked at, the model of service delivery was characterised by Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), whereas the second EPS where she continues to work, promotes an eclectic model of service delivery. In this service EPs are encouraged to use consultative approaches as part of their service delivery. This is partially due to the fact that there remains an expectation in schools that EPs will engage in a traditional way of working (i.e. psychometric assessment followed by a report that includes detailed recommendations). It is imperative to emphasise that all of the research documented in the current chapter has also contributed to consolidating the author's knowledge and understanding of consultation.

The author developed the Three Step Consultative Model, with consultation constituting the third step, as a way of achieving Wagner and Gillies' (2001) goal (see section 2.6, Definitions of Consultation):

> "...to shift the practice from the crisis work of individual assessment and diagnosis to collaborative work and preventative work." (p. 149)

The author also thought that the Three Step Consultative Model would fulfil schools' expectations to some extent as it includes a first step which focuses on selective assessment and/ or observation as well as a second step which involves providing initial feedback. In order to achieve these two goals the author developed this model, which she hopes will be more beneficial than using consultation on its own to support teachers. In the author's view, the combination of the three steps heightens the value of the model, to help teachers to adapt their practice, so that they are able to better manage the needs of children with SEN. It is necessary to highlight then that the present study is a

self-reflective evaluation of an amended general EP role to always include a specific consultation step (step three).

Chapter Three

Methodology

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with issues of methodology relating to the present study. There is background discussion about the author's theoretical positioning, discussion about the range of methodological approaches that were considered, together with a discussion of the chosen methods and justification for these. A detailed description of the methods used is presented together with an exploration of the process of data analysis. Reflexivity, issues of validity and ethical issues are considered.

The reader is reminded that the background to and the rationale for the development of the research questions is considered in Chapter One - Introduction, which provides an introduction to this thesis. The research questions are presented below:

1. What are teachers' reactions to the Three Step Consultative Model?

Step one:	Selective one-to-one assessment and/ or observation
Step two:	Providing initial feedback
Step three:	Consultation (Wagner, 2000) to develop agreed actions/ to develop thinking about child's needs

2. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors supporting them in changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

3. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors that reduce the likelihood of them changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

4. Do teachers prefer the Three Step Consultative Model or the traditional model (i.e. one-to-one assessment followed by a report)?

3.2 Theoretical positioning

This section will be presented in the 'first person', in contrast to most of the remainder of the thesis. In attempting to answer the research questions posed it was necessary to consider my own theoretical positioning as the author. The research questions pointed towards the use of qualitative methods, but I wanted to reflexively explore how I arrived at the position of choosing such research questions with the consequent implications for the methodology used.

I have a vivid recollection of one of the final university sessions (04.06.01) during my MSc in Educational Psychology course, when Alan Reynolds, the principal educational psychologist for Cumbria EPS at the time, discussed the application of the theoretical principles of dynamic assessment to the process of solution focused consultation. Whenever I engage in any kind of consultative work I remember that he emphasised that, asking the right questions will guide the consultee to give birth to their own solutions to problems. When I heard Alan say this, I was fascinated by this notion and have been ever since. I became so excited by the possibility of being able to empower consultees to this degree.

My passion for consultation was enhanced when my first experiences of using Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) in Nottingham EPS in 2001 resulted in hypotheses and ways forward being developed with teachers at the time of my involvement. This outcome revealed that participating in consultation sessions led teachers to feel empowered to begin to view the problem and to do things differently. Using a consultative

approach gave me the confidence to feel that I was able to make a difference, in terms of enhancing a teacher's capacity to meet a child's SEN. The implication of this for me was the possibility of moving away from the role of 'expert' in my work with schools and parents and adopting a consultative style instead, which guides the consultee to contribute to the process of understanding and dealing with problems. This approach also increases the consultee's involvement in making appropriate changes.

Consequently, my work as an EP, using Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) in Nottingham EPS felt both highly meaningful and immensely rewarding. My faith in consultation inspired me to read about psychological models that have underpinned the development of consultation, such as the solution focused perspective (e.g. De Jong and Berg, 1998). I began to agree with De Jong and Berg (1998) that once we accept that clients' problems are a function of their current definitions of reality, it clearly follows that different clients build very different solutions to what seem to be the same problems. Essentially, it seems that clients' capacity to reshape and shift their perceptions and definitions of reality is a critically important resource in their efforts to deal with their problems. Solutions seem to depend more on clients' capacity to develop and expand their definitions of what they want.

My reading has helped me to consider the connections between Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) and the solution focused model. For example, a core element that is common to both models is that they assume that individuals have the potentiality for development or change in personality and behaviour. Sheafor, Horejsi and Horejsi (1994) emphasise that practitioners are committed to empowering clients. By minimising the role of traditional scientific expertise and maximising the role of client perceptions, solution building moves toward a different and more complete way of helping clients to help themselves.

Furthermore, a core element that is common to both models is that they place value on the interpersonal relationship. For example, Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) emphasises the need to work closely with teachers with a sense of the school as a whole organisation. In relation to the solution focused model, Biestek (1957) states that clients must be accepted as they are and that practitioners must remain non-judgemental.

Many of the key elements of qualitative methodology resonate with the core elements of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) and the solution focused model. For example, qualitative approaches place considerable value on the relationship between the author and say, interviewee, which means that the interviewee is given increased opportunities to engage actively in the research process. I have chosen to use qualitative methods primarily because of my belief in the principles of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) and the solution focused model, as well as realising the difficulties of using quantitative methods meaningfully to evaluate consultation methods.

At this point it is also valuable to refer to one of the models influencing consultation approaches in the UK, consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) (see Chapter Two - Literature Review, section 2.82, consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers. 1959)). A core element that is also common to Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) and consultation based on Roger's principles (Roger's, 1959) is that both assume that individuals have the potential for development or change in personality and behaviour. Colvin (1999) maintains that all people have an innate capacity to find their own answers. This potential is aided by an accepting and understanding climate, which the therapist seeks to provide through the non-directive approach. Given that this approach is also a characteristic of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), it follows that qualitative methods to elicit and describe teacher perspectives are the most appropriate to use in this research.

In my casework with schools I had always found it crucial to explore the teacher's perceptions of the problem. I wished to embrace this belief by gathering the subjective views of the participants on the Three Step Consultative Model. I did want to gain some more general descriptions through quantitative measurement, but I was extremely eager to place more value on developing theoretical understandings through exploring the views of the participants who had experienced the Three Step Consultative Model.

As I begin to gather the views of participants I will remain open to whatever emerges from the data (a discovery approach). Then, as the research reveals patterns, I will begin to focus on verifying and elucidating what appears to be emerging. Qualitative research is concerned more with elucidation of participants' perspectives, process and contextual detail (Bryman, 1992).

3.3 Introduction to quantitative-qualitative debate

Oakley (2000) says that the quantitative-qualitative debate started in the early 1960s. Siber (1973) was writing nearly thirty years ago, but his statement still holds true. A review of the literature reveals that the boundaries between the two 'traditions' have not yet been dissolved.

Until the recent past there have often been considered to be two kinds of debates about qualitative and quantitative research methods, involving either technical or epistemological arguments. Henwood and Pidgeon (1992), for example, argue that it is important not to minimise the epistemological dimension to the quantitative/ qualitative debate and that the differences between methods should not be characterised purely as a technical matter.

3.4 Epistemology and method

Blaikie (1991) advocated that all measurements should be based on a common ontology and epistemology. However, Roberts (2002) argues that if method and epistemological assumptions are not logically linked, and that the qualitative-quantitative distinction is arbitrary, then there is a case for principled complementarity. This is where both quantitative and qualitative methods may be employed within the same research design and a single (interpretivist) paradigm.

It is crucial to evaluate the place of method in terms of epistemological assumptions.

Firestone (1987) has identified two groups in the qualitative/ quantitative debate: the 'purists' and the 'pragmatists'. The purists believe that the two method types are inextricably linked to paradigms, and consequently hold the view that epistemology informs method. However, for the pragmatists, both method types can be associated with the attributes of a paradigm. Firestone (1987) maintains that the aim is to explore the possibility of a rationale existing for the use of both methods on a technical level, whilst remaining in the same – interpretivist – paradigm.

Smith and Heshius (1986) claim that the argument for epistemology informing method derived from the 'logic of justification' issue. Method – as 'logic of justification' – means that the two methods, quantitative and qualitative, may not be combined in any form. For Smith and Heshius (1986), the question of the logic of justification separates the two methods at the epistemological level: They argue that there is a direct causal link between epistemological position and method. However, Smith and Heshius (1986) refer to the idea of the privileged position of the quantitative method due to its arising from a paradigm that allows certitude of how the world 'really' is. It appears that Smith and Heshius (1986) are against, not the use of both methods in the same research design, but the use of qualitative methods and the interpretive paradigm *per se*.

3.5 Quantitative and qualitative distinctions

It is important to consider whether 'traditional' distinctions between qualitative and quantitative techniques may prohibit the deployment of both techniques within the same research design.

A distinction is that of the qualitative researcher collecting data in a 'natural' setting and the quantitative researcher collecting data in an 'artificial' one. Hammersley (1992) notes that this distinction is misleading. Bevelas (1995) raises the point that all behaviour is situationally grounded, that there is always a context that affects behaviour, and that context can be hidden but not eliminated by being held constant.

A distinction is that of deductivism versus inductivism. Qualitative research may be characterised by the hypothetico-deductive method (Bevelas, 1995). Strauss (1987) refined his and Glaser's previous (1967) method of grounded theory saying that it 'involves not only induction but also deduction and verification'. However, quantitative research may also be concerned with theory generation, as found in any formulative studies.

It seems that the paradigm view of the relationship between quantitative and qualitative approaches is empirically inaccurate, not just at the level of method but also at that of the philosophical assumptions guiding research. Roberts (2002) states that the quantitative method may be used in an interpretivist paradigm to add descriptive data to the qualitative interpretations.

3.6 (Integration or) complementarity

Lincoln and Guba (2000), Fontana and Frey (2000) and Denzin and Lincoln (2000) suggest a move away from paradigmatic tensions and a move towards broader, multi method approaches. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) emphasise that qualitative researchers use a range of methods such as, graphs and numbers.

Roberts (2002) argues that qualitative and quantitative methods combined within a research design in a complementary fashion may add breadth and depth to analysis. That is, if the design aims to address several questions, each of these questions may be best suited to one or other of the qualitative or quantitative methods, and the results may usefully add depth and breadth to the overall research aim.

Roberts (2002) continues that qualitative and quantitative methods in a research design may be complementary, but not always integrated, as it is recognised that the two methods generate different types of data, and cannot be expected to achieve a 'rounded unity'. However, the relative benefits of the two approaches may be expected to assist in both the clarification of and explanation of social action and meaning.

3.7 Should the quantitative/ qualitative debate continue?

Roberts (2002) maintains that retaining the quantitative/ qualitative debate may be both fortuitous and problematic. It may be fortuitous because students in a range of disciplines need to become familiar and cognisant with research methodology in all its forms. Therefore, the debate can be a teaching/ learning tool.

However, Rabinowitz and Waseen (1997) are of the view that retaining the quantitative/ qualitative debate may be problematic. Rabinowitz and Waseen's (1997) study showed that many research 'allegiances' are the result of politics, peer group influence and personal preference rather than being based upon rational argument.

Overall, Roberts (2002) states that the debate should not be closed down, but that it should not be allowed to hinder constructive dialect.

3.8 Maintaining quality with a complementary approach

It is essential to make explicit the compilation of the research design and allowing full inspection of choice of method(s), in order to reduce the scope for personal distortion.

Kvale (1996) states that the interview attains a privileged position – it involves a conversation and negotiation of meaning between the interviewer and his/ her subjects. Patton (1980) mentions that the researcher gains views through the development of closeness in the sense of intimacy and confidentiality. Denzin (1978) argues that the desire to get close to the situation in order to increase understanding

> "involves the studied commitment to actively enter the worlds of interacting individuals." (p. 8-9)

Overall, selection among research methods requires judgement according to situation and purpose, rather than judgement based on a commitment to one or other competing views of the world and the nature of the inquiry. In order for the quantitative-qualitative debate to be a teaching/ learning tool for trainee researchers, power, personal preferences and politics should be minimised as much as possible.

This study used qualitative and quantitative methods in a complementary manner to answer the research questions posed. The qualitative approach and interpretivist methodology was dominant. The function of using quantitative methods was to add descriptive data to the qualitative interpretations. So, the responses to the scaling questions were used to describe the perceptions of individual interviewees.

3.9 Discussion about the range of methods available

The following section discusses the range of methods of data collection available in answering the research questions. There is detailed discussion about the use of semi-structured interviewing as this was the selected method of data collection.

3.9.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaire could have been used as a potential research method. Breakwell, Hammond and Fife-Shaw (1995) state that the questionnaire is the single most common research tool in the social sciences.

The questionnaire has several advantages (Cohen and Manion, 2001). For example, it tends to be reliable, because it is anonymous. It encourages greater honesty. Breakwell, Hammond and Fife-Shaw (1995) maintain that it is possible to obtain interesting insights by allowing people to make open-ended responses. It is economical in terms of time and money; and there is the possibility that it may be mailed.

However, the disadvantages outweigh the advantages of the questionnaire as a possible research method for the present study. For example, Cohen and Manion (2001) mention that there is often too low a percentage of returns. The questions may have different meanings for different people. If only open items are used, participants may be reluctant to record their answers for one reason or another. Some people may feel that it is a time consuming process. There may also be people who are conscious about the accuracy and quality of their written language, which may become a barrier to recording their answers. Moreover, it was thought that this research tool was not broad enough to answer the research questions posed. Questionnaire techniques are often associated with fact finding (Wellington, 1996). This was not a core focus in the present research. In addition, the intersubjectivity element in the consultation process, which would be strengthened when the researcher is also the

consultant, would make the meanings of quantitative interpretations difficult to be sure of.

3.9.2 Participant observation

Robson (1993) states that a core characteristic of participant observation is that the observer seeks to become some kind of member of the observed group, and has to establish a role within the group. Robson (1993) distinguishes between participant observers who can either seek to conceal the fact that they are carrying out some kind of enquiry, and those who reveal what their purpose is in participating at the onset.

Participant observation could have been used as a research method in the present study. The author could have adopted the participant-as-observer role, which is the second type of role identified by Robson (1993) (see above paragraph).

Frederickson and Cline (1995) discuss the value of observation as a tool for working with schools and children. The author believes that EPs have the potential to carry out participant observation as their work is primarily situated in educational settings. In the present research, this would have involved the author as researcher, leading the Three Step Consultative Model with teachers, whilst at the same time undertaking research into the process (e.g. observing in the classroom to investigate whether the outcomes of the model were being considered), using informal methods to gather and record information and asking participants about key aspects of what was going on. One such effect is that teachers are led to a more analytic reflection about processes and key factors influencing their functioning. Indeed, Breakwell, Hammond and Fife-Shaw (1995) state that participant observation can give access not only to behaviours but the attitudes, opinions and feelings of those being observed. Essentially, Cohen and Manion (2001) maintain that participant observers are able to discern behaviour as it occurs and are able to make appropriate notes about its salient features. However, the author concluded that, in reality,

the role would not have been possible to adopt to its maximum effect. Robson (1993) emphasises that the dual role of observer and participator is not easy.

It is likely that existing relationships with individual teachers can short-circuit a lengthy process of development of trust, but it may prove difficult for the teachers to see the author in the new role as observer. According to Robson (1993) this may lead to an artificiality and hesitancy in seeking to gain shared understandings explicitly and out in the open. The availability of time to undertake both roles is also likely to be an issue.

Furthermore, the results of participant observation are not easily open to cross-checking. The results are also prone to problems of observer distortion (e.g. observer's selective attention, selective memory). In terms of addressing, say, selective attention, one can aim to make a conscious effort to distribute one's attention evenly, but there may be times when one has a lapse in concentration and forgets to do this.

3.9.3 Focus groups

The emphasis on focus groups is on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic provided by the researcher. Cohen and Manion (2001) state that it is from the interaction of the group that data emerge.

The focus group approach can be used as a single method of data collection or in combination with other methods, such as individual interviews.

It may have been advantageous to use the focus group method in the present research for certain reasons. This approach could have yielded insights that might not otherwise have been available in an individual interview. Furthermore, as focus groups are economical on time, they would have produced a great deal of data in a short period of time.

Triangulating the use of focus groups with interviewing might also have been valuable.

The difficulties, associated, however, with using focus groups as a research method in the present study meant that this approach was not the optimal one to use. For example, even if efforts were made to ensure that participants had something to say and felt comfortable enough to say it, the possibility existed that over dominant or over quiet members may have distorted the data. Another concern considered was that chairing the meeting might have been extremely challenging, in terms of keeping it open-ended but focused. The quality of the interaction and the emerging data would have been heavily influenced by the author's role as chair. A further issue is that it would have been extremely difficult to guarantee confidentiality to the same extent as would be possible in individual interviews. The practical issue of transcription of the discussions accurately from audio recording might have also been problematic. Also, the topic being discussed is the teachers' own professional practice and their evaluation of this. Self-presentational issues may have changed the views expressed in an individual interview (e.g. not wanting to expose possible weaknesses).

3.9.4 Interviews

Interviewing is not simply the neutral exchange of asking questions and getting answers. Two (or more) people are involved in this process, and their exchanges lead to the creation of a collaborative effort called the interview (e.g. Fontana, 2000). The key here is the "active" nature of this process (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995) that leads to a contextually bound and mutually created story – the interview.

Fontana and Frey (2005) state that interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow humans. However, it is crucial to consider that interviews are interactional encounters and that the nature of the social dynamic of the interview can

shape the nature of the knowledge generated. Indeed, recently, postmodernist ethnographers have focused on the assumptions present in interviewing and with the controlling role of the interviewer. These concerns have led to new directions in qualitative interviewing focusing on increased attention to the voices of the participants (Marcus and Fischer, 1986), the interviewer-respondent relationship (Crapanzano, 1980), the importance of the researcher's gender in interviewing (Gluck and Patai, 1991) and the role of other such elements such as race, social status and age (Seidman, 1991).

Interviewing includes a wide variety of forms and multiplicity of uses (Fontana and Frey, 2005). Interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. The type of interview selected to use will depend on the paradigm or epistemology adopted by the researcher (e.g. qualitative) and the researcher questions.

In structured interviews the interviewer is required to ask all participants the same set of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories. Open-ended questions are rarely used. Responses are recorded according to a pre-designed coding system. Converse and Schuman (1974) advise that the interviewer must perfect a style of "interested listening" that rewards the respondent's participation but does not evaluate these responses.

The majority of research on interviewer effects in structured interviews has shown interviewer characteristics such as age, gender and interviewing experience to have a relatively small impact on responses (Singer and Presser, 1989). Fontana and Frey (2005) argue that this outcome is primarily the result of the inflexible, standardised and predetermined nature of this type of interviewing. It is vital to emphasise that the purpose of the present research was to learn a great deal about teachers' views regarding the Three Step Consultative Model. This would have been extremely difficult to achieve by using a high level of predetermined structure. The author agrees with Fontana and Frey (2005) who maintain

that the structured interview often elicits rational responses, but it overlooks or inadequately assesses the emotional dimension. It also has to avoid the complexity dimension.

At the other end of the continuum lies unstructured interviewing which can provide greater breadth. The traditional type of unstructured interview is the open-ended, in-depth interview, which aims to understand the complex nature of human behaviour without any prior categorisation that may limit the field of inquiry. Indeed, a core element of unstructured interviewing is the desire to understand rather than to explain (Spradley, 1979).

Fontana and Frey (2005) emphasise that as the goal of unstructured interviewing is understanding, it is paramount to establish rapport with participants. The researcher must attempt to see the situation from the respondent's viewpoint. Achieving such a close rapport, however, may lead to the researcher losing his/ her distance and objectivity. Consequently, it was decided that the optimal way to answer the research questions would be to collect information using a semi-structured approach. The data would be interpreted in a predominantly qualitative framework. The quantitative method would generate information to help clarify the qualitative interpretations.

The semi-structured interview is characterised by a degree of structure, in that, pre-established questions are prepared. However, a key feature is that there is also the potential for flexibility, as the researcher is able to deviate from the exact wording of questions and follow-up questions may be used. The interview schedule is situated in Appendix 2.

The author's rationale for wishing to conduct interviews in a semi-structured manner has been encapsulated by Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor and Tindall (1994). Banister et al (1994) state that this kind of interview provides information regarding the subjective meanings of the participants.

The semi-structured interview approach also allows issues to be explored that may be too complex to investigate using quantitative methods. A crucial aim of the author was to explore those areas where the interviewee perceives gaps, contradictions and difficulties. This can be achieved by using open-ended questions which are followed-up by individually tailored questions in line with the participant's responses. Indeed, the semi-structured interview has the potential to elucidate participants' views, some of which may not have been envisaged by the researcher (Cohen and Manion, 2001). The author was aware that analysing data from open-ended questions is more complex than in the structured response mode.

Using the semi-structured interview encourages reflexive involvement. For example, Banister et al (1994) highlight that consideration of reflexivity will occur during the interview itself (researcher's role, how the researcher was seen by the interviewee, the researcher's reflections on the process). The reflexive issues that the author thought about during the research process were recorded in a reflective diary.

Robson (1993) maintains that it is common practice to incorporate some more highly structured sequences in semi-structured interviews (e.g. to obtain standard factual biographical and other material). Consequently, it was decided that it would be valuable to include some structured questions within the semi-structured interview for this study.

In order to achieve triangulation, open-ended questions that would require qualitative analysis and structured questions that would help to clarify teachers' views were used. The use of a mainly qualitative approach supplemented with data from the quantitative method to support the dominant approach, would enhance the quality of the information gained about teachers' views regarding the Three Step Consultative Model. Refer to Appendix 2 for interview schedule.

i. Structured questions were incorporated as follows:

3.

a. Have you been able to use ideas from the detailed discussion step to change your practice for the child we discussed?

Yes/ has helped me to understand more about the concerns/ No

If yes/ has helped me to understand more about the concerns, go to question 4.
If no, go to question 6.

7.

Have you had another child assessed by an educational psychologist (EP) before?

If yes, go to question 8.
If no, go to question 12.

12.

On a scale of 0 to 10, please rate the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model in changing your practice, if?

0 = unable to think of any changes to your practice.
10 = have made/ expect to make changes to your practice.

13.

If you have had another child assessed by an EP before, on a scale of 0 to 10, please rate the effectiveness of the traditional model in changing your practice, if:

0 = unable to think of any changes to your practice.
10 = have made/ expect to make changes to your practice.

A benefit of using scaling techniques in conjunction with open-ended questions is that it allows for a degree of comparison to take place between the responses generated by the two approaches. Scaling questions are often used by solution focused practitioners. By means of such questions, a practitioner can help clients to express complex, intuitive observations about their past experiences and estimates of future possibilities (e.g. Berg, 1994). It was hoped that the use of scaling would trigger this kind of thinking during the interview process, and therefore, scaling questions were included in the interview schedule.

ii. Problems linked to using interviews as a research method

Sources of distortion may arise from the characteristics of the interviewer, the characteristics of the interviewee or the substantive content of the questions (Cohen and Manion, 1989).

The use of interviewing as a technique requires considerable skill and flexibility on the part of the interviewer (Robson, 1993). Indeed, Patton (1980) suggests that it is the interviewer's task to unlock the internal perspective of each interviewee by being adaptable. This is crucial in semi-structured interviewing where the use of prompts and follow-up questions are an important part of the process. The interviewer must endeavour to help the interviewee to feel at ease, which will optimise the quality of the data obtained.

It is clear that the interview is a social, interpersonal encounter, not only a data gathering exercise. It is vital that the interpersonal, interactional, communicative and emotional aspects of the interview are addressed. It follows that the interviewer should be adept at 'active listening'. (Cohen and Manion, 2001). The researcher must continually think reflexively about issues of subjectivity and distortion.

There are a range of problems surrounding the interviewee. Consequently, it is essential that when formulating questions the interviewer considers a number of points. A common problem is that of social desirability. This is a tendency to want to look good to the outside world and to be seen to have socially desirable habits and attitudes (Coolican, 1991). Another point the interviewer needs to consider is the extent to which a question might influence the interviewee to be unduly helpful by attempting to anticipate what the interviewer wants to hear. Coolican (1991) claims that demand characteristics may well operate, in that the interviewee may use cues from the interviewer to try to behave according to perceived research aims.

iii. Summary of reasons for using the interview method

A core element of the three models mentioned above (under section 3.2, Theoretical positioning): Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), the solution focused model and consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) is that they all place value on the interpersonal relationship.

The author is of the view that this interpersonal relationship is the main factor which influences the quality of data obtained in research. A core characteristic of qualitative approaches is that they place considerable emphasis on the relationship between the researcher and participant. This means that the interviewee, is given increased opportunities to engage actively in the research process. Oppenheim (1992) states that in interviews participants become more involved and hence, more motivated.

The author's central aim was to develop theoretical understandings through exploring the views of participants who had experienced the Three Step Consultative Model. As the research would reveal patterns, the author would focus on verifying and elucidating what appeared to be emerging. Indeed, a primary goal of qualitative research is the elucidation

of participants' perspectives, which would be possible by using the interview method.

The selected method reflects the author's view that the results may not be empirically generalisable. Schofield (1993) maintains that qualitative researchers will be interested in illumination and illustration rather than in empirical generalization. The purpose of the study was to investigate how the Three Step Consultative Model related to improved practice and how teachers viewed the benefits of this model in comparison with the traditional model (one-to-one assessment followed by a report) carried out by one single EP. It would be virtually impossible for the data to lead to the creation of principles, which would be relevant to all service delivery even in the same setting.

The author's own experiences led to the formulation of theoretical assumptions which clearly influenced the area of research chosen, the choice of research questions (refer to section 3.14.1, Grounded theory analysis) and the choice of research method - interviews.

Interviewing is far from an easy task. It is difficult to try to put the interviewee at ease in order to gain data of a high standard. Furthermore, Banister et al (1994) argue that as interviewing is time consuming it is suited to a study with a restricted number of interviews (as in the author's) in order to keep the transcription and analysis of material manageable, and to do justice to the material generated. Essentially, if the interview method is used with care and in the full knowledge of its limitations, it is possible to obtain high quality data.

3.10 Reflexivity

3.10.1 General principles

Reflexivity is one of the most distinctive features of qualitative research. According to Banister et al (1994) it is about acknowledging the central position of the researcher in the construction of knowledge. It is an attempt to make explicit the process by which the material and analysis are produced. Reflexivity has similarities with one of the main characteristics of 'grounded theory', in particular, one of Henwood and Pidgeon's (1993) criterion – keeping close to the data.

Wilkinson (1988) develops the concept of reflexivity and identifies personal, functional and disciplinary reflexivity, of which the first two are particularly pertinent to this study. Personal reflexivity is about acknowledging the researcher's individuality and how her personal interests and values influence the process of research from initial idea to outcome. The focus of functional reflexivity is how the researcher's individuality directs and shapes the course of the research.

Banister et al (1994) highlight the need for researchers to monitor their influences and to record, for example, the personal rationale for decisions. This can be achieved by keeping a detailed reflective diary, which the author did to record anything that she believed affected the research, such as her feelings, confusions and anxieties. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) make the point that the information about feelings in and around the interview are of value for understanding the dynamics of the research relationship. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) emphasise that the self-scrutiny process is difficult and complex precisely because both the researcher and the 'researched' are simultaneously influencing each other.

A detailed discussion about the author's attempts to address the issues of reflexivity can be found in Chapter Five, Discussion of Results.

3.11 Issues of validity

Validity is an integral element of qualitative (and quantitative) research. The focus of this section, however, will be validity in qualitative research. Banister et al (1994) argue that it has to do with the adequacy of the researcher to understand and represent people's meanings. The meaning that participants give to data and the inferences drawn from the data are of central importance (Hammersely and Atkinson, 1983). 'Fidelity' (Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995) requires the researcher to be as honest as possible to the self-reporting of the researched. However, the subjectivity of participants, their opinions, attitudes and perspectives can contribute to a degree of distortion. Validity should be seen as a matter of degree rather than as an absolute state (Gronlund, 1981). Cohen and Manion (2000) argue, then, that it is necessary to strive to minimise invalidity and maximise validity.

The researcher needs to be confident that the data generated are not simply artefacts of one specific method of data collection (Lin, 1976). Cohen and Manion (2000) argue that this confidence can only be achieved when different methods yield substantially the same results. Banister et al (1994) advocate that triangulation makes use of combinations of methods, investigators, perspectives etc., thus facilitating richer and potentially more valid interpretations.

Banister et al (1994) describes four common methods of triangulation. Methodological triangulation entails the use of different methods to collect information. This approach is the one used most frequently and the one that probably has the most to offer (Cohen and Manion, 2000). Data triangulation involves collecting accounts from different participants involved in the chosen setting, from different stages in the activity of the setting and if appropriate from different sites of the setting. Investigator triangulation is the use of more than one researcher, preferably from different disciplines or perspectives, or adopting different roles, thus reflecting the commitment to multiple viewpoints. Theoretical triangulation

embraces multi-theories and breaks through limitations that inevitably frame an explanation which relies on one theory.

Methodological and data triangulation as well as an element of theoretical triangulation were used in the present study. In relation to the former approach, open-ended interview questions were used and the data would be analysed using a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Some structured questions were incorporated within the interviews (e.g. scaling techniques). This data would be subject to quantitative analysis.

Essentially, qualitative and quantitative techniques were combined to achieve a richer understanding of the research area. Twiddy (2006) maintains that the 'composite' rather than 'mixed' nature of research recognises that the analysis is made up of independent parts, which together offer more than the sum of these parts.

In terms of data triangulation, data was gathered from teachers from five different schools. It was also collected over a period of four terms, which meant that the participants being interviewed would have had time to notice and reflect on, for example, the process and any outcomes of the Three Step Consultative Model.

With regard to theoretical triangulation the author intended to consider alternative theories during and following the process of the analysis of the data. So, the analysis would reveal theoretical concepts to help make sense of the data, which may then lead to the formulation of novel theories, or particular emphasis being placed on highly relevant aspects of established theories. These might constitute middle range theories advocated by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In attempting to address interpretive issues (the ability of the research to catch the meaning of situations and events for the participants) the author planned to involve EP colleagues in the validation of theories using a grounded theory approach. Clearly, then, the theories would most certainly be relevant to the present

sample, but the goal is that other EPs learn from them in order to inform their practice.

It is important to remember that validity in qualitative research is focused on personal and interpersonal qualities, rather than method (Banister et al, 1994). The author agrees with Hollway and Jefferson (2000) by recognising that the teacher's responses were elicited in the particular context of the interview relationship: The answers provided were a function of the intersubjective conditions of the moment, but at the same time, bear a relationship to actual events. Following on from this, Marshall (1986) discusses contextual validity and asks a number of questions such as "Is the research account recognisable – particularly by people within the area studied? " Is the material useful?" The author tried to ensure that her findings were contextually valid by considering such questions throughout the research process.

It is clear that the author maximised the validity of her findings by the critical evaluation on a number of levels. The findings were firmly grounded in teacher's accounts, rather than a reflection of her own unconscious issues.

The author hopes that the transcripts together with the reflexive account that reveals her story will allow the reader as Banister et al (1994) say

> "to identify the level of understanding at which the researcher worked, their tendencies, preferred models, biases, preoccupations and blind spots. This then enables others to reinterpret the findings to 'read' the analysis differently." (p.157)

3.12 Ethical considerations

Researchers must strike a balance between the demands placed on them as scientists in search of the truth, and their participants' rights and values potentially threatened by the research, that is, the 'costs/ benefits ratio' (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992). It is essential that researchers

take into account the effects of the research on participants, and act in such a way as to preserve their dignity as human beings.

Fontana and Frey (2000) highlight that ethical considerations are mainly linked to informed consent, right to privacy and protection from harm.

Informed consent has been defined by Fontana and Frey (2000) as receiving consent by the respondent after having carefully and truthfully informed him/ her about the research.

It is this principle that will form the basis, of an implicit contractual relationship between the researcher and the researched and will serve as a foundation on which subsequent ethical considerations can be structured (Cohen and Manion, 2001).

It is vital to consider whether the author had provided the participants with relevant information that was fully understood.

The right to privacy has been considered from three different perspectives by Diener and Crandell (1978). The first is sensitivity of the information being given – how personally threatening the information is that is being collected by the researcher. The second is the setting being observed which may vary from very private to completely public. The dissemination of information concerns the ability to match personal information with the identity of the research participant.

There are two ways of protecting a participant's right to privacy – ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. The main way to ensure anonymity is to not use the names of participants or any other personal means of identification. By promising confidentiality, the researcher, who will know who has provided the information will not reveal this knowledge publicly.

It is crucial to note that both these techniques were applied by the author.

In considering the ethical issue, protection from harm, it is necessary for the author to question whether involvement in the research would have had a negative impact on participants' future behaviour in any way (physical, emotional or any other kind).

The above issues are discussed in detail in section 5.12, Ethical issues (Chapter Five - Discussion of Results).

3.13 Outline of procedure

The following sections present an outline of the design and piloting of the interview schedule, the sample and information of how interview data was collected and analysed.

3.13.1 Design and piloting of the interview schedule

The next stage of the research process was to formulate interview questions linked to each of the four research questions, which would culminate in a semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix 2). Careful thought was given to avoid using open-ended questions that are double-barrelled, complex, ambiguous, leading and restrictive (e.g. Coolican, 1991).

Furthermore, it was decided that the interview schedule would be piloted. According to Breakwell et al (1985) since there are so many problems in formulating questions, interview schedules need to be piloted. Properly piloted work minimises, for example, finding that certain components of the sample cannot understand batches of questions. The interview schedule was piloted with three participants (teachers) who did not form part of the sample. Amendments were made to questions, which mainly consisted of shortening questions to focus the respondent's attention and rephrasing to enhance the clarity of the questions.

Conducting the pilot interviews also reinforced the benefit of using probes (e.g. non-committal encouragement to extend answers using eye contact, gentle queries like "I'm confused here"). Indeed, Breakwell et al (1985) argue that if the interviewer knows what each question is meant to tap and if he/ she is failing to obtain relevant information, there is a need to probe further.

Undertaking the experience of the pilot interviews heightened the importance of ensuring that the teacher felt at ease, that is, in a relaxed yet focused frame of mind and comfortable (e.g. not thirsty). Prior to the interview care was taken to consciously help the teacher to feel ready to start, which usually resulted in noticeable physical changes (e.g. increased eye contact, smiling, nodding). These signs revealed that the teacher was in an optimal state for me to begin the interview in a confident manner.

3.13.2 The sample

During the process of formulating and answering the research questions, the main stakeholders considered were:

- The LA, as it was hoped that the outcomes of the research would influence future decisions regarding funding, for example, supply cover for teachers to work with EPs using the Three Step Consultative Model.
- The EPS, as all members of the service showed a high level of commitment to the consultation approach.
- Primary and secondary aged children with SEN, as they were expected to benefit from the improved practice of teachers as a result of the use of the model.
- Teachers, as they were actively involved in steps two and three of the model. Gaining their reactions was of ultimate importance.

Teachers were the main stakeholders, as their responses would be most relevant to all four of the research questions. The first research question:

What are teachers' reactions to the Three Step Consultative Model? was developed primarily from my experience of using this model in the EPS that I work for. In evaluating consultation, researchers have focused on assessing the process of consultation. Most studies have restricted their evaluation to the effects of consultation on consultees (process evaluation), rather than examining the effects on clients (product evaluation) – actual demonstration of some improvement in performance or outcomes for clients. It is essential to emphasise, however, that as the schools in the author's patch have recently begun to experience her using consultation consistently in her casework, she is of the view that at this stage it is crucial to focus on process evaluation. For example, do teachers feel empowered to change their practice after consultation? However, even when primarily examining the process, it is possible to direct the questions towards issues of change for clients, as in the above exemplar question.

In order to find out more about what empowers teachers to change their practice, the second research question: What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors supporting them in changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)? was formulated. To explore what might go against empowering teachers, the third research question was judged to be necessary: What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors that reduce the likelihood of them changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

The fourth research question: Do teachers prefer the Three Step Consultative Model or the traditional model (i.e. one-to-one assessment followed by a report)?, was considered to be important to ask teachers because there remains an expectation in schools in the LA that EPs will engage in a traditional way of working (i.e. psychometric assessment followed by a report that includes detailed recommendations). Consequently, EPs are encouraged to use consultation as one of a range of approaches rather than a wholly consultation-based model. The EPS promotes an eclectic model of service delivery. Seeking the views of

teachers in this area would reveal more detailed information about their preferred model following experiencing a unique approach that incorporates an element of one-to-one assessment and/ observation, initial feedback from this involvement and consultation as one step.

3.13.3 The area from which the sample was chosen

As the author is the only EP who is using the Three Step Consultative Model in the EPS, the implication was that non-probability or purposive sampling would have to be selected. The sample would have to be drawn from the author's patch of schools and specifically from those schools where the author had used this model. This would involve the author adopting the dual role of researcher and service deliverer. The other reasons for this sample choice are outlined below:

- As the sample used does not represent any group from itself, it does not seek to generalise about the wider population (Cohen and Manion, 2001). It is important to stress that a key aim of the research was for the outcomes to be primarily relevant to the author's practice and to the author's EPS. It is hoped, however, that other EPSs in the region will benefit from the findings through considering their own practice in the light of findings.
- Interviewee accessibility would be facilitated given the established relationship between the researcher and the teachers in the sample.
- This relationship was likely to enhance the quality of the information gathered.

3.13.4 The sample of teachers

It was decided that teachers would be identified at Planning Meetings with the headteacher and/ or SENco, which take place at the start of the autumn term and during the spring term (end of January). The purpose of these meetings is to prioritise and plan an EP's involvement. Teachers

who were emphasised as requiring support (not financial) and advice in order to help meet a child's SEN would be targeted, whether or not he/ she had a statement of SEN.

3.13.5 Description of the sample: The schools involved

The sample was made up of teachers from the one secondary (all female) school, three primary schools in the author's patch and one infant school that was part of the author's patch until the end of the academic year 2006. The two special schools the author holds joint liaison responsibility for with another EP, were not included in the sample as the Three Step Consultative Model was not used in these schools. One SENco and one SEN teacher from the author's secondary school (all female) were interviewed. Three teachers were interviewed from one primary school and three from another primary school. One teacher and one SEN teacher from the infant school were interviewed.

3.13.6 Description of the sample: The teachers involved

The sample included eight teachers, one SENco and one SEN teacher, making ten in all.

3.13.7 Outline of procedure: The interviews

Interviews were conducted as follows:

i. <u>When interviews were conducted</u>

Interviews were conducted during the autumn term 2006 and the spring, summer and autumn terms 2007. As no specific time was allocated by the LA for the author's data collection, interviews were arranged after school, which seemed to suit teachers the best.

ii. Where interviews were conducted

All the interviews were conducted in schools. The actual location varied depending on the school (e.g. teacher's classroom/ room allocated for work with children with SEN/ office). It is essential to note that all interviews were conducted in private.

iii. How interviews were conducted

Teachers were identified at Planning Meetings at schools (see section 3.13.4, The sample of teachers). I arranged my involvement – the first and second step of the Three Step Consultative Model – at the meeting, with the SENco. I requested that following the meeting, the headteacher and/ or SENco approach the teacher to outline the details of my involvement, which would not be affected by my research (i.e. would remain the same regardless of whether the teacher chose to participate in my research or not), and to mention that I would like to interview the teacher a term later to gain their thoughts regarding my involvement. I then organised a time to visit the school to give the teacher a Participant Information Sheet (e.g. explains purpose of research) and a Participant Consent Form (refer to Appendix 1). When I met with the teacher I summarised both forms and stressed that confidentiality would be assured. Copies of these forms were also sent to the headteacher and/ or SENco, who would then be able to discuss these with the teacher. The teacher was given a minimum of two weeks to consider whether or not he/ she wished to participate in my research. Teachers were recruited when the Participant Consent Form was received, which would indicate that he/ she had given their informed consent to participate in my research. At the end of the school visit when the third step of the Three Step Consultative Model had taken place I gave the teacher a copy of the interview schedule and arranged a date for the interview.

To address the potential for inconvenience, at the start of an interview I emphasised that the purpose of it was to gather the teacher's thoughts regarding my involvement. At the end of the interview I provided the teacher with the opportunity to share their reflections about the interview process. If I identified that any inconvenience was caused, my approach was to have a detailed discussion with the teacher to explore the core concern.

The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

iv. Establishing rapport

Coolican (1991) emphasises that the biggest factor of all in ensuring that the interview is productive (particularly when it is less structured), is whether the interviewer can make the discussion feel natural. Using this individualised approach will significantly contribute to generating rich and revealing information.

As the author had previously supported some of the teachers, she had made contact with all of the teachers prior to the involvement linked to the research (to give and summarise the Participant Information Sheet and Participant Consent Form), had participated in the Three Step Consultative Model with them, meant that establishing rapport at the beginning of interviews was not difficult. The author knew, for example, the kind of conversations that would help the teacher to feel relaxed and motivated at the start of the interview. This process also enabled the author to gain a sense of calmness to start the interview.

v. Managing the semi-structured interview

The interview schedule (situated in Appendix 2) consisted of pre-established open ended, structured and scaling questions. In terms of open-ended questions, Coolican (1991) stresses that items to avoid are those of double-barrelled, complex, ambiguous, leading type. A conscious

attempt was made to avoid using open-ended questions of this nature. Tuckman (1972) maintains that careful structuring of questions helps to minimise distortions in the views given which may arise from the interview situation.

The exact wording of the questions varied slightly between interviews to maximise the quality of the information gained from each respondent. The open-ended questions were often followed-up by individually tailored questions in line with the participants' responses. They were also able to ask for clarification about questions.

Probes (e.g. non-committal encouragement to extend answers using eye contact, gentle queries like "I am confused here," questions such as "what else?") were used thoughtfully when considered to be necessary rather than prompts. Wellington (2000) points out that the distinction between probing and prompting may seem marginal, but when the distinction is considered carefully, it can be seen that prompting indirectly leads the participants (e.g. "are you saying that.....?"), which may cause bias in the reply. In contrast, probing is a more non-directive which invites elaboration.

3.13.8 Recording of interviews

Recording of interviews is an important step, as there is the potential for considerable data loss, distortion and the reduction of complexity. Cohen and Manion (2000) emphasise that the interview is a social encounter, not merely a data collection exercise. Mishler (1991) suggests that the data and the relationship between meaning and language are contextually situated. It appears that the central question is how can the recording of interviews be most useful for the research. The author's core view is that it was essential that the interviews were recorded as accurately as possible to allow an in-depth analysis of the content to take place.

The author considered taking hand-written notes to record the interviews. The disadvantages, however, outweighed the advantages. The connection between the author and the interviewee might have been affected as eye contact would have been reduced when the author would be writing. The note-taking approach would have had an impact on the flow and pace of the interview, as it would have slowed down the procedure. The likelihood of interviewer distortion would have increased as the author might have recorded aspects that supported her own views, without necessarily realising that this was happening. There was also the risk that some interpretation of comments at the time of recording might have taken place. These factors could have influenced the accuracy of the data obtained.

An argument for taking hand-written notes is that it would avoid the considerable amount of time necessary for the transcription of interviews. It could also be argued that with experience interviewers can learn to develop shorthand systems of their own, and as long as notes can be written up immediately, or very soon after the interview ends, it is possible to produce a reasonable record of what was said in the key areas. The point is that the author's core view was that it was essential that the record would be as accurate as possible a reflection of the interview in order that a detailed analysis of the information could take place. Consequently, it was decided that the disadvantages would reduce the quality of the data.

Recording of the interviews could have involved using a video camera. This strategy would have enabled the author to comment on all of the non-verbal communication that was taking place in addition to the features from the audiotape. Cohen and Manion (2000) state, however, that as soon as other data are noted, this becomes a matter of interpretation (e.g. was the respondent happy or was it just a 'front'?). Furthermore, the presence of a 'live' video camera in the room would have been a prominent feature which would have made it hard to help retain an informal atmosphere conducive to eliciting data of a high quality.

A decision was made to record the interviews using a digital voice recorder and for the responses to be transcribed in their entirety to allow for an in-depth analysis of the data to take place. The author was aware that as Coolican (1991) warns, many people are inhibited in the presence of a tape recording device, but nevertheless felt that this technique leaves the interviewer to converse naturally and that the natural language of the interviewees would be captured. It would also be possible to check data easily by listening to the tapes again. The author could also endeavour to record different kinds of data in the transcript such as, the tone of voice of the interviewee or his/ her mood. However, it was recognised that this approach would generate a huge amount of data, which would be time consuming to transcribe. Given the author's time restraints, she made a decision to transcribe two interviews and for two assistant EPs to transcribe four interviews each, under the author's supervision. The author's line manager agreed with this decision and also thought that this task would contribute to their ongoing professional development.

3.14 Data analysis

3.14.1 Grounded theory analysis

Glaser and Strauss (1967) led the development of qualitative inquiry by offering the first systematic set of guidelines for managing and analysing qualitative data. This method emerged as Glaser and Strauss (1967) explicated how they studied the social organisation of dying in hospitals (Glaser and Strauss, 1965). Glaser and Strauss (1967) advocated, for example, the idea of developing middle range theories from research grounded in data rather than deducing testable hypotheses from existing theories. Charmaz and Henwood (2008) makes the point that this kind of idea challenged conventional positivist notions of qualitative research as anecdotal.

The objectivist and constructivist threads in grounded theory have their antecedents in Glaser and Strauss's (1967) contrasting intellectual heritages (Charmaz and Henwood, 2008). Glaser (1978) imported positivist assumptions of objectivity, parsimony and generality to grounded theory. Strauss (1987) brought pragmatist emphases on agency, action, language and meaning, and emergence to grounded theory that supported its constructivist leanings. Both Glaser and Struass (1967) emphasised process and saw grounded theory as a method that facilitated studying processes.

Strauss (1987) moved the method toward verification with his co-author, Corbin (1990, 1998). Strauss and Corbin (1990)'s techniques made the method more formulaic because researchers could apply these techniques to their data.

Glaser's (2003) version of grounded theory remains positivist and Strauss and Corbin's (1990) retains elements of positivism. Charmaz's (2000, 2002a, 2006a) distinction between objectivist and constructivist grounded theory offers an epistemological handle for moving grounded theory out of its positivist roots and further into interpretive science. Charmaz (2000) shows how the resulting theory is constructed rather than discovered.

Clarke (2003, 2005, and 2006) extends grounded theory by integrating postmodern premises in her explication of situational analysis. Clarke (2003) favours a situated grounded theory analysis that takes into account positionality, relativity and reflexivity. Clarke (2003) also sees grounded theories as constructed, not discovered. Clarke (2003) argues that symbolic interactionism and grounded theory form a theory-method package in which ontology and epistemology are co-constitutive.

Pidgeon (1996) notes that the qualitative paradigm shares a number of characteristics with the approach of grounded theory, including an emphasis upon the importance of viewing the meaning of experience and behaviour in context and in its full complexity; a view of the scientific

process as generating working hypotheses rather than immutable facts and an attitude towards theorising that emphasises the grounding of concepts in data rather than their imposition in terms of a priori theory.

Much of the data in this present study was analysed using a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Glaser and Strauss (1967) chose the term grounded theory in order to express the idea of theory that is generated by (or grounded in) an iterative process involving the continual sampling and analysis of qualitative data gathered from concrete settings, such as unstructured or semi-structured data obtained from interviews.

Two fundamental analytical commitments shape the methodological stance adopted by Glaser and Strauss (1967). These are the method of constant comparison and the use of theoretical sampling. Both are advocated primarily as means of generating theory (Pidgeon, 1996). The former method defines the principal analytical task as one of continually comparing elements throughout a research project. The latter involves the active sampling of new cases as the analysis proceeds. New cases are selected for their potential for generating theory by extending the researcher's emergent understanding.

Grounded theory is fundamentally an interactive and interpretive method (Charmaz, 2006a). Charmaz and Henwood (2008) explain that theory is constructed through engaging in progressively more abstract levels of comparative analysis.

Charmaz and Henwood (2008) argue that the main concern for the researcher must be to develop a meaningful understanding of, say, a particular problem. Using grounded theory enables this and theorising about people's lived experiences to take place, so that their research might, as Day (2004) and Punch (2005) highlight, make some contribution to the ways in which people manage their problems. So, grounded theory is a model for research that is carried out in everyday contexts and has as

its goal the construction of participants' social realities by building comprehensive theories (Pidgeon, 1996). However, Pidgeon and Henwood (1996) argue that it may not be possible to realise such a goal in all studies. In smaller investigations, such as this one, more achievable goals, like focused conceptual development may have to be aimed for. This became an objective of the present study. Such focused concepts would help to make sense of the data, but they would also place particular emphasis on highly relevant aspects of established theories (and could constitute middle range theories, Glaser and Strauss, 1967). So, in this study the author decided to use Pidgeon and Henwood's (1996) term of focused concepts as well as Glaser and Strauss' (1967) term of middle range theories and combined them to coin the emerging concepts as 'middle range theoretical concepts'.

Miller's (1994) grounded theory analysis of transcripts of interviews with mainstream teachers who were talking about successful behaviour support was carried out 'by hand'. The grounded theory analysis of the interview transcripts from the present study was also undertaken 'by hand.'

Turner (1991) has characterised the process of carrying out a grounded theory approach as moving through three stages:

- Order One (information in the form of, for example, interview transcripts);
- "Chaos" (deriving from chopping up transcripts and then rearranging these, with the danger of becoming adrift in so much data) and
- Order Two (data re-combined and re-labelled).

A sequence of stages characterise the process whereby Order One is transformed into Order Two in the generation of grounded theory.

Miller (1998) states that the first stage in the process of moving from Order One to "Chaos" is that of open coding (Level One). This is achieved by the constant comparative method. Miller (1998) explains that this involves a line by line, or even word by word analysis of the data during which the researcher gives each discrete idea a name, aiming for the name – the code – to be at a higher conceptual level than the word or words in the text. Proceeding through the text the researcher generates new codes and finds other examples of already identified codes. Miller (1998) continues that Level Two codes, also known as categories, derive from condensing Level One codes. A combination of academic and professional knowledge then lead to the development of core constructs, that form Level Three codes, so that they give meaning to the relationship between themselves and the Level One and Two codes. Categories of common Level Three codes will point to focused concepts, which occurred in the present study.

Pidgeon and Henwood (1996) advocate that this active 'flip-flop' between the data and the researcher's developing conceptualisations demands a dynamic process of changing, rechanging and adjustment of the terms used (constant comparative method) until the fit can be improved. As connections are perceived these are quickly written as memos in order to capture these insights. As categories evolve, the researcher looks in the transcripts for relevant data to fill them. This process of theoretical sampling takes place while coding proceeds, ensuring that the abductive process continues at a number of levels (Miller, 1998).

Before constructing the semi-structured interview schedule, the author thought carefully about the areas that she wanted to know more about. Once the author had gained clarity about these areas, the next logical step seemed for her to re-label the areas into questions, because she was seeking answers. At this point, the realisation occurred to the author that these questions could act as research questions. The author was aware

that most grounded theory applications favour no pre-structuring at all, but in her case using the research questions as a coding framework naturally became the starting point prior to her engaging in progressively more abstract levels of comparative analysis (as referred to above in the current section by Charmaz and Henwood, 2008). Furthermore, the author felt comfortable with the approach that she had taken as she could identify with Clarke's (2003) view (above) that grounded theories are constructed, not discovered. Moreover, the author decided that the research questions would facilitate the first stage in the process of moving from Order One to "Chaos", which is that of open coding (Level One) (see Miller, 1998 above).

3.14.2 Approach to the analysis of the interview transcripts

The research questions were used as a guide to assist the production of open codes. So, the research questions provided a coding framework for the author because they gave her a starting point to begin her analysis.

Responses to questions one a, b, c, and d (in Section A), which related to the first research question, were analysed as a separate data set. The interview schedule can be found in Appendix 2.

Information gathered from to questions two a, b, c, d, and e (in Section A; question three a (in Section B); *question four (in Section B); question five* (in Section B); question six (in Section B); question seven (in Section C); question eight (in Section C); question nine (in Section C); question ten (in Section C) and question eleven (in Section C), which corresponded to research questions two, three and four were analysed as a separate data set.

Quantitative analysis of questions twelve and thirteen (in Section D)

Quantitative analysis of the data gained from these questions, which corresponded to research question four, was undertaken. The data was presented as percentages and averages. Some information is presented in tables, graphs and pie charts.

Chapter Four

Analysis and Presentation of Results

Chapter Four

Analysis and presentation of results

4.1 Description of sample

A thorough discussion of the teachers and schools that are included in the sample is detailed in Chapter Three - Methodology. To summarise, the sample comprised of ten interviewees from the author's patch:
seven teachers;
one SENco and
two SEN teachers.

All of the interviewees, with the exception of the SENco had experienced the Three Step Consultative Model for the first time.

4.2 Re-statement of the research questions

The reader is reminded that the research questions (see section 3.14.1, Grounded theory analysis, Chapter Three – Methodology) formulated were:

1. What are teachers' reactions to the Three Step Consultative Model?

Step one:	Selective one-to-one assessment and/ or observation
Step two:	Providing initial feedback
Step three:	Consultation (Wagner, 2000) to develop agreed actions/ to develop thinking about the child's needs

2. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors supporting them in changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

3. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors that reduce the likelihood of them changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

4. Do teachers prefer the Three Step Consultative Model or the traditional model of working (i.e. one-to-one assessment followed by a report)?

4.3 Summary of method of analysis

The reader is also reminded that the method of qualitative analysis involved the use of a grounded theory approach undertaken by the author.

The research questions intended to give a basic coding framework to guide the structure of the study. However, in practice the nature of the interview questions led the interviewees to establish the purpose of the study (i.e. an evaluation of a Three Step Consultative Model with teachers). This meant that their responses tied in very closely with the research questions. The findings relating to steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model were first considered to answer research questions one and two (presented in Section A using a descriptive approach). Then the results pertaining to step three of the model were looked at to respond to research questions one to four (presented in Section B in a descriptive way). Both sets of data were also interpreted using a coding analysis to develop middle range theoretical concepts. So, the final stage of the analysis switched to a theoretical level (presented in Section C), when this re-analysis of the second set of data is presented.

Figure 1: Order of presentation of results

Codes from steps one and two	Section A Research questions one and two (descriptive)
Codes from step three	Section B Research questions one to four (descriptive)
Codes from steps one, two and three (codes analysed for middle range theoretical concept development)	Section C

The author replicated Miller (1998)'s ('by hand') approach to the grounded theory analysis (as described in Chapter Three – Methodology, section 3.14, Data analysis, sub-section 3.14.1, Grounded theory analysis). Detailed information about the analysis of all the findings can be found in Appendix 4a, Frequency of Themes. Coding at Level One involved a line by line analysis of the data during which the author gave each discrete idea a name, aiming for the name – the code – to be at a higher conceptual level than the word or words in the text. The author proceeded through the text, which generated new codes and also found other examples of already identified codes. Therefore, all feedback including unsupportive comments was taken account of. As shown in the grid (Appendix 4a) the findings linked to steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model (Section A) generated fifty two Level One codes, and those linked to step three (Section B) generated one hundred and sixty five Level One codes.

Level Two codes, also known as categories, derived from condensing the Level One codes. The findings relating to steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model (Section A) generated twenty two Level Two codes/ categories, and those relating to step three (Section B) generated fifty one Level Two codes/ categories (refer to Appendix 4a). A combination of academic and professional knowledge then led to the development of core constructs that formed Level Three codes, so that they gave meaning to the relationship between themselves and the Level One and Two codes.

The findings corresponding to steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model (Section A) generated five codes/ core constructs/ descriptive concepts (the term used in the present study), and those corresponding to step three (Section B) generated fourteen descriptive concepts (see Appendix 4a) (all of which are detailed in Chapter Four – Analysis and Presentation of Results, section 4.4, Section A: Findings linked to steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model; 4.5, section B: Findings linked to step three of the Three Step Consultative Model).

Categories of common Level Three codes from the findings pertaining to steps one and two (Section A), as well as step three (Section B) pointed to four focused concepts in the present study (outlined in Chapter Four – Analysis and presentation of results, section 4.6, Section C: This section is a conclusion to the analysis and presentation of results: Middle range theoretical concepts derived from analysis of findings linked to steps one, two (Section A) and step three (Section B) of the Three Step Consultative Model).

4.4 Section A: Findings linked to steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model

As a result of the analysis, in relation to steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model five descriptive concepts were identified. These concepts represent coding at the more general level, still maintaining a descriptive orientation.

- Feedback from another professional is effective.
- Feedback to develop understanding of the child's specific needs increases its effectiveness.
- Early feedback increases the effectiveness of it, in terms of development of understanding of the child's needs.
- Earlier EP involvement (in the school year at step one) would increase the effectiveness of the feedback.
- Developing intervention strategies in the feedback step would increase its effectiveness.

All these descriptive concepts are elaborated below, to demonstrate the evidence base.

4.4.1 Research question one – What are teachers' reactions to the Three Step Consultative Model?

i. Feedback is effective

All of the interviewees found steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model effective, in various ways. For example, interviewee six said,

> *"I find it really useful for a fresh pair of eyes to speak to these students and, you know, they can assess what they think about it and come back and just give me a fresh opinion really, and fresh ideas."*

Interviewee four said,

> *".....It gave us a beginning, erm targets to work towards."*

Interviewee nine said,

> *".....It did help me after you'd spoken to me, when you'd done the assessment and then you gave me those figures."*

Interviewee ten said,

> *".....and you know it obviously helps with your observations.*

However, a small minority did suggest ways in which the effectiveness of steps one and two could be improved. This could be achieved by lengthening the duration of step two. For example, interviewee eight said,

> *"After you've had a, an observation it's nice to have a bit more time to talk and, maybe start to think about things then I think."*

In addition, interviewee eight mentioned that ensuring that step two takes place out of the classroom could improve the effectiveness of step one and two and said,

> *"I think I'd like to arrange it for, you know, so that I know it's difficult with school but sometimes the school doesn't give me the time out of the classroom to be able to do it, and I do think that I need time when I'm not in the classroom and I can go away and there's another teacher in the class to be able to take over, so that we've got a lot of time to talk about it in a quiet area where I've not, you know, not got disruptions of other children."*

ii. <u>Feedback to develop understanding of the child's specific needs increases its effectiveness</u>

Half of the interviewees were of the view that steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model helped to develop an understanding of the child's specific needs. For example, interviewee ten said,

> *"If you were coming out with the same things we were coming out with, so it helps you to see, you know, what else is needed for that child."*

Interviewee three said,

> *"It was quite informative. It helped me to reflect a little about, er, where .....was."*

Furthermore, a small minority mentioned that obtaining parental views could be valuable in further developing understanding of the child's specific needs. Interviewee eight said,

> *".....maybe we could've included .....'s mum in it a bit having the background of the condition more than maybe me or you .....maybe she (mum) could've been, you know, included in one of the stages and then maybe we could've done one together. So maybe in the initial stage to help with the initial 'what can we do?'*

iii. Early feedback increases the effectiveness of it, in terms of development of understanding of the child's needs

A great majority of the interviewees expressed that the earlier the step two following step one increases the effectiveness of both step one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model, in terms of development of understanding of the child's needs. For example, interviewee two said,

> *"It was useful in the fact that, straight after the assessment, the observation, we got the feedback, some, some amount of feedback straight away. So it wasn't, you weren't hanging around for a long time waiting to see what, what had happened, and how it had gone and, and what people's ideas were about, about ..... It was straight away. There was something to deal with."*

Interviewee six said,

> *"Well, the initial feedback took place obviously on the same day, erm, and that was quite useful because it was so fresh."*

Furthermore, a small minority made a recommendation that could make it easier for step two of the Three Step Consultative Model to take place sooner after step one of the model. Interviewee five said,

> *"...some time maybe after school or something would have been more suitable, but at the time, you know, it's always difficult with meetings and things after school as well."*

None of the interviewees reported that time delays did not influence the feedback, or that they would prefer more time before the feedback.

iv. Earlier EP involvement (in the school year at step one) would increase the effectiveness of the feedback

About half of the interviewees made the point that the earlier the EP involvement (in the school year at step one) could increase the effectiveness of steps one and two of the Three Step Consultative Model. For example, interviewee seven said,

> *"It would have been great to have done this in September. Erm, you know from my point of view as an NQT, um, it would have been great to have done it in September because it would have given me longer to try and work with him."*

Interviewee four said,

> *"If we'd been able to start it when she first came, then it would have been more, erm, what's the word, erm, we would have been able to act quicker."*

None of the interviewees said any different views.

4.4.2 Research question two - What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors supporting them in changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

i. Developing intervention strategies in the feedback step would increase its effectiveness

A minority of the interviewees felt that developing intervention strategies in step two of the Three Step Consultative Model would increase its effectiveness. For example, interviewee eight said,

> *"So, just things I suppose to help me in that first period because obviously it's quite a long time. So, I still have the child and I've still got to do something to support him, but it's just maybe a little bit of input there into how to support him up until the next time when you come in."*

Interviewee ten said,

> *"...I mean maybe more I suppose, just more strategies."*

Furthermore, a small minority made reference to the development of strategies that did take place in step two of the Three Step Consultative Model, in particular, building on developing existing strategies. Interviewee nine said,

> *"....you didn't just say this is what you need to be doing, this is what you need to be doing. You sort of looked at what was going on anyway and you said, well, you know, I would suggest that you could, which I thought was useful."*

None of the interviewees' responses indicated that developing intervention strategies in the feedback step would not increase its effectiveness.

4.5 Section B: Findings linked to step three of the Three Step Consultative Model

As a result of the coding analysis in relation to step three of the Three Step Consultative Model, fourteen descriptive concepts were identified. These concepts represent coding at the more general level.

- Consultation with another professional is the main factor that leads to its effectiveness.
- Consultation is effective in facilitating the formulation of relevant actions.
- Further developing an understanding of the child's specific needs increases the effectiveness of consultation.
- Consultation is effective in leading to a change in practice.
- Reports (traditional model) are less likely to lead to a change in practice.
- Consultation is effective in leading to benefits for other children.
- School-related pressures can hinder the implementation of the actions from consultation.
- Step three and more of it increases the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model.
- The sooner the consultation following step two increases its effectiveness.

- The function of each model is different and combining core elements of both models (complementary model) could be helpful.
- The impact of the child's specific needs can hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation.
- The earlier the consultation in the school year would increase its effectiveness.

These descriptive concepts are detailed below, to demonstrate the evidence base.

4.5.1 Research question one – What are teachers' reactions to the Three Step Consultative Model?

i. Consultation with another professional is the main factor that leads to its effectiveness

All of the interviewees thought that: Consultation with another professional is the main factor that leads to its effectiveness. For example, interviewee three said,

> *"It's a case of having time to sit down with someone who's a professional and mull over these ideas, erm, and I did take them on board and it was nice to actually sit and have time to talk, rather than, again just have a few suggestions given to you or me told to go away and think of a few ideas."*

Interviewee nine said,

> *"....your personal involvement was what made the difference. That we could discuss things and that's what made the difference. That you were so closely involved and that we worked together."*

Interviewee one said,

> *"....what leaps out of my mind is that you're just given time to actually sit down and actually focus your thoughts on one specific child as a whole and bounce ideas around...."*

Interviewee seven said,

> *"Well, I just think the main thing is that, following on from our discussions about him, he's been at the forefront of my mind, do you know what I mean? And it's like highlighted him as an individual...."*

Indeed, a small minority mentioned that consultation with more than one professional, including the EP can be effective. For example, interviewee one said,

> *"....it was good to have different people there, you know, the SENco and yourself (EP), just to bounce ideas around...."*

Interviewee two said,

> *"....it was really good to have that discussion with all the people involved and to think of things together to work out a way forwards...."*

Furthermore, a small minority did suggest that it would be valuable for the SENco to attend step three as part of the normal process to facilitate the implementation of the agreed actions. Interviewee nine said,

> *"....the SENco at the feedback to discuss implementing feedback and planning a programme for the child."*

It is worth noting that a small minority expressed the view that the involvement of other professionals can lead to less of a need for EP involvement. Interviewee five said,

> *"....behaviour support team, they regularly come still, every six weeks. They come in, and so we do discuss, you know, his IEP targets, and we've put new targets in place, so really, because I'm getting support from that side, you know, I don't need it from everyone, because it would be too much."*

ii. <u>Consultation is effective in facilitating the formulation of relevant actions</u>

Every interviewee shared the view that: consultation is effective in facilitating the formulation of relevant actions. For example, interviewee four said,

"....I think it gave us time to reflect on successes and ways forward...."

Interviewee six said,

> *"I think we came...we had some ideas on cards, which we were able to make the same week...."*

Interviewee seven said,

"....that was good as well because that enabled me to pick up on some specifics I could do with....., erm to try and encourage him in terms of, we talked about, erm letter writing and shadowing letters...."

Interviewee one said,

"....I think when you go through these activities you sort of have more in your toolkit if you like, because then you've got, erm, lots of different ideas to try."

iii. Further developing an understanding of the child's specific needs increases the effectiveness of consultation

Virtually all of the interviewees felt that further developing an understanding of the child's specific needs increases the effectiveness of consultation. For example, interviewee seven said,

"....Perhaps a bit more information earlier on about exactly what his problems were, how they affected him and stuff like that, talking to someone about it that knew rather than just reading would probably have been helpful."

Interviewee three said,

"....the more knowledge a teacher has it would help and certainly the more knowledge I have of my children the better it would be...."

Interviewee ten said,

"....it's things like when I've done P.E, you know, I wasn't quite sure about his sort of areas of difficulties would affect his P.E...."

Interviewee five said,

"....I really do think that maybe there is something medically wrong, so maybe some sort of advice on something to do with that, but then you're not a doctor, So I don't know."

It is important to note, however, that half of the interviewees did report that consultation is effective in leading to a development in the understanding of the concerns. For example, interviewee four said,

"....has helped me to understand more about the concerns."

Interviewee nine said,

> *"....getting more understanding of their special needs from an expert, such as yourself, I think is essential. So, I would say, it's building on your expertise to assist me, which was great."*

Furthermore, the same two interviewees mentioned that consultation enables the child's progress to be evaluated. For example, interviewee four said,

> *"....you tend to review more, so you are able to see progress, and intervene, or put more strategies in when it's not going right."*

Interviewee nine said,

> *"....it would have been plenty of time, because I obviously needed to reflect on what had been said, and you know, sort of, have another fresh look at.....and see if things were working."*

4.5.2 Research question two – What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors supporting them in changing their practice after consultation?

i. Consultation is effective in leading to a change in practice

All of the interviewees held the view that consultation is effective in leading to a change in practice. For example, interviewee three said,

> *"....this time it's something I feel I can do and be implementing and seem to get a more positive feedback straight away, so you're more likely to carry on and try to do it...."*

Interviewee five said,

> *"....that's one of his targets now, on his IEP."*

Interviewee eight said,

> *"....I think the things that we actually put in place in the detailed discussion we have followed through with and they have made a difference."*

Interviewee eight went onto say,

> *"....we did target the specific trigger points of the home time, dinner time and some of the transitions and I think having discussed that just for those particular times some of those then apply to other times in the day as well. So, it was kind of like a dual use. I could use it for things we discussed but also maybe apply some other techniques to the other areas of the day that we were struggling with as well."*

ii. Step three and more of it increases the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model

About half of the interviewees indicated that a principal factor supporting them in changing their practice after consultation was step three of the Three Step Consultative Model. This is highlighted by the emergence of the general concept – step three and more of it increases the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model. For example, interviewee three said,

> *"....so far the actions I did were fine, and it hasn't been that long since we started implementing them, although now I think probably....I'd include more, and so maybe as we've come down, you know, now to do this sort of discussion, it might be nice to have an interim one, even if by phone....to see how things were going and to take them forward from there."*

Interviewee eight said,

> *"....I think that its been valuable to have especially the detailed discussion time, and I think more of that, you know, would improve it even more."*

It is worth noting, however, that about half of the interviewees made reference to the value of agreeing additional strategies in the main consultation. For example, interviewee six said,

> *"....if I could have got more strategies."*

Interviewee ten said,

> *"....just different, a variety of ways of doing things."*

iii. The sooner the consultation following step two increases its effectiveness

Virtually all of the interviewees thought that a principal factor supporting them in changing their practice after consultation was if step three takes place soon after step two. The general concept generated was – The sooner the consultation following step two increases its effectiveness. For example, interviewee two said,

> *"....it wasn't too long after the actual observation, so again there wasn't a great deal of waiting around before we could get together and work out a way forwards."*

Interviewee three said,

> *"....its been after school, erm, and its a good time and you know its been within the time, erm, a viable time from you looking at.....and then feeding back to me, you know it wasn't weeks or anything, so it was fine."*

Interviewee six said,

> *"....the second time I saw you, that was a little bit later, but it wasn't too far in the future, so we were still able to focus on some of the problems."*

Interviewee six went onto say,

> *"If you can keep it within a month, you're looking at the same problems. With a child of.....'s age, obviously being year eight, she would be sort of twelve to thirteen years old at that time. Two or three months down the line, they're different people again, you know, and they've either got different problems, or lesser problems, there are different things, all the time it changes. If you keep it within sort of a month is really quite good at that age."*

A small minority of the group suggested that having the consultation at the end of the school day increases its effectiveness because there is sufficient time to have it. This suggestion could enable the consultation to take place sooner following step two, which has been identified to be one of the principal factors supporting teachers in changing their practice after consultation. Interviewee seven said,

> *"Obviously its difficult isn't it when you're teaching to fit it in, its either got to be on my PPA day or at the end of the school day and it was fine at the end of school."*

iv. The earlier the consultation in the school year would increase its effectiveness

The responses of half of the interviewees revealed that a principal factor supporting them in changing their practice after consultation is if step three takes place earlier in the school year. This led to the development of the general concept – the earlier the consultation in the school year would increase its effectiveness. For example, interviewee five said,

> *"I think really, by the time, you know, you came, we had the final meeting, I think he was very much settled in the classroom....so, it was nice to hear what you had to say, but at the same time I think....we don't need as much support."*

Interviewee eight said,

> *"So, thinking about strategies we've already put in place, I think they're going to have to be rethought a little bit for next year, because it's also a different setting. So, it might be valuable for you to come back at the start of the year, yeah, rather than quite late on in the year."*

In fact, a small minority of interviewees felt that the timing of the consultation in the school year might have hindered a change in practice following the consultation. The poor timing was seen as a consultation at the end of the school year, or when teachers were very busy with SATs examinations or other pressures. Interviewee two said,

> *"....I think logistically speaking the problem was the summer holiday, which you can't really do anything about, but with him moving to a different teacher just when we started to get these things in place sort of threw a spanner in the works."*

Interviewee nine said,

> *"....the ideas discussed will be implemented and that's because at that time, if you remember, it was SATs time....It's not that I didn't take on the ideas but it was like, I was busy with the SATs and doing assessment with..... and....., and it was just, it happened at slightly the wrong time."*

v. Consultation is effective in leading to benefits for other children

All of the interviewees thought that consultation is effective in leading to benefits for other children. For example, interviewee three said,

> *"....so, people like..... they've benefited because they've been able to use the activity box."*

Interviewee ten said,

> *"....making the strategies that I've put in for.....like recording work, they obviously are at similar levels, so that's been very good, you know, questioning them. I've made sure that they both answer, you know, the equal amount of questions, checking that they've listened...."*

Interviewee nine said,

> *"....it makes you think about different ways of dealing with other children, who maybe haven't got the extreme learning difficulties that.....had, but certainly, self-esteem and other things that you brought into the conversations."*

Interviewee seven said,

> *"....its encouraged me to get more peer help for all of them....so I'm trying to get the children to help each other more...."*

4.5.3 Research question three – What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors that reduce the likelihood of them changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

i. School-related pressures can hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation

The great majority of interviewees maintained that school-related pressures can hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation.

Just over half of the group claimed that limited time can hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation. For example, interviewee three said,

> *"....sometimes you don't always, erm have time to spend on an individual as much as you want to...."*

Interviewee one said,

"Again the problem was, erm, it's always fitting things in with all the other things you have to do."

Just less than half of the group made the point that trying to meet the needs of other children with specific needs can hinder the agreed actions from the consultation. For example, interviewee eight said,

"....it maybe would have been better for me to have had another person all of the time and more support for....., and so I think that's kind of hindered the way I've dealt with....., because I feel like I do need to redistribute my time."

Interviewee ten said,

"....if I don't work with.....and.....they can't do it by themselves but then I'm spending all the time with them and obviously then there's other children that are being neglected...."

A small minority of the group commented on the limited funding (e.g. to release teachers/ resources) and that it can hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation. For example, interviewee one said,

"Resources, I just looked down here, there's two things, like the inflatable balls to help with balance. I'm not sure they've arrived in school, so I don't know if there was funding or they weren't ordered. I don't know what happened to those, but that wasn't done."

Interviewee five said,

"That was difficult again, because the school hadn't got someone to cover me, so the classroom teacher next door was supposed to come in and cover me but as you know, they went on a class trip."

ii. <u>The impact of the child's specific needs can hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation</u>

Half of the interviewees stressed that the impact of the child's specific needs can hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation. For example, interviewee four said,

".....'s (child) hindered dealing with....., erm, in the fact that sometimes she (child) feels, maybe, I am going to stick this out until I get my own way, it's going to be on my terms," erm, and attendance and issues outside of school have hindered..... (child)"

Interviewee six said,

> *"The things that hinder are the people that, erm, she (child) doesn't get on with. So certain lessons are easier than others, or if you're using certain strategies you'll clear up maybe thirty percent of problems, and the other seventy are relationship problems, if you like, with the staff or other students."*

4.5.4 Research question four - Do teachers prefer the Three Step Consultative Model or the traditional model of working (i.e. one-to-one assessment followed by a report)?

i. Reports (traditional model) are less likely to lead to a change in practice

The responses of the great majority of interviewees led to the development of the general concept – reports (traditional model) are less likely to lead to a change in practice. For example, interviewee one said,

> *"....if you get a report you very often read the bulk of it, the gist of it, but you don't actually give it as much attention as you do as if you were talking to somebody."*

Interviewee six said,

> *"....you get these reports, and we get stacks of paperwork, and you're flicking through it, and you may miss key things, just nuances, that you may have picked upon in a conversation when you're batting ideas around."*

Interviewee eight said,

> *"....not to speak in-depth to the person that's got the child in their class. I don't think that's an effective method in providing the teacher with ideas and suggestions, and moving the child on in the classroom in the long run."*

Interviewee ten said,

> *"....if they put ideas down on the report that maybe you've tried and didn't work for some reason, you know that you've got no way of discussing that with them."*

ii. The function of each model is different and combining core elements of both models (complementary model) could be helpful

It is important to highlight that the responses of the minority of the group reflected the view that the function of each model is different and combining core elements of both models (complementary model) could be helpful. For example, interviewee four said,

> *"....I think you would use it (traditional model) maybe as a strategy to get a Statement for a student....a parent would see the traditional model as, erm, they would see it as, as in gaining a label, or a diagnosis or something, whereas the other, it doesn't seem to give you that, it gives you a strategy for a difficulty....I think both (models) have a purpose."*

Interviewee four developed her thinking and said,

> *"....if an educational psychologist has assessed a student and they say that these are the strategies that, the strategies they've given, you would think that they would be the strategies most beneficial to that student in the situation from the assessment. If that has not worked, then you have indicators that you need some additional support, or you need something additional to that. Erm....in the step approach."*

Interviewee ten said,

> *"....maybe it would be helpful to have a bit of both, you know, because obviously it's good to have a written report that can go in the child's IEP and then passed onto the next teacher, that's right, you've got evidence of that the, but it's also helpful to have the discussions as well."*

4.5.5 Analysis of preferences for the Three Step Consultative Model with teachers or the traditional model or both

Question eight asked (refer to Appendix 2 for interview schedule):

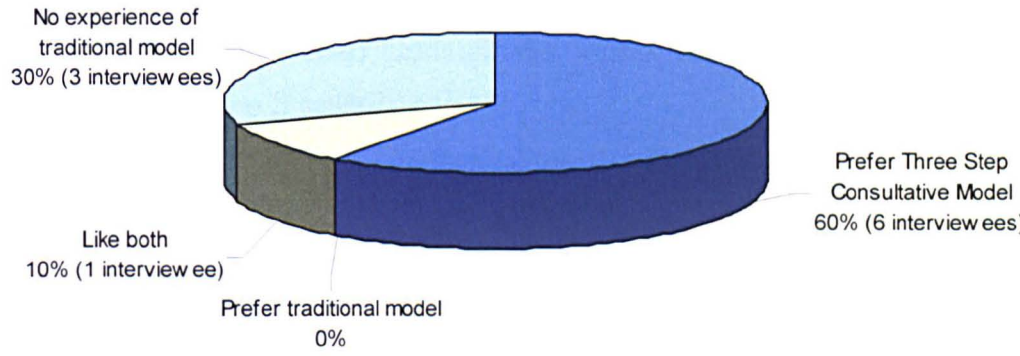
What differences did you see between the Three Step Consultative Model as opposed to the traditional model (i.e. assessment followed by a report)?

Once interviewees' views were obtained about the differences that they saw between the two models, question nine went onto ask:

Which do you prefer?

Responses are shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Pie Chart showing expressions of preference for the Three Step Consultative Model, the traditional model or both



In summary, a clear majority of the interviewees preferred the Three Step Consultative Model.

4.5.6 Analysis of relative ratings of the Three Step Consultative Model and the traditional model (i.e. one-to-one assessment followed by a report)

In question twelve interviewees were asked:

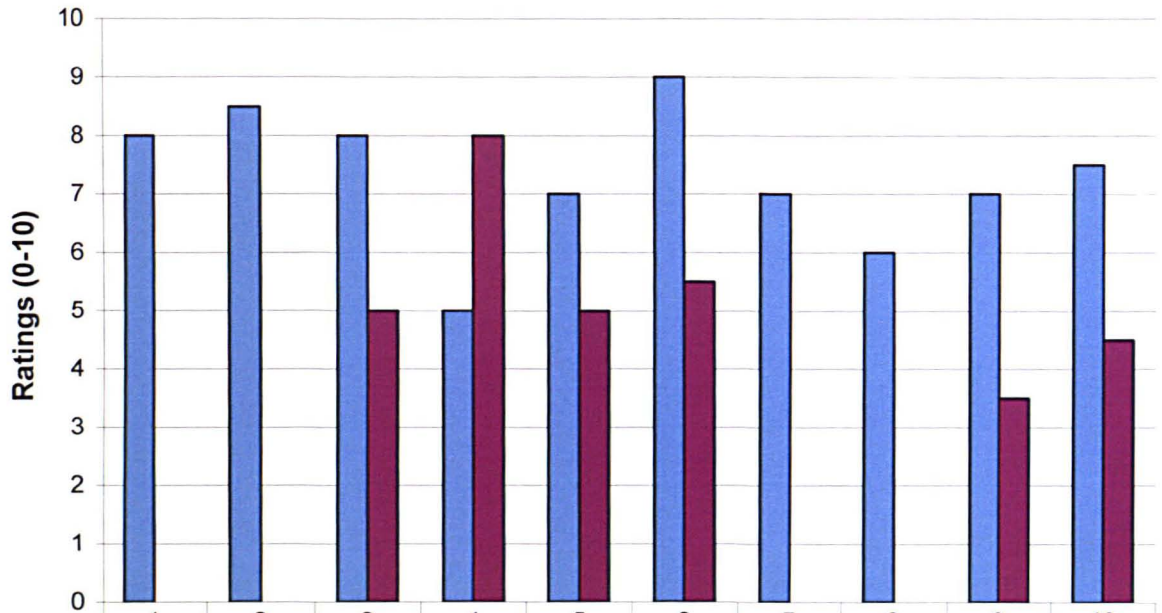
On a scale of zero to ten, please rate the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model in changing your practice, if:
Zero = unable to think of any changes to your practice,
Ten = have made/ expect to make changes to your practice.

Question thirteen asked:

On a scale of zero to ten, please rate the effectiveness of the traditional model in changing your practice, if:
Zero = unable to think of any changes to your practice,
Ten = have made/ expect to make changes to your practice.

Ratings for both the Three Step Consultative Model and the traditional model are shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Graph showing ratings of the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model and the traditional model in changing practice



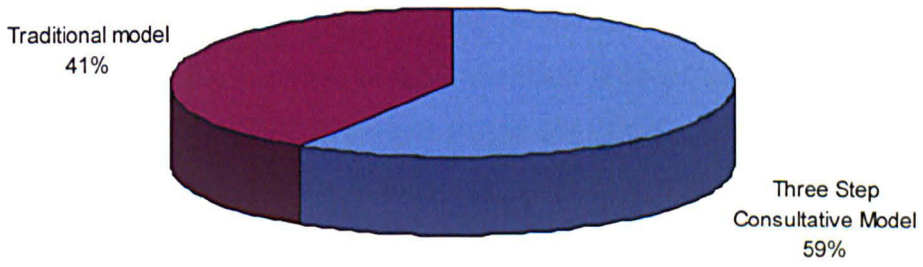
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Rating for effectiveness for Three Step Model	8	8.5	8	5	7	9	7	6	7	7.5
Rating for effectiveness for traditional model	0		5	8	5	5.5			3.5	4.5

It is clear from Figure 3 that only one interviewee (out of seven) thought that the traditional model was more effective than the Three Step Consultative Model in changing practice. However, it is necessary to note that it is not known what the views of the three interviewees with no experience of the traditional model would have been had they experienced the model.

Figure 4: Table showing average (median) ratings and range for the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model and the traditional model in changing practice

	Average (mean) rating	Range
Three Step Consultative Model	7.25	5-9
Traditional Model	5	0-8

Figure 5: Pie chart showing average (median) ratings for the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model and the traditional model in changing practice



4.5.7 Generalisability

The small number of teachers in the sample makes the quantitative data presentation only indicative of general tends in the responses rather than definitive of precise findings. Also, as the present study is a qualitative one, generalisation is only possible within very similar populations of teachers.

4.6 Section C: This section is a conclusion to the analysis and presentation of results: Middle range theoretical concepts derived from analysis of findings linked to steps one, two (Section A) and step three (Section B) of the Three Step Consultative Model

In this study the author decided to use Pidgeon and Henwood's (1996) term of focused concepts as well as Glaser and Strauss' (1967) term of middle range theories and combined them to coin the emerging concepts as 'middle range theoretical concepts'. (See section 3.14.1, Grounded theory analysis, Chapter Three – Methodology.)

The four middle range theoretical concepts, which are grounded in the data obtained from this evaluative study of the Three Step Consultative Model with teachers, will be outlined. The main findings contributing to the development of these concepts will be summarised. Theoretical interpretation of the codes identified, and the process of descriptive generalisation have also played a part in the construction of these concepts. A detailed discussion of these concepts in light of existing theories will take place in Chapter Five - Discussion of Results, section 5.6, Discussion of middle range theoretical concepts.

The author wishes to stress that the middle range theoretical concepts have emerged as a result of a thorough and fair approach to gathering the views of the interviewees. They were asked about what would have made steps one and two more valuable for them (question one, d). Similarly, they were also questioned about step three in this way (question two, e). Question three – Have you been able to use ideas from the detailed discussion step to change

your practice for the child we discussed? A multiple-choice question encouraged the interviewees to provide an honest response, which could be negative. For example, one of the response choices was, no. They were given the clear opportunity to express their thoughts about what hindered trying the different ways of dealing with the child (question six). The purpose of questions ten and eleven was to allow the interviewees to consider the benefits relevant to each model that could not be gained from the other model. Questions twelve and thirteen provided them with the opportunity to rate each of the models in turn.

The analysis has revealed that one middle range theoretical concept is that:

4.6.1 Step three (consultation with another professional to develop agreed actions/ develop thinking about a child's specific needs) is a major contributor to the success of the Three Step Consultative Model.

The involvement of other professionals such as another teacher is also effective. The SENco attending step three would be valuable in facilitating the implementation of agreed actions. It does seem that the most essential requirement to ensure that consultation is effective is the involvement of an other professional(s). However, this professional does not necessarily need to be an EP. The ongoing involvement of another professional, such as a specialist behaviour teacher is considered to lead to less of a need for EP involvement.

The timing of step three, in terms of how soon it takes place following step two and when it takes place in the school year, are factors that influence its effectiveness. The sooner the consultation takes place after step two increases its effectiveness and the earlier it happens in the school year would seem to have a similar effect.

One of the outcomes of consultation with another professional is that it facilitates the formulation of relevant actions in a process involving the teacher. These actions are highly valued by teachers. An outcome that has implications for improving EP practice is that consultation helps teachers to change their practice, in order to be better able to manage the needs of children. A by-product of adaptations to teachers' practice is the benefits for the focus child as well as other children, particularly those with similar needs.

To support teachers to make changes to their practice requires the support from a range of school systems. Limited time, trying to meet the needs of other children with specific needs and limited funding (e.g. to release teachers/ resources) can all hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation. To a lesser degree, the impact of the child's specific needs (e.g. attendance/ relationships with other children) can also hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation.

A further middle range theoretical concept is that:

4.6.2 Step one (selective one-to-one assessment and/ observation) and step two (providing initial feedback) help to understand the child's specific needs, which contributes to the success of the Three Step Consultative Model.

The earlier the feedback following step one and the earlier the EP involvement (in the school year at step one) contributes to the cumulative benefit of both steps. Beginning to think about ideas for relevant actions (which would then be discussed in step three) during step two would enhance the value of this step.

Supporting teachers in step three to continue to further develop an understanding of a child's needs is regarded as important in increasing the effectiveness of the third step. However, step three undoubtedly does serve the function of consolidating teachers' understanding of their concerns about

the child. This step, more than step two also provides increased opportunities for the child's progress to be evaluated.

A third middle range theoretical concept is that:

4.6.3 Teachers who adhere to the medical model value a statutory assessment of a child's SEN with the outcomes being a Statement or a diagnosis, and are of the view that this is best achieved as a result of the traditional model (i.e. one-to-one assessment followed by a report).

Problem-solving in the helping professionals has been strongly influenced by the medical model (e.g. Weik, 1992). Scientific knowledge is regarded as the basis for medical practice and also in the medical model of diagnosis and treatment.

Teachers' association with the medical model may have arisen from observing that administrators in the Education department, such as casework officers, often make assumptions derived from the medical model. For example, when making decisions about the number of hours of LSA support a child should be provided (i.e. treatment) with, and factors such as whether he/ she has a diagnosis and the nature of it are often questions casework officers will look for answers to. It is hoped; however, that the focus is becoming more needs led. So, the administrative agenda may be influencing some teachers to work within a medical model, which in turn has an impact on their expectations of EP involvement, with the traditional model being preferred as it is more likely to culminate in, for example, a diagnosis being reached.

The final middle range theoretical concept is that:

4.6.4 Combining steps one, two and three by using the Three Step Consultative Model is an effective way of supporting teachers to change their practice. Step three is a particularly important element, so much so, that an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four), similar to the third step would serve the function of continuing to support teachers' active involvement to make changes to their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children.

So, the evidence clearly indicates that selective one-to-one assessment and/ or observation (step one), accompanied by the main outcomes being shared with the teacher, usually on the same day, (step two) help to develop an understanding of the child's specific needs. These two steps prepare both the teacher and the EP for the consultation (step three), as the core concern(s) to be focused on become clear. During this detailed discussion actions are agreed or thinking about the child's needs is developed. The combination of all three steps have been shown to support teachers to change their practice. In fact, more of step three in the way of a follow-up discussion (e.g. step four) would help to ensure that teachers' change of practice is sustained.

Chapter Five

Discussion of Results

Chapter Five

Discussion of Results

5.1 Introduction

This chapter includes the following sub-sections: Context of professional work in schools; a re-cap of the research questions used as a coding framework; a summary of the middle range theoretical concepts that emerged from the data analysis process; initial reflections about the data collection/ data analysis process; interpretation of findings/ middle range theoretical concept development; implications of the present study (for the EPS, schools and the LA); issues of generalisability; consideration of methodology: limitations/ constraints; ethical issues; issues of validity; further research and concluding comments.

5.2 Context of professional work in schools

It is essential to emphasise that many EPSs are still concentrating on steps one and two (possibly to meet time line targets) in spite of the generally increasing acceptance of the value of consultation as one of an EP's resources in his/ her tool kit. The findings of the present study clearly demonstrate the increased effectiveness of the routine inclusion of a step three. By teachers placing equal weight on all three steps led to them to adapt their practice in order to be better able to manage the needs of the children. To ensure that a step three is consistently incorporated into day-to-day EP work, more case studies like this one are required to support the need for the more general inclusion of this step.

5.3 Re-cap of research questions used as a coding framework

Data was gathered to address the research questions below. The research questions were used as a basic coding framework (as explained in section 3.14.1, Grounded theory analysis, Chapter Three – Methodology).

1. What are teachers' reactions to the Three Step Consultative Model?

Step one:	Selective one-to-one assessment and/ or observation
Step two:	Providing initial feedback
Step three:	Consultation (Wagner, 2000) to develop agreed actions/ to develop thinking about the child's needs

2. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors supporting them in changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

3. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors that reduce the likelihood of them changing their practice after consultation (Wagner, 2000)?

4. Do teachers prefer the Three Step Consultative Model or the traditional model of working (i.e. one-to-one assessment followed by a report)?

The descriptive concepts that emerged are grounded in the views of the teachers who experienced the Three Step Consultative Model.

5.4 Summary of middle range theoretical concepts that emerged from the data analysis process

The following four middle range theoretical concepts emerged from the grounded theory data analysis. At this point, these will be outlined and will be discussed in greater detail, including how they are connected in section 5.6, Discussion of middle range theoretical concepts.

1. Step three (consultation with another professional to develop agreed actions/ develop thinking about a child's specific needs) primarily contributes to the success of the Three Step Consultative Model.

The descriptive concepts, which provide support for this middle range theoretical concept, are the following:

- Consultation with another professional is the main factor that leads to its effectiveness.
- Consultation is effective in facilitating the formulation of relevant actions.
- Consultation is effective in leading to a change in practice.
- Reports (traditional model) are less likely to lead to a change in practice.
- Consultation is effective in leading to benefits for other children.
- School-related pressures can hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation.
- The sooner the consultation following step two increases its effectiveness.
- The impact of the child's specific needs can hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation.
- The earlier the consultation (in the school year at step one) would increase its effectiveness.

- Further developing an understanding of the child's specific needs increases the effectiveness of consultation.

2. Step one (i.e. selective one-to-one assessment and/ observation) and step two (providing initial feedback) also help to understand the child's specific needs, which contributes to the success of the Three Step Consultative Model.

The supporting descriptive concepts for this middle range theoretical concept are below:

- Feedback from another professional is effective.
- Feedback to develop understanding of the child's specific needs increases its effectiveness.
- Early feedback increases the effectiveness of the feedback.
- Earlier EP involvement would increase the effectiveness of the feedback.
- Developing strategies in the feedback step would increase its effectiveness.

3. Teachers who adhere to the medical model value a statutory assessment of a child's SEN with the outcomes being a Statement or a diagnosis, and are of the view that this is best achieved as a result of the traditional model (one-to-one assessment followed by a report).

The descriptive concept – the function of each model is different and combining core elements of both models could be helpful – is relevant. It is important to highlight that the first strand of this descriptive concept (the function of each model is different) is linked to the emergence of this third middle range theoretical concept.

4. Combining steps one, two and three by using the Three Step Consultative Model is an effective way of supporting teachers to change their practice. Step three is a particularly important element, so much so, that an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four), similar to the third step would serve the function of continuing to support teachers' active involvement to make changes to their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children.

Supporting evidence clearly comes from the descriptive concepts: Step three and more of it increases the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model as well as the function of each model is different and combining core elements of both models could be helpful. The second strand of this descriptive concept (combining core elements of both models could be helpful) is related to the emergence of this fourth middle range theoretical concept.

5.5 Initial reflections about the lack of negative feedback in the data collection process

At this point, the author feels that it is necessary to begin to reflect on the fact that there are not many examples of negative feedback about the Three Step Consultative Model.

In relation to the data collection process, the range of interview questions (see Appendix 2 for interview schedule) ensured that interviewees had the opportunity to share their genuine views. In fact, certain questions specifically encouraged them to critically consider their experiences (see Chapter Four - Analysis and Presentation of Results, Section 4.6, Section C: This section is a conclusion to the analysis and presentation of results: Middle range theoretical concepts derived from analysis of findings linked to steps one, two (Section A) and step three (Sections B) of the Three Step Consultative Model).

The implications of the author's dual role as author and service deliverer as an EP are discussed in detail below (in section 5.10.3, Implications of dual role of author and service deliverer). This discussion highlights the author's astute awareness of this conflict of roles, which enabled her to manage the issues, so as to maximise the quality of the data obtained.

The author made it clear to the interviewees that all comments, positive and critical were useful to learn from and to evaluate the Three Step Consultative Model. The author is confident that the use of a grounded theory approach to analyse the data meant that all feedback, including unsupportive comments were taken account of, as the text was analysed by using a line-by-line approach. It is also relevant to state that the use of grounded theory meant that when a new theme emerged, further text segments relating to this theme were subsumed under this theme. As the data accumulated, linked themes become apparent. This means that all themes, critical as well as positive ones underwent the same thorough search processes.

5.6 Discussion of middle range theoretical concepts

The middle range theoretical concepts will be discussed in relation to the most relevant literature from Chapter Two - Literature Review.

5.6.1 First middle range theoretical concept – "Consultation with another professional"

1. Step three (consultation with another professional to develop agreed actions/ develop thinking about a child's specific needs) primarily contributes to the success of the Three Step Consultative Model with teachers.

5.6.2 Existing models which provide support for – "Consultation with another professional"

i. Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)

Wagner's (1995) definition of consultation (see section 2.6, Definitions of consultation, Chapter Two – Literature Review) mentions that it is a "collaborative process which involves working with the person most concerned, who, by definition, is motivated towards some change....." This definition captures the essence of step three, as indicated by the emergence of the first theoretical concept "consultation with another professional."

Larney (2003) describes some of the key characteristics of effective consultation under the three headings (in section 2.7, Key characteristics for effective consultation, Chapter Two – Literature Review): Consultant-consultee relationship, consultant-consultee responsibilities and entry processes. The author has used these characteristics as a hook to explain how consultation can be an effective approach to achieving change. In relation to the consultant-consultee relationship, the need to be collaborative has been found to be critical in the success of consultation (e.g. Gutkin and Curtis, 1999; Wagner, 1995, 2000). Gutkin (1999a) progresses onto say that the optimal conditions for successful consultation are a collaborative and directive combination. Step three, particularly with its inclusion of solution-focused procedures is characterised by these two features.

In terms of the consultant-consultee responsibilities, Larney (2003) maintains that consultees are responsible for taking action on the intervention plan that emerges from the consultation discussion. Both consultants and consultees, however, are responsible for the successes and failures of the intervention plan they jointly design for clients (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999). The formulation of relevant actions in step three, were valued by all of the teachers in the present study. So, this step helped

teachers to change their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. This outcome was the consequence of the collaborative working between the EP (author) and the teacher, which is consistent with Gutkin and Curtis' (1999) point.

With regard to preparing schools for consultation: use of entry processes, Wagner (2000) argues that transparency helps to promote skill transfer. When EPs clarify what is appropriate to their role in the system and work out ways of explaining it carefully to a range of role partners they increase the engagement and contribution of those partners. In the author's view, following the EP's input in terms of being transparent, the contribution of school partners is essential to support teachers to make changes to their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. The findings confirm that support from a range of school systems is required to facilitate such change following step three: Limited time, trying to meet the needs of other children with specific needs and limited funding (e.g. to release teachers/ resources) were all shown to hinder the actions from the consultation.

ii. Mental health model of consultation

In relation to models influencing consultation approaches certain features of the model of mental health consultation (Caplan, 1970) (refer to section 2.8.1, Mental health model of consultation, Chapter Two – Literature Review), namely, consultee-centred case consultation resemble those of step three, as shown by the data. For example, the main objective of consultee-centred case consultation is for the consultant to try to understand the nature of the consultee's difficulty with the case and in trying to help him/ her to resolve this. The consultee's difficulty may be due to either a lack of knowledge, a lack of skill or a lack of self-confidence. This then influences how the consultee interacts with the client at the centre of the case, and the overall aim of the consultation is to improve the effectiveness of the consultee's work with the client.

One difficulty that the consultee may have which is unique to mental health consultation is that the consultee may experience a lack of professional objectivity due to the interference of subjective emotional complications with his/ her perceptual and planning operations. Consequently, there is some recognition about the need for consultees to have personal emotional support rather than a plan of action or an intervention programme. However, Gutkin and Curtis (1998) argue that the personal needs of the consultee (e.g. teacher) are a legitimate focus only to the extent that these personal needs have an impact on the client (child).

iii. Consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959)

Two models influencing consultation approaches, running in parallel, explain the emergence of "consultation with another professional" (as well as the fourth concept, "supporting active teacher involvement"). Consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) (detailed in section 2.8.2, Consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959), Chapter Two – Literature Review) and the behavioural (described in section 2.8.3, Behavioural model of consultation)/ eco-behavioural model of consultation, an adapted version of the behavioural model (outlined in section 2.8.4, Eco-behavioural model of consultation, Chapter Two – Literature Review and discussed below in section v, Eco-behavioural model of consultation).

Consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) requires the implementation of three distinct attitudes: congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding. These genuine attitudes must somehow be perceived by and ultimately have a positive effect on the client. Indeed, Wilkins (2000) states that the inter-relationship of the three conditions is so high that they are inseparable in theory, and practice. The emergence of "consultation with another professional" indicates that the three core attitudes are likely to have been present in step three, because their presence probably contributed to the

effectiveness of this step, and this step played a key part in the success of the Three Step Consultative Model.

The aim of consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) is to enable clients to think through their problems and to find a solution matching their situation. In this respect, step three may include a similar function, in that, providing personal emotional support is paramount as long as it is in the interest of having a positive impact on the client (child). However, it is important to recognise that Colvin (1999) states consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) is a wholly non-directive approach. Examples of directive behaviours include asking questions and making interpretations. Step three, in contrast, does allow for such behaviours to take place.

iv. Behavioural model of consultation

The behavioural model of consultation also helps to explain the emergence of "consultation with another professional" (as well as "supporting active teacher involvement"). The main goal of the behavioural model is to work with consultees to identify and manipulate relevant person-environment variables to improve, eliminate and/ or prevent problems (Zins and Erchul, 1995). The approach of this model involves the consultant leading the consultee through a structured problem-solving process. Bergan's (1977) four-step model involves: problem identification, problem analysis, plan implementation and treatment evaluation. The findings reveal that that the second and mainly the third step take place during step three of the Three Step Consultative Model.

Keller (1981) maintains that trying to systematically investigate and enhance transfer and generalisation is a key aim of the behavioural model of consultation. This is consistent with an outcome of step three. It was found that a consequence of changes to teachers' practice was benefits for the target child as well as other children, particularly those with similar needs (i.e. generalisation).

It is crucial to stress that Larney (2003) states that a criticism of the behavioural model of consultation is that it lacks focus on the nature of the consultant-consultee relationship, and how the nature of the relationship can determine whether a favourable outcome will be achieved. This relationship, however, is a central feature of the Three Step Consultative Model. In this way the behavioural model is unable to explain "consultation with another professional" (and "supporting active teacher involvement"), but consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959), (which runs alongside the behavioural model) is able to compensate for this gap as it does provide personal emotional support.

v. Eco-behavioural model of consultation

Gutkin and Curtis (1999) maintain that with an eco-behavioural model of consultation, the consultant not only takes account of the immediate antecedents and consequences of behaviours, but also the multi-layered ecological systems within which the client exists and interacts. For example, factors relating to teacher expectations, class variables, school and LA policies and family factors together with the interaction between these factors. The model also takes the structure of Bergan's (1977) problem-solving model.

5.6.3 Concluding summary - Delivery of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)

Prior to undertaking the present study the author's view was that step three was primarily based on Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000). However, it can be seen from the emergence of "consultation with another professional" that consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) and the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model of consultation in parallel strongly influence the way that the author in actual fact delivers Wagner's model (Wagner, 2000). This means that all three models can be used to give a theoretical background to step three.

5.6.4 Psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)

i. Symbolic interactionism

With regard to the psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) the Symbolic interactionism model (e.g. Hargreaves, 1972) (put forward in section 2.10.1, Symbolic interactionism, Chapter Two – Literature Review) emphasises the need to consider a range of processes within a school context, which influence behaviour and views of the self (e.g. learning influences on behaviour). The model also stresses that by working collaboratively with the significant others (e.g. teacher) ideas for making a difference to the situation, by exploring such processes, develop. The findings confirm that step three allowed for such processes to be discussed, in that; an outcome was that teachers made changes to their practice. Furthermore, the EP being the consultant might have symbolised meanings such as a commitment to inclusion; independence from school structures and possessing knowledge of children with needs. These meanings that an EP symbolises are likely to have enhanced teachers' willingness to adapt their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children.

ii. Personal construct psychology

The two notions arising from the Personal Construct Psychology model (see section 2.10.3, Personal Construct Psychology, Chapter Two – Literature Review) - constructive alternativism, and constructs as well as ideas having a range and focus of convenience, provide a rationale for creative and open discussion, with the possibility of reframing and re-construing problems. The results indicate that this took place in step three to a certain degree as this would have helped teachers to change their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children.

iii. Solution focused perspective

The solution focused model (discussed in section 2.10.4, Solution focused perspective, Chapter Two – Literature Review) views clients' problems as a function of their current definitions of reality (De Jong and Berg, 1998). It follows that solutions seem to depend on clients' capacity to develop and expand their definitions of what they want. By using solution focused procedures the author actively tried to achieve this in step three. Furthermore, by consistently asking clients to explore and trust their own perceptions about what they want and how to make that happen, solution focused practitioners give clients the opportunity to sharpen their awareness of their past successes and strengths (inner resources). These inner resources can be used to deal with current and future problems. Asking teachers to explore their own perceptions in step three led to them making adaptations to their practice, which culminated in benefits for other children, particularly those with similar needs, as well as the focus child.

De Jong and Berg (1998) argue that respect for human dignity through acceptance and the non-judgemental attitude is the foundation for the development of trust in the client-practitioner relationship. In essence, this is the equivalent of Rogers' (1942) attitude of unconditional positive regard. As mentioned above this core attitude was perceived by teachers in the present study, particularly in step three.

5.6.5 Second middle range theoretical concept – "Understanding of the child's specific needs"

2. Step one (selective one-to-one assessment and/ observation) and step two (providing initial feedback) help to understand the child's specific needs, which contributes to the success of the Three Step Consultative Model.

This middle range theoretical concept, "understanding of the child's specific needs" stresses the importance of the involvement of the EP in a fairly direct way to help describe the situation in which the child and the teacher find themselves, recognising the influence of, for example, the child's history and the classroom situation on their learning and behaviour.

5.6.6 Existing models which provide support for the need to develop "understanding of the child's specific needs"

i. Behavioural/ eco-behavioural model of consultation

A central feature of the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model of consultation is Bergan's (1977) problem-solving model. The first step (problem identification) ties in closely with step one of the Three Step Consultative Model. The second step of Bergan's model (problem analysis) describes one of the main activities of step two of the Three Step Consultative Model.

Keller (1981) states that positive involvement in the assessment process for problem identification and analysis should enhance teachers' involvement in subsequent interventions. In the present study teachers participated in step two of the Three Step Consultative Model (Bergan's 1977, problem analysis step), which helped them to prepare for engaging in step three of the Three Step Consultative Model, which included an element of problem analysis but mainly plan implementation, and subsequently empowered them to make changes to their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. Step two (problem analysis) taking place as soon as possible following step one (problem identification) contributed to enhancing teachers' involvement in implementing relevant actions. EP involvement taking place as early as possible in the school year also seemed to have a similar effect. The results indicate that giving initial consideration to ideas in step two (problem analysis) in preparation for step three (plan definition and

implementation) may serve to further motivate teachers' involvement in subsequent interventions.

5.6.7 Third middle range theoretical concept – "Assumption of a medical model of SEN"

3. Teachers who adhere to the medical model value a statutory assessment of a child's SEN with the outcomes being a Statement or a diagnosis, and are of the view that this is best achieved as a result of the traditional model (one-to-one assessment followed by a report).

5.6.8 Existing models of service delivery which provide support for the "assumption of a medical model of SEN"

i. Larney's (2003) approach to service delivery

In relation to one of Larney's (2003) characteristics of effective consultation: use of entry processes, Conoley and Conoley (1991) emphasise the need for service delivery to be cost effective. Conoley and Conoley (1991) emphasise that it is important that there is a shared meaning with teachers and LA administrators in regard to the concept of consultation. The data obtained would support this prerequisite. The results reveal that teachers who adhere to the medical model are more supportive of the use of the traditional model than the Three Step Consultative Model. These teachers are of the view that a statutory assessment of a child's SEN with the outcomes being a Statement or a diagnosis, is accomplished via the traditional route. This association with the medical model may have arisen from observing that LA administrators often make assumptions derived from the medical model. For example, when making decisions at the point of issuing Statements, about the number of hours of LSA support a child should be provided with (i.e. treatment), factors such as whether he/ she has diagnosis and the nature of it are often questions casework officers will look for answers to. The

outcomes of the present study show that clearly explaining the process of the Three Step Consultative Model prior to involvement helped to create a shared understanding and value of the model.

ii. Inclusion model

Advocates of the inclusion model believe that all children, regardless of their SEN have the right to be educated in a mainstream school. In the author's view it follows that to enable this to be achieved, the process of assessing children as well as supporting teachers' active involvement to empower them to adapt their practice in order to be able to better manage their SEN, by using the Three Step Consultative Model is crucial.

5.6.9 Fourth middle range theoretical concept – "Supporting active teacher involvement"

4. Combining steps one, two and three by using the Three Step Consultative Model is an effective way of supporting teachers to change their practice. Step three is a particularly important element, so much so, that an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four), similar to the third step would serve the function of continuing to support teachers' active involvement to make changes to their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children.

5.6.10 Existing models which provide support for "active teacher involvement"

i. Larney's (2003) model of service delivery

With regard to the first of Larney's (2003)'s key characteristics of effective consultation, the consultant-consultee relationship, Miller (1969) maintains that the consultation relationship should involve active participation by the consultee throughout the process until the problem is resolved. In this way, there is greater likelihood that the consultee will feel 'ownership' of

the strategy. The findings of the present study highlight that the participation of the consultee in step one (in that, the activities to be undertaken were discussed with the teacher prior to any involvement), step two (during which feedback from step one was given and discussed by the EP and the teacher) and step three of the Three Step Consultative Model, had the cumulative effect of supporting teachers to change their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children.

Larney's (2003) second key factor characterising effective consultation is that both the consultant and consultee have respective responsibilities (Gutkin and Curtis, 1999). For example, consultants are responsible for the process elements of consultation. They are required to ensure that the consultation context supports consultees' development. Both the consultant and the consultee are responsible for bringing their content expertise to the consultation situation. Consultees are responsible for taking action on the intervention plan that emerges from the consultation discussion. The outcomes of the present study confirm that as a result of the EP and the consultee actively participating in each step of the Three Step Consultative Model equates with taking on board the above responsibilities.

ii. Behavioural/ eco-behavioural model of consultation

The approach of the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model of consultation involves, the consultant leading the consultee through a structured problem-solving process and Bergan's (1977) four-step model is widely used. The first three steps of Bergan's (1977) model share similarities with three steps of the Three Step Consultative Model. The combination of these three steps has shown to help teachers to change their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children.

Cooper, Tompson and Baer (1970) have found that consultant praise and frequent feedback to teachers has shown to effectively increase appropriate use of behavioural interventions. The results of the present study show that the opportunities for this kind of feedback to be given take place in steps two and three of the Three Step Consultative Model. It is important to note that consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) does not advocate the use of such techniques by its non-directive nature, but the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model of consultation does and therefore fulfils this gap. This confirms that both models in parallel contribute to explaining the emergence of "supporting active teacher involvement."

Increasing emphasis within the literature has been placed upon social validation in determining the efficacy of interventions (Kazdin, 1977). It is essential that consultants and consultees have ongoing conversations in relation to processes that lead to changes as a result of interventions as well as the actual changes. Again, opportunities for such conversations occur in steps two and three of the Three Step Consultative Model.

5.6.11 Summary of discussion of the four middle range theoretical concepts

The emergence of "consultation with another professional" highlights that teachers see step three of the Three Step Consultative Model as critical in developing agreed actions/ developing thinking about the child's needs, and so can be seen as the most important element of the three steps. The findings imply that an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four) would continue to support teachers' active involvement to want to make changes to their practice in order to be better able to manage the needs of children. Indeed, Roller (2000) argues that the process of review (core elements of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)) is crucial to the development of practice. Dickinson (2000) concludes that once we are clear about planned actions and outcomes, then we can have a purposeful

conversation with the consultee when we review the outcomes of our involvement.

The author's interpretation of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) primarily took into account the social constructionism theory of psychology, in particular, Macready's (1997) work. Social constructionism (e.g. Macready, 1997) draws on themes that help to clarify the importance of language in the construction of meaning. Meaning is regarded as a continually emerging outcome of interactional processes. EPs may reflect on a range of conversational options, which are associated with different therapeutic approaches. Possibilities for change occur when individuals become connected to their own meaning making abilities and when they experience greater choice in the meanings available to them.

It is clear that consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) as well as the behavioural/ eco-behavioural models of consultation in parallel strongly influence the way the author in actual fact delivers Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000). In terms of the former model, the findings confirm that the core attitudes – congruence, positive regard and unconditional positive regard - are perceived and have a positive impact on teachers, in that, they all changed their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. So, experiencing these attitudes enables interactional processes to lead to the ongoing development of meanings. This then allows for what Macready (1997) says to happen – opportunities for change being created as people feel that they have access to a wider range of meanings.

The approach of the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model of consultation involves the consultant leading the consultee through Bergan's (1977) problem-solving model. The findings show that the first step (problem identification) primarily took place during step one and to a degree in step two of the Three Step Consultative Model. The second of Bergan's steps (problem analysis) mainly took place during step two and was touched on in step three. The third step (plan implementation) occurred during step

three. Opportunities for praise and frequent feedback were a feature of steps two and three, as were conversations in relation to processes that lead to changes as a result of interventions as well as the actual changes. The exploration of multi-layered ecological systems (a feature of eco-behavioural model), such as factors relating to teacher expectations also took place in step three. The combination of the three steps constituting the Three Step Consultative Model are all essential components, to support teachers to change their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. The findings revealed that an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four), similar to the fourth of Bergan's (1977) steps (treatment evaluation) would help teachers in the process of adapting their practice.

It is clear that the main impact of consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) on the implementation of the Three Step Consultative Model is in the emotional support it provides. In contrast, the central feature of the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model of consultation is that it allows for teachers to contribute to the problem identification, problem analysis and plan implementation steps. During these steps opportunities for feedback – positive and evaluative are created, as well opportunities to discuss processes that lead to changes, not just the changes.

5.6.12 Concluding summary - Discussion of the four middle range theoretical concepts

Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) as well as the behavioural/ eco-behavioural models of consultation in parallel help to explain how teachers are able to change their practice, in a safe learning environment in order to be able to manage the needs of children. The implementation of Wagner's model (Wagner, 2000) means that particular attention is paid to language in the construction of meaning. Following the principles of consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) gives teachers emotional support, whilst the features of the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model

enables them to learn. The Three Step Consultative Model as practised by the author seems to need multiple aspects of existing models to provide middle range theoretical concepts consistent with the reactions of the teachers evidenced in this study.

5.7 Implications of the present study

The implications of the present study for the EPS, schools and the LA are discussed below.

5.7.1 Implications for the EPS

i. "Consultation with another professional"

Given the benefits of the Three Step Consultative Model, in particular, step three that primarily contributes to the success of the model, the author is already in the process of leading discussions in an Assessment and Intervention Working Group in the service, to ensure that the model is incorporated in the EPS Assessment policy as one evidenced-based approach.

Following on from this, it is crucial that the EPs receive training to cover a review of the models influencing consultation approaches in the UK (discussed in Chapter Two – Literature Review, section 2.8, Review of models influencing consultation approaches in the UK) and the psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) (refer to Chapter Two – Literature Review, section 2.10, Psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)). It is essential that the training includes a discussion regarding the use of consultation in the author's LA (see Chapter Two – Literature Review, section 2.12, Use of consultation in the author's LA), the main objectives of the Three Step Consultative Model (in Chapter Two – Literature Review, section, 2.20,

Conclusion to Chapter Two – Literature Review), the core features of the three steps and how best to implement them.

Emphasis will need to be placed on the importance of step three, in leading to the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model. There will be a need to highlight that the sooner step three takes place after step two and the earlier it happens in the school year increases its effectiveness. Perhaps, a time limit could be introduced (e.g. step three to take place within a month after step two). The implication of this time limit is that following step two EPs will need to plan a date/ time for step three, which does put pressure on EPs to be able to manage their work load very well in order to fit in these tight arrangements. The other implication of such a time limit is that it will increase the need for EP involvement (at steps one and two) to lead to increased understanding of the child's specific needs by the teacher, so that the teacher is able to do things differently at the rate required. In the training, a central outcome of step three, the formulation of relevant actions, being highly valued by teachers will need to be noted. The resulting type of changes in teachers' practice will need to be discussed during the training session, and that the benefits for the focus child extend to other children, particularly those with similar needs will need to be mentioned. The role of the EP in supporting staff at a school to manage the impact of the child's specific needs (e.g. attendance/ relationships with other children), so that they do not hinder the implementation of the actions from step three will need to be explored.

ii. "Understanding of the child's specific needs"

Training will need to emphasise that step one, which is the one step that EPs already engage in the most frequently as part of their day-to-day practice, will need to be accompanied by step two for the benefits gained from it to be meaningful. It is important to note that both steps are required to maximise the development in understanding of the child's specific needs. Involving parents in step two could be valuable in further developing understanding of the child's needs. The sooner step two takes

places following step one (e.g. on the same day), as well as the earlier the EP involvement in the school year will help to optimise the value of both steps. The initial exploration of ideas for relevant actions during step two is likely to heighten the effectiveness of this step.

The possibility of a preliminary step (step zero) which takes place before step one that entails a discussion between the EP, SENco and the teacher may begin to develop understanding of the child's SEN for all three professionals. This initial thinking may enable all to start to consider the educational implications of the child's needs. Incorporating a step zero might clarify the activities that would be most meaningful to undertake during step one, as well as contributing to enhancing the effectiveness of step two.

iii. "Assumption of a medical model of SEN"

It is vital that an element of the training should include that one aim of step two is to construe the teacher's attitude to change. As mentioned in Chapter Two - Literature Review, Rhodes (1993) points out that some clients are not interested ('visitors'). Another group are eager to share plenty of information, but do not believe their actions could have any effect ('complainants'). The final group are confident that their actions could bring about change ('customers'). An insight into the teacher's views should also reveal whether the teacher adheres to the medical model. Advocates of this model will prefer the EP to work in a traditional manner, as it is more likely to culminate in a diagnosis being reached or a Statement of SEN being issued. Once the teacher's expectations are ascertained it is crucial that the EP starts to work in a way, which matches these (Rhodes, 1993). As the relationship between the EP and the teacher develops, the EP can then begin to challenge the expectations of teachers in the first two groups, to encourage them to believe that they are able to bring about some change. Furthermore, as trust develops the EP will be able to challenge teachers who work within a medical model to see the benefits of the Three Step Consultative Model.

iv. "Supporting active teacher involvement"

Throughout the training the message needs to be reinforced that it is the combination of each step of the Three Step Consultative Model, with step three being a particularly important element that is an effective way of supporting teachers to make changes to their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. As step three is so crucial, an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four) similar to it would help teachers to sustain changes to their practice. As referred to in Chapter Two - Literature Review the process of review is crucial to the development of practice (Roller, 2000).

However, it is worth considering whether the EPS should offer teachers choices in terms of level of EP involvement (marketing strategy). This approach would involve the EP establishing if: (a) the teacher's primary goal is to obtain a clearer understanding of the child's specific needs or (b) whether he/ she would value this as well as support to be able to better manage the child's needs. If the EP learnt that the teacher's objectives fell in the former category steps one and two would be offered, following which a detailed report would be provided. Should the teacher require the latter level of involvement, steps one to three would be implemented, following which a summary report would be written, including, for example, the agreed actions. At step three the teacher would be asked whether he/ she would benefit from an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four) as a way of supporting his/ her active involvement. Offering such choices to teachers will enable the EPs in the EPS to work in a more productive way, as involvement will be more closely matched to a teacher's individual needs.

To enable the benefits of the Three Step Consultative Model to be experienced by other EPs nationally requires information about it to be shared with other services, starting with those in the local region, and then those further a field. Information regarding the development of the model will also need to be explained to allow others to understand the rationale for its existence. Furthermore, the views of EP colleagues who choose to

implement the model will need to be considered to improve the use of the model in the author's service.

There are a number of ways in which information can be disseminated within the profession. The author, in conjunction with other keen EPs from her service could deliver a presentation at the annual regional training day for EPs. As an alternative or as a follow-up, a more detailed presentation could be made to EPs in individual services in the region.

Following the author's presentation of her research proposal to the Ed. D community at the University of Sheffield in September 2006, she has already had initial discussions with EPs who have expressed an interest in trialling the Three Step Consultative Model in their own EPSs. An EP in a South Yorkshire service is strongly considering trialling the model at the start of the autumn term 2009.

Publishing articles in professional journals will be a way in which many EPs working beyond the regional area could find out about the Three Step Consultative Model. Those who are interested could then contact the author by letter/ e-mail/ telephone to have further discussions. Such conversations with the author would be essential if an EP wishes to practise using the model. The author would need to maintain ongoing communication with these EPs in order to obtain evaluative feedback about the model.

The author, it is hoped with an increasing number of EPs from the service, who gradually begin to favour the use of the Three Step Consultative Model over other approaches, will create opportunities to share their experiences more widely within the profession. The support of the LA will no doubt facilitate the distribution of information about practice.

5.7.2 Implications for schools

i. "Consultation with another professional"

Like EPs, teachers should also receive considerable training related to the Three Step Consultative Model. Training for teachers should include the psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000) (refer to Chapter Two – Literature Review, section 2.10, Psychological models underpinning the development of Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000)). It is paramount that the training includes a discussion regarding the use of consultation in the author's LA (see Chapter Two – Literature Review, section 2.12, Use of consultation in the author's LA), the main objectives of the Three Step Consultative Model (in Chapter Two – Literature Review, section, 2.20, Conclusion to Chapter Two – Literature Review), the core features of the three steps and how best to implement them.

It is essential that school systems are in place to support the implementation of the Three Step Consultative Model. This entails the SENco, following raising concerns about a child at the joint services Planning Meeting, agreeing that the use of this model would be the optimal way to support staff. At this point, the SENco will need to be clear about the EP and teacher involvement required for each of the three steps, so that arrangements such as releasing the teacher for steps two and three can be made in advance.

Furthermore, after step three certain agreed actions agreed might mean that specific resources are needed. Schools need to recognise the importance of supporting staff to implement these actions, for example, by providing the funding for the required resources.

Releasing teachers for steps two and three as well as providing funding for relevant resources could be the basis for a school's commitment to the assessment and support process in the EPS's marketing strategy (discussed in section 5.7.1, Implications for the EPS, sub-section IV, "Supporting active teacher involvement").

ii. "Understanding of the child's specific needs"

At the joint services Planning Meeting the nature of EP involvement in step one will need to be discussed and confirmed with the SENco. Step two will need to be arranged, whenever possible for the same day.

iii. "Assumption of a medical model"

Prior to EP involvement the school SENco needs to ensure that the teacher not only understands the process of the Three Step Consultative Model, but also the associated benefits of the approach, such as the development of agreed actions/ development of thinking about the child's specific needs. This transparency will help the teacher to approach the process in such a way that he/ she is more likely to be a 'customer' (Rhodes, 1993) and to be less reliant on the medical model.

iv. "Supporting active teacher involvement"

Following the implementation of the Three Step Consultative Model the SENco will need to be supportive of making the necessary arrangements to enable a fourth step to take place which would involve, for example, reviewing the agreed actions (from step three) with the teacher. This additional step would serve the purpose of continuing to support the teacher in the process of changing their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. A school's commitment to support this process should be evidenced by releasing teachers for step four and providing the funding for any resources that may be required following this step (see the EPS's marketing strategy mentioned in section 5.7.1,

Implications for the EPS, sub-section IV, "Supporting active teacher involvement.")

The impact of the child's specific needs, such as his/ her attendance can hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation. Acknowledging that this is a hindering factor should take place promptly which should trigger a full investigation. One element of this investigation would involve discussions with parents. Involvement from external agencies (e.g. Education Welfare Service) should take place if the necessary criteria are met.

The focus child's relationships with other children has been shown in the present study to hinder the implementation of actions from the consultation. As soon as this factor is identified as a difficulty appropriate measures should be taken to address it. For example, brief advice may need to be sought from the EP.

5.7.3 Implications for the LA

i. <u>"Consultation with another professional"</u>

Given the outcomes of the present study, it is without a doubt that the LA needs to not only acknowledge the Three Step Consultative Model, but to understand its value, in terms of the cumulative effect of the three steps. The LA may wish to support the increased implementation of the Three Step Consultative Model by making the model, purpose and potential benefits of it explicit to school governors and school management teams. At the LA level, it may be better to re-frame the Three Step Consultative Model as a "Consultation Following Assessment Model" to help relate it to the expectations of school governors and school management teams.

ii. "Understanding of the child's specific needs"

The LA needs to recognise that although step one of the Three Step Consultative Model is already an established part of EP practice, the added knowledge obtained from it needs to be shared (step two) as soon as possible for teachers to develop their understanding of the child's specific needs. The LA needs to highlight this point when promoting the model in any context.

iii. "Assumption of a medical model of SEN"

The Education department within the LA needs to accept the Three Step Consultative Model as an approach to developing understanding of a child's specific needs, and supporting teachers to make changes to their practice in order to be able to better manage the child's needs. Understanding the value of the model will assist administrators to reduce their reliance on the medical model and to recognise that different models have valuable outcomes. The LA will also have to plan how to respond to some teachers who may not want to seek new ways of working in existing contexts.

iv. "Supporting active teacher involvement"

When sharing information regarding the Three Step Consultative Model, it is vital that the possibility of a fourth step to review the agreed actions (from step three) with the teacher is mentioned as way of ensuring that teachers' change of practice is sustained. Step four will allow teachers to continue to improve ways to manage the child's needs.

5.7.4 Point of caution

The author is aware that all of the above implications of the present study for the EPS, schools and the LA are the ideal goals. The author recognises that at times the ideal expectations may have to be reduced, given work load management issues for EPs and teachers.

5.8 Issues of generalisability

The question of the extent to which the findings, in particular, the middle range theoretical concepts, that emerged from this study can be said to have more general significance is important. Perhaps, to talk in terms of the transferability, rather than generalisability, of findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) is more appropriate. Hayes (1997) states that this term refers to applying the findings of a study in contexts similar to the context in which they were first derived. The fact that the operation of the Three Step Consultative Model did clearly relate to several other models of successful consultation in other contexts also supports its transferability to other contexts. Hayes (1997) continues that this gives the qualitative researcher the responsibility of reporting fully on the contextual features of a study. Hayes (1997) is of the view that rich and dense grounded theory, which is contextually sensitive to diverse levels of abstraction, will in itself suggest its own sphere of relevance and application.

The author did provide a detailed reporting of the contextual features of the study. For example, the author thoroughly outlined the procedural details (issues related to data collection are reported in Chapter Three – Methodology, section 3.13.7, Outline of procedure: The interviews). The author provided the pertinent information, to enable the reader to assess the adequacy of a complex coding procedure (information pertaining to data analysis can be found in Chapter Three – Methodology, section 3.14, Data analysis). Corbin and Strauss (1990) maintain that detail reported in this way and supplemented with appropriate cues can, highlight thorough tracking of indicators, conscientious and imaginative theoretical sampling

and so on. Moreover, Corbin and Strauss (1990) argue that if key components of the research process are clearly laid out and if sufficient cues are provided, then the middle range theoretical concepts can be assessed in terms of degrees of plausibility. It is then possible to judge under what conditions the concepts might fit with "reality," convey understanding and prove useful in practical and theoretical terms.

If one considers that the benefits demonstrated in the area under study might also be assumed to be occurring in other areas in the regional area, it is necessary to reflect on the factors that may make this more of a possibility. There are many variables which can be considered to affect the outcomes of the Three Step Consultative Model. For example, the skills of the EP, the EP's relationship with the teacher, the knowledge and understanding of the teacher, the location of steps two and three, the timing of step two and three, the concerns brought for discussion and so on. Whilst it cannot be pretended that all these variables could or should be controlled to make the Three Step Consultative Model a standard experience in EPSs in the regional area, some common characteristics are already inherent in these services. For example, all schools have the potential to provide supply cover to release teachers for step two and three of the model. All EPs have a working knowledge of consultation approaches. The implication being, that the middle range theoretical concepts derived from the present study can, to some extent, be applied to other EPSs, particularly, where there are a greater number of similar characteristics.

5.9 Consideration of methodology: Limitations/ constraints

The author reflexively thought about each aspect of the research cycle and recorded her thoughts in a research diary. This process of reflection is presented below.

5.9.1 Research design

Analysis of the views of the teachers who experienced the Three Step Consultative Model allowed for process evaluation to take place. However, examining the effects on the children (product evaluation) would have provided information about any improvements in performance or outcomes for them. It will hopefully be possible to undertake a product evaluative research study of the Three Step Consultative Model in the future. One way in which this could take place is by children monitoring their own progress using, say, a booklet in conjunction with school attainment information and other data such as whether a statutory assessment is requested.

5.9.2 Tension between demands of being a researcher and an EP

The author had thought carefully about how it would be possible to marry up her research with her EP practice. As a result of this consideration she was able to achieve this, which facilitated the data collection process. However, as she did not predict the length of time that would be required for the data analysis she had not negotiated with her employer for time to be protected to undertake this intensive task. Consequently, this lapse in her foresight had an impact of the completion of this research study, in that it delayed it somewhat. EPs undertaking research should take account of the time needed to plan the research, gather the data as well as to analyse it in order to be able to work at a consistently steady pace.

5.9.3 Implications of dual role of researcher and service deliverer

Issues of reflexivity are particularly relevant to the author's study, because she is evaluating her own practice of using the Three Step Consultative Model. The author needs to consider how this role influenced the research process.

The author interviewed teachers from her own schools, some of whom she had supported prior to the implementation of the Three Step Consultative Model. However, this meant that the author did have privileged knowledge of most of the teachers and of the experience of conducting the interviews. This knowledge and experience has to be acknowledged rather than erased. Ultimately, the purpose of the study was to obtain teachers' views, which was achieved. The fact that the teachers participated whole-heartedly in the research reveals the importance of the positive relationships the author had established with them.

Furthermore, one of the main effects of the Three Step Consultative Model was that as teachers had an experience of being paid attention to and taken seriously through their own, self-styled account largely contributed to them being enthusiastic about participating in the research. The author also thought that the teachers valued the opportunity for discussion and reflection following the interview. This often allowed them to engage in reflexive thought. The author recorded the key points in her reflective diary so that she could take them into consideration when interpreting the findings.

Hollway and Jefferson (2000) consider whether the author's interventions during the interview (e.g. paraphrasing) can be positive and produce the kind of understanding that will enhance trust. The author felt that the influence of her interventions did aid the quality of the responses generated. The author implemented, for example, the use of 'recognition' (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000), by saying phrases to reflect the reality of certain experiences.

Nevertheless, it is possible that given the author's prior professional relationship with most of the teachers, led them to be more reluctant to share their views about the weaknesses of the Three Step Consultative Model. To account for this possibility the author included a number of questions in the interview to obtain such information. (Refer to Interview Schedule in Appendix 2. Questions: Oneb,d; two,c,e; three; six; eleven

and thirteen). Question six directly seeks negative information - Can you tell me about what hindered trying the different ways of dealing with the child we discussed? As mentioned above (in section 5.5, Initial reflections about the lack of negative feedback in the data collection process) the author explained to the interviewees that both favourable and critical feedback was required in order to evaluate the Three Step Consultative Model.

Alternative research strategies could have involved:

- Arranging for interviews to be carried out by more than one researcher,
- or, sampling schools from outside the author's 'patch', either from within one other EP's 'patch' or from across the whole of the LA.

It is crucial to mention that certain similarities and differences between the author and the teachers, related to, for example, professional experience, attitude to work and personality. Recognising these similarities and differences assisted the author's interpretation of the teachers' responses. However, the author needed to regularly check back by using her reflective diary, that her observations were valid.

Overall, the author found that discussing her work in progress with her research supervisor, helped her to extend her understanding of a range of issues and to gain clarity. The author was also able to share her reflexive thinking with her supervisor which enabled him to ask questions to further develop her thinking in relation to specific areas. The length of time the author spent working with the data gave her the opportunity to think about the work a great deal, which led to fully 'grounded' conclusions.

It is possible that the author could have adopted narrative inquiry as an alternative research method. Chase (2005) maintains that:

> "Contemporary narrative inquiry can be characterised as an amalgam of interdisciplinary analytic lenses, diverse disciplinary approaches, and both traditional and innovative methods – all revolving around an interest in biographical particulars as narrated by the one who lives them." (p. 651)

So, it can be said that the narrative inquiry method is the process of gathering information for the purpose of research through story telling. Narratives come from the analysis of the stories. It is the researcher's role to interpret the stories in order to analyse the underlying narrative. Chase (2005) stresses that a narrative communicates the narrator's point of view, including why the narrative is worth telling in the first place. Chase (2005) continues that in addition to describing what happened, narratives also express emotions, thoughts and interpretations.

A benefit of the narrative inquiry research method is that it might have yielded more evaluative information about the Three Step Consultative Model, which would have included more negative feedback. Such feedback would have been informative in terms of adapting the Three Step Consultative Model to enhance its worth.

However, it is necessary to note that although all qualitative researchers address the question of the relationship between the relatively small sample they study and some larger whole, this question is particularly relevant for narrative researchers, who often present the narratives of a very small number of individuals in their research. The author would have had to carefully consider this issue and the implications for the generalisability/ transferability of the findings.

5.10 Data collection

On reflecting about the design and conduct of the interviews the following points were considered important. These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter Three - Methodology, section 3.13.7, Outline of procedure: The interviews.

The type of interview selected was semi-structured which enables interviewees' views to be explored more than by using quantitative methods. The inclusion of pre-established open-ended questions, followed-up by individually tailored questions contributed towards achieving this. The use of structured and scaling questions helped to obtain other relevant information. However, the combination of questions tended to encourage teachers to talk about their specific experiences. In hindsight, increasing the number of open-ended questions may have encouraged teachers to talk about their views in a more general way, so that they would in fact have been telling short stories. In the tenth interview the author decided to ask a final follow-up question: "Is there anything else that you just want to add about the experience in general?" This question led the teacher to share her concluding thoughts, which otherwise would not have been captured. Asking the whole sample this question would have revealed the essence of each of their views.

Giving teachers a copy of the interview schedule prior to the interview helped them to prepare for it (to varying degrees). However, this action might have indicated that the author would be heavily reliant on the information gained solely from those questions. Most of the teachers informed me that they had looked at the interview questions; some said that they had thought about their responses and two teachers had prepared written notes and referred to these during the interview. There was the possibility that the more the preparation that had been done could have enhanced the richness of the data provided, but on occasions it could have led to more linear than lateral thinking. Consequently, it was necessary to follow-up open-ended questions with individually tailored

questions in line with the interviewees' responses, and to give non-committal encouragement to extend answers (probes) to stimulate flexible thinking.

The decision to record the interviews using a digital voice recorder meant that the author was able to converse naturally with the teacher; a detailed analysis of the information was able to take place and interviewer distortion was reduced. Indeed, the author perceived that recording the interviews was seen as flattering for those being interviewed. It is unfortunate, however, that the author did not manage to record different kinds of data in the transcripts, such as the tone of voice of the teacher/ her mood. This data about the non-verbal communication would have complemented the verbal data obtained. Banister et al (1994) suggests it would also have been useful to have compared data from different stages of the data collection process. For example, teachers could have been asked to check their transcripts to check if any issues had been neglected or over emphasised to extend understanding.

Transcribing each of the interviews was, as expected, a time consuming task which created a huge amount of data for analysis. However, it was possible to easily check data by referring to the transcripts or by listening to the recordings again. This ensured that errors in explaining the results were avoided.

It is necessary to state that the author's interviewing skills gradually developed following each interview, as she reflected on her conduct and adapted her approach in preparation for the next interview. The implication being that later interviews probably generated a higher quality of data given the increased use of follow-up questions and probes.

5.11 Data analysis

The reader is referred to Chapter Three – Methodology section 3.14, Data analysis for a detailed discussion of data analysis techniques.

In favour of grounded theory, Charmaz and Henwood (2008) advocate that it fits with both constructionist (interpretive) and post-positivist (quantitative) epistemologies. Charmaz and Henwood (2008) continue that researchers with both epistemological leanings will find that grounded theory strategies increase their efficiency and effectiveness in gathering useful data and constructing focused analyses.

However, Lofland and Lofland (1995) argue that three fundamental problems impede theoretical development. First, many grounded theorists do not attain a level of intimate familiarity with their data, which reduces the researcher's awareness of the range of variation of the phenomenon, its reach and connections with other phenomena and levels of analysis. In support of the researcher of the present study, she was able to balance the demands for detailed description and analytical/ theoretical explication of interviewees' experiences and meanings. The author was able to achieve this, as she aimed for a thorough analysis of the data from the onset of this process.

Lofland and Lofland (1995) state that the second problem is that the analytic process starts with coding in grounded theory but most coding remains descriptive and general. The researcher of the present study, however, took the data and the codes apart. While coding the author also defined points in the data that suggested analytic leads or illuminated telling issues (such as the benefit of a fourth step in the Three Step Consultative Model which would include a review element).

Third, Lofland and Lofland (1995) claim that grounded theorists do not move back and fourth between data collection and undertake the refinement of abstract categories (constant comparison). The researcher of the present study did do this. The author also used theoretical sampling to explore whether the emerging middle range theoretical concepts best accounted for the findings. The author wished to deepen her emergent understanding. The author, part way through the data collection/ analysis process, thought about which kind of child (e.g. primary/ secondary/

specific SEN) had not yet featured in the study. The author then consciously selected cases to fill the gaps to find out whether the emerging middle range theoretical concepts would also be able to explain new data. For example, during the data collection/ analysis phase the author noted that a female secondary aged youngster with social, emotional and behavioural needs had not been discussed by a teacher and so a suitable case from the secondary school in her patch was selected.

In this study (as mentioned in Chapter Four – Analysis and presentation of results, section 4.6, section C: This section is a conclusion to the analysis and presentation of results: Middle range theoretical concepts derived from analysis of findings linked to steps one, two (Section A) and step three (Section B) of the Three Step Consultative Model) the author decided to use Pidgeon and Henwood's (1996) term of focused concepts as well as Glaser and Strauss' (1967) term of middle range theories and combined them to coin the emerging concepts as 'middle range theoretical concepts'. In the author's view, this approach captured the essence of the findings beautifully.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that a researcher should externalise the analysis and the processes of interpretation by keeping a 'reflexive journal'. The author followed this advice and recorded, for example, methodological decisions as they occurred, reflections on the role of her own values and interests, emerging theoretical reflections and links to the literature. In line with Pidgeon and Henwood's (1996) suggestion, the author wrote a memo as soon as a poignant thought had occurred, so that it would not be forgotten. The act of writing memos frequently stimulated further thinking.

5.12 Critique of Three Step Consultative Model

With regard to criticisms of the Three Step Consultative Model, it is imperative to emphasise that the model was a pragmatic solution to responding to the expectations of a few schools that EPs will engage in a traditional way of working (i.e. psychometric assessment followed by a report that includes detailed recommendations), but also taking into consideration that staff in the majority of schools had liked Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), with the added observation element. This means that the Three Step Consultative Model was a context specific model and that it does not have currency as a 'brand' outside the context of this thesis. Perhaps, a more appropriate name for the Three Step Consultative Model would have been a Pragmatic Consultation Model. Furthermore, this name may have more easily captured the attention of staff in schools than the Three Step Consultative Model, as introducing the Three Step Consultative Model seemed to require a precise explanation of each step before staff began to show an interest in it. However, the Pragmatic Consultation Model may not have needed such a specific description at the time of introducing it because it is more of a general name.

A further criticism of the Three Step Consultative Model is that implementing the three steps may place pressure on the EP and the teacher, because of time restraints and practical restrictions (e.g. limited funding to release teachers), especially if it is decided that an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four) would also be beneficial as a way of supporting the teacher's active involvement. To address this criticism the EPS's marketing strategy (discussed in section 5.7.1, Implications for the EPS, sub-section IV, "Supporting active teacher involvement") could be offered to teachers as a way of offering choices in terms of level of EP involvement. Offering such choices to teachers will enable the EPs in the EPS to work in a more productive way, as involvement will be more closely matched to a teacher's individual needs.

5.13 Ethical issues

The reader is referred to section 3.12, Ethical considerations in Chapter Three - Methodology for a discussion of the ethical issues that were considered in the present study. The issues raised in section 3.12 will be considered below:

5.13.1 Informed consent

It was imperative to thoughtfully consider whether the interviewees had been carefully and truthfully informed about the research. Teachers were identified at Planning Meetings at schools. The author arranged her involvement – the first and second step of the Three Step Consultative Model – at the meeting, with the SENco. At this point, the author explained to all the SENcos that the research was not commissioned by the LA, but formed part of an evaluative professional development study for her.

The author requested that following the Planning Meeting, the SENco and/ or headteacher approach the teacher to outline the details of the author's involvement (see section 3.13.6iii, How interviews were conducted in Chapter Three - Methodology), and to mention that the author would like to interview the teacher a term later to gain his/ her thoughts regarding the process of the Three Step Consultative Model. With hindsight further consideration should have been given to the author routinely informing headteachers about the purpose of the research and obtaining their permission for the interviews to take place. It is important to note that the author's doctoral research was funded by the LA, and the LA was without a doubt a stakeholder in EPS service delivery. It would be necessary in analysing and interpreting the data to consider the implications of the research for all of the stakeholders involved, and this was a central ethical consideration.

The author then organised a time to visit the school to give the teacher a Participant Information Sheet (e.g. explains purpose of research) and a Participant Consent Form (refer to Appendix 1). The author emphasised the key points and answered any questions that the teacher asked. A copy of these was also sent to the headteacher and/ or SENco, who would then be able to discuss these with the teacher. The teacher was given a time period (two weeks) to consider whether or not he/ she wished to participate in the author's research. Teachers were recruited when the Participant Consent Form was received, which would indicate that he/ she had given their informed consent to participate in the research.

Permission was not sought from parents, as the author's involvement with children would not be affected by her undertaking the research. The involvement would be the same regardless of whether the teacher chose to participate in the research or not.

At the end of the school visit when the third step of the Three Step Consultative Model had taken place the author gave the teacher a copy of the interview schedule, which stated the research questions. The author had a discussion with the teacher, to ensure that he/ she had fully understood the information. This discussion did seem to help the teachers to approach the interview in a more relaxed, yet focused frame of mind. Prior to this discussion most of the teachers appeared to be still thinking about school-related matters, as they often said things referring to unfinished tasks. Indeed, Banister et al (1994) note that discussing the purpose of the research and outlining the questions that interviewees will be asked, can do much to allay their anxieties or reservations.

The issue of informed consent will be one, which will need to be considered in an ongoing way following the completion of this study, in terms of how the outcomes of the research will be applied and the audience to which the findings will be made known to.

5.13.2 Right to privacy

The two ways of protecting a participant's right to privacy – ensuring anonymity and confidentiality – were applied by the author. To address the former, the teacher's name or school were not included in the interview transcripts. To ensure that the latter took place, the author promised all the teachers confidentiality. When the author met with the teacher to give him/ her the above forms and to summarise them, the author stressed that confidentiality would be assured. Providing this reassurance appeared to suffice to put the teachers' minds at ease, as throughout the remainder of the interview process none of the teachers asked any questions relevant to this issue. The author knew who had provided information but has not revealed this knowledge publicly (and will not do so in the future).

5.13.3 Protection from harm

In considering this ethical issue it is necessary to question whether involvement in the research would cause the interviewees to change their behaviour in any way.

The interview questions generally encouraged the interviewees to reflect on their experience of participating in the process of the Three Step Consultative Model. The author's view was that this opportunity for reflection would allow interviewees to share their thoughts and that it would be unlikely to have a negative impact on their future behaviour, for example, in hindering their practice of meeting the needs of children with SEN. Furthermore, the author ensured that she spent a few minutes with each respondent after the interview in order to thank them for their participation, answer their questions and reassure them that they did well and generally to talk to them for a short while.

A different ethical issue potentially could have arisen from the time allocated to conduct the interviews by the author. If this time had in some way reduced the level of service that could be provided to schools by the author, then the value of the research would need to be strongly justified as outweighing the benefits that would have arisen from delivering the amount of time lost. However, the need for this justification is not relevant, as the author carried out interviews after school hours, and the time taken was not deducted from the EP hours allocated to the school for service delivery.

5.14 Issues of validity

As mentioned in Chapter Three – Methodology, section 3.11, Issues of validity, validity in qualitative research should be seen as a matter of degree rather than as an absolute state (Gronlund, 1981). Cohen and Manion (2000) argue, then, that it is necessary to strive to minimise invalidity and maximise validity.

Banister et al (1994) advocate that triangulation facilitates richer and potentially more valid interpretations. Methodological and data triangulation as well as an element of theoretical triangulation were used in the present study. In relation to the former, qualitative and quantitative techniques (open-ended interview questions and structured questions – scaling techniques) were combined to achieve a deeper understanding of the research area.

In terms of data triangulation, data was gathered from teachers from five different schools over a period of four terms, which meant that teachers had the opportunity to reflect on the process and any outcomes of the Three Step Consultative Model.

With regard to theoretical triangulation, the author did consider alternative theories during and following the process of the analysis of the data (e.g. Wagner's model of consultation (Wagner, 2000), consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959), behavioural/ eco-behavioural models of consultation). As a result of the grounded theory data analysis four middle range theoretical concepts emerged to help make sense of the data. Links with the existing theories were made. As highlighted earlier (in Chapter Three – Methodology, section 3.14, Data analysis), Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) discuss how basic taxonomy development or focused conceptual development (the outcome of the present study) may represent alternative, perhaps more achievable, goals for smaller scale grounded theory studies than the development of an explanatory theory.

It is imperative to highlight that the researcher of the present study invested a great deal of time, patience and commitment to undertake the grounded theory data analysis 'by hand'. The author had hoped to involve EP colleagues at Level one (open coding) and Level two (condensing of Level one codes) of the process of data analysis, to triangulate her ideas. However, at the time the author felt that she had to immerse herself independently in the process in order to really connect with the data. Unfortunately, this meant that EP colleagues did not participate in the data analysis process. In hindsight, the author recognises that involving EP colleagues in this way would have contributed to addressing interpretive issues. Following each stage of the analysis the author did find it beneficial, though, to discuss the main outcomes with her research supervisor, who provided her with the necessary guidance to progress through each stage. This support helped the author to steer her way though the data analysis so that she was able to construct four middle range theoretical concepts, which were grounded in the data.

In addition to the above strategies used by the author to maximise the validity of her findings the following could have been considered. Using multiple methods to collect data would have provided multiple sources of evidence. One example of this could have been to use the author to

facilitate the running of focus groups. This would have meant that it would have been possible to compare the responses in interviews with the responses generated in a group situation where the data emerges from the interaction within the group. On reflection, the quality of the interaction and the emerging data would have been heavily influenced by the author's (who was also the service deliverer) role as chair. This was one of the main reasons why this form of methodological triangulation was not adopted (see other difficulties of using focus groups in Chapter Three - Methodology, section 3.9.3, Focus groups).

Respondent validation could have been used to help to maximise the validity of the author's findings. As Pidgeon (1996) states, this means that a researcher's interpretations should subsequently be recognisable when presented to the participants in the study or to others within a similar social or interactional context. Interviewees could have been asked to review transcriptions of the interviews they had been involved in for feedback and further elucidation. Furthermore, interviewees could have been formally asked to comment on the findings of the data analysis, with their responses contributing to the final outcomes. The kind of respondent validation would have helped to maximise the validity of the findings. However, it is crucial to re-iterate that whilst the author was undertaking the role of a researcher, she was also an EP delivering a full time service to schools in her patch. So, the author was restricted by her overall capacity and her tight time constraints for completing the data collection process.

5.15 Further research

The author of this present study chose to focus on process evaluation. The purpose was to evaluate the (process of the) Three Step Consultative Model with teachers. This was the goal as the author had only began to use the Three Step Consultative Model consistently in her patch of schools since the autumn term 2005, and ninety per cent of the teachers had experienced the model for the first time as part of the research. Given

that the findings of this study indicate that the Three Step Consultative Model is effective in changing the practice of teachers (in the sample) in order to be able to better manage the needs of children, the next avenue for future enquiry would be to find out about the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model in improving the outcomes for children (product evaluation). Ascertaining whether there is an improvement in the outcomes for a child could involve, for example, the teacher comparing how a youngster presents when the initial concerns (e.g. literacy or behavioural difficulties) are raised at the Planning Meeting with the SENco, and how the youngster progresses a term or so after the agreed actions from the Three Step Consultative Model have been implemented.

It is worth noting that even though the findings of the present study do indicate that the Three Step Consultative Model is effective in changing the practice of teachers (in the sample), to improve managing the needs of children with SEN the link to amended practice has not been independently validated. A possible avenue of inquiry would be to follow up a new sample of teachers and to record the new strategies and outcomes.

The final middle range theoretical concept that emerged from the findings of the present study, revealed that step three is a particularly important element of the Three Step Consultative Model with teachers, so much so, that an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four), similar to the third step would serve the function of continuing to support teachers' active involvement to make changes to their practice. For example, a fourth step would allow the outcomes for the child of the actions agreed in step three to be reviewed. This review might lead to actions being adapted to improve outcomes for the child. So, a further avenue for further enquiry would be to find out whether the anticipation of a fourth step as well as actually having this step, helps the teacher to closely monitor the child's progress, so that he/ she continually reviews and adapts his/ her practice to improve the outcomes for the child.

In the real world there will be times when it will be challenging to implement the Three Step Consultative Model with teachers, taking into consideration factors such as time constraints, work pressures and so on. Incorporating a fourth step would be the ideal next step, but might not always be possible. Given the range of work-related demands, sometimes it might only be practical to implement certain steps. In restrictive circumstances, the author recommends that steps one and three of the model be implemented. An additional area of enquiry could then be to investigate the effectiveness of the marketing strategy in improving the outcomes for children (product evaluation).

5.16 Concluding comments

Within this chapter the author has attempted to summarise the main findings of the present study and discuss these findings in relation to the research questions. There is discussion about the middle range theoretical concepts that emerged from, and were grounded in, the views of teachers in the sample. The implications of the present study for various stakeholders have been discussed. Issues of generalisability have been addressed. Limitations and criticisms of the present research have been considered. Suggestions for future research have been made.

The following chapter presents a conclusion to the present study.

Chapter Six

Conclusions

Chapter Six

Conclusions

When considering the implications of the present study, talking in terms of the transferability, rather than the generalisability of the findings is important. The author of this study reported in detail on the contextual features of the study. This allows for the findings to be applied in contexts similar to the context in which they were first derived. The benefits demonstrated in the area under study are likely to occur in other EPSs in the regional area, because some common characteristics are already inherent in these services. For example, all EPs have a working knowledge of consultation approaches. So, the middle range theoretical concepts that have emerged from the study can, to some degree, be applied to other EPSs, particularly where there are a greater number of similar characteristics.

The goal of the present study was to evaluate (the process of the) Three Step Consultative Model, which the author has tried to achieve to the best of her ability. The findings, encapsulated by the four middle range theoretical concepts, do indicate that the model is effective in changing the practice of teachers (in the sample) in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. As mentioned previously in this thesis the author decided to use Pidgeon and Henwood's (1996) term of focused concepts as well as Glaser and Strauss' (1967) term of middle range theories and combined them to coin the emerging concepts as 'middle range theoretical concepts'. (See section 3.14.1, Grounded theory analysis, Chapter Three – Methodology.)

It is hoped that the findings have created avenues for future enquiry (see Chapter Five - section 5.16, Further research), such as finding out about the effectiveness of the Three Step Consultative Model in improving the outcomes for children (product evaluation). Furthermore, there will inevitably be times when it will be difficult to implement the model in its

entirety. The possibility of investigating the effectiveness of steps one and three of the model in improving the outcomes for children (product evaluation) should be considered.

The findings of the present study show that consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers 1959) and the behavioural/ eco-behavioural models of consultation in parallel strongly influence the way that the author in actual fact delivers Wagner's model (Wagner, 2000). The implementation of Wagner's model (Wagner, 2000) means that particular attention is paid to language in the construction of meaning (e.g. Macready, 1997). The main impact of consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers 1959) on the implementation of the Three Step Consultative Model is in the emotional support that it provides. In contrast, the central feature of the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model is that it allows for teachers to contribute to the problem identification, problem analysis and plan implementation steps of Bergan's (1977) model. During these steps opportunities, for example, for feedback – positive and evaluative are created. Following the principles of the behavioural/ eco-behavioural model enables teachers to learn. So, Wagner's model (Wagner, 2000), consultation based on Roger's principles (Rogers, 1959) and the behavioural/ eco-behavioural models together help to explain how teachers are able to change their practice, in order to be able to better manage the needs of children in a safe learning environment.

It is hoped that the present study will be of interest to a range of professionals. Given the benefits of the Three Step Consultative Model, the author is leading discussions in her EPS about how the model can be incorporated into the service Assessment policy. To ensure that the model is implemented effectively, EPs in the service need to be given training. To enable the benefits of the model to be experienced by other EPs requires information about it to be shared with other services, starting with those in the local region. Publishing articles in professional journals will be a way in which many EPs working beyond the regional area could find out about the model.

The author has thought about whether her EPS should offer teachers choices in terms of level of EP involvement (marketing strategy discussed in Chapter Five – Discussion of Results, section 5.7.1, Implications for the EPS, sub-section iv, "Supporting active teacher involvement"). This approach would involve the EP establishing if: (a) the teacher's primary goal is to obtain a clearer understanding of the child's specific needs or (b) whether he/ she would value this as well as support to be able to better meet the child's needs. If the EP learnt that the teacher's objectives fell in the former category steps one and two would be offered, following which a detailed report would be provided. Should the teacher require the latter level of involvement, steps one to three would be implemented, following which a summary report would be written, including, for example, the agreed actions. At step three the teacher would be asked whether he/ she would benefit from an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four) as way of supporting his/ her active involvement. Offering such choices to teachers will enable the EPs in the EPS to work in a more productive way, as involvement will be more closely matched to a teacher's individual needs.

It is anticipated that schools will be interested in the findings of the present study. Taking into consideration the positive outcomes of the Three Step Consultative Model schools are likely to value EPs using this model. However, it is crucial that school systems are in place to support the implementation of the model. Arrangements for releasing the teacher for step two and three need to be made in advance. Schools need to recognise the importance of supporting staff to implement actions agreed in step three, by whenever necessary, by providing the funding for the required resources. Releasing teachers for steps two and three as well as providing funding for relevant resources could be the basis for a school's commitment to the assessment and support process in the EPS's marketing strategy.

To make sure that the teacher actively participates in the process of the Three Step Consultative Model, the SENco needs to ensure that the teacher understands the process and the benefits of the model, so that he/ she feels confident that his/ her actions could bring about change.

Following the implementation of the model the SENco will need to be supportive of making the necessary arrangements to enable an extra follow-up step (e.g. step four) to take place with the EP and the teacher. Schools will also need to provide the funding for any resources that may be required following this step, to continue to support teachers' active involvement to make changes to their practice in order to be better able to manage the needs of children. A school's commitment in this way will support the EPS's marketing strategy.

The impact of the child's specific needs (e.g. attendance) can hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation. So, schools have a responsibility to take appropriate measures should such factors be identified.

In light of the advantages of the Three Step Consultative Model, it is in the vested interest of the LA to support its increased implementation by promoting the model to school governors and school management teams. At the LA level, it may be better to re-frame the Three Step Consultative Model as a "Consultation Following Assessment Model" to help relate it to the expectations of school governors and school management teams. It is also extremely important that the Education department within the LA accept the model as an approach to developing understanding of a child's specific needs. Having a clearer understanding of the model will enable administrators to reduce their reliance on the medical model.

Throughout the research process the author has recognised the tension between the demands of being a researcher and an EP. At the onset of the research cycle the author thought that marrying up her research with her EP practice would aid the data collection process, which it did.

Following this stage of the research, the author felt confident that the views of teachers would not have been so rich if the research had been conducted in a setting outside of her EP patch where relationships had not already been established. The author is of the view that her dual role enhanced the depth of the data that was collected. However, there remains the possibility that the author's prior professional relationship with most of the teachers, led them to disclose less negative feedback about the Three Step Consultative Model. To account for this possibility, several interview questions specifically encouraged teachers to critically consider their experiences. The author also kept a detailed reflective diary to record anything that she believed affected the research, such as her feelings, confusions and anxieties. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) argue that this can be difficult because both the researcher and the 'researched' are simultaneously influencing each other (see Chapter Three - Methodology, section 3.10, Reflexivity).

The present study has allowed the author to experience an exciting journey of exploring teachers' views about the process of the Three Step Consultative Model. Along this journey the author's knowledge and understanding of issues related to undertaking rigorous research has greatly improved, such as that of the complementarity approach and grounded theory data analysis. It is hoped that this study, with all of its limitations, will give EPs a unique way of working with teachers that empowers them to continually adapt their practice in order to be able to better manage the needs of children. Furthermore, the process of assessing children and supporting teachers' active involvement to enable them to do something differently (by using the Three Step Consultative Model) will contribute to including children with a range of SEN more effectively in mainstream schools (refer to Chapter Five – Discussion of Results, section 5.6.8, Existing models of service delivery which provide support for the "assumption of a medical model of SEN", sub-section ii, Inclusion model).

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Participant Information Sheet

Participant Consent Form

Participant Information Sheet

1. Research Project Title

An evaluation of a Three-Step Consultative Model of Working with teachers.

2. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide to participate it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the project's purpose?

Background

I am interested in finding out how useful teachers finding having a detailed discussion (consultation) with an educational psychologist (EP) following some involvement, which may include undertaking selective assessment and / or observation.

The Psychology Service Handbook of Guidance for Schools (2005 / 2006) states that a consultation meeting can enable a guided and systematic enquiry into the situation causing concern. This consultation involves those most directly involved with the child and the EP considering a range of relevant information (e.g. patterns of learning and behaviour), clarifying problems and reviewing and developing strategies to help solve problems and move difficult situations forward.

The model of consultation most commonly used by EPs has been primarily drawn on the work of Wagner (2000). She maintains that consultation is a collaborative approach established to aid the functioning of a system and its inter-related systems. When consultation works as it is intended, a greater capacity develops in the system for developing solutions.

Aims

To find out:

1. What are teachers reactions to the Three-Step Consultative Model of Working?

   - Step one: Selective assessment and / or observation.
   - Step two: Providing initial feedback.
   - Step three: Consultation to develop agreed actions.

2. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors supporting them in changing their practice after consultation?

3. What are teachers' opinions on the principal factors that reduce the likelihood of them changing their practice after consultation?

4. Do teachers prefer the Three-Step Consultative Model of Working or the traditional model of Working (e.g. one-to-one assessment followed by a report)?

Duration of the research project

The data collection process will take about six to eight terms.

4. Why have I been chosen?

Teachers are being identified at Planning Meetings with the headteacher and / special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), which take place at the start of the autumn term and during the spring term (end of January). The purpose of these meetings is to prioritise and plan an EP's involvement. Teachers who emphasise the need for support (not financial) and advice in order to help meet a pupil's SEN are being targeted, whether or not a statement of special educational needs (SEN) is involved.

A total of twenty teachers will be involved in this research project.

5. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this Information Sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a Consent Form). You can still withdraw at any time and you do not have to give a reason.

6. What will happen to me if I take part?

Length of time teacher will be involved in the research project:

Following my involvement I would like to interview the teacher about a term later. The interview will take no longer than an hour.

Teacher's responsibility

The expectation is that the teacher will answer the interview questions truthfully, providing as much detail as when possible when required to.

Research methods

Semi-structured interview techniques, with qualitative analysis of the data will be used. Some structured questions will be incorporated within the interview, and the data generated will be subject to quantitative analysis at a descriptive level.

The interviews will be tape recorded and then transcribed.

7. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There may be a degree of inconvenience involved for teachers, as interviews always have the potential for raising challenging issues (e.g. related to teaching practice). The justification for this degree of inconvenience is that the information gathered from interviewing teachers will enable the research project's aims to be met.

To address the potential for inconvenience, at the start of an interview I will emphasise that the purpose of it is to gather the teacher's thoughts regarding my

involvement. At the end of the interview I will provide the teacher with the opportunity to share their reflections about the interview process. If I identified that any inconvenience was caused my approach would be to have a detailed discussion with the teacher to explore the core concern.

8. **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for the teachers participating in the research project, it is hoped that this work will reveal teachers' views regarding the Three-Step Consultative Model of Working, and whether they prefer this model or the traditional model. It is intended that this research project will contribute to the debate within the profession about the evolving role of consultation within a pattern of Educational Psychology Service (EPS) delivery.

9. **What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?**

Teachers will be informed in writing and the reasons will be outlined.

10. **What if something goes wrong?**

Dr David Thompson, my research project supervisor (see below for contact details) should be contacted should a teacher wish to raise a complaint. If it is felt that the complaint has not been handled to their satisfaction the University of Sheffield's registrar and secretary can be contacted.

11. **Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

Each teacher will be asked to sign a Consent Form to allow restricted access to information collected about them in the course of the research project.

All the information that is collected about a case during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Reference to casework in my research report or publications, and in my discussion with Dr David Thompson will be kept anonymous.

My work with pupils will not be affected by my research, and consequently parental permission will not need to be obtained.

12. **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The results are likely to be published during the autumn term 2008. A copy of the published results may be obtained from the University of Sheffield library.

The data collected during the research project might be used for additional or subsequent research.

13. **Who is organising and funding the research?**

Leicester City Council is funding the research project. Dr David Thompson and the Psychology Service are supporting me to organise the research project.

14. **Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This research project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield School of Education ethics review procedure. The University's Research Ethics

Committee monitors the application and delivery of the University's ethics review procedure across the University.

15. **Contact for further information**

My contact details:

Karleni Bains, educational psychologist
Department: Children & Young People's Services
Leicester City Council Psychology Service
Collegiate House
College Street
Leicester
LE2 0JX
Telephone number: 0116 2211200
Email: baink001@leicester.gov.uk

Contact details for senior lecturer in education:

Dr David Thompson
Department of Educational Studies, 388 Glossop Road, Sheffield, S10 2JA,
Telephone number: 0114 2228104
Email: d.a.thompson@sheffield.ac.uk

Finally ...

Each teacher will be given a copy of the Information Sheet and a signed Consent Form to keep.

Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: An evaluation of a Three-Step Consultative Model of Working with teachers.

Name of Researcher: Karleni Bains

Participant Identification Number for this project:

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the Information Sheet dated 29th June 2006 for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.
   Contact telephone number: 0116 2211200 ☐

3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. ☐

4. I agree to take part in the above research project. ☐

Name of Participant (*or legal representative*)	Date	Signature
Name of person taking consent (*if different from lead researcher*) *To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*	Date	Signature
Lead Researcher *To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*	Date	Signature

Copies:

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated Consent Form and the Information Sheet. A copy for the signed and dated Consent Form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.

Date: 29th June 2006

Name of Applicant: Karleni Bains

Appendix 2

Interview schedule

Interview schedule

An evaluation of a Three-Step Consultative Model of Working with teachers.

- Step one: Selective one-to-one assessment and / or observation
- Step two: Providing initial feedback.
- Step three: Consultation to develop agreed actions / develop thinking about pupil's needs.

Section A

1.

a. How informative and useful were the assessment and / or observation and initial feedback steps?

b. Would more information have been more useful?

If so, what?

c. What did you think about the timing of the feedback (e.g. when it took place or for how long?)

d. What would have made these steps more valuable for you?

2.

a. How informative and useful was the detailed discussion step?

b. Would developing additional agreed actions have been more useful?

c. Would developing your understanding of the pupil's needs have been more useful?

d. What did you think about the timing of the feedback (e.g. when it took place or for how long?)

What else?

e. What would have made this step more valuable for you?

Section B

3.

a. Have you been able to use ideas from the detailed discussion step to change your practice for the pupil we discussed?

Yes / has helped me to understand more about the concerns / No

If yes / has helped me to understand more about the concerns, go to question 4.
If no, go to question 6.

4.

Can you tell me about what helped trying the different ways of dealing with the pupil we discussed?

5.

Has this benefited other pupils that you work with?

What else?

6.

Can you tell me about what hindered trying the different ways of dealing with the pupil we discussed?

Section C

7.

Have you had another pupil assessed by an educational psychologist (EP) before?

If yes, go to question 8.
If no, go to question 12.

8.

What differences did you see between the Three-Step Consultative Model as opposed to the traditional model (e.g. assessment followed by a report)?

9.

Which do you prefer?

Why?

10.

What benefits do you gain from the Three-Step Consultative Model that you do not gain from the traditional model?

What else?

11.

What benefits do you gain from the traditional model that you do not gain from the Three-Step Consultative Model?

What else?

Section D

12.

On a scale of 0 to 10, please rate the effectiveness of the Three-Step Consultative Model in changing your practice, if?

0 = unable to think of any changes to your practice.
10 = have made / expect to make changes to your practice.

13.

If you have had another pupil assessed by an EP before, on a scale of 0 to 10, please rate the effectiveness of the traditional model in changing your practice, if:

0 = unable to think of any changes to your practice.
10 = have made / expect to make changes to your practice.

Appendix 3

Example of interview transcription

JM
(Interviewer interjections not shown if only a single word such as OK, or yes.)

OK J, so I'm just going to ask you some questions about my involvement with C last term. OK? So, the first question is: how informative and useful were the assessment / observation steps and the initial feedback steps for you?

Um, it was quite informative it helped me to reflect a little bit about, er, where C was. Um, some of the suggestions that you gave were quite nice and helped me to focus on ways to move him forward, where I was but I don't think I was focused enough on doing it, and carrying that through made me focus a little bit more, during every lesson asking him questions and things like that, having a model of a box at the end. Again his, things like your assessment with his vocabulary and generally where he was, was quite nice 'cos it gave me an idea and that where I thought his vocabulary was quite limited actually it's not as limited as I thought he was and he's quite good on that score. Um, I think... um, it, any assessment certainly does help and having an outside person who actually knows what they're doing does, does really, reinforce something you know. I mean I had a general idea, as teacher, as a person where he was...

Mm, of course

...but having it actually pinpointed a little bit more helped a lot more.

OK. So would more information have been useful?

I think yes, er... personally for me, I don't know if all teachers... but the more information you have the more useful it is. Er, and personally for me I think you can never have too much information, um, because it doesn't matter how much of information you get if you can't take it all on board then you don't have to use it all, but... I feel, you know, I'd like to have as much information as possible on the children so then I can say 'Ooh,' you know, 'Ooh I can use that aspect or I can't use that aspect' or, you know, take things on board as to exactly what they can do. And as much as we'd like to we don't have the time always to sit down and do in detailed assessments and the way you do it obviously, you have far more knowledge in the way, you know, these children work, so, you know, that does help, yes.

OK, so what kind of information would you have found useful perhaps?

Well, difficult, difficult to say but I think really all information, you know, um... language skills, um, processing skills, especially I think, um, probably come to the forefront. Um, simple skills like, you know, numeracy skills or phonic skills then, you know, they are things we can test, you know, it's the step beyond um, co-ordination, um, all comes into it

really, um but probably processing is probably the most important for us, um... how much they can process and that, that makes us break down, perhaps when we're giving instructions then we can actually bear that in mind and break it down into smaller chunks for them.

Yep, OK, so what did you think about the timing of the feedback? So, for example, when it took place or for how long?

It was fine, I mean, you know, we, we fed back and I used that straight away so, I, you know, there wasn't any problem with that I was quite happy with that feedback and when we had it.

OK, so what would have made these steps more valuable for you?

Um... Difficult to say, maybe having... a sort of, a bit like... an IEP, though it's difficult for you, but having an IEP sort of set out for C for things like processing you say, well you know, if I was going to write C's IEP, um, you know, which obviously I write and J writes, this, you know, put this and put it almost in the way that they have in the IEP boxes, um, because that's what we tend to use and that's what our ancillaries tend to use and then maybe if you put it in that, the same format as the IEP that would be quite useful 'cos then we can put that straight into that and then the ancillaries could then look at that as well and they'd be able to use that and suggestions, or to, to help write that together, maybe... I think. That's the only thing otherwise I could think of, yeah.

OK. OK, so moving onto question 2, how informative and useful was the detailed discussion step for you?

Um, that wa-... that was informative I think mainly because it gave me time to reflect with you, um, what I do with C and we had... quite a few ideas I had and you had, um, ideas that I gave, you looked at and decided, you know, if they were viable or not. You gave some suggestions which I did carry on board and try as well, um, it's a case of having time to sit down with someone who's a professional and mull over these ideas, um, and I did take them on board and it was nice to actually sit and have time to talk, rather than, again, perhaps just have suggestions given to you or me told to go away and think of a few ideas. It was nice to, yep, have talk. So I liked that, you know.

OK. So would developing additional agreed actions have been more useful?

They were, so, so far the actions I did were fine, and they, it hasn't been that long since we started implementing them although now, I think probably, you know, we do perhaps I'd s... I'd now include more, and so maybe as we've come down, you know, now to do this sort of discussion it might be nice to have an interim one, even if by phone or something like that like maybe say 'Well I've started those but I still have,' like I have at the moment, still a bit of a gap in the middle, um, because, you know, I've

sorted out beginning activities and questions and end but sometimes the middle I say well, you know, I'm still at a loss sometimes what to do with him so maybe an interim one, I don't know, might help. But I know it's difficult 'cos you've obviously got a lot of people, you know, you can't spend lots of time on...

Yeah, but then again it might be, it might still be a possibility to have a, perhaps a slightly shorter discussion.

Yeah, I don't know but yes.

Because it could be very beneficial. OK.

Um, would developing your understanding of C's needs have been more useful?

Again, all knowledge is good knowledge, so yes I'd say, um, the more knowledge a teacher has it would help and certainly the more knowledge I have of my children the better it would be, so however much, um, anyone can help in the way of providing knowledge or how children think is going to reflect your practice, you know, and it is going to change how you deliver what you teach to them really. So I'd say yes to anything to do with knowledge!

Um, again, what did you think about the timing of the feedback, so for example when it took place or for how long?

It was fine, yeah, we, we had it, um, it's not a problem, we, we've done all our feedback so I think it was, they've been after school, um, and it's a good time and you know it's been within the time, um... a viable time from you looking at C and then feeding back to me, you know, it wasn't weeks or anything so it was fine.

So what would've made this step more valuable for you?

Um... difficult to tell, like I say perhaps an interim... discussion to see how... the ideas were going and to take them forward from there. Um, the only other thing I can suggest, which I don't know is viable, is possibly, um, spending some time in the classroom with C, which I know you did right at the beginning, but maybe after things had started to be implemented and things, to see is, you know, are they working, and if they are working what else could be put in, just for a twenty minute session or something, maybe...

Yes that is, may be a possibility because again it's, it's quite short so it could be incorporated in, yeah.

OK, er, so moving on to the third question, so have you been able to use the ideas from the detailed discussion step to change your practice for C?

Yes! Yes we did, I took them on, um, two suggestions in particular. Um, including C in the class more by directing specific questions, even though they were far lower than the ability of the rest of the class to include him in that, at the beginning and ends and at certain times in the sessions and to make myself really aware, right I'm going to ask C three questions during these introductions and plenaries, um, appropriate to work he was doing or joining in with, whatever we were doing. Um, and also an activity box so that, because his attention span was shorter, giving him more time to go to that rather than just perhaps a book corner or another activity, um, more hands on activity to develop, you know, fine manipulative skills and things, I mean, they've, and he's enjoyed that.

OK, so question four is can you tell me about what helped trying the different ways of dealing with C?

How do you mean, sorry?

So I think the question's asking about the strategies that you did go ahead and implement, um, what sort of empowered you to feel that you did want to go ahead and implement those strategies or for you to continue trying to adapt them?

I think, you know, the motivation that, hopefully, C's going to get more out of it, you know 'cos at the end of the day, you know, we are here to teach and sometimes when you have children with particular special needs it is difficult to incorporate them, I mean you certainly don't want to feel, make them feel isolated, I mean that's the last thing you want to do and you do want to feel you're moving them forward and I think having these, having someone to talk to about strategies to do that is always very good. Especially, you know, as a lot of the children in my class this year are actually probably well up the scale and are very able there seems probably an even more of a distinction with C, although they don't ever treat him any different, you know, they are very very good with him and, you know, the class actually has, as a whole spent more time, ah, praising C and um, doing things with C, including C more, I think that's just as time's gone by really. Um, there'd be no distinction about him using, you know, activity boxes or anything like that, you know, no-one's questioned why he should be doing different work or more kinaesthetic things, or you know, that I'd be questioning C about something that... wasn't relevant to, necessarily to what they were doing, they've taken that in their stride, um, and that's all helped motivate to carry on that as well, so the class have been very good and because it's working I think you want to keep it working, you know, I mean that has been working so it's been good, um, but again you get to the stage, I've been doing it for a few weeks now, that I get to the stage now I'm ready to do something else as well. So, yeah.

OK so all the input um, has that benefited other pupils that you work with?

I think, I think yes 'cos you, you reflect upon everyone so you do tend to do it but I think nearly, um, in that they, their perception... of C has become more inclusive. Whether that's to do with the way that I'm... treating C, um, or not I don't know. Um, I mean hopefully I was inclusive before but struggling for ideas to keep him... going, um, so it's been a little bit, it has been a little bit better, um, I think everything you do does eventually help. Some of the other children have helped because obviously C doesn't always play on his own, um, so people like T who could also do it they've benefited because they've been able to use the activity box.

OK. Is there anything else that he's been able to benefit from? T?

Um, well, um, T, er, and C, although they sit on different tables 'cos they don't work very well together, a lot of the stuff I do with C is applicable to T, certainly in the literacy and writing score. In numeracy T doesn't have so much of a problem, he's not, he's fine with that. Um, I think perhaps with processing skills, 'cos one of the things we talked about was chunking down what we have to, to say to C and to give him time to process things, um, and it's given me a little bit more reflection that perhaps I should be doing that to T and I think therefore I do, automatically now, but give them more processing time and won't automatically, um, press for an answer or expect them to do something and I'll give them the instruction and possibly even some time to just go away for a little bit and they, they do carry it out, you know, giving them time to do it.

OK, um, so number six, so can you tell me about what hindered trying the different ways of working with C?

I think the thing that probably hinders most is just the pressure of the class teaching, that sometimes you don't always, um... have time to... spend on an individual, as much as you want to, and you aim to... but with the best will in the world I think, sometimes I think, 'oh I had these questions for C' or 'I meant to do this' and I've, you know, I didn't carry it out at the time, you know, 'cos the idea was to have it for ev- do things for every lesson and it doesn't always go to course. And that's because... something might occur or, um, the children are asking something else all at once, or suddenly, you know... the lesson's not on time because something else has happened so you're shortening it up and things go out the window. Um, I think that's becoming better as you, as you spend more time making it an integral part of classroom life... it gets better, but there are times that, um, you sit there and think oh gosh, you know, 'I meant to ask these questions to C and I didn't' or C's finished and I hadn't realised, you know, and there's several children, asked if I-, buzzing around might have said, 'cos they're very good you know, 'ooh C's ready' or C might come up 'ooh just sit down' and then suddenly realise 'ooh I meant to put him onto the activity box' and he's sat there, quite happily, but, you know, you feel very guilty that, er, perhaps you didn't ask him and T or somebody else to, you know, go ahead and do it or go on the computer or whatever so, um, I

think the, the main hindrance is just the main hustle and bustle of classroom life.

Yes, yes, OK. So, so moving onto another section, have you had another pupil assessed by an educational psychologist before?

Um, only very many years ago for... um, a behavioural student so not recently that must have been about... four years ago, so not recently.

OK, er, so what differences did you see between the three step consultative model as opposed to the traditional model which might consist of a detailed assessment followed by a report?

Um, I think probably time to sit and reflect and talk about what you're going to do... with somebody like you, you know, actually sitting down and talking, um, I think has more of an impact rather than just getting a report and saying 'well this is the report, now'... you know, 'it's up to you to design something to do with it.' It's nice being able to, if you like, you know, have somebody to bounce ideas off.

So which particular model do you prefer?

Mmm, I prefer sitting and talking things over... personally.

Um, and what benefits do you gain from the three step consultative model that you do not gain from the traditional model?

I think it's having somebody with... um... the inside knowledge basically, who is professional, who you can actually talk over ideas, you know, and if things come up you can sit then and discuss them with them. Whereas if you have a report, er, you might have a question about the report but you don't necessarily have anyone then to answer that question, you know, and it d-, it does actually make a difference talking to people.

OK, so what benefits do you gain from the traditional model that you do not gain from the three step consultative model?

Um, I'm not sure, but, I mean it's a long time ago since I did it, a traditional one, um... but, er, it, we got a report, we did do things, and the, and the ed ps-, educational psychologist did come back and talk to us after a while about this child, um, but I suppose, s'pose, because it's actually, seem, things seems to have happened in a shorter span of time... that I seem to remembered it's coming, came, has come together quicker than the last time which I seem to, you know, there was a long time between the educational psychologist coming in, then getting a report and then we had to sit down and try and work out what strategies were going to do and then the next time we talked to them seemed to be forever. I don't know if that was true or not, I mean that, like I say, that was a long time ago.

OK, right, so just the final section, um. So question 12 on a scale of 0 to 10, please try to rate the effectiveness of the three step consultative model in changing your practice, so 0 = unable to think of any changes and 10 is have made or expect to make changes to your practice.

I think probably be about an 8 at the moment 'cos there are still things I want to change, um, and I won't say that I'm happy totally with the way I'm implementing it on a totally day to day, you know, lesson by lesson basis at the moment 'cos there's always still work to be done.

And if you have had another pupil assessed by an educational psychologist before on a scale of 0 to 10 please rate the effectiveness of the traditional model in changing your practice.

Um, that was probably about a five. Um... I did try to change but the situation was very different then, it was to do with behaviour in the classroom and we found it very difficult to implement, and it didn't seem to make a lot of difference, um, so maybe it's that this time it's something I feel I can do and be implementing and seem to get a more positive feedback straight away so you're more likely to carry on and try and do it, whereas before... I tried implementing strategies that I was suggested and they didn't really seem to work, so, but I kept implementing but it still didn't seem to work so I think I probably got disheartened, yeah.

And that's the end but is there anything else that you want to add, just as any sort of general comments at all?

Um, not really, I mean, I th-, I think as... it's always very difficult 'cos I realise educational psychologists can't have one to one dialogues with teachers all the time, they can't have time to speak to ev-, but I'd say as a teacher, as much time as we can get with you, you know, or that you can come in and support by just looking for a few, even if it's for 10 or 15 minutes or in the classroom, or the child and how they're doing now, um, does reflect 'cos it brings us back to reflect on our teaching and it ensures us that we're not just looking at it with a different pair of eyes but actually, look an expert's looking at it and they're coming to either the same conclusions or they're giving us ideas, yeah.

Alright, so we'll stop there.

Appendix 4

Summary of data from grounded theory data analysis

Summary of data from grounded theory data analysis - steps one and two

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Feedback is effective													
1,2	**FdbHCTFoc** (feedback - helped class teacher to focus)	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	4
1,2	**FdbG** (feedback is good)	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	3
1,2	**FdbInfofrAssessmG** (feedback - including information from assessment is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	4
1,2	**FdbHappdG** (feedback - fact that it happened is good)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
1,2	**FdbReinf** (feedback - reinforces what is already known)	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
1,2	**FdbRacts** (feedback - right actions)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbS** (feedback - supportive)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbF-upG** (feedback - follow up feedback was good)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	2
													19
Feedback from another professional is effective													
1,2	**FdbPG** (feedback - from another professional is good)	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	1	0	5	7
1,2	**FdbPS** (feedback - from another professional is supportive)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
1,2	**FdbJntDisG** (feedback - involving joint discussion is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbPMOKnowl** (feedback - from another professional who has more knowledge)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													11

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Keeping the feedback focussed increases its effectiveness													
1,2	**FdbQuantG** (feedback - quantity is good)	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	4	4
1,2	**FdbLQuicSumG** (feedback - length, quick summary is good)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbLG** (feedback - length is good)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
													7
Classroom observation is effective													
1,2	**AssmCOG** (assessment - classroom observation is good)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	3
1,2	**AssmCO** (assessment - classroom observation)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													4
Feedback is effective in leading to a change in practice													
1,2	**Fdb/CHG** (feedback - led to change in practice)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	2
													2
Teachers need positive feedback													
1,2	**BgdInc** (bogged down if incorrect, low morale)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**CT'sEffsAdeqNG** (class teacher's efforts adequate, not good)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													2
Uncertainty about definition of assessment													
1,2	**AssmU** (assessment - uncertain of meaning)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**AssmIndW** (assessment - individual work) *(researcher clarification)*	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													2

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Uncertain whether feedback could have been more valuable as no comparison available.													
1,2	**FdbMOValUNComp** (feedback - more valuable uncertain as no comparison available)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													1
EP involvement taking place in the classroom would increase the effectiveness of the feedback.													
1,2	**FdbMOValEPInvCR** (feedback - would have been more valuable if EP involvement had	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													1
Lengthening the duration of the feedback would increase its effectiveness.													
1,2	**FdbValLLong** (feedback - would have valued the length being longer)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													1
Feedback taking place out of the classroom would increase its effectiveness.													
1,2	**FdbMoValOutCR** (feedback - would have been more valuable to have had feedback out	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													1
Report covered the same as Step 2.													
1,2	**RepSameasStep2** (feedback- report covered the same as Step 2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													1
													52

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Feedback to further develop understanding of pupils specific needs would increase its effectiveness													
1,2	**FdbValMOInfoG** (feedback - would value more information would have been useful)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
1,2	**FdbValMoDisPup'sSN** (feedback - would have valued more discussion about pupil's	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2
1,2	**FdbValMOInfoSel** (feedback - more information would have been useful to select	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbPValMOLang** (feedback - would value more information about language skills)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbValMOProc** (would value more information about processing)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbValDevIEP** (feedback - would have been valuable to have developed IEP)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													8
Feedback develops understanding of the pupils specific needs													
1,2	**Fdbpup** (feedback - to help pupil)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbpupSN** (feedback - to help pupil because of specific needs)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbPupS** (feedback - to help pupil is supportive)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbUndPup'sSN** (feedback - to help pupil's specific needs)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
													5
Feedback contributes to teachers evaluating the pupils progress													
1,2	**FdbHCTEvalProg** (feedback - helped class teacher to evaluate progress)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**Fdb/PupProg** (feedback - led to pupil progress)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													2

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Feedback about progress would increase its effectiveness													
1,2	**ValEvalProg** (would value evaluation of progress)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**ValEvidProg** (would value evidence of progress)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													2
Feedback including parents' views would increase its effectiveness.													
1,2	**FdbValObtPar'sVs** (feedback - would have been valuable to obtain parent's views)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													1
													18

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Early feedback increases the effectiveness of it													
1,2	**FdbTmmedG** (feedback - timing, immediate, is good)	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	4	0	5	9
1,2	**FdbT** (feedback - timing)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbTG** (feedback - timing is good)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
1,2	**FdbTConven** - (feedback - timing, convenient)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1,2	**FdbSoonAftOG** (feedback soon after observation is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													14
Feedback would be more convenient if it takes place after school.													
1,2	**FdbMOConvenAftSch** (feedback - would have been more valuable after school)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													1
													15

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Developing strategies in the feedback step would increase its effectiveness													
1,2	**FdbValStratsHePup** (feedback - would have valued strategies to help pupil)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	**2**	**5**
													5
Feedback to develop existing strategies is good.													
1,2	**FdbDevExistStratsG** (feedback - to develop existing strategies is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	**1**
													1
The later the EP involvement the more important it becomes to develop strategies at the feedback step													
1,2	**FdbValDVMPStratsLteEPInvSchyr** (feedback - would have valued development of strategies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	**1**
													1
													7

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Earlier EP involvement would increase the effectiveness of the feedback													
1,2	**FdbMOValEarlEPInv** (feedback - would have been more valuable if EP involvement had	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	4	5
													5
													5

Summary of data from grounded theory data analysis - step three

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Consultation with another professional is the main factor that leads to its effectiveness													
3	**DisPG (3-step)** (discussion - with another professional is good: 3-step model)	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	1	1
	DisPMNBenef (3-step) (discussion - with another professional is main benefit)	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	6	8
3	**DisPPup** (discussion - with another professional to help pupil)	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	4
	DisPS (3-step) (discussion - with another professional is supportive: 3-step model)	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisS (3-step)** (discussion - is supportive: 3-step model)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
3	**DisG** (discussion - is good)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	3
3	**DisMOCont** (discussion - equates with more contact)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
3	**DisBenefListEP** (discussion - benefit to be listened to by EP)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
3	**DisJntDisG** (discussion - joint discussion is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	2
3	**DisPsGoalG (3-step)** (discussion - working with professionals with the same goal is good:	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisNMoVal** (discussion - could not have been more valuable)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisPExistKnowlPupG** (discussion - with a professional who has existing knowledge of the pupil is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													28
The 3-Step Model is preferred over the traditional model													
3	**DisPref3-Step** (discussion - prefer 3-step model)	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	7	7
													7

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Flexibility of 3-Step Model increases its effectiveness													
3	**DisMOFlex (3-step)** (discussion - more flexible: 3-step model)	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
3	**Dis3-StepQuickerThTrad** (discussion - 3-step model came together quicker than traditional	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisMOEasUndPup (3-step)** (discussion - 3-step model is more easier to understand for pupil than traditional model)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													5
Consultation with other professionals is effective (e.g. EP, 2 teachers)													
3	**DisDifferPsG** (discussion - with different professionals is good)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisPOthCTG** (discussion - with another professional and another class teacher is	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisDVMPAgrdActsDifferPsH** (discussion - development of agreed actions by different	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisOthCTH** (discussion - with another class teacher helped trying the different ways)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													4
The relationship between the EP and the teacher increased the effectiveness of consultation													
3	**DisRel'shipBetCT,EPH** (discussion - relationship between CT, EP helped)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	3
													3
Frequency of contact with another professional increases the effectiveness of the 3-Step Model													
3	**DisMOFreq (3-step)** (discussion - more frequent review wise: 3-step model)	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
													2

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
The involvement of other professionals can lead to less of a need for EP involvement													
3	**DisInvOthPs/LNDEPInv** (discussion - involvement of other professionals led to less need for EP involvement)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisOthPsG/LimNDMOAgrdActs** (discussion- with other professionals good, led to limited need for more agreed actions)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													2
It would be valuable for SENco to attend Step 3 to facilitate the implementation of agreed actions													
3	**DisValSENcoAttendatStep3FacilImplemStrats** (discussion - would be valuable for SENco to attend Step 3 to facilitate implementation of strategies)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													1
													52

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Consultation is effective in facilitating the formulation of relevant actions													
3	**DisAgrdActsG** (discussion - agreed actions is good)	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	5	5
3	**DisPAgrActivs (3-step)** (discussion - with another professional to agree activities: 3-step	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	3
	DisNDFocDevRelevAgrdActsG (discussion - need to focus on developing relevant agreed	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	3
3	**DisSpecifActsG** (discussion - specific actions is good)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	3
3	**DisMOIdeas** (discussion - provides more ideas to try)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
	Dis/AgrdActs (3-step) (discussion - 3-step model has led to agreed actions)	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
3	**DisAgrdActsDevExistStrats** (discussion - agreed actions, development of existing	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
3	**DisAgrdActsNewStrats** (discussion - agreed actions: new strategies)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisMAgrdActsTried** (discussion - many agreed actions tried)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisIdeasOthSituats (3-step)** (discussion - provides ideas to try in other situations: 3-step	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
3	**DisJntDVMPAgrdActs** (discussion - joint development of agreed actions)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**Dis/CT"sDVMPPosAttAgrdActs (3-step)** (discussion - led to class teacher's	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisAgrdActsNDRelevIndPup**	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisExistStratsNWHe** (discussion - about existing strategies that had not worked was helpful)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	2
													29

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Keeping the consultation focused increases the effectiveness of it													
3	**DisLGFoc'd** (discussion - length good, focused)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	3
3	**DisQuantAgrdActsR** (discussion - quantity of agreed actions was right)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2
3	**DisLG** (discussion - length is good)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
													7
Developing a high quantity of actions increases the effectiveness of it													
3	**DisAgrdActsHQuantG** (discussion - high quantity of agreed actions is good)	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
													2
Sharing agreed relevant actions with the next teacher would increase the effectiveness of it													
3	**DisNDShEffectStratsNextCT** (discussion - need to share effective strategies with next class teacher)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													1
													39

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Further developing an understanding of the pupil's specific needs increases the effectiveness of consultation													
3	**DisNDUndPup'sSN** (discussion - need to develop understanding of pupils specific	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
3	**DisNDDevUndPup'sSNNewCTs** (discussion - need to develop understanding of pupil's	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2
3	**DisValDevMOUndPup'sSN** (discussion - would have been valuable to have developed	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
3	**DisNDMOInfoUndPup'sSN** (need more information to develop understanding of pupil's	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
													8
Consultation is effective in leading to a development in the understanding of the concerns													
3	**Dis/DVMPUndConc** (discussion - led to development of understanding concerns)	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	5	6
													6
Providing information about specific areas would increase the effectiveness of consultation													
3	**DisNDSentsensWor** (need for sentence sense work)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisNDBalCoordWor** (need for balance, coordination work)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisMOIdeasKinaes** (more kinaesthetic ideas)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisValActsManPotentNewBehavs** (discussion - would have valued actions to	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisNDMedAdv** (discussion - need medical related advice)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													5

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Having discussions with the pupil increases the effectiveness of consultation													
3	**DisDisPupH** (discussion - discussions with pupil helped)	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
3	**DisDevRelPupH** (discussion - developing relationship with pupil helps)	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
3	**DisNDPupParticipat** (discussion - need pupil participation)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													5
Consultation enables the pupil's progress to be evaluated													
3	**DisOppEvalProg** (discussion - gave opportunity to evaluate progress)	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	4
3	**DisTOppEvalProg** (discussion - timing allowed for opportunity to evaluate progress)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													5
Consultation is effective in leading to the development of the pupil's specific needs													
3	**DisSpecifActsNW/BettUndPup'sSN** (discussion - specific actions did not work but	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisUndPup'sSNDev** (discussion - understanding of pupil's specific needs	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													2
Providing information about involvement with other pupils would increase the effectiveness of consultation													
3	**DisValResOthPups** (discussion - would have been valuable for me to have referred to research about other pupils	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisNDEvidWorOthPups** (discussion - need evidence of work with other pupils)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													2

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Providing more adult support to meet the pupil's specific needs would increase the effectiveness of consultation													
3	**DisValMoAdSuppPup** (discussion - would value more adult support for pupil)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													1
Relationship between CT and parent is important													
3	**DisRel'shipBetCT, Parlmp** (discussion - relationship between CT, parent is important)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													1
													35

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Consultation is effective in leading to a change in practice													
3	**Dis/Chg** (discussion - led to change in practice)	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	10	13
3	**Dis/CHGStratsEffect** (discussion - led to change, strategies effective)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2
3	**DisPupCL** (discussion - to help pupil in classroom)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisP/CHG** (discussion with another professional is likely to lead to change)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisDifferPs/CHG** (discussion with different professionals is likely to lead to change)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**Dis/CHG2AgrdActsImplem** (discussion - led to 2 agreed actions being implemented)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisPosFdb/ContCHG (3-step)** (discussion - positive attitude led to continued change in	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHPup'sSN** (discussion - helped to focus on pupil's specific needs)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
3	**Dis/CHGOthAreas** (discussion - led to change in other areas)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisBenefContin'yStratsPup** (discussion - continuity of strategies is beneficial for pupil)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**Dis/ImplemStrats** (discussion - leads to implementation of strategies)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													24
Consultation is effective in improving the teacher's motivation to change her practice													
3	**DisMotivatPupProg** (discussion - having the motivation that the pupil will make progress)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisAgrdActsEffectReinfMotivat** (discussion - agreed actions are effective which reinforces	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													2

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Consultation is effective in meeting the pupil's specific needs													
3	**DisSpecifStratsBenefFocPup** (specific strategies only beneficial for focus pupil)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													1
Teachers improving their implementation of the agreed actions would increase the effectiveness of the model													
3	**DisCTNDDevImplemAgrdActs (3-step)** (need to develop implementation of agreed actions: 3-	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													1
													28

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Reports (traditional model) are less likely to lead to a change in practice													
3	**DisRepsLAttent (trad)** (discussion - give reports less attention: traditional model)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisRepsLApplicatCRD (trad)** (discussion - application of reports in classroom is difficult:	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisRespProbsCR (trad)** (discussion - tendency to respond to problems in classroom:	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisRepsLimImpact (trad)** (discussion - reports have less impact than a discussion	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisRepStratsDiffImplem (trad)** (discussion - report strategies difficult to implement:	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisRepStratsNWDisContCHG (trad)** (discussion - report strategies not worked,	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisTradModL/CHG (trad)** (discussion - traditional model is less likely to lead to change: traditional model)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisLContLInfoPup (trad)** (discussion - less contact gives less information about pupil: traditional model)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisTDelBetRepF-upDis (trad)** (discussion - time delay between receiving report and having	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisRepsMissImpInfoNtDiss (trad)** (discussion - reports can miss important information that would not be missed in discussions)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisRepsDiffUnd (trad)** (discussion - reports, difficult to understand)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
													11
Verbal feedback in the consultation is more effective in leading to a change in practice than receiving a report													
3	**DisVerbfdbBetThRep (3-step)** (discussion - verbal feedback is better than a report: 3-step	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	5	6
													6

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
The limited verbal feedback in the traditional model reduces its effectiveness													
3	**DisVerbfdbLim (trad)** (e.g. verbal feedback limited: traditional model)	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	4	4
3	**DisRepsCan'tDisP (trad)** (discussion - reports, can't discuss with another	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
													6
The traditional model has limited benefits													
3	**DisNBenefs(trad)** (discussion - no benefits: traditional model)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
3	**DisNoCHG (trad)** (discussion - no changes made: traditional model)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													3
Individual work with a pupil only decreases the effectiveness of the traditional model in the classroom													
3	**DisIndWkPupOnlNoInfoPupCR (trad)** (discussion - individual work with pupil only does not give information about pupil in the classroom: traditional model)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													1
Advice given without focusing on current practice is not good (traditional model)													
3	**DisAdvicW/OutFoc'gCurrPractNTG (trad)** (discussion - advice given without focussing on current practice is not good: traditional model)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													1
													28

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Consultation is effective in leading to benefits for other pupils													
3	**DisBenefOthPups** (discussion - has benefited other pupils)	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	9	10
3	**DisPupSimSN** (discussion - to help pupil with similar specific needs)	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	3
3	**DisOthPupsMOInclus** (discussion - other pupils have become more inclusive)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2
3	**DisBenefOthPupsGenStrats** (discussion - general strategies beneficial for other pupils)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2
3	**DisAwarenPupsSimSN** (discussion - increases awareness of pupils with similar	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHSeeSim2PupsSN** (discussion - helped to see similarity in 2 pupils' specific needs)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**Dis/CHGPupSimSN** (discussion - led to change in practice for pupil with similar specific	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
3	**DisPupSimSN/Processing** (discussion - helped pupil with similar specific needs to	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisBenefsWCBehav** (discussion - has benefits for whole class behaviour)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**Dis/MoPeerSupp** (discussion - has led to more peer support)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHPup'sIntegrat** (discussion - helped pupil's integration)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
													25
													25

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
School - related pressures can hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation													
Limited time can hinder the implementation of the actions from the consultation													
3	**DisHindFTI** (discussion - hindering factor, time)	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	4	5
3	**DisProbsTI** (discussion - problems with time)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisTIInflusModImplem** (discussion - time influences which model is implemented)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHindFTPupLim** (discussion - hindering factor, time with pupil is limited)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
													8
Trying to meet the needs of other pupils with specific needs can hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation													
3	**DisHindFMTOthPupsSN** (discussion - hindering factor, meeting other pupils' specific	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	3
3	**DisHindFCPress** (discussion - hindering factor, class pressures)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	3
3	**DisHindFOthPupsSuff** (discussion - hindering factor, other pupils suffer)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	2
													8
Limited funding (e.g. to release teacher/resources) can hinder the implementation of agreed actions from the consultation													
3	**DisHindFFund** (discussion - hindering factor, funding for releasing teachers)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisTIDiffNCov** (discussion - timing difficult as no cover provided)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHindFRes** (discussion - hindering factor, resources)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHindFT'ing** (discussion - hindering factor, timetabling issues)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													4

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Less time required (e.g. out of the classroom) is easier to organise (traditional model													
3	**DisLTOutCRG (trad)** (discussion - less time out of the classroom is good)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisLTReqd (trad)** (discussion - less time required: traditional model)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
													2
													22

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Step 3 and more of it increases the effectiveness of the 3-Step Model													
Developing more new strategies would increase the effectiveness of consultation													
3	**DisValMoStrats** (would have valued more strategies)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	3	4
3	**DisNDNewStrats** (discussion - need for new strategies)	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	3	4
													8
Step 3 increases the effectiveness of the 3-Step Model													
3	**DisPotentMoEffect (3-step)** (discussion - has the potential to be more effective: 3-step model)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisMoStep3Impr (3-step)** (discussion - more of step 3 would improve model's effectiveness: 3-step model)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisStep3EspG (3-step)** (discussion - step 3 was especially valuable)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisNDMoS (3-step)** (need for more supportive reassurance in discussion: 3-step model)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisArranG** (discussion - arranged, good)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisNNDDevUndPupsSNExistKnowl** (discussion - no need to develop understanding of pupil's specific needs as had existing knowledge)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													6

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Having a follow-up consultation to further develop actions would increase the effectiveness of the initial consultation													
3	**DisValF-upDisDevActs** (discussion - would value follow-up discussion to develop actions)	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
3	**DisValF-upOEvalActs** (discussion - would value follow-up observation to evaluate	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisValOppEvalStrats** (discussion - would have valued opportunity to evaluate strategies)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisF-upDisAftRep (trad)** (discussion - follow-up discussion after receiving report took place)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													5
Timing of the consultation at the end of the school year means that the teacher has knowledge of strategies which can increase the effectiveness of the consultation													
3	**Dis1BenefEPInvEndSchyr:MStratsAlrTried** (discussion - I benefit of EP involvement at end of school year: many strategies already tried)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													1
													20

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
The sooner the consultation following Step Two increases its effectiveness													
3	**DisTSooner** (discussion - timing, could have been sooner)	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	3	6
3	**DisTSoonAftOG** (discussion - timing, soon after observation is good)	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
3	**DisTDelBet1,2 and 3** (discussion - time delay between steps 1,2 and 3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
3	**DisTG** (discussion - timing is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
													10
The consultation taking place soon after Steps 1 and 2 increased the effectiveness of it (within same month)													
3	**DisTConven** (discussion - timing convenient)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisTSoonAft1,2G** (discussion - timing, soon after step 1,2 is good)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisTSMontG** (discussion - timing within the same month is good)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisArr'dTStep3G** (discussion - arranged, timing of Step 3 is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													4
Having the consultation at the end of the school day increases its effectiveness													
3	**DisTConvenAftSchG** (discussion - timing convenient, after school is good)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
													1
													15

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
The function of each model is different and combining core elements of both models could be helpful													
The traditional model is effective in leading to a statutory assessment with outcomes such as a diagnosis													
3	**Dis/SA (trad)** (discussion - traditional model has led to statutory assessment)	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
3	**DisPurpSA (trad)** (discussion - purpose is to gain a Statement: traditional model)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisBenefsPupRep (trad)** (discussion - benefits for pupil from report: traditional model)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
3	**DisLeadLab (trad)** (discussion - traditional model can lead to a label/diagnosis)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													7
The traditional model can lead to a change in practice in meeting the pupil's specific needs													
3	**DisTrad/CHGMtPupsSN** (discussion - has led to change in practice to meet pupils' specific needs)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**Dis/S.CHG (trad)** (discussion - traditional model would lead to some change in practice)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													2
The function of each model is different													
3	**Dis2ModsFunct** (discussion - both models have a function)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**Dis3-StepMod+RepHe** (discussion - 3 Step Model and report at the end of it would be helpful)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
													2

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
Limited success from the traditional model should lead to the 3-Step Model													
3	**DisRepNWLead3-Step** (discussion - if report does not work 3-step model could be next step)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
													1
													12

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
The impact of the pupil's specific needs can hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation													
3	**DisHindFPup'sHeal** (discussion - hindering factor, pupil's health)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2
3	**DisHindFImpPupsSN** (discussion - hindering factor, impact of pupil's own specific needs)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHindFPupAttend** (discussion - hindering factor, pupil attendance)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHindFPup'sRelshipsOthPups** (discussion hindering factor, pupil's relationships with other pupils)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisPupAttendTDelStep3** (discussion - pupil attendance led to time delay between Steps 1,2 and 3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
													6
Issues outside of school can hinder the implementation of the agreed actions from the consultation													
3	**DisHindFIssOutSch** (discussion - hindering factor, issues outside of school)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisHindFHomPress** (discussion - hindering factor, home pressures)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													2
Rigidity of traditional model decreases its effectiveness													
3	**DisMORig (trad)** (discussion - more rigid: traditional model)	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
													2
													10

Step	Themes	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9	Interview 10	Count Theme	Sum Theme
The earlier the consultation in the school year would increase its effectiveness													
3	**DisBenefEPInvLimTSchyr** (discussion - benefit of EP involvement was limited due to timing in school year, end of year)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	2	4
3	**DisHindFTISchyr** (discussion - hindering factor, time in school year)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
3	**DisValKnowlPupStYr** (discussion - would have been valuable to have had knowledge of	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	**DisValEPInvStNewSchyrDevStrats** (discussion - would value EP involvement at start of new school year to develop strategies)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
													8
													8