The role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

The importance of role clarity from a school professionals' perspective.

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Abstract

In 2014, the Dutch educational Act was amended, aiming for a more inclusive approach, giving schools more responsibilities, however lacking clear guidelines. Therefore, schools are searching for ways to approach inclusive education and student support. This study revolves around the central question: "What is the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing?'' Research shows that mental health and wellbeing are crucial for development and being resilient. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2015, children and adolescents need a balanced set of cognitive, social, and emotional skills to achieve positive outcomes in school, in work, and in life more generally. This statement is supported by many others throughout the years (Minam & Tanaka, 1995; Pollard & Lee, 2003; Mc Lauglin, 2008; Roffey, 2010; Kutsyuruba et al., 2015; Porsdam et al., 2016; Michalos, 2017).

Semi-structured interviews were used for data collection together with contextual data to support the understanding of the data from the interviews, to explore the school professionals understanding of this concept. According to the literature, schools have a prominent role in protecting children's wellbeing through systematic social and psychological support, thus, the role of the school becomes more societal. Interpretative Phenomenon Analysis was used to analyse the forty-eight in-depth interviews of school professionals, and findings indicate that there is no commonly used definition of social-emotional wellbeing. Findings also indicate a unified approach in how school professionals try to understand their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing with the use of personal narratives. Analysing the interconnection between the key themes of personal narratives, mental health, measuring wellbeing, collaboration and context, and role clarity revealed the complexity of working with the concept of social-emotional wellbeing within education and the underlying risks for students. Recommendations were made for further research and development.

Content

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Declaration

This thesis is a presentation of original research, carried out under the supervision of Professor Ian Davies and Doctor Eleanor Brown, of which I am the sole author. This thesis has not been published or presented at any other University. All sources used in support of this research are acknowledged as references.

Dedication

To all the school professionals and social workers who are doing the best they can, with the resources they have, to support and protect children's social-emotional wellbeing.

You are making a difference.

Chapter 1. Introduction

This chapter will present the research questions and explain the aim of this study. It will describe the context in which this study took place, which procedures were used to identify relevant literature, the rationale, and which methodology was used.

1.1 Aim of this research

As the role of the school seems to change into a broader and more social and societal role, schools are often connected to the topic of social-emotional wellbeing. Schools have a role in supporting the wellbeing of their students, yet it remains unclear how this is translated and understood by school professionals. Their understanding is vital for their response to supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. The definition of social-emotional well-being remains unclear, yet there is a consensus on the connection between social and environmental psychology and the three most important competencies: social competence (Keyes, 2002), emotional competence (Squires, Bricker & Twombly, 2003), and wellbeing (Department of Education and Children's Services, 2005). Together these three descriptions form the framework to explain social-emotional wellbeing as the ability to integrate thinking, feeling, behaving, and effectively regulate emotions to achieve social and interpersonal goals. Leading to children's physical, social-emotional welfare, and development. This research aims to explore how school professionals understand this concept and the relation to their role. This research focuses on the main question:

What is the role of school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing in secondary education?

To address this question, three supporting sub-questions will be explored:

- *How do school professionals understand their role in relation to social-emotional wellbeing?*
- *What are school professionals doing to support students' social-emotional wellbeing and what challenges do they experience?*
- *Do they have any recommendations or ideas for improving the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing?*

The research question and usage of sub-questions were the result of multiple factors which I will further explain later in this chapter (1.4). Through exploring the understanding of school professionals on their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, this research aims to contribute to clarifying or understanding the role of the school. This research unveils the school professionals' perspective when it comes to supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and revealing possible implications of the current approach to this concept. It is important to hear the voice of the school professionals, their experiences, and their challenges. They are the designated people who try to execute educational innovations and latest ideas, the best they can, with the resources they have. How school professionals understand these innovations and policies has a direct effect on students and their wellbeing. This research approaches school professionals as educationists and specialists within their subject of choice, motivated and engaging people who made the conscious choice of working with students. These school professionals are part of guiding children through young adulthood.

1.2 Context

In the context of this research, there is a global interest in the concept of wellbeing and the international trend towards inclusive education. Wellbeing, behaviour, and education have been connected throughout many discussions (Erikson, 1963; Evans, 1995; Bronneman-Helmers, 1999; De Jong, 2013). These different sources throughout time illustrate the ongoing debate. These days child wellbeing is a major topic, gaining attention worldwide, sparking global comparison. Major reports are released that gives us insights and information about the status of children's wellbeing, such as the United Nation Children's Fund report on the wellbeing of children in richer and well-developed countries (UNICEF, 2007). Such reports have resulted in broadening people's view on the importance of wellbeing, but also resulted in the almost uncritical acceptance of the need to improve wellbeing among school-aged children.

Alongside, Dutch schools are often handed the role of supporting these children, knowing that because of the Compulsory Education Act, schools can be held accountable for providing student care. One of the major motivations behind this act was prevention of children falling between two stools. According to this Act schools are a valid place if you want to reach and monitor all children, knowing that the start compulsory education from the age of five, five days a week (Jacobs & Struyf, 2013; Educational inspectorate, 2015; Haug, 2017).

In the Netherlands, a new Educational Act aiming at inclusive education was introduced in 2014. There was no trial period and together with the financial measures, schools were given the responsibility and obligation to provide student care (Messing & Bouma, 2011; Smeets et al., 2017). This meant developing and improving student support policies, differentiating within the classroom as well as supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. It is important to note that social-emotional wellbeing is a complicated phenomenon to capture in one clear definition and as such I need to describe the boundaries of its content. I will come back to that later, supported by some of the literature. With this complex concept, schools were given an important task with this new Educational Act. It focusses on preventing school dropouts and preventing students missing proper support. This act holds schools responsible for the enrolment of students in education and when schools are unable to provide the right type of support, schools are held responsible for finding a more suitable educational option for their students. This creates pressure on school professionals and expectations for students and their families.

According to the Mental Health Taskforce (2004), is it difficult to define social competence because development is not uniform, and knowledge can be socially framed, and the interpretation of such is personal. Denham & Weissberg (2004) underline the importance of understanding that every person's personal lens of experiences (students and school professionals) plays a significant role in how people interact with each other. This understanding is vital to assess or interpret a concept such as social-emotional wellbeing. The literature suggests that the core of wellbeing is the subjective experience of social sufficiency of individual existence (Raver & Knitze, 2002; Raver & Zigler, 2004). According to Goodman et al. (2015) social-emotional wellbeing is about social and emotional skills. They describe skills such as understanding and managing emotions, making responsible decisions, and dealing with social conflicts in an effective manner. These skills are noted to be crucial factor in influencing numerous measures of social outcomes. They state that these social and emotional skills are vital for improving health, reducing anti-social behaviours and conflicts, having life satisfaction and subjective wellbeing. All these different descriptive and unclear approaches to social-emotional wellbeing underline the complexity of collective understanding the concept or even giving schools the task to support students' social-emotional wellbeing. The literature review (Chapter 2) and Findings (Chapter 4, 5 and 6) will reveal how complex this concept is and what kind of discussion comes forth from this data (Chapter 7).

The implementation of the in 2014 mandatory Educational Act is loaded with many social expectations, one of them being schools can protect and support psychological and social-emotional development of children (Bosscher, 2013; Koning et al., 2014; Lester & Cross, 2015; Leijdesdorff et al., 2020). Many school-based programmes have targeted an interrelated set of skills that fall under the headings of mental health promotion, character education, social and emotional learning, bullying prevention, life skills, strengths-based approaches, and youth development (Luthar et al., 2020). According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) in 2005, social and emotional wellbeing is the social and emotional learning. This is defined as a learning process where students develop and effectively apply knowledge and attitude towards different social-emotional skills. CASEL describes skills such as recognising and the managing of emotions, establish positive relationships, the ability to solve problems. A common approach to supporting the development of social and emotional skills has been school-based interventions (Jones and Bouffard 2012; Barry et al. 2017).

According to multiple studies (Ruus et al., 2007; Roffey, 2010; Biesta, 2011; Pels, 2011; Langford et al., 2014), schools as a key setting for building social, emotional, and behavioural skills and supporting and monitoring these skills because students spend a substantial amount of time at school. The school also provides a socialising context in which students can learn a range of life skills. Researchers and government organizations seem to emphasize more on the social and societal role of schools these days. Goldberg et al. (2018) discuss the importance of the whole-school-approach to improve students wellbeing. They suggest that interventions (such as on behaviour and wellbeing) have more successful outcomes when they are integrated into daily practice and school culture. In this approach it is vital to engage all school professionals and reinforce skills and support outside of the classroom. Together, these characteristics point to the importance of adopting a whole school approach to enhancing students' social and emotional skill development. This research focuses on school professionals working in Dutch secondary education. The research site contains four state schools from one school management. All four schools offer regular secondary education, yet on various levels. The educational system will be further explained in Chapter 2.

1.3 Rationale for the project

Although there are many studies to be found about social-emotional wellbeing and the role of the school, these studies are often about younger children, or from an outsider's perspective (Edmunds & Stewart-Brown, 2003; Denham & Weissberg, 2004; Ballantine & Hammack, 2012; Bosscher, 2013). Schools often receive advice on how to improve existing policies and approaches. For example, every school has an anti-bullying policy. Although this concept has a clear definition, how this policy is implemented, and part of every school profession depends on their interpretation of the importance of making that policy your own. It is impossible to know if everyone feels equally committed and responsible. It is important to find out if school professionals feel prepared to take on different roles and how do they understand these roles. Especially since this research is about the complex and difficult concept of social-emotional wellbeing which lacks clear definition.

What is missing in these different findings from earlier studies is the interpretation and understanding of social-emotional wellbeing from a school professionals' point of view. Most earlier studies that make the connection between students social-emotional wellbeing and education use a student's perspective, the top-down approach or the advising role of a sociologist or pedagogue (Van Dorsselaer et al., 2010; Hascher, 2012). Researchers in the past have not been able to definitively define social-emotional wellbeing, there are multiple descriptive definitions to be found (e.g., Kahneman et al., 1999; Diener et al., 1999; Keyes et al., 2002; Squires et al., 2003; Stratham & Chase, 2010; Seligman, 2011). Some refer to mental health, others to social-emotional learning, but to achieve the possibility of a whole-school-approach or inclusive education, we need to know if we understand social-emotional wellbeing in a comparable way. Especially amongst the professionals who are expected to function accordingly.

Throughout my time working as a pedagogue, coordinator, and counsellor in education, I have been particularly interested in supporting vulnerable students and therefore promoting supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing in schools. During these years it became noticeable that the quality and type of students' support was strongly influenced by the person who provides the support. The knowledge and skills of each school professional on supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing seemed to vary or maybe this will be explained by motivation and commitment. Nevertheless, these differences will have consequences for the quality of school support and in the end, have consequences for the students who need extra support.

Every student has the right to receive support to succeed in education and some students need more support to achieve this. Yet, school professionals are educationists and not youth care specialists or mental health workers and should not aim to be. We cannot expect school professionals to take on the role of a mental health specialist. This is expected to create imbalance and lack of clarity for the school professional and can put students at risk for not receiving support of a specialist when needed. Therefore, I take a keen interest in the available support system in schools to help and understand the special needs of students and which role the schools have or should have.

The returning topic is the social-emotional wellbeing of students. Research reveals the important connection between didactics and wellbeing, but during my practise as a pedagogue, a recurring conversation topic is the interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing. I believe this research can provide an insight into how school professionals interpret and understand their role in relation to students' social-emotional wellbeing. These insights can raise new awareness and understanding surrounding the role of the school in supporting their students. If this research can discover how school-professionals understand social-emotional wellbeing and what affects their interpretation of the concept, then this will provide new possibilities in improving policies and whole-school-based approaches to support students' social-emotional wellbeing. With clarity in the understanding of social-emotional wellbeing, comes clarity in the role of the school professionals. These two subjects are interconnected. By clarifying the role of the school, students are protected from misunderstandings and inappropriate approaches when they need support. By defining the role of the school professionals, they also are protected from overcharging and wrong expectations. This can lighten work-related stress and benefit the collaboration and communication with students and their families.

1.4 Methodology

The main research question developed through multiple phases in this research. My professional experience working in education and seeing school professional struggle to find a unified understanding of social-emotional wellbeing or feel unsure about their role regarding to this concept was the first step in developing the research question. It became clear, after reviewing multiple literature sources focusing on wellbeing, education, environmental psychology, and social psychology, that there was no clear definition on social-emotional wellbeing (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Mooney, 2000; Seligman, 2011). However multiple research projects reveal the important connection between this concept and education (Rivlin & Weinstein, 1984; Gifford, 2002; Looney, 2009). Which meant that this research was layered.

Not only did I research the role of the school professional, but it was also vital to research their understanding of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing as well. The pilot study tided these two phases together and confirmed the necessity of sub questions to provide structure and a clear framework to this study without framing the data too much. The pilot study revealed it was important to not only research the 'how' and 'why'. The 'what' provides clear examples which are vital in understanding the context of the participants and the meaning behind their given answer. Research participants were approached as experience experts.

Because of the complex concept of social-emotional wellbeing and aiming to understand the school professionals' point of view on their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, it was important to find a research method that can capture someone's personal understanding, yet still respecting the context it was being used in. IPA (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) is the chosen method. IPA supports in-depth research and uses a combination of factors to research the interpretation of a certain phenomenon. It is a flexible method that contains the seven steps of reading and re-reading the data, initial noting, developing themes, looking for connections across these themes, working from case to case, looking for patterns across cases and the last step: taking interpretation to a deeper more personal level. These steps can be used flexibly during the analysis and this flexibility and the search for deeper understanding is why IPA is a crucial approach to understanding the data of this research (Smith, 2011; Eatough & Smith, 2017). As this research explores the understanding of school professionals on supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, it expected that they will not be able to define social-emotional wellbeing without sharing their personal understandings and narratives. Exploring the interpretation behind these personal understandings of the concept is what this study is all about.

IPA is the most fitting method for this type of research; however, it is important to note that this research contains a large sample of forty-eight interviews. IPA normally is used for smaller size samples (four to ten) yet can still be used on a larger sample. To make sure that IPA can be used in a qualitative and appropriate way, no more than five cases were analysed per session. It is also important to note that reflexive thinking has been extremely important throughout this research process. Because of the usage of IPA, and not only being researcher, but also working at one of the research sites, it was important to be aware of my thoughts, understandings, and beliefs to raise awareness of my own interpretation and therefore consider the possible impact on the research.

Later, I will explain more about my role as a school professional and researcher and other possible limitations in Chapter 4. Considering the limitations, IPA is still believed to be the most fitting method for handling the data of this research. The key themes emerging from the data reveal how largely affected the understanding of the role of the school professional in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing is by personal narratives, understanding mental health, measuring wellbeing, collaboration & context, and role confusion. Although this research used a relatively large sample size and IPA focuses on the person's interpretation of a phenomenon, there was such a common ground amongst participants in these 5 key themes. Although it revealed the difficulty in defining social-emotional wellbeing, it also revealed the implications of the role confusion school professionals' experience. These implications are an important revelation and need to be addressed to support and protect students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Contribution to knowledge

This research developed from educational practice; experiencing the struggle of motivated engaged and highly educated school professionals who feel they must live up to new demands and expectations of schools in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Prior to this research, I have researched similar projects in the Netherlands and abroad, but most research projects that focus on students' wellbeing are from a students' or outsiders' perspective (Ruus et al., 2007; Langford et al., 2014; Kutsyuruba et al., 2015; Kern et al., 2015). Previous research on the school professional's perspective on wellbeing review the wellbeing of the school professional (Van Horn et al., 2004; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Or are trying to measure smaller sub-concepts of students' wellbeing through the school professional's perspective (Odenbring, 2019; Luthar, 2020). None of these research projects are trying to clarify the role of the school in supporting wellbeing through the school professional's perspective.

School professionals have been adapting to the many educational innovations throughout the years and will have to work and adapt to many more to come. So, it is vital to research their current view and understanding of the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. With the knowledge of the understanding of school professionals it is possible to review the role of the school, the capability of schools to take on a supporting role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and possibly improve that role. This research will be used by the local government to review the local role of education in relation to student care and the societal role of the school.

1.5 Overview

The previous paragraphs revealed some insight in the aim of this research and what this thesis will contain in order to answer what the role of the school is in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Although, as stated before, social-emotional wellbeing is a complex and difficult concept to define, the school professionals' point of view will be used to try to clarify their educational role in relation to students social-emotional wellbeing. This thesis contains seven chapters and starts with explaining the context around this research as part of the literature review and will end with the conclusive chapter. This will be the lay-out of the thesis:

1. The introduction chapter (chapter 1), which is the current chapter, contains the aim of the research, validation, and this short overview.
2. The literature review chapter (chapter 2), starting with a more descriptive approach to explain the context within which this research was executed, the consideration of other empirical studies and then discussing relevant research and theories pertinent to the research area.
3. The methodology chapter (chapter 3), where the choice for IPA is explained, and rational for this, with details regarding the procedures followed for data collection and analysis.
4. The findings chapter (chapter 4, 5, and 6), with a presentation and interpretation of the research findings. These findings will be presented at the hand of quotes and themes emerging from the data.
5. The discussion chapter (chapter 7). In this chapter the findings in relation to important literature and theories will be discussed and explained.
6. The conclusion chapter (chapter 8) contains a presentation of the conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for practise and future research.

Impact of the research

After finishing this research project, the outcomes will be presented and discussed with the school management and local government. There is a keen interest in defining the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Several Acts and policies of education and Youth Care are reviewed and implemented separately. Yet, the Educational Act asks for a different approach. It is difficult to collaborate between education and health care because of these different Acts, with different regulations and approaches.

As explained earlier, this research will be part of reviewing some of the local policies on education and health care and will bring the voice of the school professional to the local politics and policymakers. As a result of working in education as a pedagogue, I have been informant for the mayor and city council members on numerous occasions. Because of this connection, I can present the outcomes of this research to them. The tension field between the role of education and youth health care in supporting children and adolescents is a returning topic within city hall. On top of that, the Covid outbreak from the past two years and the latest innovations within education and youth health care cause for local governments to reevaluate their policies and to be more open to collaborate and receive input from the field.

My hope for this research is to let the voice of the school professionals be heard and review the support of students' social-emotional wellbeing from a different perspective. If we can provide clarity on the role of school professionals, students, and outsiders, this will affect wellbeing in a positive way for all involved. If school professionals feel confident and sure about their role in the school, they are more likely to stay and fulfill that role for a longer period (Simon, 2011; Mendes & Stander, 2011). Creating stability and safety for their students and room for professional growth amongst the school professionals. The current education system must take on many roles, which causes lack of clarity, different approaches to wellbeing and offered support, and the increase of staff turnover. Which will put students in need of support at unnecessary risk.

Agresta (2004), Oder (2005), Young (2011), and Verhoeven et al., (2019) all highlight the dynamic role of the school and the interaction between education and the social role. These dynamics will always be part of education, especially since the core of every school should be guiding children to adulthood in every sense of the way. The need for role clarity this research highlights is about the different roles each school professional must fulfill and the feeling they need to be experts on multiple levels. It is important for all professionals to work through their own expertise and leave room for collaboration with other experts. Otherwise, students are at risk of receiving insufficient care and there will be major individuals' differences in the approach to student care.

Chapter 2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review relevant literature on the role of the school supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Starting this chapter by explaining the Dutch secondary education system, the context where the research takes place, and other relevant contextual literature. After a clear description of the context, different theoretical perspectives are reviewed, with connected areas that are of influence on how social-emotional wellbeing is understood. By reviewing these different approaches to the subject, the research gap around social-emotional wellbeing in relation to the role of the school becomes visible and the literature review will articulate how this research addresses this gap. The problem, according to the literature, is that there is no collective understanding and approach when it comes to the subject of social-emotional wellbeing. Although the literature often speaks of wellbeing and the role of the school as naturally connected, it seems complicated to explain what that role is and if there are evidence-based methods to improve or guarantee this supporting role of the school on social-emotional wellbeing. Although some social-emotional learning programs seem to have improved academics (Jones et al., 2011; Raver et al., 2011), others have shown no impact on students' academic outcomes (Catalano et al., 2002; Greenberg et al., 2003).

Much of the earlier research done on the role of the school and social-emotional wellbeing do not treat social-emotional wellbeing as a solitary topic; rather, social-emotional wellbeing is commonly tied to the topics of learning, behaviour, bullying, neglect, or disorders. While these various subjects can be non-specific and sensitive to interpretation, they will sometimes be addressed simultaneously because of the interconnection between these various subjects. This chapter will review some of these previous studies and explain the connection or lack of connection to this research. It has been striking to see that most research done focusing on wellbeing in education, does not use the school professional's perspective (Edmund et al., 2003; Denham, 2006, Honingh & Ehren, 2012; Haug, 2017; Gubbels et al., 2018). Very often research on social-emotional wellbeing and education is executed with the aim to give advice to school professionals, however these researchers do not always consider the experiences and abilities of school professionals in an in-depth manner and if there is sufficient support to work on this advice.

Jacob & Struyf (2013) examined the perceptions of teachers on integrated social-emotional guidance, by a large-scale survey study of 3,336 Flemish secondary education teachers, using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analyses. This research gave a voice to many teachers (although not by in-depth study) and results revealed teachers consider social-emotional guidance of students as part of their responsibility. Not all teachers, however, are also able to effectively guide and support students' social-emotional development. An important question that stays unanswered is 'why'. Without in-debt research it is difficult to assess why teachers feel unable to effectively support students' social-emotional wellbeing and how teachers and other school professionals understand their role in relation to their students' wellbeing.

This study aims to reveal 'why' school professionals do what they do and how they understand the role of the school connected to the concept of social-emotional wellbeing, bearing in mind the dynamics of the social context and the developmental psychology supporting the understanding of school professionals and their students. Social-emotional wellbeing is a complex concept to define, and the role of the school professional has changed throughout the years. By researching the interpretation, understanding and experiences of the school professionals this research aims to understand the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing or reveal underlying critical issues. They are the professionals working with students in need of support, and it is important to review how they understand their supportive role and the concept of wellbeing. Although this study focusses on the Dutch education system as the change in educational law was a clear indicator of the important connection between education and wellbeing, the literature reveals the tension field school professionals experience between taking on different roles goes beyond geographical boundaries and is of all times (Hunsaker & Johnston, 1992; Van Horn et al., 2001; Rouse, 2008; Ouwehand et al., 2022).

Earlier research discussed the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and the responsibility teachers feel in taking on such a supportive role. This research aimed to reveal a better understanding on how school professionals (and not only teachers) interpret the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of the school. Multiple search terms were used in order to find relevant literature. As the research came more together, the search terms evolved.

At the start of this research, more general search terms were used such as:

- Understanding social-emotional well-being

- The changing role of the school

- Teachers' perspective on students' well-being

- Education for all, changes in the Dutch education system

As the research evolved, so did the search terms to find relevant literature (see Figure 2.1.1).

Figure 2.1:
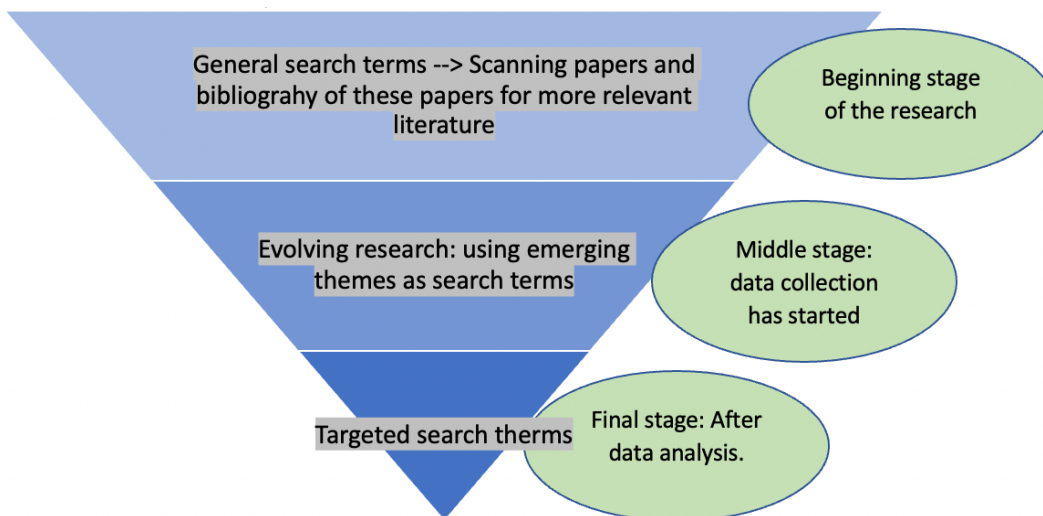
Examples of targeted search terms used in the later stage of this research:

- Schools and the current societal role

- Role clarity and staff engagement in education

- Students' wellbeing at risk

- The decentralization of the Dutch Youth care system

- Inclusive education in the Netherlands

Although most of the papers found were very interesting, boundaries needed to be set to stay focused on the main research question. Literature that was marked as relevant to this research connects two or more key themes from the research questions; students' social-emotional wellbeing, the psychology behind social-emotional wellbeing, measuring wellbeing, school professionals' perspective, secondary education, (Dutch) inclusive education, the different roles of the school, educational policies, student care or youth care policies. I have focused on papers prior to Covid, since most of my data collection was also prior to the Covid outbreak.

It is worth mentioning since more recent papers on educational changes and wellbeing are often connected to the period of lockdowns during the first two years of outbreaks of Covid. As the literature reveals, the role of the school in relation to children's' social-emotional wellbeing has been subject of discussion for many years and is expected to be for many more to come. As the concept of social-emotional wellbeing lacks clear definition and someone's understanding of wellbeing could be affected by personal and environmental factors, it is important to continue these discussions. Understanding the role of the school through the eyes of the school professional within a certain context and time, will provide important knowledge on how schools assess students social-emotional wellbeing at this time. Clarifying the role of the school and their approach to social-emotional wellbeing, will support finding a more unified approach. Which will be vital for developing a solid support system for students.

2.2 Context to the research

To understand and interpret this research, it is important to explain the context around the research site. This research took place at four public schools for secondary education in one town in the Netherlands. Since 2014 there have been major changes within the education system and these changes can affect how schools take on their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. This part of the chapter will start with explaining the Dutch secondary educational system, and the changes the new law on inclusive education brings. Chapter 2.3 will build from this and explains the connection these educational innovations and social-emotional wellbeing.

2.2.1 Explaining the Dutch secondary education system

The Dutch secondary education system focusses on students from around eleven or twelve to eighteen years old. The different forms of secondary education were streamlined in the law on secondary education in 1963 by legislator Jo Cals. The law is better known as the mammoth act, a name it got from a statement Anton Bernard Roosjen made because he considered the reforms too extensive (too many rules). The law was enforced in 1968. It introduced four streams of secondary education, depending on the capabilities of the students, and expanded compulsory education to nine years. In 1975 this was changed to ten years. Although the law on education changed in august 2014, the mammoth act is still the base of the Dutch education system to this day. There are two ways to interpret this information; the base of the systems is that solid and still works, or the system is outdated (Eurydice, 2008; Luijkx et al., 2008).

Children in the Netherlands receive eight years of primary education, most starting at four years old and compulsory education starts when they turn five. Primary education focusses on basic skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. They will also start studying English at an early age. After attending primary education, children in the Netherlands go to secondary education. Informed by the advice of the elementary school and the results of the final test, a choice is made for the level the pupil will receive education at. When it remains unclear which type of secondary education suits a student best or if parents or caregivers insist their child can handle a higher level of education than what was recommended to them, there are multiple meetings set up between student, parents, and both primary and secondary schools to determine which level the student is placed. During these meetings, social-emotional wellbeing is always part of the discussion. These discussions are complex because of the interaction between social-emotional wellbeing and academic results. According to Blair (2002) and Diamond & Lee (2011), some early social-emotional competencies are critical to children's academic outcomes. The early competencies they are mentioning are behavioural regulation, attentional skills, and the ability to problem solve. Earlier research stated that children raised in poverty are more likely to start school with lower levels of social-emotional skills. This indicates that economic factors might also be of influence on social-emotional development (Ursache et al., 2012).

While the structure of Dutch primary education is relatively straightforward, the structure of the Dutch secondary education system can cause confusion because of the multiple levels, paths, and duration of education. Secondary education starts around the age of twelve, children enter one of three different streams. The different streams represent different educational paths, based on a student's academic level and interests:

VMBO (preparatory secondary vocational education)
The VMBO stream is a four-year vocationally orientated stream focused on practical knowledge, which leads to vocational training (MBO). It has three qualification levels, and most students complete the track at the age of sixteen.

HAVO (senior general secondary education)
The HAVO is a five-year middle stream that prepares students to study higher professional education at universities of applied sciences. The HAVO degree allows students to enter a bachelors study to study towards a bachelor's degree in applied sciences.

Most students complete the HAVO around the age of seventeen, although it is also possible for VMBO students with the highest VMBO qualification level (MAVO) to start the two final HAVO years and work towards the HAVO exam.

VWO (university preparatory education)

The VWO is a six-year education stream with a focus on theoretical knowledge, that prepares students to follow a bachelor's degree at a research university. Students study the VWO at schools known as atheneum and gymnasium and complete the stream around the age of eighteen. Gymnasium offers the classical languages (Latin and Greek) in addition to the VWO program and is often reviewed as the highest secondary level, although both Atheneum and Gymnasium diploma's grant students access to a university. It is possible for HAVO students, after they've passed their exam, to transfer to the final two years of VWO and work towards the Atheneum or Gymnasium exam.

The possibility to move up in levels after passing the final exam can be motivating and feel safe for some of the students, knowing they can have access to a more advanced level of higher education. This system acts as a safety net to diminish the negative effects of an erratic development curve (for all sorts of reasons) in the development of the student. Most schools do set requirements such as a particular grade average or taking extra classes to ensure the student can handle the increased study load and higher level (Veugelers, 2004; Government, 2019).

All levels are required to achieve a diploma through their final central or state exams. Students always receive a diploma on one level. It is not possible to receive multiple diplomas after final exams, although some students have the chance to do their final exams on a higher level. This will not change the level of their final diploma, but they will receive a certificate for passing the extra exam. After secondary school they can go on to vocational education or higher education. There are both public and private institutions in the Netherlands at all levels of the education system. There can always be an exception. For instance, academically gifted children, who finish the elementary school program in advance, can enter secondary education from the age of nine or ten. Depending on the social-emotional state of the child; Cognitive development should not be achieved at the expense of the development in the socio-emotional and physical domains. In this situation schools often seek for advice from specialists, for placement or to investigate if the school can offer the right level of education and support. If schools and specialists agree the school is not suitable for the pupil, schools are allowed to reject an application.

The Dutch education system is leveled and aside from the ability for students to move up a level in the system, there is also a system in place where students can be demoted to a lower level of education. When, for example, a pupil has entered secondary education at a level they cannot cope with, or when they possibly lack interest or do not have the ability to make sufficient effort on their education resulting in poor grades, they can be sent to a lower level. For some students, this possibility can be a relief if the level they are at seems too difficult. Most schools provide education at various levels and that means demotion does not bring major changes in the students' environment. The environment is mostly the same and students can still see their friends during breaks or outside the classroom. How the student handles a demotion is personal but can be influenced by the school and parents. It is important for the school to monitor the student's confidence. Some students experience fear of failure, and they need counseling to cope with their anxiety. Demotion as result of underperforming (which can have numerous reasons) can result in underperformance, behaviour problems, and even school dropouts (Nivoz, 2014).

Sometimes students and parents are advised to start at a lower level because the pupil is expected to find it extra challenging in finding their place at their new school, have difficulty making new friends, or just having trouble experiencing new things. A lower level can still be academically challenging enough but leaves a little room for other areas to work on (such as social skills). Some schools offer an orientation year teaching a combination of levels. Some secondary schools offer one or more levels of education, at one or multiple locations. Wellbeing is not the only factor schools need to take into consideration. They also need to manage a financial stable organization and this focus leads to more centralization; larger schools that offer education on all or most educational levels instead of smaller schools with a more specialized approach to a certain level (Roeters, 2013).

2.2.2 Inclusive education

There is a global interest in inclusivity within education, although each country has its own understanding of inclusivity. The Dutch education system is moving towards inclusive education as well. Therefore, there was a change of law in 2014, which I will further explain later. Aiming for inclusive education kickstarted the discussion around the role of the school professional, how inclusive schools are meeting social-emotional needs of children. and the issues which school professionals need to be aware of when making judgements about children's social and emotional competence and wellbeing reveal the complexity of the context.

Schools are so much more than a place for academic development and good education is no longer only connected to results and qualification. There is an increase in interest of the societal and pedagogical role of education. Society this day asks different things from students and schools.

According to the government the education system was outdated and in need of reform and there have been many changes or alterations throughout the years. Although the 'mammoth act' still holds, law changes have been made. Haug (2015) reviews the change towards inclusive education and explains there seems to be deep uncertainty about how to create inclusive environments within schools and about how to teach inclusively, knowing teachers are asked to differentiate on an even more personal level for their students. According to Haug, multiple countries who strive for more inclusivity within their education system are struggling with the realization. The policy development and formulations seem to have a gap in the implementation and realization of those plans. According to Kiuppis (2014) who research the topic of inclusive education, key elements of inclusion were unclear. The important but complex principle of inclusion is not a readily identifiable, stand-alone entity in policy. Inclusion is mostly only mentioned in passing in most policies.

In another attempt to make the Dutch educational system more inclusive, the Education Act for Student- Centred Education was adopted on October 9, 2012. From January 2013 the collaborations within the district were formed as preparation for the most crucial element of this Act: "The Duty of Care", which was introduced in August 2014. The major principle of this act is that students, including students with additional needs, should attend mainstream schools when possible. To prevent school dropouts and preventing students falling through the cracks of the system, this act holds schools responsible for the enrolment of students in education. To achieve these goals, collaboration between schools and professionals was assumed to be essential. Therefore, regional partnerships were established to improve the sharing of resources and knowledge and to stimulate collaboration between schools (Gubbels et al., 2018).

There seems to be a tension field between the role of the school and the role of wellbeing organizations when it comes to supporting mental health. The Duty of care implies schools being responsible for student care and wellbeing. As a result, schools invest in coaching students' mental health with the support of student counsellors or student care teams. Less shyness to act can result in an increase in what school professionals can act on and will act on.

Which means more specialized care inside schools instead of at specialized organisations. It is debatable if schools should have specialized mental health workers in school. There is no control or supervision on the background of school professionals who offer support for students. Schools might be held responsible for offering support, there is no responsibility or obligation in hiring specialists. According to the law, the responsibility of the implementation of the Youth (Health) Act lies with the local government. Parenting support, youth protection, and the support of youth mental health are covered by this Act.

This law describes that most individual help that comes from this law will not take place at schools (Youth Act article 2, 2014). There is no article of reference in this law that connects inclusive education with youth health care. This is confirmed by local governments reports as well. Policies on education are separated from policies on healthcare. The law on protecting personal data seems to be a key factor in preventing the collaboration between education and health care, because schools can only take on the role of informant but will not be seen as partner when it comes to a student's health care. It seems contradicting that schools are being held responsible for caring for their students, yet also being left in the dark when it comes to supporting students social-emotional wellbeing because the law prevents them from taking on that role. On the other hand, this separation indicates the need of specialized professionals for supporting students' mental health or wellbeing. According to the Education Act for Student- Centred Education schools are responsible for organising their student support program and indicating when the students need for support exceeds the possibilities of the school.

The following is a brief description of key factors of the Dutch educational system before the Education Act for Student- Centred Education, and after to inform about any major changes.

Before august 2014

Collaboration within district

All schools (primary, secondary, and special needs education) collaborate within 240 different districts for primary education and 183 districts for secondary education. Every district had the responsibility to provide schooling for all children with the compulsory education age. They provided light forms of school support for children with additional needs (Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, 2013).

National index special needs

In the year 2003 regional expertise organizations were founded. Schools and parents applied for financial support based on additional needs, behaviour problems, physical development problems or development disorders. The financial support could be used for student care in regular education or for admission on a special needs school (Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, 2013).

Regional expertise

All secondary schools (including special forms of education) collaborated with 75 regional specialized organizations for expertise on medical, development and behaviour problems. The expertise commission was responsible for the indication and allocation of funding for students with additional needs. The personal budget was provided for four years (Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, 2013).

After august 2014

Duty of care

The law on inclusive education brought extra focus for schools on supporting mental health issues. Part of the new law is the so called 'duty of care' for every school. This duty of care makes schools responsible for every registered student, providing inclusive education for every child with or without additional needs. If the school is not able to provide the support needed, schools are responsible (in collaboration with parents) to find a suitable place (Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, 2016).

Collaboration within district

New collaborations have been developed. In total there are 152 district collaborations. These districts make the connection between regular and special schools. District schools have mutual agreements on student care and how to provide care and placement for students with additional needs. The district is also responsible for engaging the city's commission and youth health care organizations (Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, 2016).

Finances

The regional expertise commission is replaced by the district. The district committee is responsible for dividing this funding from the government. Every district is free to collaborate and agree in a way they seem most fitting for their students.

Special education schools should be reduced and more students with additional needs can apply for short or longer periods of time of extra care within the regular education system. The desired reduction of special education indicates this change in law is not just to benefit children's wellbeing, it is also an economical government decision. Over the last decade, the costs for educating students with additional needs have risen in most countries, including the Netherlands (Minne et al., 2009). The primary cause of this rise in costs seems to be the increasing numbers of students who participate in special education (Parrish et al. 2003).

In several countries, the funding mechanisms of inclusive education have been reformed recently in response to the rising costs caused by growing numbers of students in special education and to growing concerns about the incentives in funding mechanisms for referring students with additional needs to special education (Ferrier et al. 2007). About 4.5% of the Dutch students in primary education have additional needs, which is comparable to other European countries (Helliwell et al., 2012).

2.2.3 Purpose of the Education Act for Student- Centered Education

1. District collaboration must provide a united care policy and student care policies for every individual school, so there is clarity to what extend student can apply to regular (supported) education or special education. The policies contain information on the expertise every school can offer and where they need support.
2. Collaboration within district should mean no waiting lists for student who want to apply for extra funding, no difference between light or heavy support/ funding, more expertise near schools. The district receives funding and support. They have full responsibility and freedom on how to use them in support of students who need additional support. It creates flexibility and more students can appeal for help.
3. Improvement of the school support system. More qualified teachers. Inclusive education focuses on efficiency and further development of teachers.
4. Reducing the number of students drop-outs. Extra support in school for every student should reduce the number of students who stay at home because of additional needs.
5. Harmonization between education and care. Local authorities are responsible for the implementation of education for all (for example: transportation, accommodation, and compulsory attendance).

From January 2015 social work and youth health care organizations transferred from government to local community to further improve collaboration and provide personal care for children (Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, 2013).

The implementation of the Education Act for Student- Centred Education is reviewed in 2020 without any major changes. There was no pilot before the implementation in august 2014, only minimal preparation by introducing the collaborations within the district. These new organizations had eighteen months of building positive relationships and collaborations with the schools in their district. The lack of a pilot study and the focus on reducing special education, indicate the importance of economic factors for his change in law and not so much children's wellbeing.

According to Messing & Bouma (2011) the introduction and implementation of inclusive education is a complex and far-reaching operation where education and healthcare are partners and should work as partners, although the law still does not support this partnership. In 2020 the National Education Guide was released, sharing teachers' experiences on inclusive education. The evaluation reveals that inclusive education is not doing what was hoped for. Teachers and other school professionals experience an increase in workload and students do not always feel supported. These school professionals state that special needs students do not flourish in regular overcrowded classrooms and there is no clarity or structure in the implementation or guidelines. They make the distinction between special needs students, who need the extra support on a day-to-day basis, and the students who need additional support on a short term or incidental basis. Each school has a different structure or interpretation on what is needed for student support. This confusion creates huge differences between schools and these different approaches will also affect students' wellbeing. Schools do not always have specialized or qualified professionals to support students in need of additional support.

2.2.4 Basic student support program

All schools have the obligation to write a document about the basic student support program the schools offer. The collaboration within the district monitors the writing and collect all BSSP documents from all district schools to analyse if the districts cover most of the students' needs. This document is in addition to the general school guide all schools offer.

Student care route in school

The mentor is first point of contact for students and caregivers. The mentor and teachers signal, mentor collects important signals. The mentor discusses signals and worries with student and/or caregivers. The educational requests for support will be undertaken by mentor, supervised by the department leader. Pedagogical, social-emotional requests for support will be, after approval of student and caregivers, undertaken by a member of the student care team.

School professionals who are mentioned in the basic support program policy, Mentors, teachers, department leaders, counsellors, dyslexia coach, pedagogue or social worker, and the student care coordinator. School guidance instruments which are mentioned in the basic support program policy, Student consultations, signal and observatory lists, social skills coaching, fear of failure coaching, action-oriented approach, and internal and external consultation with specialists.

Student care route internal to external

1. Mentor and department leader call in the student care team when needed. They will explain their reason for concern and will ask for advice.
2. If the student care team and other involved school professionals agree the student might need more specialized support, the student will be discussed during a ZAT meeting. ZAT stands for care and advice team. In this team, external specialist will attend such as social workers, health care workers, contact of the collaboration within the district, paediatrician, school attendance officer. The ZAT chairperson is the school's student care coordinator.
3. If the situation is critical and the students is not capable anymore of coming to school, the collaboration within the district offers a 'time-out class', where students receive coaching and education on a more personal level. This is a temporary measure until there is more clarity on what the student needs and how to move forward, returning to a regular education setting or in some cases, special needs education.
4. These basic steps are similar at all schools. How each student care team functions and what type of background these student counsellors have, is different at every school. All four schools are referring to a disbalance between educational and pedagogical needs. And their goal is to help students find their balance and support them in a positive way for as long as possible.

It remains unclear what 'as long as possible' means. If the situation remains viable for students and school will be monitored and discussed during several evaluations.

General school guide, key points (2020)

To support understanding of the context of the participating schools, the general school guide provided information about key points of the organization, overlapping all four schools. The organizations' policy explains the focus on needs and talent of the individual students. They offer all educational levels, divided over four secondary schools. So, each student from any of the primary schools can choose a secondary school as part of this collective organisation (if they want to, there are other non-public schools in the local community). Within the various levels offered, students can make other choices to customize their program (language, practical subjects, sports, technical direction, economics, construction, classical languages, or digital art). They do have to see if the customization is possible on the level their attending. Not all combinations are possible.

The organizations vision for their students pays extra attention to their social-emotional development; They believe the adolescent stage as a crucial stadium for the development of identity and individuality of people. School is a place for adolescents to practise. Making mistakes is okay if you try to learn from them. The organization is a strong advocate for guiding children in finding their place in society. They believe schools needs to make an active contribution in supporting citizenship and social integration. They help adolescents learn how they can contribute to society in a meaningful way and have an appreciation for it. Contemporary education is, according to the organization, the best preparation for their further educational career (university) and, long-term, helping to start a career. Independence and responsibility are two key concepts to create success. Therefore, the organization focuses on a context-rich learning environment and high-quality digital services

According to the general school guide, every school location strives to focus on opportunities and possibilities amongst their professionals and students. Seeking for solutions and working towards inclusive education. Personal approach and wellbeing seem to be an important concept for this organization. They claim to have an ongoing supervision from primary education to the end of secondary education. All schools work together to make the transition primary school to secondary school as smooth as possible to ensure the students' feel supported and seen. It is important to note that with this statement they refer to the primary and secondary schools connected to this organization.

It is not often that primary and secondary schools share a board of directors. The organization talks about educational customization (within national educational guidelines). Especially for students with learning difficulties. Not only students who have difficulty reaching a certain level but also a customization for gifted children or for children who are not able to attend fulltime education because of a certain illness. Collaboration with other organisations or professionals is key.

The four secondary schools from this organization have educated their teaching staff with 'the six roles of the teacher' by Slooter, an educationist of CPS. CPS stands for Christian Pedagogical Study Centre. CPS is a by the government acknowledged consultancy firm who specializes in educational professionalization and school development. The teaching staff was educated about these six roles: the host, the presenter, the didactical, the pedagogue, the closer, and the coach. All schools have a student counsellor or specialized coordinator who has a background in special educational needs. All secondary schools have a team who specializes in students' additional and special needs. Every location and school professional in this organization is informed and trained in how to signal and act when they are worried about one of their students' safeties. The organization is a strong advocate for 'handle with care' in collaboration with the Augeo Foundation. This foundation was founded in 2006 to help professionals who work with children and families recognize and act on signals of child abuse. The Augeo foundation offers online schooling to these professionals. The office of public health and the office of justice and safety are supporting the project 'Handle with care'. There are two local Dutch communities where this project is implemented, and the organization of the data collection is talking to their local government in the possibility of starting 'handle with care'. This concept was inspired by the Operation Encompass program from the UK.

2.2.5 NPO program

NPO program stand for the Dutch National Education Program. This program was introduced in 2021 by the national government as a supporting package for education, to repair any damage because of Covid. Although this program did not exist at the start of this research, it is there at the end, and it needs to be considered when it comes to explain the context. The NPO program is a non-structural investment program of the government to support students who suffer the effects from Covid. With this program schools are free to choose methods, programs or instruments that are most fitting to their organization to provide extra support for students. Schools are also responsible to fund these choices on their own analysis of the situation (minister of education, culture, and science, 2021).

This illustrates the flexibility schools have in interpreting how to use the funding of the NPO program, but also with that flexibility comes great responsibility and several extra roles for the school. Schools need to make an analysis of the implications of Covid and the lockdowns, they need to choose fitting programs and methods to deal with these implications, fitting for most of their students, and they need to monitor if the program is working as expected and the financial status of all these steps. It is expected that schools will use the NPO program very differently, which will make it difficult to evaluate, compare and learn from each other. The NPO program was non-existing during the data collection phase of this study, but this information is added because it paints a picture of how schools are approached top-down and what extra roles, challenges and chances schools are given. Also, it is important to take the NPO program into account at the end of this study because schools will be working with the program then.

2.2.6 Citizenship

Schools are often seen as a miniature society and state they help prepare students to become good citizens. Schools have the obligation to encourage and teach citizenship and Dutch secondary schools are now facing a new task. Since august 2021 schools need to meet new legal requirements when it comes to citizenship. The legal mandate citizenship from 2006 was seen as to unclear and without obligation. In the law on secondary education, article 17, the new mandate on citizenship is:

- Schools promote active citizenship and social cohesion in a purposeful and coherent manner, in which school noticeably focuses on:
- Teaching respect for and of the basic values of the democratic rule of law, as anchored in the constitution and the universal fundamental rights and freedoms of all human beings and acting on these principles at school.
- The development of social and societal competencies in which the student is capable of being part of and contributing to a multiform, democratic Dutch society.
- Teaching knowledge about and respect for differences in religion, life philosophy, political affiliation, origin, gender, handicap, sexual orientation, as well as the value that equal cases are treated equally.

This new mandate will affect students social-emotional wellbeing. According to the government this new mandate should affects students' wellbeing in a positive way and stimulate a safer school environment. It is up to the schools to decide how they will implement this mandate into the existing learning program.

The schools' authorities are responsible for a school culture who is in conformity with these values, as stated before, creating an environment where students are encouraged to actively practice these values and schools are responsible for an environment where students and school professionals feel safe and accepted, regardless of the possible differences explained in the first statement (Government, 2021). In October 2021 Gelink et al., released a guideline for schools in collaboration with the government. It is remarkable that this guideline was provided after the starting date of the new mandate.

2.3 Empirical research on social-emotional wellbeing and education

For this research, it is important to understand the school dynamics and the challenges that might come from this. School professionals have different roles in the school (school support staff, teachers, department leaders) and interact with hundreds of students daily. Researching the relation between social-emotional wellbeing and education is not a straightforward concept and different aspects need to be considered. School buildings are public places and therefore represent the communities where they are located. There have been multiple studies about social interactions, adolescents, and schools. Pachucki et al., (2015) researched the connection between mental health and social interaction dynamics, choosing the school site as location because of the social dynamic nature of schools. Gifford (2002) emphasizes on the importance of environmental psychology where the place and person mutually influence each other at this affects the shaping of its future. Environmental psychology is a key component of human, animal, and environmental welfare, which makes it essential for policymaking (Vlek, 2000).

2.3.1. Social-emotional wellbeing in schools

Schools are often described as a dynamic environment where different aspects of human interaction and development take place. The four schools where this research takes place share the vision of guiding children to young adulthood and acknowledge their societal role. This underlines education is more than transferring information. Minam & Tanaka (1995) illustrated the connection between social and environmental psychology. They examined the implications of the concept of group space and defined group space as collectively inhabited and sociocultural controlled physical settings. One of these settings or factors who will affects someone's life is the schools' social climate. Interpersonal relationships amongst students, school professionals and parents are a fundamental part of a school's social environment (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

The school's social climate communicates about values, mutual respect, and expectations to all the people participating in school. These relationships and communications can even affect the student outcomes (Maxwell, 2016). Rivlin & Weinstein (1984) already highlighted the importance of understanding the multiple roles of the school. They viewed schools from three different perspectives: a learning place, a place for psychological development and a place for socialization. With this review they wanted to help improve the education system and quality of life in schools, pointing out how closely social-emotional wellbeing and education are connected.

Given the fact that schools and government organizations are still innovating and trying to improve students' wellbeing, it is safe to say that these dynamics can be complicated (Looney, 2009; Serdyukov, 2017). These days school professionals are highly aware of the need for collaboration, and the consensus that school professionals cannot deliver the same instructional practices or student approach that were in place thirty years ago. Innovation in education can be described as doing things in a new way, requiring different approaches, processes, products, or strategies. The re-designing of the concept of education strives to meet the needs of diverse learners. In the current days personalized learning, school psychologists and blended learning are three of many innovative ideas as a response to the students in schools today. Making the concept of students' social-emotional wellbeing a widely discussed topic. Society will keep evolving and so will education, creating new questions and challenges in how to review the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

2.3.2. The role of the teacher

Taking in consideration that each student will be in secondary education for 4 to 7 years, 5 days a week, it is safe to say that schools fulfill a significant role in the development of their students. Not only in education (didactics), but also on physical, cognitive, and social level. There is much written about the importance of the teacher in the development of the student and who should conduct the assessments of children. The early childhood literature argues that whoever makes the assessment should have a relationship with the child and see the child daily (Edmunds & Stewart-Brown, 2003; McAfee & Leong, 2007). Others suggest it would depend on the type of assessment being completed. If a professional diagnostic assessment about wellbeing were to be made, then therapists, social workers, school psychologists or physiotherapists may become involved.

Teachers need to make judgements about when to ask for professional assistance, and this is usually done when a holistic study of the child has been conducted by a variety of means, including observations across different situations and from multiple viewpoints. However, there are issues which teachers need to be aware of when making judgements about children's social and emotional competence and wellbeing.

Teacher assessment on wellbeing subjectivity: Childhood practitioners often do not understand that children bring their own cultural lens to experiences, which plays a significant role in their interactions with others. This understanding is critical when practitioners apply their own cultural lens to assess, assign meaning to, or interpret the social and emotional competence and wellbeing of children (Denham & Weissberg, 2004). This illustrates how wellbeing and assessing someone's wellbeing is affected by personal narratives.

Teacher workload and philosophy: A practical barrier to assessment in this area can be teacher workload. Teachers from a study in the United Kingdom (Edmunds & Stewart-Brown, 2003) reported that time and school supports were issues they needed to contend with. They said they found both informal and formal assessments to be time-consuming and that time had become a barrier for assessment. Educational innovations are more often additional roles for the school and not so much about fundamental change to the educational system.

Teacher wellbeing and school environment: Weare & Gray (2003) report that the teacher's own behaviour and attitudes are factors influencing children's social and emotional competence and wellbeing was the teacher's own behaviour and attitudes. Teachers cannot fully engage and transmit emotional and social competence and wellbeing to students if their own emotional and social needs are not being met. To them the wellbeing of teachers is just as important and a key factor in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Teacher knowledge and competence: Central to administering any summative or formative assessment tool is the teacher's understanding of assessment procedures and processes and knowledge of the area of social and emotional competence and wellbeing. As well, they need to know how to apply the information they have gained to relevant and useful classroom practice without having their personal understanding or interpretation to interfere (Denham & Weissberg, 2004).

Influence of context: Children's learning, actions and behaviours are constantly evolving through social construction within the context of their families, friends, and communities. By the time children enter school, their social and emotional wellbeing has been influenced by several factors: the immediate setting of family and friends, peers, and school impact most directly, while (social) media, government agencies and social services exert a more indirect influence (Diamond & Lee 2011).

Most primary school teachers have been educated with Kohnstamm. Each year during their study, primary teachers receive classes in pedagogies and psychology. This is different from the education of secondary school teachers, they also have been introduced with pedagogies (often by the theory of Kohstamm), but in a much lesser intensity as it was not a yearly returning topic. A possible explanation for this difference in education of teachers comes from Brok et al., (2006) in which they state that primary teachers are trained to differentiate during teaching, because they are teaching young children whose development is very personal and these primary teachers offer subjects on multiple levels unlike secondary teachers. Another explanation is that primary teachers have a vastly different role. Primary students have one teacher for the entire day or week, while secondary students have different teachers for each subject. Primary teachers have a more pedagogical role than secondary teachers. Although the changes in secondary education encourage teachers to take on a more pedagogical role.

According to the literature, schools have a prominent role improving children's wellbeing through systematic social and psychological support. As development is not uniform, and knowledge can be socially framed, decisions about what social competence looks like are problematic (Mental Health Taskforce, 2004). It is difficult to define social competences and develop a collective understanding. According to Denham & Weissberg (2004) schools and school professionals often do not understand that children bring their own lens to experiences, which plays a key role in their interactions with others as well as the personal lens school professionals bring to work. Understanding these dynamics are vital to understanding and explaining the role of the school professional in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

The four participating schools are free to choose training for their school professionals. Although all teachers need to be qualified teachers, there is often continuing training offered to support school professionals by staying up to date and refreshed.

One of the methods used by these schools is the five roles of the teacher (Slooter, 2016) and the six roles of the teacher, a more recent edition by the same educationist (Slooter, 2018). These roles contain the host, the presenter, the teacher, the pedagogue, the closer and the coach (added in 2018). Slooter (2018) is clear about the importance of the sixth role; when teachers can reflect together with their students on their learning process, the ultimate goal will be reached and that is to help students learn to self-regulate, where they can influence and feel responsible for their own learning. The explanation for adding this role is because of the need for personalized teaching and differentiation in the classroom. It is remarkable that in two years' time, already there was the need to add another role to teaching. It remains unclear if this need comes from teachers or school professionals in a more managing position.

According to Helms et al. (2019), there is a necessity for improvement and upscaling pedagogies and didactic skills among unexperienced teachers within secondary education. The national government recognizes the lack of preparation for these new teachers as well, one of the twenty-five measures in their report on improving inclusive education is to provide more knowledge on inclusive education during teacher training to help new teacher prepare in the best possible way (Central government, 2021). The report from the national government was released in 2021, seven years after the implementation of the new educational act for more inclusive education. Seven years of waiting and seeing how the new educational setting evolves, when the school professionals who need to work accordingly are underprepared to do so.

2.3.3 The dynamic triangle

Mulligen et al. (2014) describe this dynamic triangle to be the most important condition in creating a positive environment for the student and a positive collaboration between student, school, and home situation. If one of these three end the collaboration or two of these three stands against the third, there will be an imbalance in the triangle, and this will affect the learning environment of the student. This dynamic triangle is commonly used in education and often part of the registration procedure and new students, and their parents even receive this in writing.

The dynamic triangle is part of the system-oriented approach, often used by social workers. In this approach the social worker sees itself and others as components of different but interconnected systems which influence each other (Nabuurs, 2007; Mameren-Broers et al., 2018). Within education, the school professional takes the place of the social worker in this triangle.

The dynamic triangle is often used as a visualising tool to underline the importance of mutual collaboration and help start the conversation about what to expect from each other; school regulations, schedules, role of the mentor, etc. According to Adams (2007), collaboration is key, but also difficult to define. According to them, education needs a culture of collaboration and trust. Trust is not a straight-forward concept or something to agree on, trust can be fragile and very personal. Hoy & Tschannen-Moran (1999) defined trust in ''one party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the belief that the latter party is competent, open, benevolent, and reliable' (p.265). Trust among individuals in a social system (like education) develops over time and through positive social interactions. It is safe to say this can be challenging in secondary education, where multiple interests play a role, and other environmental or developmental factors can influence social interactions.

Social interactions and relationships that lead to positive outcomes (such as students feeling supported, happy, resilient, and having good grades) advance the level of trust held by the individual or group toward someone else participating (such as the school professional). In its simplest form, trust is based on a type of cost benefit calculation and each participant sees this calculation through their own personal lens. Potential outcomes resulting from a trusting relationship are weighed against potential risks associated with the relationship (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996).

Investing in positive relationships and social interaction takes time and effort. According to Stevens (2018) and Kreutzer (2020) the line between being partners or opponents can be thin depending on the stakes for each participant. Within school dynamics, there can be a lot at stake, especially when students or school professionals feel pressured to perform. This pressure will influence how they approach one another and in these types of situations communication and collaboration are key factors for a positive outcome. A student who is performing poorly can still feel support by the school professional who is competent in communicating, empathizing, and coaching.

2.3.4 Aligning the different roles of the school

The report on 'the state of education' reveals difficulties in the regional collaboration to provide inclusive education and the increase of unauthorized teachers because of the shortage of teachers. The report states a need for collective responsibility to take on this societal challenge and not everybody is taking their responsibility now. (Education inspectorate, 2020).

A year later Defense for Children (2021) released a report in collaboration with the NCOJ (Dutch Centre Education and Youth health care) where they revealed risks on providing mental healthcare for children and adolescents in education. According to this research there are deficiencies in the partnership between education and youth-mental healthcare. The report states all children have the right to education and the right to adequate care to take part in education, so this includes mental healthcare. It is not self-evident schools offer mental-health care or that it is integrated in their student support policy. Mental healthcare workers are seen as specialists and as external partners.

As stated before, the responsibility of the implementation of the law on youth health care lies with the local government. Yet, there is no article of reference in this law that connects inclusive education with youth health care. This separation within the law is remarkable and can be an explanation for the tension field that rises between the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing. Schools are held responsible for providing the right care for their students, but they play no part within the law that described the guidelines for youth health care. They are not health care specialists or seen as partners when it comes to providing mental healthcare for their students. However, several recent reports are critical of schools not taking on their collective responsibility which, according to this law, is not their responsibility. In 2021, the Education Committee released a report that stated there lie too many responsibilities on the shoulders of individual teachers. This results in not being able to focus on giving and developing education. And this will affect the quality of education. The committee advises to invest in expanding the team of school professionals and framing the school professionals' activities so they can focus and prioritize.

2.3.5 Pressure and confusion

The focus on the role of education is changing. Although earlier studies reveal schools always had a social function, there seems to be more focus on the societal role of the school these days. Students social-emotional wellbeing is not only connected to mental health or additional needs, the literature and government also make the connection to citizenship as explained before. Schools have a societal function, and the institute needs to provide so much more than sharing knowledge. Bronneman-Helmers (1999) stated early on how schools received increased socials tasks. The nature of education consists of social interaction, but in 1999 Bronneman- Helmers already spoke about the increase of pressure on schools to fulfill this societal role.

The major sociological perspectives on education fall nicely into the functional, conflict, and symbolic interactionist approaches (Ballantine & Hammack, 2012). Turkenburg (2005) spoke about the limitations of this societal function. She pinpointed the Confusion behind these social tasks and how this negatively affected the quality of education. So did the ministers of OCW (education, culture, and science) in 2009. They sent a letter to parliament to share their concerns about the increase of pressure on education and on school professionals. The parliament acknowledged the role of the government is important in canalizing the pressure on schools and referred to the report of the Commission Dijsselbloem (2007–2008, 31 007, nr. 17) and stated that the government should be incredibly careful in giving new assignments to education. According to the parliament (2009) and this report, schools have the responsibility to signal and monitor when it comes to student care, acting on these signals is up to the network of specialists around the schools. School professionals experience increasing workload, overcrowded classrooms and swarmed with administrative tasks.

The Board of education (2021) released a statement that it is time to focus and shared an advisory report to reduce the workload. According to this report there is too much responsibility on the individual school professional. Being an educator is much more than transferring information. The data revealed all school professionals have multiple tasks within the school and these participants all think teachings is more than transferring information. Ouwehand et al. (2022) stated that a teacher's workday often contains of a little bit of teaching, writing call reports, filling in papers for health care institutions, and writing to parents. The extra tasks and high demands increase the workload and distract from teaching.

Not only school professionals experience an increase in work pressure, but students also seem to experience the same difficulties. According to HBSC (2020), their school-stress has increased in the past decade. Research from UNICEF and Trimbos in the same year reveals the pressure and workload from school declined these past two years, but overall is still too high. Almost 50% of Dutch teenagers at the age of sixteen feel stress from school or homework. The experienced stress is cohesive with the fact that there is also an increase in emotional problems and a decline in life satisfaction by youth. They feel pressured to perform. Almost one out of three 12- to 16-year-olds experiences pressure from their own goals and expectations or expectations from parents and school. Trimbos and Wennekers et al. (2018) revealed that the number of students who experience pressure to perform has been increasing since 2001.

According to Stevens (2018) and Kreutzer (2020) there are several possible explanations, the most important ones are the higher ambitions amongst students and the pressure from parents and schools investing in breaking the culture of mediocrity. This means the increase in pressure to perform is experienced by students, parents and school professionals and explains why the dynamic triangle is not only important but also fragile. The line between being partners or opponents can be thin depending on the stakes for each party and, according to the data, on the communicative abilities from the school professional and his ability to steer a difficult conversation in a positive direction. Although there seems to be a discussion about pressuring students coming from parents or school, various research projects illustrate that parental involvement had a significant positive effect on the functioning of students in school, their cognitive functioning, school results and work attitude. According to Henderson and Mapp (2002) the influence of home and family factors is 49% in subjects such as reading and math. This number needs to be set against the influence of the size of the class (8%) and the influence of the quality of the teacher (43%). This indicates the importance of parental involvement.

Epstein states, "student learning, development, and success, broadly defined, not just achievement test scores, are the main reasons for school and family partnerships" (1994, p.42). With this statement he underlines the importance of broader evaluation and collaboration. Schools are more than organizations who transfer information, they are partner in the upbringing of children. Hargreaves (2015) argues that while we are often conscious of the practical educational changes and innovations, and the challenges that come from this, the emotional consequences are often neglected. According to his research, considering the emotional aspects of teaching and educational change, is pivotal for creating positive change as well as managing the stress of students, school professionals and parents during these changes. Although both articles review education from a different perspective, they both underline the importance of acknowledging the different roles and emotions that are connected in working within a social organization such as education.

2.3.6 Role confusion

Pressure and confusion seem connected. The literature is elaborate when it comes to explaining why it is important for school professionals to connect, communicate and support their students effectively, but it remains unclear in who does what, when, and how. According to Kahn & Byosière (1992) there is a lot of confusion about what is work stress. This is underlined by van Veldhoven (1996) and De Jonge et al. (2003).

There is different terminology used to describe stress from work, however all studies seem to agree on several explanations for why work can become immensely stressful. One of these explanations is role confusion or confusion within your tasks. Without knowing what to do, there is no way of knowing if you are doing an excellent job. This can create uncertainty and adds stress (Notelaers, 2005).

In 2012 the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment collaborated with Wiezer et al. to investigate work pressure and to release a clear definition of it. With the help of an unambiguous definition of the concept of work pressure, the Health Council believes it will help identify important determinants of work pressure. Key factors of this new definition include, disbalance between working demands, capacity, context, and the possibilities for the employee to do their work well. It is safe to say that without role clarity, the working pressure will increase.

Another crucial factor is that role confusion in a social function is not easy to solve and the dynamics between professional and student (and their families) can become complex. Someone who has a social function can experience more difficulty in maintaining their boundaries when emotions get involved. School professionals are encouraged to connect with their students and build a relationship, so once there is a feeling of mutual trust, it can become difficult to set boundaries when it is unclear what your role as school professional is. The emotional attachment in combination with confusion and uncertainty undermines the professionalism (Taggart, 2011).

According to Biesta (2011) schools must take three important concepts into account if they want to deliver good education. Qualification (knowledge), socialisation and personalization. Biesta has a critical view of the Dutch usage of certain concepts. Other countries also seem to focus on the socialization of education, but often use terminology such as social cohesion. In the Dutch educational system, it is explained as a pedagogical approach. There seems to be different understandings of what this approach entails and should focus on. Again, there seems to be confusion in the role of the school. Not only for school professionals, but this confusion will also affect students and parents. If they expect a different approach to education than what the schools deliver, a tension field will rise between the different parties. Everyone wants good education. Parents want it for their children, students for themselves, the government wants it for the society, corporate life wants it for the economy and school professionals and pedagogues want to deliver good education. But when the role of the school remains unclear, each party will use their own personal lens to define what is good education.

It is important to state that there are more risks involved for students who need social-emotional support when there is confusion in the role of the school. Not only can this mean that school professionals are underqualified, but still take on a supporting role with the best intentions and offer the wrong type of specialized support to their students. In this case student's wellbeing will not improve or even deteriorate (De Jong, 2013). Schools taking on too many roles can be time consuming and confusing.

If students expect to be cared for by the school, it might take longer for the to accept specialized care outside of school. Again, putting students' wellbeing at risk. There are many studies about diverse types of students with special educational needs and the risks it brings when schools offer the wrong type of support. Examples of these studies are students with Autism (Desimpel, 2012), gifted students (Suijkerbuijk et al., 2021), student with behavioural problems (De Jong, 2013). It raises the discussion on what we expect from schools. School professionals are educationalists, but it is unfair to expect them to be special needs specialists. Yet, we want students to receive proper support and guidance.

Aelterman et al. (2002) studied the professionalism and societal appreciation of school professionals. They underline the increasing complexity and confusion of the role of the school professional and how this role is changing, partly because of societal pressures, and how these changes can trigger uncertainty amongst school professionals and even makes the profession for a lot of people less attractive. According to Hunsaker & Johnston (1992) constantly changing and evolving the role of the teacher will lead to teachers not being open to innovative ideas.

Barber et al. (2012) state that school professionals are open to new innovations but are missing the time and resources to do so in a prepared and professional manner. Educational innovations follow each other quickly and seem impetuous. It is unrealistic for school professionals to maintain the same level of professionalism throughout all these educational innovations.

2.4 Theoretical perspectives on social-emotional wellbeing

Several different theories and views at adolescent development and their wellbeing have been reviewed. Recent pedagogical views on wellbeing are still influenced by the different approaches from historic philosophers. Educational professionals with a background in social work often encounter these three developmental theories during their studies. These theories are also part of the philosophy, pedagogy, and psychology classes given as a small part of teachers' studies. While the education system innovates in collaboration with health care, it is expected these three historic approaches find their way even more to the classrooms.

The psychological approach (Freud), psychosocial approach (Erikson), and cognitive approach (Piaget) are the three theories that are important to highlight as they play an important role in the development of understanding children's development and social-emotional wellbeing. Each theory has a unique focus or starting point and they might use different terminology. For the clarity of this research, the different theories will be briefly discussed. Freud believed that the psychological conflicts that arise during adolescence and adulthood result from a failure to satisfy or express specific childhood wishes. Freud describes the five psychosexual developmental stages (oral, the anal, the phallic, the latent, and the genital) as the erogenous zones associated with each stage serves as a source of pleasure. Being unsatisfied at any stage can result in fixation. On the other hand, being satisfied can result in a healthy balanced personality.

The believes of Freud are still part of many social and psychological oriented educational programs, there are many commentators who declare the believes of Freud are history and should not be part of current theoretical perspectives on social-emotional wellbeing. Critics attack an archaic version of the psychodynamic theory, which is considered obsolete by most clinicians. According to Westen (1998) there is a new understanding of the Freudian approach and the contemporary psychodynamic theory is seen as a series of propositions about (a) unconscious cognitive, affective, and motivational processes; (b) ambivalence and the tendency for affective and motivational dynamics to operate in parallel and produce compromise solutions; (c) the origins of many personality and social dispositions in childhood; (d) mental representations of the self, others, and relationships; and (e) developmental dynamics. Freud's scientific historical heritage still has implications for many domains in psychology (like within cognitive science and methods within cognitive behaviour therapy).

Erikson's theory explains how personality develops in a predetermined order through eight stages of psychosocial development, from infancy to adulthood. During these eight stages, the person experiences a psychosocial crisis which could affect someone's personality development in a positive of negative way. The eight stages are (1) trust vs. mistrust, (2) autonomy vs. shame or doubt, (3) initiative vs. guilt, (4) industry vs. inferiority, (5) identity vs. role confusion, (6) intimacy vs. isolation, (7) generativity vs. stagnation, (8) ego integrity vs. despair. Erikson describes in 1958 and 1963 the tension field between individual psychological needs and the needs of society, describing the conflict between psycho and social, and underlining the importance of recognising the psychosocial nature of these crises. His theory states a healthy personality is the result of successfully completing each stage and with that someone acquires basic virtues. These basic virtues (characteristic strengths of the ego) can be used to resolve subsequent crises. Erikson's theory is one of the first who addressed development throughout life and not just a certain stage in life (such as childhood). It underlines the importance of social relationships and its impact in shaping personality and growth throughout development (Mooney, 2000; Darling-Fisher, 2019).

Piaget was a psychologist who developed the theory of cognitive development. Piaget's theory suggests that the intelligence of children will change as they grow and that children construct meaning by interacting with their surroundings. The way a child interacts within an environment will have impact on the child and this interaction is what creates learning. The theory explains four stages of cognitive development: (1) sensorimotor intelligence, (2) preoperational thinking, (3) concrete operational thinking, and (4) formal operational thinking. Children's cognitive development does not only regards acquiring knowledge, the cognitive development of children also stands for the importance of children's need to develop a mental model (mindset) of their surrounding world (Miller, 2011). Piaget's theory underlines the realization that children are constantly experimenting and investigating and not merely passive recipients of knowledge.

Children have a natural curiosity and are craving knowledge as they build their understanding of their surroundings and how the world works. Piaget's vision on the role of the educator is to assist children in their learning instead of pushing information. According to him there should be more emphasis on sharing the learning experience, motivating children to be active and engaged.

Within this situation (the learning experience) children can naturally develop their mental abilities. Piaget's theory of cognitive development supports the understanding of children's intellectual growth. (Mooney, 2000; Campbell 2006).

More recent theories on wellbeing and social-emotional development highlight the complexity of the concept. There is considerable debate in the literature about the complexity of describing social-emotional wellbeing and what social and emotional competence and wellbeing really is, how it is represented, defined, and how it should be assessed. Research in and about wellbeing has increased throughout recent years (Kahneman et al., 1999; Diener et al., 1999; Keyes et al, 2002; Stratham & Chase, 2010; Seligman, 2011). However, Ryff and Keyes stated and identified in their research in 1995 that the absence of theory-based definitions of wellbeing is puzzling' (pp. 719–720). Terminology such as social competence, emotional wellbeing, and emotional literacy illustrates the complexity of the subject and how someone can have a different interpretation or understanding. This adds to the difficulty of clearly defining this concept. Work in psychology, health (both mental health and health promotions), and education often use different terms to describe similar aspects of social and emotional development.

While there is variation in which types of terms are used, there is consensus regarding the major aspects of describing childhood social and emotional development and the most important competencies in this domain. These are:

- Social competence: described as the ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve interpersonal goals and social outcomes (Keyes, 2002).
- Emotional competence: described as the ability to effectively regulate emotions to accomplish interpersonal goals (Squires, Bricker & Twombly, 2003).
- Wellbeing: referred to as 'children's physical, social and emotional welfare and development' (Department of Education and Children's Services, 2005, p.3).

The assessment of social and emotional competence and wellbeing raises a few issues. The importance of the teacher, the influence of context, lack of consistency in terminology, and ethics associated with assessment are all complexities and of influence on how we look at the role of the school in supporting social-emotional wellbeing. Social and emotional competence is a broad domain incorporating elements such as feelings, temperament, values, personality, dispositions, and behaviour.

There is a tension field between what aspects of these elements should be assessed and what the criteria for the assessment of social and emotional competence and wellbeing should be. Young children and adolescents experience dramatic physical and emotional growth spurts and competencies are constantly evolving, adding to the complexity of assessment of social-emotional wellbeing. Dodge et al. (2012) underline the complexity of this concept. They discuss different approaches to the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and state defining wellbeing as complex and a challenge. Their research states that previous research has been driven by dimensions and descriptions rather than definitions. Doge et al. focused on three key areas: the idea of a set point for wellbeing; the inevitability of equilibrium/homeostasis; and the fluctuating state between challenges and resources. In their conclusion they define wellbeing as the balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced (p.230).

2.4.1 Social-emotional development

According to Kohnstamm (2002) there are many similar elements within behaviour and development during the early, middle, and late adolescent years. The normal feelings and behaviours of the adolescent can be categorized into four broad areas: moving toward independence; cognitive development; sexuality; and ethics and self-direction. We expect school professionals to recognize 'normal' behaviour and recognize signals of problematic behaviour. Teenagers in the adolescent phase go through personal changes and this phase can be unpredictable. Adolescence is a time when physical changes are happening at an accelerated rate, but there is so much more happening for teenagers. The adolescence stage is not just marked by physical changes. These young people are also experiencing cognitive, social-emotional, and interpersonal changes as well. As they grow and develop, they are influenced by outside factors, such as their environment, culture, religion, school, and the media.

According to the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2004), social-emotional development encompasses both intra- and interpersonal processes. This includes personal experience of the child, their expression, and management of emotions and the ability to engage in positive relationships with others. The NSC describes the key competences of emotional development as the ability to understand and identify personal feelings, the ability to interpret and understand someone else's emotional state, the ability to manage strong personal emotions and expressions, the ability to regulate personal behaviour, being able to feel and develop empathy for others.

Differences in social and emotional development result from a child's genetic predisposition, cultural influences, disabilities, behaviours modelled by adults, parental bonding, and the opportunities provided for social interaction. (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2004). Even though the NSC tells us a clear description of social-emotional development, it does not make a conscious connection with wellbeing. It seems that the combination of competencies will add up to improving the child's wellbeing. Although it is questionable if young children and adolescents can achieve and maintain these competencies, since their physical and emotional (hormonal) grow spurts will affect their abilities to work on these competencies.

According to Denham (2006), growth and development in the social and emotional domain during the early years affects the health, wellbeing, and competence of children throughout life (Denham, 2006; Mental Health Taskforce, 2004). Personal experiences that encourage curiosity, self-confidence, engagement, and positive reciprocal relationships have been strongly linked to elevated levels of self-esteem and socialisation. Therefore, the experiences children are exposed to have the potential to influence their future life trajectory that over time may become more difficult to modify (Farrar et al., 2007). Research reveals that good mental health and wellbeing is crucial for children to develop and be resilient to life's setbacks. Yet nationally one in ten children aged 5–16 is found to have a diagnosable mental health disorder. That is an average of three students in every classroom.

Denham (2006) discusses the importance of the connection between social and emotional competence to school readiness and their academic performance in the future. Without these social competences, students will experience difficulty in participation and interactions with peers and adults. Support for children's social and emotional growth in early childhood and adolescent programs are dependent on how well the teachers know the child and how skilled they are at gaining meaningful information about children's social and emotional knowledge, skills, and dispositions, and how this information is used to create effective programs.

Both the NSC (2004) and Denham (2006) explain the importance of the relation between experiences and intrapersonal processes. In 2007, Mcleod uses the nature versus nurture theory to explain child behaviour. The nature vs nurture debate discusses whether a person's development is genetically predisposed, or whether much of it is influenced by personal life experiences and environmental factors.

Researchers in the field of behavioural genetics study variation in behaviour as it is affected by genes, which are the units of heredity passed down from parents to their children. This has enabled psychology to quantify the relative contribution of nature and nurture regarding specific psychological traits but does not explain personal wellbeing.

What begins as an attempt to understand the causes of behavioural differences has a risk of developing into a personal or politically motivated dispute about justifying types of behaviour. A concept such as wellbeing needs a more qualitative approach to reach an in-depth understanding. Instead of defending extreme nativist or nurturist views or trying to measure the different factors to see who wins, most psychological researchers are now interested in investigating the dynamics of nature and nurture and how they interact. For example, the theory behind psychopathology state that both a genetic predisposition and an appropriate environmental trigger is required for a mental disorder to develop. This underlines the dynamic between nurture and nature and for this reason it makes more sense to view hereditary factors and environmental factors together and not exclude one or the other.

2.4.2 Measuring wellbeing

In education, when thinking about students' social-emotional wellbeing, most signals come from behaviour. Instruments to monitor student social-emotional wellbeing mostly contain checklists the school professional uses during observation. It is called signal processing. For example, The Leuven Wellbeing and Involvement Scales is an international tool. This tool is developed around two key indicators: children's 'wellbeing' and 'involvement'. According to Leuven, wellbeing refers to feeling comfortable and relaxed, being spontaneous and free of emotional tensions and good wellbeing is crucial to good 'mental health'.

According to them, wellbeing is also connected to self-confidence, healthy self-esteem, and resilience. The indicator 'involvement' measures how engaged children are in different activities and being involved is necessary for children's learning and development. Other signal processing tools scale different behaviour areas, where the school professional assesses the intensity of these areas. Lists such as the child behaviour checklist (CBCL) or development behaviour checklist (DBC) focus on different areas such as: Concentration, energy, complexity & creativity, facial expression & composure, persistence, precision, reaction time, verbal expression, and satisfaction. These checklists are a possible indicator for further research and are only used in collaboration with a psychologist.

Other questions often used in these types of research are: Does the child behaves age appropriate; how he/ she behaves in the group; react to authority; which social values does he/she know, does he/she look happy, angry, or sad. We measure a certain amount of happiness based on behaviour. Behaviour is a key factor when monitoring and assessing social-emotional wellbeing. The Dutch Central bureau for statistics (CBS) use eight dimensions to measure and report on the personal wellbeing index. These eight dimensions are: Material life standard, economic risks, education and career, health, social relations, social participation and trust, safety, living environment (CBS, 2015). According to the literature you can measure the effect of interventions on wellbeing, but it is difficult to measure someone individual wellbeing as a whole (Ploegmakers, 2015; Bom, 2021).

One could claim that objective wellbeing can be measured in terms of Gros Domestic product (GPD), using quantitative measuring instruments, due to its objective nature. However, wellbeing contains more than the material living conditions of someone and it should also reflect the quality of someone's life. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Italian Statistics Bureau (ISTAT) have had similar approaches towards identifying six important objective and observable dimensions for its measurement: health, job opportunities, socioeconomic development, environment, safety, and politics. These six dimensions need to be assessed together and will be assessed through the extent to which these six dimensions or needs are satisfied. Only together they represent the objective well-being.

It is important to understand that these objective approaches merely investigate the objective dimensions of what we understand as key needs to live a 'positive life'. It does not reveal how someone experiences and values their life on a more personal level. Subjective wellbeing, which is also referred to as happiness, has been defined by Veenhoven (1988), as the degree to which an individual assesses the overall quality of their life as-a-whole favourably. The OECD (2013) recognized the importance of taking into consideration someone's personal assessment and perceived wellbeing and added 'subjective wellbeing' when investigating the overall wellbeing. These outcomes and personal assessments can be different from the GDP objective measurements, which underlines the difficulty of using objective methods for measuring societal happiness. (Ploegmakers, 2015; Bom, 2021; Voukelatou et al., 2021)

When using behaviour as part of an instrument or checklist to assess children's social-emotional wellbeing, it is important to discuss understanding behaviour. What kind of behaviour is considered 'normal'. There needs to be the realisation that the way people identify behaviour as normal is affected by social standards, societal influences, political standards, etc. The current standards of acceptable behaviour are not the same standards that were there twenty years ago. Parenting styles change throughout the years, so do approaches, believes and methods. Which means, schools are likely to approach and understand behaviour differently than they did twenty years ago.

Behaviour is affected by development: the personal growth a child experiences and the challenges the face along the way and the societal approach to acceptable behaviour. Because development and growth are not uniform, and knowledge and approaches within this area are socially and contextually framed, decisions about when and how to assess and what to assess become complicated and can become problematic. In addition, Squires et al. (2003) also underline the complexity of these dynamics and identify the following key variables: setting and timing of assessment of wellbeing, health indicators, family culture and child development. These variables influence the child's performance and way of handling itself in a social situation such as school and complicate the assessment of social and emotional competence and wellbeing.

2.4.3 Measuring education

Honingh & Ehren (2012) state there is no general definition of quality when it comes to education and the roles of the school professionals because of the polycentric nature of the Dutch education system. According to several researchers, a professional identity is a dynamic process and not a fixed characteristic and is never ´complete.' So, there is no comparison possible between an experienced or a less experienced school professional. According to Zanting et al. (2003) and Beijaard et al. (2004), professional identity is a complex concept with several characteristics. It is about continuously reinterpreting meaningful experiences from the teacher taken from his or her practice and biography. Professional identity has hardly been researched among experienced teachers. Research has been done among teachers in training (Mansvelder-Longayroux, 2006) or beginning teachers (Flores & Day, 2006). Without any clarity on defining social-emotional wellbeing or what roles schools should play in supporting students' wellbeing, it is difficult to measure the quality of education or even the personal progress of a student, combining grades and wellbeing since these two are interconnected.

The current inspection policy measures the quality of education by using the CITO results. CITO stands for Central Institute for Test development and these tests primarily focus on students' knowledge. According to Biesta (2012) this 'unlearning' of education unknowingly added new values to education: economic values. Schools need to be effective, efficient and customer oriented. And this is a problem says Biesta because services where the wishes of the clients (parents and government) need to be met, make schools unlearn their primary focus which is the pedagogical climate of the school. Hargreaves (2003) states that the focus on data-based learning might give short-term positive results, long-term consequences will be disastrous. The curriculum narrows, test-oriented training will dominate, and weaker students will be excluded from testing and the competition between schools will increase. Biesta (2012) underlines this vision and speaks of 'the unlearning' of education, which stands for the unlearning of pedagogical values in education. Both Hargreaves and Ravitch were encouraging the economization and data-based approach of the education system and then came back from their initial statements (Hargreaves, 2003; Ravitch, 2010).

Vandeputte (2014) discusses the importance of broader evaluation, which will personalize a students' learning curve and help them stay motivated. Quantitative measuring tools will not be able to hold into account personal or environmental factors. Although testing students on their educational skills stays important to define a level. Vandeputte promotes both ways of measuring. One does not exclude the other to paint a fuller picture of someone's progress and its important students' have insight in their own progress, so they feel responsible and in the lead. This statement underlines why the student tracking systems, with the different tracking components, can be a useful tool. Students, parents, and school professionals have excess to the same information.

This can benefit the students' feeling of responsibility and facilitate communication between school, student, and parents. Van Lommel et al. (2021) state that intuitive evaluations of students' competences were a solid base for decisions for many years and that it is only recently that teachers have been expected increasingly to use data. According to the education inspectorate, schools can only achieve a positive assessment during inspection when they function as a whole. They are tested on classroom environment, quality of teaching, students' support programs, results, and student and parents' experiences as collaborating partners (Education Inspectorate, 2020).

Yet, the report on 'the state of education' reveals confusion within education; For years, the Dutch teacher's union (AOb) advocates for the definition of objectives of the basic support system in schools and what is expected from schools and teachers. The minimal standard needs to be clear. National politics have responded with a workgroup who will examine the minimal standards and the role of the school (Education inspectorate, 2020). According to Arnold (2000) the development of effective policies to improve schools are impeded by the lack of a consistent definition. He states that diverse needs, need flexible policies. There are different views on the necessity of providing minimal criteria on the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. According to some the minimal criteria is necessary to provide clarity for school-professionals, students, and their parents about who does what (Wartenbergh-Cras & Kessel, 2007; Allers, 2020), others suggest schools are a social environment where it is important to leave room for personal interpretation; some connections between students and teachers or affinity with supporting students social-emotional wellbeing is something you cannot capture. It is natural and social process (Peters et al., 2012; Van Engen et al., 2017).

The Dutch education inspectorate wrote a guideline with the title 'Room within rules' to explain how much flexibility the national law on education and inclusive education offers. According to inspector general Jonk (2015) you only need to register and plan things you really use. The problem is that these different reports and advice change quickly, which makes it difficult to embed these approaches into an organization. To do so, policies are needed. However, to implement a policy successfully, clear definitions are essential, and the implementation takes time and should not be altered while implementing.

The connection between policies, policy supervision and improving the quality of education is researched by different studies. These studies reveal the effect of the policy and supervision on several outcome variables such as the extent to which teachers and school leaders reflect on the quality of education. These studies state that policy and supervision contribute to the quality of self-evaluating schools and the implementation of improvement measures (Chapman, 2001; Dedering & Müller, 2011; Hardy, 2012; Penninckx et al., 2014; Ehren & Shackleton, 2016). Policies and guidelines can help create a collective understanding of different concepts, such as social-emotional wellbeing, within the miniature society schools are according to the literature.

Several studies highlight the negative effects of the (over) usage of policies. Some state that using policies can promote strategic behaviour instead of openness and motivation (Shaw et al., 2003; Rosenthal, 2004; Matthews & Sammons, 2005; Luginbuhl et al., 2009; Allen & Burgess, 2012). As schools need to build on trust, communication and collaboration, over-usage of policies does not seem the appropriate approach. The solution seems to lie in the middle. Measuring wellbeing in education seems no straightforward task. According to the literature so far, there needs to be a mix of quantitative and qualitative measuring tools based on a clear definition of the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

2.4.3 Personal Narratives

Experiences are described as a crucial factor on how children and adolescents develop. This highlights the importance that stories have in our lives and how the creation of coherent personal narratives is important for wellbeing and a relevant topic for positive psychology. Methods used in support of helping people experiencing mental health problems, are mostly focused on talking and writing about personal experiences. This indicates that if we deal with our perception on previous experiences and work on our personal narratives, we can improve, or at least, influence personal wellbeing (Tarragona, 2019). Because of the subjective nature of understanding someone's wellbeing (Nurser et al., 2018) and researching how school professionals understand their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, it is important to fully understand the impact personal narratives have on social-emotional wellbeing and the understanding of this concept.

According to Fivush et al. (2011) personal narratives are embedded within families and cultures where narrative interaction is a frequent practice. They explain that adolescents especially use narratives to provide a framework for personal understanding and emotion. It is a way of coping with situations and have a sense of self-regulation. This statement is also supported by Bauer et al. (2008) where they argue that personal narrative is intricately connected to the interpretation of oneself wellbeing. They use the concept of the Greek philosopher Aristotle on eudaimonia (wellbeing) and argue that this concept extends to a higher degree of psychosocial integration. Aristotle's expression on wellbeing is that someone needs to connect and be living in accordance with their personal spirit. With spirit he means that your character and virtue can lead to a good life. According to Bauer et al. (2008) personal narratives have a direct effect on personal wellbeing and ego development. They describe wellbeing as having pleasure and meaning in life.

These perspectives on the connection between personal narratives and wellbeing make this an important subject and factor to consider in reviewing the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

From experiences to narratives

It is important to clarify narratives some more since narratives play a key factor in understanding a social concept such as social-emotional wellbeing. There is a difference between experiences and narratives. Experience is content specific and static. It generally ends when the interaction with the content ends. Experiences are very personal and how experiences are received are affected by multiple factors such as emotion, personal history, and personal understanding. Stories add a more dynamic element, they position specific content within a flow of events, but these events typically have a beginning, middle and end. Stories unfold over a defined period. Stories and narratives are often used interchangeably, as synonyms. But there is a crucial distinction between the two and it is important to understand this difference. Narratives are stories without ending, they are carried on indefinitely. They are continuously unfolding, being shaped, and filled in by the individuals' stories and new experiences and can go on for generations. For example, personal traumas can evolve in family traumas. (Labov et al., 1997).

These days narratives play a significant role, especially for students. Information comes to us in fragments throughout the day: short news messages, texts, social media, phone applications. Students must deal with the online world and with the offline world, where schools are seen as a miniature society. It is up to the individual to pick up these fragments and re-assemble them into new and more compelling narratives. It is a human reaction to resist atomization and fragmentation. Because of the yearning to connect, empathize, seek meaning, recognition, and identify, these fragments and experiences grow into stories and eventually into narratives (Davidsen, 2013; Lind, 2020).

According to Carlson (2017) there are some behaviours, such as escape and courtship, who are often genetically determined. However, many behaviours are heavily influenced by learning and experience. In particular, early life experiences can have a lasting impact on adult behaviour and because of this also have an impact on their future children. He states that the child's social environment (such as homelife and school) during early development has a strong effect on social behaviour throughout life, which underlines the importance of supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing throughout their years of development.

Narratives provide stability and continuity in our lives. When confronted with growing demands on our attention (social situations online and offline), narratives help us to filter, select and prioritize what should receive our attention. Narratives have the potential to shape the future of the individual as stated before. Experiences from the past are, for some, lessons to be learned to make different choices in the future and for other experiences are patterns that will form in the future. Narratives help construct personal meaning, purpose, identity, and autonomy. They help to situate ourselves in a broader context and to build relationships across. At most, narratives help to ignite and nurture passion within us. To make a connection with other individuals, such as student-student relationship or teacher-student relationship, we need narratives to help us empathize and connect (Cooper et al., 2017).

Narrative is an elementary need of individuals, according to the theory of Linde (1993). During this research the term 'homo narrans' is one of several binomial names for the human species modelled on the commonly used term Homo sapiens and this term is used when exploring how human beings shape their world through the stories they tell. According to Linde, personal narrative is the paradigm of human communication, one of the main activities performed daily by all humans. Using personal narratives is often to organize experiences, to label them. It reflects social organization and cultural values, intertwined with the person's social evaluation of people and their actions. Narratives help someone decide or measure the morality of itself and the situation. It is where someone also assesses someone's wellbeing. The moral behind their personal narratives for everyone are to be good or to be seen as good or to learn from mistakes. The speaker of the personal narrative will try to persuade the listener that they would have acted in a comparable way. It is a key factor that humans look for a connection or approval by using personal narratives. It is a way to build a relationship by convincing other of the same moral (Ochs et al., 2002).

According to Labov (1997) personal narrative is reviewed as a verbal technique for summarizing individual experiences, in particular a way of constructing narratives which match the timeline of that certain experience. Labov discusses that narratives can be divided into subcategories such as the abstract, orientation, complication, resolution, evaluation, and conclusion. Labov believes that all narratives have a similar structure, and most individuals use a similar approach in storytelling. If there is a similarity in structure and, according to Linde (1993), all storytellers use their personal moral as justification for their personal narrative, to explain and defence their actions.

There is a clear connection between personal narratives and personal needs. Especially young children and adolescents are known for a phase in their lives where their needs are more self-oriented (some would state selfish). This is where personal narratives touch the statements of Maslow. Maslow (1943) initially stated that individuals must satisfy lower-level deficit needs before progressing on to meet higher level growth needs. However, he later clarified that satisfaction of a needs is not an all-or-nothing phenomenon, explaining that earlier statements may have given "the false impression that a need must be satisfied one hundred percent before the next need emerges" (1987, p. 69). When a deficit need has been satisfied it will go away, and our activities become habitually directed towards meeting the next set of needs that we have yet to satisfy. These then become our salient needs. However, growth needs do not stem from a lack of something, but rather from a desire to grow as an individual. Once these growth needs have been reasonably satisfied, one may be able to reach the highest level called self-actualization.

Maslow continued to refine his theory based on the concept of a hierarchy of needs over several decades (Maslow, 1943, 1962, 1987). Every individual is capable and has the desire to move up the hierarchy toward a level of self-actualization. Unfortunately, progress is often disrupted by a failure to meet lower-level needs. Life experiences, such as divorce, sickness, and loss of a job, may cause an individual to fluctuate between various levels of the hierarchy. Therefore, not everyone will move through the hierarchy in a uniform directional manner but may move back and forth between the diverse types of needs. These life experiences eventually form personal narratives and Maslow noted that the order of needs might be flexible based on these life experiences or individual differences. For example, he notes that for some individuals, the need for self-esteem is more important than the need for love. For others, the need for creative fulfilment may supersede even the most basic needs (Maslow, 1987).

Personal narratives are not static as explained before. Stories have subtle changes for each listener, and as the relationship of the teller and listener changes, tellers alter their stories as their values change and as their understanding of their past changes. This is a natural motion since listeners might comment on the story and with that, influence the storyteller. Personal narratives also function as a means of self-exploration. Stories inform and explain us who we are, who we can become, and who we cannot become. All individuals have dreams and visions for their future. These visions are formed by our stories and make our narrative.

Additionally, these narratives transform who we are: narrators act when they tell, creating new selves and transforming the existing self. Not only do our memories of self-shape and are in turn shaped by personal narrative, but narrators shape their narratives to overcome disjunction between reality and memory. Narrators authenticate their memories, despite the imperfect, malleable nature of memories by creating credible-sounding accounts (Worthham, 2001).

One key function of personal narrative is to distinguish the individual from others. Narrative is a valuable resource for forming personal identity by oneself, a fundamental need of children, as well as showing and negotiating the self (and identity) with others. We tell personal narratives to share our lives, communicate trust, and create intimacy. Personal narratives make a personal statement, and these stories are traded more frequently as traders grow closer and reach milestones in the relationships. (Linde, 1993; Ochs et al., 2002). Personal narratives also influence the real world because individuals act and react on what is said to them. These dynamics are under a magnifying glass in schools, where students need to interact with hundreds of other students and multiple teachers.

Some argue that the creation and negotiation of self cannot be applied to all equally, that it is a Western-specific phenomena. According to some, personal narrative belongs within socially defined situational contexts (Bauman, 1992). There is a discussion that in most cultures the basic unit is the community (and not the individual), and one cannot be said to have a personal reflective consciousness (Linde, 2015). According to Bauman (1992) personal narratives arise from an overall system of influence between any individual and every other individual within any selected group of people, and are therefore ideological, simultaneously producing, maintaining, and reproducing that power structure; they either support or resist the dominant meaning. It is argued life histories guided by questions are not personal narrative but fall somewhere between biography and autobiography because the ethnographer helps the individual and teller shape their story, and thus they terminate to function for only the speaker. Bauman underlines why it is difficult to trace back storytelling to the individual experience or environmental conditions.

Personal narratives in schools

Students learn from an early age to write about personal narratives. So according to our school system, 'personal narratives' is an important subject to teach and study. But this only refers to consciously thinking about the personal narrative and how the system expects you to write about it.

It does not refer to the subconscious part of the brain. The part where our previous experiences end up (trough storytelling) as our personal narrative and influence our day-to-day choices or the way we react to certain situations seems neglected. Students bring their personal narratives to school, and this affects their social-emotional wellbeing, as well as their teachers. Everyone's personal filter creates a dynamic, a dynamic where the teacher is expected to guide these students is a positive way and use their persona; narratives for motivation and setting personal goals. It is clear personal narratives are an important part of the professional identity of school professionals and understanding this professional identity as a dynamic process leaves room for personal growth (Vloet, 2009).

If we look at the pedagogy in the classroom, some students are described as having more 'life experience' and apparently this is something that is noticeable by others. According to Klausewitz (2005) what really differentiates mature age students is not age as much as it is life experiences, and this goes for teachers as well. All, and especially older students and teachers, bring rich experiences and images into the classroom that affect their attitudes, approach, reactions, and decision-making. Klausewitz discusses the following conclusions: Life experiences, from activities such as other jobs, parenting, travel, reading, coaching, and community work were embedded in the perspectives of the emerging teacher serving as a lens or filter through which decisions were made in the classroom. Life experiences provided connections to build upon. Examination of prior experiences and beliefs will help to reconstruct these experiences into meaningful ideas about teaching that will be more than an overlay experience that may be washed out in the early rigors of learning to teach. Implications for teacher education include the need for promotion of the examination of prior life experiences to integrate self-knowledge with theory and practice and to remove possible barriers to the development of solid teaching practices.

Personal narratives and storytelling are an important part of the working environment, especially when professionals have a large social aspect to their role. Sharing personal stories supports the development of interpersonal relationships through the building of trust and feelings of closeness. Within an organization this means, trust is key in the support of cooperative behaviours and team performance, and collaboration within a team and across teams becomes exceedingly important as organizations grow and increase in complexity (Ebeling, 2020). Data tells us what, while stories tell us why, which is ultimately the root of all motivation. Stories give meaning to data by connecting it with emotions that reveal personal values.

Although motivation is a key factor for professionals to stay connected to their work and enjoy their working place, personal stories can also take over. There is a thin line between sharing and oversharing. According to Radovic et al. (2017) much of what determines 'what is oversharing' and 'what is healthy self-disclosure' is likely in the eyes of the person who is on the receiving end of what is being shared. Their research also indicates oversharing is likely to increase as people get older. Also, from a psychological point of view, the personal narrative could give clues as to how a person dealt with a particular personal experience and how they may approach future experiences. You can gain insight into how the narrator looks at themselves, which can influence how other people look at them (Bauer et al., 2008). According to the research of Beattie (2000) and the research of Craig (2011), personal and professional narratives are interconnected when you are a teacher; "Consciously we teach what we know, unconsciously, we teach who we are" (Hamachek, 1999, p. 209).

Personal narratives can support understanding a concept such as wellbeing and these personal narratives are a considerable influence in interpreting the concept of social-emotional wellbeing. Findings suggest that narratives may have a positive influence when used as inspiration and empowerment tools to stimulate policy inquiries, as educational and awareness tools to initiate policy discussions and gain public support, and as advocacy and lobbying tools to formulate, adopt or implement policy. Van Manen, Dutch-Canandian pedagogue wrote the tact of teaching and empathizes the importance of relation and making a connection to make an impact. "Tact is the expression of a thoughtfulness that involves the total being of the person, an active sensitivity toward the subjectivity of the other (Van Manen, 1991, p.531)." "Tact is not a skill we use, it is something we are (Van Manen, 1991, p.533).

2.4.4 Communication and wellbeing

When discussing the impact of personal narratives on school dynamics or in general, the discussion is about storytelling and that is why communication and the ability to communicate is a crucial factor in understanding the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing. Communication is paramount in education. Whether it is teacher to student, student to student, teacher to teacher, teacher to parent, teacher to admin or admin to parent, or vice versa, communication is needed to make sure students can be successful in education. Communication is something that does not always happen, or it happens in many forms. Sometimes is a lack of time, a lack of resources, a lack of knowing how to get the point across or a language barrier.

Communication is seen as a far more important concept than transmitting information. There are three obvious types of communication when thinking of education: verbal, nonverbal, and written. Verbal communication refers to sending or receiving a message through sounds and languages. Teachers can address one student or the whole classroom through verbal communication. Non-verbal communication refers to communicating without words through body language, gestures, facial expressions, the tone and pitch of the voice, and posture. Written communication is sending or receiving information through writing. These three types are commonly used when talking about the teacher- student relationship during class, but the goal behind every communication method can be hugely different. Communication is used to connect to others, it should encourage others to respond. There is a dynamic behind these three communicative descriptions that is important to acknowledge (Chruches, 2018).

This chapter reviews communication in relation to wellbeing. All three types of classroom communication will probably be used by teachers and students while trying to communicate about different subjects. In relation to wellbeing, we will look at the emotional, personal side of communication and how we use communication in support (or in an unsupportive way) of our wellbeing. In this modern time, we live in, we are receiving, sending, and processing many messages every day online and offline. Students must communicate on multiple levels all day every day. But communication is far more than sharing information, it is also the understanding of the feelings behind this information, communication is used to understand and interpret each other. Being able to successfully communicate can help build relationships in personal life or educational life.

Communication and personal wellbeing refer to how human beings create, transmit, and interpret messages between two or more people and the wellbeing, or quality of life, of those individuals who are parties to that communication. As inherently social creatures, most human beings find their greatest source of happiness and satisfaction in relationships with other people. Communication is the process by which people create, transmit, and interpret messages. The exchange of messages between two people is characterized as interpersonal communication. Much of what is known about communication and personal wellbeing concerns the role of interpersonal communication in quality of life. However, other communication contexts such as small group communication, organizational communication, and even mass communication can also be associated with personal wellbeing (Segrin, 2014).

According to John & Wright (2005), people with excellent communication skills tend to report higher life satisfaction, hope, and happiness and lower levels of perceived stress than people with poor communication skills. Successful communication helps us better understand people and situations. It helps us overcome diversities, build trust, and respect, and create conditions for sharing creative ideas and solving problems. Communication can play a vital role in maintaining or disrupting personal wellbeing.

While the above explains the impact, challenges and possibilities that come with the ability to communicate, there is still a basic need for certain communication skills that are necessary for successful communication and help to support wellbeing. Teachers are trained in helping their students develop communication and social skills. This is necessary to help students develop these communication skills, but also to make sure that every student and school professional can communicate and understand each other. Schools are often seen as a mini society. It is a crowded place, where adolescents meet each other 5 days a week. It should be noted that in the processes of communication and education not only the relationship between the information sender and the receiver but also an environment that is appropriate and favourable for communication and other aspects gain significance. Therefore, creativity to have a dynamic feature, whereby students can develop if teachers provide them with appropriate learning environments (Leikin, 2009).

According to psychologist Petrulytė (2008), to start speaking, an individual must feel a need to do it, a motive to convey or write information expressing their personal emotional state and feel a sense of safety and trust. It can be stated that school professionals, who communicate in the educational process, become conveyers of professional knowledge. They can also have or already had influence on the student personal moral, ideas, emotional state, and wellbeing. It is particularly important because, as Sousa (2007) points out, the outcome of communication is not only the result of the communication skills of the school professional, nor is it the student, it lies in the interaction between the two. There is a dynamic that comes from communication. This underlines the importance of the school professional and why there is a need to improve subject-specific, educational and communication competences.

Tidikis (2001) states that during this communicative process the student adopts a thinking style of an authoritative and personally respected teacher, frequently follows the manner of his or her behaviour or speaking, his or her activity or behaviour patterns, develops respect and tolerance for other people. Communication sets the standard for a starting point of building a relationship. Through such relations a student is evaluated accordingly and learns to express themselves, builds up criteria of self-evaluation and value of own personality. A positive self-evaluation supports self-sustainability and with that a positive social-emotional wellbeing.

Long et al. (2014) claim competences such as knowledge on a subject, clarity of presentation, interaction with students, teaching creativity, clarifying learning outcome, class activity and lecture notes are significantly related to student satisfaction and wellbeing. In the process of communication, a teacher acquires a significant role of an educator, which can influence the student's personality and it even makes an influence on learning outcomes. According to Aukštkalnytė (1999), who analysed the communication competence of teachers as a prerequisite for pedagogical communication, also attracted her attention to those communicative processes. According to her, pedagogical communication differs from personal, organisational, and even any other kinds of professional communication as it occurs during the educational activities. The participants in pedagogical communication always consist of a teacher, as an initiator of the process and a student, who assumes an active role and provides a meaningful reaction to the teacher's initiative.

Brok et al. (2006) researched the comparability between students and teachers. According to them more than thirty other studies revealed that the perception of students and teachers are hugely different. Most of these researchers focused on the interpersonal behaviour of teachers on these differences were incidental findings. The differences lie in the perception. Most teachers have a higher perception than their students. The study of Brok et al. reported that the differences in perception between teachers and students are in direct relation to the way of teaching and classroom management. This underlines the importance of communicative competences amongst school professionals.

2.4.5 Mental health, wellbeing, and education

Mental health and social-emotional wellbeing are often used intertwined within education. To understand the concept of social-emotional wellbeing, it is important to define and understand the concept of mental health or at least be informed about the way it is used. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) the current explanation of mental health is "a state of wellbeing in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (World Health Organization, 2004). This definition, while representing a substantial progress with respect to moving away from the conceptualization of mental health as a state of absence of mental illness, raises several concerns and lends itself to potential misunderstandings when it identifies positive feelings and positive functioning as key factors for mental health (Galderisi et al., 2015).

Although the definition of mental health has been clarified in 2004, social-emotional wellbeing is still often confused with mental health. The Dutch abbreviation GGZ is still used to describe care organizations and translated from Dutch GGZ stands for mental-health care organizations. Trimbos (2020) released a statement and article where they explain the importance of further clarification of defining and measuring mental health amongst youth. During their research with RIVM and the Amsterdam UMC on mental health of Dutch youth, data showed 8,3% of the Dutch youth between 12-25 is psychologically unwell, 20% of the Dutch youth between 12-16 experiences emotional problems and 14,4% of Bachelor students rapport severe anxiety or depression complaints. Three different descriptions and measurements, which makes it unclear and difficult to read according to Trimbos. Statements such as feeling happy or balanced are popular and used frequently, but not so easy to explain or clarify.

According to the measurements amongst scholars by Trimbos and the national institute for public health and environment (RIVM), there is an increase in students who experience feelings of depression and anxiety. One out of eleven young adults (9%) in the Netherlands are at considerable risk of developing an anxiety disorder or depression in 2020. Compared to 2016 this number is significantly higher; then 7% was at considerable risk, compared to 6% in 2012. It is important to include the percentage of young adults who feel positive about their overall health, this is 88% (RIVM, 2021).

Struyf et al. (2013) talk about the importance of integrated care at schools. Their goals are to inspire schools to do more to integrate care and education, while she also was one of the co-writers with Verschueren (2016) on research who questions if transferring specialised care from outside the school into the school is a formula for success. Vrielink (2011) underlines the importance of an extensive collaboration between schools and youth-care but also explains the importance of separating these two surroundings. She also explains the difficulties in exchanging information: students and caregivers need to give schools and health care professionals permission to exchange information. According to the literature and law, health care professionals contact schools for additional information, but schools are not receiving any information unless this request comes directly from the student and family. This means schools are not equal partners when it comes to supporting and caring for students who need specialized care.

Pollard & Lee (2003) explain 'wellbeing is a complex, multi-faceted construct that has continued to elude researchers' attempts to define and measure' (Pollard & Lee, 2003, p. 60). The research of Dodge et al. (2012) underlines the complexity of this concept as stated before. As well as the several other researchers that are referred to earlier in this chapter. Defining wellbeing is a challenge and they discuss that many attempts at expressing the nature of wellbeing, purely have focused on dimensions of wellbeing, rather than on definition. Although Dodge, et all proposed a new definition, there is still no clear statement of definition being used to describe wellbeing. With the lack of a clear definition of wellbeing that is widely accepted and implemented, schools are searching for other ways to explain and measure wellbeing.

Wellbeing is part of the definition of mental health, and it is important to note that the definition of mental health is an official definition by the WHO, while there still is a lack defining wellbeing. Wellbeing is often described as the total of objective and subjective assessment (OECD, 2013). The mental health definition focuses on how someone can proactively handle life, while wellbeing is more often used to explain someone's state of mind. The WHO definition of mental health uses wellbeing as another way of explaining mindset. Wellbeing is seen as one of the aspects of mental health. Therefore, it is important to review the concept of wellbeing separately from mental health. However, both concepts are connected and often used together (Warr, 1990; Maxwell et al., 2008; Van Lente et al., 2012; Patalay & Fitzsimons, 2018).

Previous research highlights the important connection between education, mental health, and wellbeing. Van Lente et al., (2012) state that higher levels of social support (as in education) predict positive mental health. Their research revealed that lower levels of social wellbeing were found to be the strongest predictors of negative mental health. Maxwell et al., (2008) researched the impact of mental health programs. According to them, schools who combined mental health programs with cognitive behavioural therapy, targeting children with emotional wellbeing and menta health needs, give proof of an effective approach. Not only are these two research papers one of many who offer evidence for the interconnection between mental health and wellbeing, they also reveal the importance for schools to take on a role in supporting these concepts.

There seems to be a consensus on the importance of schools taking on a supportive role in students' social-emotional wellbeing, yet there remains confusion in defining wellbeing. There are many reports on student mental health or wellbeing, often used together. The area of student mental health seems hampered by the imprecise use of terms and definitions. Barkham et al., (2019) plea for clearer and more consistent use of definitions of, as well as differentiations between, student wellbeing and mental health. According to them there is a lack of evidence-base, overall coordination, and collaboration in the collection and use of data. Without a clear mutual understanding it is impossible to develop a strategic and systematic approach, leaving schools without clear guidelines in how to provide appropriate interventions and support for their students.

2.4.6 School as a mini society

Education is more than transferring information about different subjects and schools are more than the building where the transferring takes place. Schools are often reviewed as a miniature society and state they help prepare students to become good citizens and prepare them for life after school. Schools have the obligation to encourage and teach citizenship and Dutch secondary schools are meeting new, very recent (2021) legal requirements when it comes to citizenship as explained in the context chapter (2.2.6). Previous wellbeing or citizenship research suggests that wellbeing and citizenship are interconnected. They even state that citizenship supports wellbeing (Lawson, 2001; Davies & Evans, 2002; Potter, 2003; Jansen et al., 2006; Zepke, 2013).

The term citizenship has many definitions and interpretations. According to Roosevelt (2022), the true meaning of education is to produce citizens. The term citizenship can usefully be described as a continuum, from minimalist forms of citizenship to maximal forms, depending on the context in which it is used or the meaning of the person using it (Evans, 1995). Minimal interpretations of citizenship emphasize a person's civil, legal status, rights, and responsibilities as members of our society. The focus of this approach to citizenship is in the encouragement of good citizenship, someone who is public-spirited, law-abiding and who exercises political involvement through voting for representatives. This approach to citizenship identifies citizens as consumers, someone who knows their rights and how to exercise these rights. There is minimal personal or emotional involvement in this approach. It focuses on someone's knowledge of institutional rules, rights, and obligations (Mellor et al., 2002). At the other end of the continuum is maximal citizenship. This approach focuses on the extent to which, in this case, students have a consciousness of their involvement in a shared democratic cultural society. This is the kind of citizenship the government tries to encourage via education. It emphasizes participatory approaches to political involvement and highlights the ways in which social disadvantage undermines citizenship by denying people full participation in society.

Martin (2008) researched students' approach to good citizenship and stated that many educators review citizenship preparation as the primary task of public education. With this statement it is important to note that citizenship should be redefined with each generation because it depends on the interpretation of society at that time. During this 2008 research, results revealed secondary students valued community service more than political engagement as part of their 'good citizenship'. Geissel (2007) argues that the definition of 'good citizenship' will not be the same for everyone. One cannot be sure if the political agenda of the lawmakers affects the reinstatement of this new educational law. She highlights the connection between citizenship and the political movement.

Schools must deal with all these different interpretations, yet their interpretation of good citizenship connects with wellbeing. Their biggest challenge at this moment seems to be time. Schools are challenged to maintain a certain level on language and math and because of this many schools chose to replace social studies to provide extra time and support on these subjects. Now they are obligated to focus on both. Time will tell if this creates balance or extra work pressure amongst students and school professionals.

Durkheim (1972) and Dewey (1907) both argued that school is a miniature society and both educationists are still rereferred to by many articles in more recent years (Thompson, 2017; UNESCO, 2001; Abott, 2009; Davies, 1994). Durkheim (1972) argued that school is preparing us for life in wider society and therefore it is a miniature society. According to Dewey (1907), school is the society itself. Each classroom is a community in which the members must comply with the norms of the society. The students in a school represent a wide cross-section of the society at large, cutting across barriers of economy, class, religion, colour, or creed. With the changes in law and aiming for more inclusiveness within education and encouraging good citizenship, the individual differences are personal preferences must be considered.

For school professionals to reach these students, connect with all of them, and respect their individuality, there is an increased need for a more personalized approach inside the classroom. Hiemstra et al. (2013) discuss the importance of handling with individual differences on a pedagogical and didactical level and adapting your approach to these differences. Smeets et al. (2017) did a first measurement on inclusive education after the implementation of the new educational law and stated the importance of recognising the interconnection between the need for support and types of support needed in cohesion with environmental factors. Schools might not be able to fulfil all types of support students need. This report reveals the motivation of school professionals, but the missing of extra support inside the classroom. School professionals often need to work in a comparable way as before these legal changes, yet their demographic of students has changed.

2.4.7 Supporting social-emotional wellbeing in education

According to McLaughlin (2008) schools play a key role in supporting emotional development in education. She emphasizes the importance of reflecting on social-emotional wellbeing in schools from sociological, philosophical, psychological, and educational perspectives. The aspects of schooling identified as important were schools that have good academic records and attentive, caring teachers; schools that have wide conceptions of achievement; schools that enable children to take responsibility and foster good relationships. Teachers emerged as potentially immensely powerful agents in children's lives (Howard et al., 1999). The role of the school in the literature is often described as an extended family and miniature society, where positive role models can change students' lives in a positive way. Even non-academic instructors (such as educational support staff) are confidants and positive models for personal identification when showing personal and sincere interest in their students.

Not all literature explains a positive and necessary connection between wellbeing and learning. De Bruyckere (2018) explains the conflict between wellbeing and education. According to him the theory behind wellbeing being an important condition to learning is dated. Wellbeing, happiness or fun and learning are three different subject and have no coherence, just coincidental relation based on situations (cause and effect). When discussing wellbeing we often think is should be improved, but looking at the PISA monitor, the children in the Netherlands score better on happiness than the children in Finland (OECD , 2017; Borgonovi, 2015). Which is remarkable, considering Finland's education system plays an exemplary role for enhancing the interconnection between social-emotional wellbeing and education.

According to the Youth Research Platform monitor (JOP, 2019) schools have almost no influence on youth wellbeing. Schools mostly deal with wellbeing that is influenced by external factors. Factors that negatively influence wellbeing and life-contentment are separated families, difficult family relationships and mental health problems. Yet, during recent years the issue of mental health problems in the school setting, and the broader concept of promoting resilience for all students, has grown in importance in education.

Unresolved mental health problems including depression can have devastating effects in adolescence and increase the risk of school failure, violence, or suicidal behaviour (Lewinsohn et al., 1999). Conversely, teaching in ways that promote resilience may help to prevent mental health difficulties and improve behaviour and learning outcomes (Zins et al., 2004). Teachers have a key role in recognising and referring young people at risk of mental health problems.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter is set out to review and discuss relevant literature concerning this study. This chapter has tried to clarify important terms and themes used throughout this study. According to the literature, it is difficult to determine and define what the role of the school is in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. There are several dynamics and complex processes that happen in a social organization such as schools, and all these processes come together and influence one another.

Defining and measuring social-emotional wellbeing seems just as complex as the social dynamics of the school, yet without general consent on how to approach social-emotional wellbeing it is rather difficult to make clear statements about what the role of the school is in supporting this. Although there in an increase in studies about social-emotional wellbeing, there is still no clear definition. The three descriptions, stated earlier in this chapter, of social-emotional wellbeing by Keyes (2002), Squires et al., (2003) and DECS (2005) seem to capture the total meaning of social-emotional wellbeing and together with the approach of the OECD (2013) in measuring wellbeing this was the framework on social-emotional wellbeing used during this research. Combining these four approaches to social-emotional wellbeing results in the following description:

Social-emotional wellbeing is the physical, social, and emotional welfare and development of someone. We speak of social-emotional wellbeing when having the ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve interpersonal goals and social outcomes. As well as having the ability to effectively regulate emotions to accomplish interpersonal goals.

To measure the concept of social-emotional wellbeing six dimensions will be assessed together: health, job opportunities, socioeconomic development, environment, safety, and politics. These six dimensions will be assessed through the extent to which these six dimensions or needs are satisfied. Together with these objective approaches, someone's subjective wellbeing needs to be considered as well.

The theory agrees both are influenced by multiple personal and environmental factors and to evaluate such dynamic concepts, both objective and subjective measurements need to be made. It was a returning debate amongst all researchers that defining and clarifying social topics is rather impossible since the understanding of these topics are strongly influenced by the lens of the person who tries to understand. Social-emotional wellbeing is described in multiple ways and often researchers used indicators such as: resilience, emotional intelligence, and self-sustainability (Goleman, 1996; Keyes, 2002; Squires et al., 2003; Weare, 2004; DOECS, 2005; Krause, 2007). Indicators help to understand and clarify a dynamic and complex concept such as social-emotional wellbeing. Themes such as: how personal narratives influence our understanding of social-emotional wellbeing, the importance of communication, the complexity of defining wellbeing and the lack of clarity around wellbeing and the role of the school came forward during this study and the literature reveals the interconnectedness between the different themes.

There is enormous attention for school dynamics in the research field and the changing role of the school. There seems to be a consensus in the literature on the increasing societal role schools must take on, yet the connection between the role of school professionals and students social-emotional wellbeing is seeming underrepresented. Often studies focus on what is needed for students to come to some advice for schools (Arnold, 2000; Dedering & Müller, 2011). Multiple studies who did focus on school professionals (mostly teachers) used quantitative methods to research work pressure or functioning in the classroom (Aukštkalnytė, 1999; Notelaers et al., 2005; Brok et al., 2006) or there were studies from a complete pedagogical point of view (Biesta, 2011).

The reports from the government do not clarify the role of the school professional, although they have done multiple attempts to clarify their vision on the societal role of the school and the duty of care, yet there is no clarity on who does what when it comes to support students' social-emotional wellbeing. Without clear guidelines, schools are held responsible for an important task in the lives of young people in need of support and these school professionals are not trained to do so. According to the literature, there are several topics that need clarification or guidelines. It is impossible to leave personal narratives at home when they are such an important part of who we are. They form us to who we are and support a person into making a connection. Personal narratives are an important part of being or becoming a good school professional, yet there are boundaries to protect.

Communication is a key factor in connecting with, and supporting students, yet this is strongly influenced by role confusion. It would be helpful for all school professionals and students to have a clear indication on what to expect for one another. And the literature underlines there is a lot of confusion on the role of the school professional in supporting students' social- emotional wellbeing. This adds pressure, uncertainty, and stress on the school professional, but also puts students at risk for not receiving the support they need.

The literature also reveals that it is difficult to clarify or define the definition of wellbeing in relation to education, because of rapid changes and innovations in the education field. There seems little time for developing policies and proper training of school professionals and implementing those in a structured and long-term approach. Yet, there is a need for policies and a broader evaluation of education.

The literature seems to agree on the importance of a more personalised approach to students' educational progress and wellbeing and connect quantitative measuring tools with qualitative measuring tools to gain insight in these processes. Although, there is also the debate on who is responsible for supervising these processes. School professionals experience an increase in workload already and qualitative measuring tools need to be used by someone who is trained and competent to do so. Otherwise, there will be variations in usage and outcomes.

The literature underlines the difficulties schools are facing in their evolving role of supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, without clear guidelines and definitions. It seems that schools experience many challenges to fulfil this role. Although schools are working with a lot of confusion, the descriptions, laws, and policies that are there, are enough for them to try and fulfil this role as best as they possibly can. Fink & Capparell (2013) underline the importance of role clarity and define clarity as the alignment between people and tasks to achieve team goals. Role clarity allows your high-performing team to be effective and march in the same direction. The lack of clear guidelines is also an opportunity for schools and local governments to create their own. Although it remains uncertain if these guidelines will provide long-term clarity since educational innovations, are a returning topic.

There are many unanswered questions that need more research to try and clarify the concept of wellbeing and the role of the school. Building on the theoretical framework, this thesis explores the understanding and interpretation of school professionals on their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. What is missing from previous research is a clear interpretation and understanding of social-emotional wellbeing from a school professionals' point of view as well as a clear approach to students' social-emotional wellbeing and the role of the school in supporting this. It is vital to know if school professionals understand their role and the concept of social-emotional wellbeing in a comparable way.

Without clarity on this understanding, it is impossible to develop effective policies or guidelines on supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and expect school professionals to be trained and function accordingly. There seems to be a lot of variation in school professionals' knowledge and skills of supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Nevertheless, these variations will affect the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, the quality of school support and in the end, can have dangerous consequences for the students in need of extra support.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe and discuss the methods used in this project to study the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. I will start by introducing the research design. I will then introduce and explain the chosen methodology (Interpretative Phenomenon Analysis) with several discussions regarding the theoretical underpinnings, the rationale for selecting this approach, the limitations associated with this approach and the consideration of other approaches. The followed procedures will then be outlined and discussed in relation to ethical considerations and quality in qualitative research.

3.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this research is to gain in-depth understandings of the role of the school in relation to students' social-emotional wellbeing. It is vital to research the understanding of school professionals regarding the concept of social-emotional wellbeing, in order to find an answer to the main question. This will involve exploring the interpretations, perceptions, beliefs, and reflections of school professionals to gain insights into how they make sense of and understand their experiences. This approach focusses on in-depth interviews, and it is important to use suitable methods for a correct in-depth approach. The most appropriate way to capture this is to gain detailed personal accounts and this research will therefore be qualitative in nature.

My approach to this research will not be with a predetermined hypotheses to test, instead I will use a main research question, supported by three sub-questions, that will form the first steps of the framework for this study. The analysis process can be described as an inductive one, driven by data, exiting theory and literature, rather than a deductive approach. Stebbins (2001) explains the open character, pragmatism and flexibility of exploration is a more attractive way of representing social research than treating it as a narrowing, discipline-based process. Exploring is not about settling and confirming but unsettles and questions what one knows.

3.1.2 Epistemology

Three key concepts were outlined by Carter &Little (2007) which provide the foundations for conducting qualitative research in the social sciences. The first fundamental component is a researcher's epistemological stance, which needs to be clarified as this position has a direct impact on the chosen approach. This in turn provides justification for the techniques used to gather data. Madill (2000) also identifies three different epistemological positions and argues that these should be viewed as positions on a continuum instead of these being viewed as unrelated and distinct. Madill (2000) talks about two extreme poles which need to be explored and between these extremes is the contextual constructionist perspective. On one end is the realist perspective which assumes knowledge is pre-existing and this is discovered through an objective and detached approach. On the other end is the radical constructionist perspective which argues that knowledge is a social construction, and all knowledge exists from language. The importance of a qualitative approach is also underlined by the data from the literature. This chapter reveals the complexity of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the missing of a clear definition, which makes it difficult to study in a quantitative approach. A more qualitative approach allows this research to search for an understanding beyond the answer given by participants.

According to Thomas (2009) epistemology has its roots in philosophy. When thinking epistemologically, according to Willig (2013), researchers should attempt to answer philosophical questions. Bryman (2012) argues the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative methodology are typically attributed to phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Where the phenomenological position is that it takes a person's perspective as the empirical point of departure. Bryman (2012) explains a positivist approach, this is when the researchers' point of view is that from an outsider perspective and with empirical concerns imposing upon social reality. This approach lacks reference and underlying support to the observations of the investigated subject. He argues that a more insiders' perspective is vital for social research, which should be supported by phenomenology according to epistemological principles.

Larkin et al (2006) argue the limitations of this research. Through research we can only attempt to understand individual points of view. This understanding will be related to this particular person, in this particular context, at this particular time. Research findings are therefore variable and dependent on the context in which data is gathered and analysed (Madill, 2000; Larkin et al., 2006). As people are always embedded within a specific context, all knowledge is context bound and therefore someone's perspective and standpoint dependent.

According to Jaeger & Rosnow, (1998) the researcher is also a contributor to the research process. The researcher is inevitably part of the context and therefore takes an active role in knowledge discovery and construction. Therefore, it is important in social research to be aware of the researchers position and role during the data collection.

3.2 Methodological approach

There is a significant gap in knowledge when investigating the role of the school in relation to students social-emotional wellbeing. Although there are many research projects in the Netherlands about students' wellbeing or about inclusive education, most of these research projects (such as Health Behaviour in School-aged Children) focus on quantitative research methods and become a satisfaction survey (Verdurmen et al., 2005; Schnohr et al., 2015; Houben-van Herten et al., 2015). The larger research institutes in the Netherlands, such as 'Trimbos' or 'NJI' show grades on happiness, motivation, stress (Stevens, 2018). In-depth interviews about the role of the school and the experiences of school professionals are scarce. Some interviews appear in short articles, but there does not appear to be any published research aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of what it is like to be a school professional and how the understand their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

According to Willig (2013), a realist position would advocate the belief that there is a single, objective, independent reality, and therefore straight forward relationship between our perception of the world and the 'true' world. Madill et al. (2000) argue the radical constructionist perspective on the other end, which rejects the notion of any knowledge existing outside of language and argues that knowledge is a social construction. Between these two extreme poles is the contextual constructionist perspective and this is the position I will be adopting for this study. The perspective of the contextual constructionist examines how social phenomena are defined, defended, and reacted to (Burningham & Cooper, 1999; Madill, et al., 2000). Not only does this perspective provides the foundation for researching someone's understanding and perspective, but it is also part of the contextual approach. This approach is commonly used in Dutch education when discussing students with an extra need for support. It seems very fitting to use a somewhat similar approach for school professionals, as the role their expected to adopt when it comes to supporting their students.

The aim of this research is to gain insight into the school professionals' thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and reflections surrounding their experiences of supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of their students. This is to increase awareness, knowledge and understanding regarding their unique perspectives. I am not proposing that through this research I can produce an objective, 'true' account of the school professionals' experiences in supporting social-emotional wellbeing and that this will correspond to an external 'reality.' Instead, I am adopting the belief that I can gain an understanding of how individual participants perceive and interpret this phenomenon from a subjective standpoint. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis supports the contextual constructionist perspective and is the method I will be adopting. IPA is thought of as a methodology and not just a method. It is based on a theoretically informed framework whereas thematic analysis and conversational analysis are techniques for collecting and analysing data. IPA offers an adaptable and accessible approach to phenomenological research intended to give a complete and in-depth understanding of the individual. As this research gives voice to school professionals understanding their role in relation to the complex concept of social-emotional wellbeing, it is vital to use a methodology that respects the phenomenon and personal interpretations within the context of the participants feelings, experiences, and beliefs.

3.2.1 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is the methodological approach I am adopting to explore the in-depth experiences of school professionals. The approach of IPA aims to offer insight into how someone, in a particular context, makes sense of a given phenomenon. The phenomenological approach is a descriptive and inductive approach, developed from phenomenological philosophy. IPA makes a combination of psychological, idiographic, and interpretative factors and therefore it separates itself from other approaches (Smith, 1996; Eatough & Smith, 2017). IPA zooms in on understanding the response of participants as a whole, not specific parts or behaviours.

Its aim is to describe and understand the participants personal experience as it is lived by the person. Researchers who use IPA as the approach for their studies want to listen intently to concerns and experiences expressed by the participants in order to obtain an insider's perspective of the phenomenon. They attempt to interpret these accounts to gain understanding of what it means for the participants to have those concerns in a particular context (Larking et al., 2006). The combination of understanding and interpretation is necessary when trying to understand the school professional's perspective on social-emotional wellbeing and their role in supporting students.

IPA uses an interactionist approach alongside inquiry to develop theory and because of this in-depth approach, participants are known to share more personal understandings, beliefs, values, and attitudes with an insight in their world and how they shape and interpret the world around them. IPA was introduced as a specific research methodology in response to frustrations with the over-emphasis placed on quantitative methods in psychological research (Smith, 1996). Within IPA the focus lies on in-depth data collected from participants. Participants are seen as being both 'self-aware' and 'aware of others' and, therefore, can adapt their social interactions and situational behaviour to shape meaning and society. In this sense, the focus lies with the symbolic meanings that are uncovered by people's interactions, actions and resulting consequences. Data for IPA research is most collected through in-depth or semi-structured interviews. The interviews are often described as "a conversation with a purpose," and once finished, are transcribed verbatim (Smith, 2009, p. 57).

The focus of IPA is to explore and understand how participants are making sense of their personal and social surroundings. Exploring a complex concept such as social-emotional wellbeing asks for an approach where the meaning behind the given answer is explored. IPA studies the meaning behind particular experiences. The data analysis is flexible and dynamic, making it possible for the researcher to go back and forth between the data when needed, focusing on the meanings throughout the analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2008).

3.2.2 Phenomenology

The approach of IPA is phenomenological. Husserl (1900) is considered the founder of the phenomenological approach. According to Husserl, phenomenology is descriptive and should focus on consciousness. The descriptions specify the structures that characterise how participants experience the world around them and are conscious of their experiences. Husserl's approach has been labelled as 'transcendental phenomenology' (Larkin, 2011). Husserl argued that to describe and fully understand any given phenomena, we must be conscious of all things and themselves. He argued that we often take our experiences for granted and do not fully focus on them. We perceive them regarding our pre-existing expectations (Smith, 2008). According to Smith, phenomenology is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the phenomenologist.

The phenomenologist studies personal experience from the point of view of living through that experience. This can sound as introspection, yet phenomenology should not be equated with introspections psychology. It focusses on the exploration of personal experiences and the perception of the person. It does not produce an objective statement of the person or experience. Phenomenology can be described as a philosophical approach to the study of human experience (Langdridge, 2007). Sokolowski (2000), describes phenomenology as the study of a perso''s experience and of the ways things present themselves in and through such experience.

3.2.3 Hermeneutics

IPA states that the research is a dynamic and flexible process with an active role for the researcher. The researcher is trying to understand the insider's perspective but cannot do this directly or completely. The researchers own conceptions will complicate and insider'' perspective, yet these own conceptions are necessary to make sense of that other perso''s perspective through the process of interpretation. Packer and Addison (1989) describe how IPA is connected to hermeneutics and interpretational theories. IPA combines an emphatic interpretation with a questioning interpretation, and this will make it possible for different interpretations to occur during the research. Understanding is a keyword and captures the two aspects of interpretation and understanding in the meaning of identifying or empathizing. It is a process of trying to make sense of someon''s experience, using critical question to help make sense of it all. The theory behind IPA commits to a cognitive, emphatic, linguistic approach to the conversation, respecting the connection between what is be'ng said, what they believe and the persons' emotional state.

At the same time this interconnection is complex. As the aim of this research is to understand what the role of the school is in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in secondary education, the type of inquiry needed lends itself to a qualitative approach that is aligned with interpretive theory. Heidegger (1927) argued that our engagement with the world and our understanding of the meaning of 'consciousness' is always accessed through interpretation. According to him, it is impossible to exclude our prior personal experiences, assumptions, and preconceptions to the process of interpretation. Our interpretation of any situation is understood through the lenses of previous experiences, assumptions, and preconceptions. It is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid this. Raising awareness of these lenses and try to suspend our judgement is necessary to do good research.

The interpreter looks to understand the meanings behind the actions and vision of the interviewee. When using this approach, the emphasis is on the importance of the processes which lie within supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in secondary education. Different personal factors and environmental factors will influence the outcome of the information. The central character in these processes is the person who personally experiences working within education and having to consider student wellbeing. It is anticipated that by utilizing this theoretical perspective relevant themes will emerge that addresses the central research question and give light to supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in secondary education.

3.2.4 Ideography

IPA is ideographic in nature and has the aim to focus on personal perspectives and the experiences of particular individuals rather than completely losing these accounts in order to make group level claims (Smith, 2004). Smith (2004) criticised popular 'nomothetic' research due to its focus on making generalizable and overarching claims regarding human behaviour. IPA stand in contrast to these approaches. According to Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez (2011) IPA does not aim to produce results which are generalizable but instead focuses on the potential transferability of findings from one group to another. This is a complex endeavour and therefore requires a prominent level of involvement and interpretation on the part of the researcher. Smith et al. (2009) use the term 'theoretical generalisability' and it involves encouraging the researcher to adopt an active role, drawing on their existing experiences and knowledge, in order to judge the applicability of the finding and possible implication for their own practice.

Although the experiences presented will be specifically applicable to the school professionals under study, these can increase understanding and add to the already existing knowledge and research base. Smith et al. (2009) underline that IPA can in fact make a valuable contribution by focusing on single cases, however, most researchers tend to achieve the ideographic element by focusing on the detailed examination of each individual case before searching for convergence and divergence across participants accounts. The idiographic commitment in this research project will also be represented in the analysis write up by including transcripts extracts for everyone to highlight individual experiences.

3.2.5 Rationale for IPA

Although there any many studies within (Dutch) education, most of them are based on quantitative methods or an evaluation of the education system. Research that is aiming to explore experiences of school professionals in-depth appear to be scarce. According to Evers (2016) who reflects on the usage of qualitative research methods in Dutch education, most universities spend more time teaching quantitative research methods. The Dutch education system tends to teach in pre-structured units of time, making the curriculum organization of higher importance than the educational message. The quick fix for the uncertainty among students seems to be about unambiguous advice instead of teaching them about the contextual advice. This makes teaching qualitative research methods difficult. Dealing with uncertainties is an important aspect of the qualitative researcher, and this seems an unwelcome message in over-regulated society where the illusion of controlling everything prevails (Evers, 2016).

Since 2019 there has been a slight increase of national qualitative research reports. After the introduction of 'Education for all,' the new law on inclusive education in the Netherlands, the educational inspectorate wants to evaluate and combine quantitative research with qualitative research. This means a combination of a satisfaction surveys and a one-day analysis of schools (with observations and a group interview). Although these one-day analyses of schools help the researcher to create an image of the school and school professionals, it is still far from in-depth interviewing and utterly understanding the perceptions and feelings. Most known research projects regarding social-emotional wellbeing in education are quantitative.

Larger research organisations such as Trimbos and the Dutch Youth Institute (NJI) mostly use quantitative methods and ask participants (students/ school professionals) to grade their happiness, motivation, and stress. These numbers are used to evaluate the quality of the Dutch education system (Stevens et al., 2018). With this research and the use of IPA I aim to gain in-depth insight in the perspective of school-professionals and their role in relation to students social-emotional wellbeing. IPA is the most appropriate methodology for this research project and that is why it has been chosen. Although IPA has its roots in health psychology, the approach has been increasingly used in other research areas of psychology, such as social, clinical, and counselling (Smith, 2004). Reid et al. (2005) argue that the approach of IPA is a valuable method to adopt when researching an area that has previously lacked exploration.

The inductive nature of the approach means that I do not have to rely on existing literature to drive the analysis process (although it will help) and instead IPA will allow for the possibility of unexpected and novel experiences arising. The position of contextual constructionism I am adopting seems complementary to the aims and philosophical underpinnings of IPA. This is due to the focus on context dependent knowledge rather than objective knowledge, and on the acknowledgement of the active interpretative role of the researcher. According to Larkin (2006) the strength behind IPA is the usage of this method from different epistemological positions, but the position of contextual constructionist has a complementary nature to the aims of IPA.

3.2.6 Limitations of IPA

The transferability of the themes that will emerge to other schools and contexts is the most obvious limitation of this study. Although there are four schools participating, with a large sample size of participants, the conclusions developed will still only bear relevance to those schools directly involved. This study focuses on one group of schools, so there is no certainty whether the conclusions drawn from this particular study apply elsewhere. Especially since results from an analysis with IPA are influenced by personal and contextual factors. Results cannot be generalized to the wider population. This also makes the research difficult to replicate.

My sample size is large (forty-eight), and this means there is a little more insight into the experiences of a larger group of school professional, yet the larger sample size brings extra challenges. IPA is normally used by smaller sample sizes (up to five). This sample of forty-eight participants contains smaller groups of school professionals that have a similar role in the school and within IPA the goal is to generate a purposive, fairly homogeneous sample. These smaller sub-groups ensure the study holds relevance and personal significance to respondents and enables during the data analysis to capture detail on a specific group of individuals who have experienced a particular phenomenon. The largest group has sixteen participants (mentors) and the smallest group has four (directors). According to Smith & Osborn (2003) the sample size is connected to the phenomenon that is researched. Some studies might contain a topic only relevant to a limited number of individuals, while other studies will draw from a population with similar demographics. There is no right or wrong. Smith et al. (2009, p. 56) suggested that in IPA research, "there is no right answer to the question of...sample size".

However, as stated before, smaller concentrated samples are commonly utilised. Clarke (2010) stipulated that four to ten samples is the default sample size advised for professional doctorates. Even a single participant study could be justified, if they can generate a particularly rich or compelling case (Smith, 2004). In traditional phenomenological studies, Coyle (2014) noted that the average sample size was between one and twelve. I was also aware of the potential problems that would accompany data overload using a large sample size. However, after much deliberation and consultation with my supervisor – I did choose to go with the larger sample size. Using IPA gives me the possibility to look for the 'why' behind given answers and the large sample size is important in the connection to practise. The results are presented to the local government and school directors and are part of the evaluation of the local policy on the connection between education and the youth care system. It is important results not only show the individuality of particular experiences, a key principle of IPA, but also represent a larger group. To protect the quality of the data analysis, there will be a maximum of analysing five interviews per session. With this approach I believe to have the best of both worlds (in-depth approach of IPA and a larger sample size).

IPA can be very time consuming, and I need to be aware of my own subjective feelings and the influence it may have on the study. Because the results are based on the analysis of qualitative (descriptive) data a lot depends on the interpretation being placed on the information that is acquired. Personal experiences and their interpretations are always formed, limited, and enabled by language and this can create a tension field since the personal interpretations of the researcher can mix with the personal interpretations of the participant. Language is limited and can limit the sharing of our understandings (Jaeger & Rosnow, 1988; Smith et al., 2009).

Regarding the selection of the participants, it is possible that those who volunteer will have strong opinions about student social-emotional wellbeing. This can be seen both as a strength and a weakness of a qualitative study. By inviting participants who represent both ends of the spectrum regarding their role in supporting student social-emotional wellbeing, all the issues will hopefully be raised and thus add to the richness of the data. However, it could also be that only those who are strongly proponent or strongly against volunteer. School directors were involved in this process and asked for suggestions to ensure a diverse representation. Personal motivation in relation to this research is an important contextual factor for this research and it will help understand the individual's perception.

Although IPA is concerned with describing, exploring, and understanding individual perceptions, a limitation of IPA is that it does not attempt to explain why people experience certain phenomena in certain ways. Willig (2013) argues that this is a potential drawback as the lack of explanation could in fact restrict our understandings of phenomena. Using IPA for research gives the opportunity to gather in-depth information. This is the strength of the research method, but also its weakness. More information gives a better view of the interviewee or school but is not necessarily usable in comparing other schools. It will be particularly important to describe how the interview is been taken and what happened with semi-open questions. Did it influence the interviewee and there is a chance the interviewer is influenced.

Discussing important topics always caries out an emotion. That can be a distraction, or it can complement the research data, depends on how in the interview has been carried out. IPA aims to gain an insider's perspective on experience, and this is achieved through listening to and analysing the language participants use to describe their experiences. This therefore relies on participants having the ability to articulate, complex, thoughts and feelings. Willig (2013) argues that it is a great challenge to communicate the intricate details of experiences, especially when people are not accustomed to talking in such way.

3.2.7 Consideration of alternatives

The initial aim of this research was to focus on in-depth experiences and IPA is only one phenomenological approach which aims to do this and is in fact a relatively new approach. There are several highly regarded qualitative methodological approaches that were considered. They are developed for sociological research to increase the understanding of and explain different social processes (Willig, 2013). Methods (such as grounded theory) investigate social processes and appear to emphasise understandings at the group level rather than the individual level were dismissed. One of the attractions of IPA for me was the idiographic focus where we look at the phenomenon and interpretation of each individual. This suits the exploration of how school professionals understand their role in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing on a more personal level. Other methods such as discourse or conversational analysis were considered and seemed a better fit with the individual in-depth approach, however they could not match the theoretical framework IPA offers. In the literature IPA is often described as a methodology, while grounded theory and conversational analysis are seen as methods for data collection and analysis (Hammersley, 2003; Stokoe, 2020).

According to Langdridge (2007) 'descriptive phenomenology' was one of the foundational approaches that first attempted to apply phenomenology to research in the human and social sciences. The methodology attempts to describe phenomena (rather than interpret) and aims to capture the underlying structure of an experience (Giorgi, 1992). This seemed a less complementary approach to my research than IPA. IPA gives the possibility to fully acknowledge my role in the 'understanding' and 'sense-making' process. Descriptive phenomenology does not fully acknowledge any preconceptions of the researcher.

In the field of social sciences, phenomenology and case studies are often used in describing research methods. Yet, phenomenology is also a concept in philosophical studies. The main difference between the two, when using it as a research method, is that case studies provide a detailed, in-depth investigation of the development of a single situation or individual, over a period of time. Phenomenology focuses on understanding the subjective, personal experiences and perspectives (Yin, 1984). Although I considered IPA combined with a case study approach, this research only uses elements of case study approach for contextual understanding, rather than a full case study. Therefore, I will only refer to IPA in my research design.

3.3 Pilot study

In preparation of the data collection on a larger scale, a pilot study has been executed. This pilot study revolved around a similar research question "The role of the school in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in secondary education: Results of a pilot study."

3.3.1 Introduction

The purpose of a pilot study is to explore and provide the basis on which clarifications could be made to the research question and sub questions and the methods by which those questions are researched. The pilot study consists of six interviews and the participants were all school professionals working in Dutch secondary education. Two participants are teachers, two are department leaders, one is a concierge, and one participant is a front desk assistant. The pilot study of the current research was the first step of the practical application of the interviews to learn more about the role of the school in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in secondary education.

This chapter covers the definition and value of pilot studies. It also covers the goal of the pilot study; what the researcher expects from a pilot study. The researcher then discusses the application of the pilot study in the current research. The outcomes of the pilot study will also be discussed shortly because these have a very direct influence on the actual research itself. The importance of the pilot study is shown in the results. A few changes have been made in the interview method and fine tuning the way the interview questions and sub-questions are presented to the participants.

3.3.2 Definition

A pilot study is a mini version of a full-scale study, or a trial run done in preparation of the complete study. It can also be a specific pre-testing of research instruments, including questionnaires or interview schedules. The pilot study will thus follow after the researcher has a clear vision of the research topic and questions, the techniques and methods which will be applied, and what the research schedule will look like. It is trying out all research techniques and methods, which the researcher has in mind to see how well they will work in practice. If necessary, it can then still be adapted and modified accordingly (van Teijlingen, 2002).

3.3.3 Purpose

In relation to this project my purpose for this pilot study was to test the interview questions, to experience how these questions are received, understood, and answered and to see if the interviewees are understanding these questions somewhat similar. This pilot study provides an opportunity to see what types of responses are given and if the interviewees feel comfortable while being interviewed. The outcome of this pilot study indicated which questions and interview tactics to improve, change or keep for the final study.

According to the literature (Van Teijlingen, 2002; Thabane et al., 2010; Abbas & McLean, 2013) there are multiple benefits to gain of a pilot study, and these explain why a pilot study is valued; It is needed to detect possible flaws in measurement procedures; do all participants have a similar understanding of the questions and concepts? For example, 'social-emotional wellbeing' is a leading concept in this project, and it is important to learn if all participants understand the concept in a similar way. A pilot study is also valuable to identify unclear or ambiguous items in a questionnaire.

Non-verbal behaviour of participants in the pilot study may give valuable information about any embarrassment or discomfort experienced concerning the content or wording of items in a questionnaire. It became clear that the introduction was particularly important to create a safe and open interview environment.

It can give advance warning about where the main research project can fail/ it indicates where research protocols might not be followed. The pilot study can also identify practical problems of the research procedure. All interviews need to be planned in advance and most teachers prefer multiple options, so if there are any last-minute changes in their teaching schedule, the interview can be moved to another option.

This prevents interviews being postponed for a longer period of time. It indicates whether proposed methods or instruments are inappropriate or too complicated; it was necessary to go from semi-open interview to open interview, otherwise the questionnaire became an obstacle instead of a guideline. The subject of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of the school is a complicated subject yet also a subject participants feel very connected to. The answers being given are based on personal experiences, beliefs, and context. The open (conversational) interview is more appropriate to discuss personal responses like these.

3.3.4 Characteristics of the PSG

All members of this Pilot Study Group (PSG) have a different contribution within the organisation, while working with students: Two department leaders, two teachers with a mentoring role, two members of the educational support staff. The PSG will be formed out of the members of staff from one regular state school for secondary education in the Netherlands. The total of members of staff (at this particular school) is eighty. More than fifty percent is working part-time. Five of the six pilot study participants work part-time. The selected members of this PSG have a permanent position at the school and have over two years of experience in education, so they are familiar with the expression 'student wellbeing.'

The interviews were held in Dutch to make it easier for all participants to understand and reply. Dutch is their first language or the language they use during their work. Not all participants feel comfortable being interviewed in English. Language differences may have consequences, because concepts in one language may be understood differently in another language.

The relation between subjective experience and language is a two-way process; language is used to express meaning, but the other way round, language influences how meaning is constructed. Qualitative research is considered valid when the distance between the meanings as experienced by the participants and the meanings as interpreted in the findings is as close as possible (Polkinghorne, 2007). Translation between languages involves interpretation as well.

The pilot study started with the intention of translating as soon as possible (within 24 hours) so both the researcher and the participant could come back to something if they felt the need after the interview, with the translation as guideline and the interview still somewhat fresh in their memory. During the pilot it became clear that no participant felt the need to come back to the interview or needed insight in the translation right away. It also revealed that the translation should take place later, so the analysis of the data would take place in the same language that the interview was held.

By selecting members of staff with different roles within the organisation and regarding the students they work with, the pilot study shows a similar diversity in interviewees as the final study. It is expected these differences will influence the outcome of the interviews. All pilot study participants have a comparable role in the school and relation to students and with that supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, as the sample that participated in the final research.

3.3.5 Pilot project description

All participants of the pilot study were recruited in collaboration with the school director and asked if they wanted to participate in this research. There are disadvantages to this approach. The school director can be of influence on the validity of the research if they favor certain candidates to participate in the research with similar experiences and experiences at school. It could prevent the study from receiving data based on different experiences and interpretation of the concept. Yet, collaborating with the school director seemed more beneficial for the research for the following reasons:

- A general invite via e-mail does not generate many responses,
- Other data such as, school policy and records, are also received via the school director,
- The director knows who is employed for over two years and, for example, who has a mentoring role (not every teacher is also mentor),

- The privacy policy has changed this the beginning of this year. That is why the school directors prefer to keep supervision on how data is handled, since not everyone is familiar with the new policy just yet.

Participants who consent to be interviewed were given the opportunity to view the basic interview schedule prior to the interview in order to have time to consider their responses, with the explanation that this schedule is a guide for the interview and questions may not necessarily be asked in that order. It was hoped that this will encourage more meaningful replies, which, in turn, will provide richer data. Spontaneous replies are to be included by asking clarifying questions. Thus, it will be possible to elicit both planned and unplanned responses that will again aid in gathering meaningful data. The duration of the pilot study interviews was around forty-five minutes so it would fit in the teaching timetable. This approach was very helpful and similar to the one used in the final data collection.

Permission was sought from each participant to use a voice-recorder to record the interview and they all agreed. In the PSG, all interviews will take place at the participant's place of work and at a time that is most suitable for them. The interview itself, although based around the guiding questions, was conducted in a conversational manner in order to place the participant at ease and to aid rapport. This is also why it will be helpful to use a voice-recorder. The interviews will be open and conversational and that means no interview will be completely the same.

Of course, the guiding questions and my focus will stay the same, but questions have different responses and, depending on the natural flow of the conversation, subjects can be discussed at a different stage of the interview. So being able to re-experience the interview by listening to the recording will help collecting and comparing data afterwards.

3.3.6 Identified risks and its evaluation

In regard to the self-selection of the participants it is possible that those who volunteer or accept when asked to participate, will have strong opinions about student wellbeing. And during the pilot study, there were just a few selected interviewees. The selected interviewees were not seen as representatives. The interview is individual, and it is expected that participants will draw upon personal experiences (within the work field), so it is difficult to use those answers and see it as a representative for a larger group.

Participants with strong opinions can add or change the focus of the interview. Therefore, it was important to stay focused and guiding during the interview, without interruption. As an interviewer I need to provide a safe and professional environment. And if, during the interview, other subjects come to mind, I need to reflect on those and possibly alter or add sub research questions. After the pilot study I have contemplated to alter the semi-structured approach to open, but I choose not to. A subject such as wellbeing triggers an emotional response. A semi structured interview can still provide flexibility and openness with open ended questions but prevents the interview from going in a different direction. Which can be a risk when someone is emotional or personally touched by the subject of the conversation. Open interviews are also prone to be more time consuming and difficult to analyze (Fontanella et al., 2006)

3.3.7 Evaluation of the pilot study

During the pilot study six interviews were held among school professionals. Two of the participants were teachers, two have a management/ leading role within the department and two were working as part of the educational support staff. Four interviews were completed within forty-five minutes, two interview were completed within sixty minutes. Three interviews were semi-structured interviews, and the final three interviews were conducted with the use of the open (conversational) interview method.

Criteria

All participants understand the interview questions in a similar way.

All participants had trouble explaining social-emotional wellbeing. Not by knowledge, but by finding the 'right' words. The concept of social-emotional wellbeing is complicated and the general meaning, according to the participants, seemed similar. But they all seem to have a different approach when describing 'social-emotional wellbeing.' This is where the open interview structure is valuable. There is room for open conversation about complicated concepts. All participants needed the use of (personal) examples and additional questions to fully explain the meaning of social emotional wellbeing. I summarized and repeated given answers, to be sure I understood the deeper meaning and interpretation of the given answer.

The pilot interviews had an open structure, which supported the conversational style fitting for discussing individuals understanding and perception, however the risk of completely open interviews is the lack of structure.

With the lack of a clear definition on social-emotional wellbeing, it is important to give some structure to the conversation to be able to compare some of the data around the understanding and interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing. Therefore, the open interview style will be altered in semi-open. The semi-open interview style gives more structure to the data outcomes, yet still leaves room for open conversations.

Participants are able to respond to the interview questions based on personal experience or work-related experience, so they can give detailed responses and possibly support their response with examples.
The introduction at the beginning of the interview has changed slightly. Instead of emphasizing the background information/ introduction to this study, the PSG seemed to prefer a more personal approach. They searched for reassurance about what kind of answers the study was looking for. After explaining the value and importance of their point of view and that there is no right or wrong answer, the participant seems more relaxed and open. All participants seemed very engaged with the subject and felt comfortable enough to explain by using examples. Conducting the interview in a conversation-like-manner was very helpful for creating a comfortable and open atmosphere.

The interview questions are guiding, and during the interview I will be able to ask supplementary questions.
In the beginning of the pilot study, I was hesitant in asking supplementary questions. For the original interview questionnaire, see Appendix B. I did not want to ask to much supplementary questions, in fear of adding suggestive questions. But the 'why' is especially important for understanding the interpretation of participants. During the final pilot interviews, I let go of the prepared questionnaire (with the questions still in the back of my mind) and focussed on the research questions and the 'why.' Weare & Gray (2003) report that the teacher's own behaviour and attitudes are factors influencing children's social and emotional competence and wellbeing was the teacher's own behaviour and attitudes. Teachers cannot transmit emotional and social competence and wellbeing to children if their own emotional and social needs are not being met. So, it is important to fully understand the context of the answer being given and ask supplementary questions for a deeper (contextual) understanding.

Results of the PSG can be compared.
A problem associated with this area is the lack of consistent terminology. Assessment of social and emotional development and wellbeing is often complicated by a lack of appropriate diagnostic terms.

A limited range of (evidence-based) assessment tools, and an unwillingness to acknowledge that a range of social and emotional concerns can affect children, also complicate efforts for policymakers to consider assessment in this area (Mental Health Taskforce, 2004). Asking for examples and experiences helped to check if we are all understanding the same. Context makes a big difference in the answers being given and the interpretation of it. It is not about what the answer is, but about the 'why.' Why do the participants think about a certain event or emotion? What makes it important to them? During the first half of the pilot, I did not ask enough examples or supplementary questions. By adding those is the other pilot interviews, I can see the answers given are more detailed, describing context and making it easier to connect to the literature.

Other/ general remarks or questions

The PSG was also interested in a student point of view on the subject. What do students understand by their social-emotional wellbeing? Is there something they miss in the school? To see a student's perspective on the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and their idea of the role of the school in support of this concept, can bring important new perspectives and might shed light on other ideas. Or maybe support the data from the literature, interview participants, or both.

Translation: Translating within 24 hours not only meant the translation needs to be rushed, but it also showed the risk of losing important data in translation. Because of the expected duration of the data collection, it is important I can compare the first and last interview in a similar way. If I translate in between interviews, there is a risk in losing data. IPA uses interpretation and phenomenology. Interpretation in Dutch and English can be different. Therefore, I have decided to not translate the interview transcripts. Translation will happen at the end of the data collection and analysis.

3.4 Research design

This study has a qualitative research approach and explores the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing in secondary education. This research explores the role of the school through the eyes of the school professional, collecting data from a large sample size.

3.4.1 Sample selection

The participating school professionals work at one of four schools who form the state school community for secondary education in one city in the Netherlands and are managed by one overarching schoolboard. It is important to state that a school does not operate as a group of isolated variables. Student-teacher relation, policy, interaction with different members of staff and whole-school approaches, it all has impact on each other, from the classroom to the administration, everything is connected. Considering the practical factors within the school that influence each other, the factors outside of the school are just as important, and with that I mean personal context. No outside school data was collected, but it was expected that participants' personal experiences during school hours and after school hours affect the data from the interviews. The beliefs and personal experiences of all the people working in education influence what they understand by students' social-emotional wellbeing and how they act on it. Thus, to understand the interviewees at different schools, it is necessary to understand the viewpoint of the school and the interviewee as a whole and how it fits within the context in that school.

Even though the wider community (such as parents, educational partners, local community) affect how schools operate, and students are obviously central to the school environment, only school professionals were interviewed about the role of the school in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in secondary education to make the research manageable and protect the quality of the project.

The data collection focusses on the beliefs held by school professionals within that particular school. All phenomena that either influence or reflect these beliefs that are controlled were examined, such as each school's student care policy, classroom management policies and the support system for students with special needs.

To preserve unity, the data from each school was analysed with the unique context of the school in mind, including location, socio-economic factors, rates of suspension and alternative programs, with the help of the reports of the schools and school inspection. The four schools are not identical, although they are part of the same schoolboard, and it was important to stay aware of the differences during the data collection.

The participants were selected and invited for in-depth interviews, and they were not selected to represent a larger group. Each participant was looked upon as an individual with personal unique experiences and a personal interpretation and understanding about social-emotional wellbeing. Selecting participants is connected to the method of purposive sampling.

This approach was used to develop the sample of the research under discussion and fits in the category of non-probability sampling techniques. According to this purposive sampling, sample members are selected based on their knowledge, expertise, and relationships regarding a research subject (Freedman et al., 2007). During this research the school professionals all have a clear connection with the phenomenon under investigation, sufficient and relevant work experience in the field, because of the recent changes and innovations within education.

All state schools in one city in the Netherlands who provide regular secondary education took part in this research. School with a religious background or specialized form of education were excluded. The excluded schools can refuse pupils based on beliefs or specialization, while the regular state schools legally cannot and will not refuse pupils. In this city there are nine schools who offer secondary education. Four of those are schools with a Christian background, one school offers special education for students with development disorders and behaviour disorders. These schools were excluded from this research project because their student's admission preferences can influence the outcome of the data and makes it impossible to compare data with other schools or see these school sites as comparable.

The four remaining schools offer education on all levels, open to all, without distinction. These four schools do differ in levels (they are all specialized on other levels). All four participating schools are state schools, they report to the same board of directors, they cannot exclude students based on age, religion, special needs, or previous schools. These four schools have the same mission and vision about student's social-emotional wellbeing in their school policy.

They are part of the local foundation for state schools and have the same managing-director. They are of similar-economic standing and the student population are comparable in age. The four schools differ in size and level of academic achievement.

The sample contained forty-eight in-depth open interviews with school professionals. Each of the four school sites has had a comparable sample. Participants who participated in interviews had to be employed for more than two years, so they were expected to be familiar with school policies. All participants were recruited in collaboration with the school director and asked if they wanted to participate in this research (with the option to say no). If so, they received information about the project and were asked to sign a consent form. Although this was helpful in constructing a large sample group, I am aware of the disadvantages to this approach. The school director can be of influence on the validity of the research if they favour certain candidates to participate in the research with similar experiences and experiences at school. It could have prevented the study from receiving data based on different experiences and interpretation of the concept.

This research does not review the Dutch school system or several schools. There is no right or wrong: the focus lies on understanding and researching a phenomenon. That is why collaborating with the school director seemed beneficial for the research for the following reasons: It was anticipated that a general invitation via e-mail does not generate many responses. Other data such as, school policies and general records about students' attendance, drop-outs, etc., were also received via the school director. The director knows who is employed for over two years and, for example, who has a mentoring role (not every teacher is also mentor).

Each school director was invited to participate in the sample as well as the managing director of all four schools. Eight department leaders participated in the sample, equally divided amongst the four school sites so they have a comparable sample. If it was not possible to interview a minimum of two department leaders from one school, a third department leader from one school is asked to participate in the sample. In this situation, the third department leader worked at one of the schools with a higher student population. Some of the smaller schools do not have as many department leaders. All four schools have a minimum of two.

Mentors were invited to participate in the sample. They have a key role in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing as they are spokesman and confidant for their mentor-students. Mentoring students has found to be a valuable role in every forum of learning. A fundamental difference between mentoring and advising is that the role of the mentor is more than advising; mentoring is a personal, as well as professional relationship. An adviser might or might not be a mentor, depending on the quality of the relationship and the role within the school. The lowest level of education offers a minimum of four years in school. Interviewing mentors from each year (1-4) at each school gives a semi comparable sample. They can be first a first-year mentor, there is no minimum of experience.

A school professional who is a mentor for a longer period of time can be more familiar with mentor tasks and policies. However, this research is not about reviewing policy, it is about exploring the role of the school professional in social-emotional wellbeing. Unexperienced mentors can be very committed and passionate about their role in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing and it is important not to exclude them. Approximately twelve teachers, three from each individual school site were invited to participate. They were asked about other components of their job. Some teachers have the extra task of coaching new colleagues. Being a teacher and a coach can affect their possible interpretation of their role in supporting social-emotional wellbeing but being a coach in this example is not only referring students but also colleagues.

The educational support staff contains different jobs in the schools. Eight educational support staff members were invited for this sample, but their individual roles can be different. Some work as a receptionist and keep track of students' absence from school, others work as a janitor and have the role of handling students with detention. The sample invited two members of the educational support staff from each school site. Both fulfilling other roles in the school. If school A. samples a concierge and technical assistant, so should school B. Although qualitative research does not provide a clear comparison like quantitative research, similarities between the interviewees on ground of work-related factors is preferred.

The sample in the four school sites are divers and in-depth so it was possible to explore and understand differences and similarities between the schools. It was highly important to take the differences and similarities of each individual participant into account. Everyone has a different role in the school or a different relationship with what we look at as education.

The concierge might experience school policy on a whole other level than the school director who wrote it and they both have a different relationship to the students. Students might have a different kind of interaction with the different staff members. And these moments of interaction can influence the answers during the interviews. Figure 3.4.1 presents the sample.

Figure 3.4.1: Sample

Sample	Invited participants	Description
Director	4	These are all the school directors of the local state schools in secondary education
Department leader	8	Inviting two department leaders to participate from each school site, prevents the information being just from one person and all school sites have a minimum of two department leaders. Having two department leaders from one school can shed light on the influence of different academic levels on the data. Each department leaders are responsible for a different level.
Mentor	16	In consultation with the school director, we agreed on inviting four mentors and three teachers from each school site. Enough to collect (presumably) different data. School director was careful about adding to the workload of his teaching staff.
Teacher	12	This can be teachers with different additional tasks.
Educational support staff	8	Two members of the educational support staff from each school site are invited. Both fulfilling other roles in the school. Based on the IPA method, this gives a broader insight in different roles of the school staff.

The sample selection is exceptionally large for IPA standards, consisting of school professionals in many different roles. The choice for a larger data sample comes from different factors. IPA has been chosen to be the most fitting methodology to fulfil qualitative in-depth research amongst school professionals and their outlook on social-emotional wellbeing and student support. However, it is very common for researching within Dutch education to use quantitative methods. This larger data sample is meant to bridge the gap. The outcomes will be shared with local politics, and it is important that the data reflects a larger group of people. However, it is also highly important to research the complex concept of social-emotional wellbeing in a qualitative way to fully understand someone's interpretation and implementation of the matter. Therefore, a conscious decision was made to use a large sample size, investing extra time in collecting and analysing the data, to enable the outcomes to represent a larger group. The representation of a larger group will have a bigger impact within the local community and piques the interest of local politics.

3.4.2 Data collection

As stated before, the focus of the data collection was contracting data through in-depth interviews. In-depth studies draw on multiple sources of evidence. Yin (2009) describes there are six sources of evidence: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artefacts. These six sources require different approaches and are likely to reveal different kind of insights. Although it is important to recognize that these six sources also have their strengths and weaknesses, because of the use of a multi-facetted perspective. To ensure richness in data, it is important, according to Yin, to use different sources of evidence.

Contextual studies help to understand phenomenon and interpretation, which is crucial during IPA. These sources are interconnected and equally important. The various sources are highly complementary, especially when investigating the context, and a good contextual study will therefore want to use as many sources as possible. The first stage involved gathering data from the participating schools regarding the school policies on student care, students' attendance, size of the student population and staff, academic level. How the school operates is influenced by the context and the perspectives of its school professionals and this information will aid in "painting a picture" of the school.

During the second stage participants were interviewed. The data and contextual material from the first stage affect the data from the interviews and were regarded while interviewing to help form objective and subjective understanding. This study developed themes using the knowledge, experience, beliefs, and opinions of the school professionals who experience students' need for social-emotional support and the implementation of student care policies daily, and deal with the outcomes. Therefore, it is important to conduct the interviews in such a manner as to encourage openness and truthful replies.

Participants were given information about the research, the research questions and to which methods this research is based upon. Informing participants prior to the interview, provided time for them to prepare and consider their responses. This approach supported more meaningful replies, which, in turn, provided richer data (Stolterman, 2008). Although semi-structured interview techniques were used in a conversational manner, a framework provided structure for the interviews. The semi-structured interview gives flexibility for spontaneous replies to be included by asking clarifying questions. Thus, it created flexibility to elicit both planned and unplanned responses that will again support gathering meaningful data.

Most interviews were completed within forty-five minutes. Some interviews lasted a little longer, but no longer than 60 minutes. The indicated time for the interview was customized to the school schedule. For example, one hour of science is only forty-five minutes in the timetable. Most teachers do not teach back-to-back but have space in their timetable. So, if they had some space in between classes, it was possible to fit in the interview. Each participant was asked for permission to use a tape-recorder to record the interview. Most interviews took place at the participant's place of work and at a time that is most suitable for them. Therefore, participating was very accessible as possible and discomfort was minimized. The interview itself, although based around the framework and guiding questions, was conducted in conversational manner to place the participant at ease and to encourage and support openness.

The type of interview technique that was used was the semi-structured interview as stated before. This interviewing method allows to use both a structured approach as well as a more 'conversational' style to answer the research questions. This style of in-depth interviewing is appropriate for this study as the purpose was to explore and gather as much information about the interpretation behind the answer, pertaining to the participants' perspectives. There is familiarity with techniques in creating and building rapport, which is expected to be substantially supported by the fact that the researcher is a member of the educational support profession. My role within this organization will be explained later in this chapter, during '3.4 Ethical issues', although it is important to state that being an insider was very helpful in generating participants and creating an open atmosphere to conduct these interviews. The research focuses on the experiences of school professionals without a social work or pedagogy background, and there was no right or wrong. This kept the possibility of me having a dual role to a minimum.

Semi-structured interviewing in a more 'conversational' style is an alternative style of survey interviewing that allows deviations from the norms of structured interviewing. During more conversational interviews, it is allowed to ask participants for clarification and provide unscripted feedback, if necessary, to clarify any meanings of questions. This type of interviewing supports an alternative set of techniques to standardized survey interviewing. Structured interview methods may, in this study, reduce the richness in data because standardization prevents conversational interactions that may be required for respondents to clarify and understand some of the questions (Armour, 2012).

To support the finding of accurate and rich data, a framework diagram (figure 3.4.2.) will be used to structure the semi-open interviews and within this framework the interview questions were prepared (as seen in the chapter about the data collection). The diagram is the result of literature and pilot study. As explained earlier, these is no clear definition on social-emotional wellbeing. This affected the approach on the data collection tremendously. Without a clear definition (Mooney, 2000; Seligman, 2011), it is impossible to measure the knowledge of school professionals around this subject. Therefore, it was necessary to have a more open approach where data was collected of their understanding and interpretation within the context of their role as school professional instead of factual knowledge and policy driven evaluations. Engaging conversations provide richer data than following a questionnaire (Rodrigues et al., 2021).

The pilot study confirmed this standpoint. During the pilot study, the interviews where I was more flexible in using additional questions and the interview felt more like a conversation, the outcomes provide more insight in someone's understanding, interpretation, and ideas. This type of rich data is what this research needs to not only give voice to school professionals, but also reveal their interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing and what their interpretation means for this generation of students.

The type of interview questions used were open interview questions and a full questionnaire is in the appendix. This questionnaire also contains examples of the supportive questions that were used to clarify or encourage the participants to provide richer data. The questionnaire and framework diagram were used as a guideline and structural support; however, the interview setting was held in a conversational manner.

Figure 3.4.2. Framework

National/ Regional level

Educational policy

School Climate

School emphasis on academic success and social-emotional well-being

Teachers and supporting staff

Professional

Teacher education
Learning behaviour
Confidence
Resilience
Job experience
Professional development
Classroom management

Educational

Supportive/ emotional
climate : *for teacher and
students*
Cognitive activation
Pedagogics
Social skills
Emotional regulation

The role of the school supporting social-emotional well-
being of students.
1. Who is responsible for student social-emotional well-being and
how is this monitored and valued?
2. How do school professional understand their role in relation to
student social-emotional well-being and what challenges do they
experience?
3. What are school professional's doing to enhance provision to
support students' social-emotional well-being and do they have
any recommendations?

Contextual framework

Mental health

Definition of health by the World Health Organisation (2001) as
contained in its constitution: "Health is a state of complete physical,
mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or
infirmity."
Often viewed as relating primarily to severe mental illness that
required detention.

Social-emotional well-being

The term social and emotional wellbeing is used to describe
the social, emotional, spiritual, and cultural wellbeing of a
person. Mental health focus too much on problems and don't
properly describe all the factors that make up and influence
wellbeing. Because of this, the term social-emotional well-
being fits well with a holistic view of health. And view mental
health as part of a person's social-emotional well-being.

Language

It is important to underline again that this research took place in the Netherlands and to prevent any
data to get lost in translation, additional effort was done to contain all the richness, yet still being able
to translate the data to this report. Language differences may have consequences, because some
concepts and expressions in one language may be understood differently in another language. The
relation between experiences and language is a two-way process. Language is used to express meaning
and beliefs, yet language influences how meaning is constructed and understood.

To validate this qualitative research, the distance between the meanings as experienced by the participants and the meanings as interpreted in the findings is kept as close as possible (Polkinghorne 2007). When translating from one language to another, interpretation is involved as well. According to Kusher (2009), any communicated message must be interpretated by the translator and transferred into another language in a way that the meaning is preserved. Participants commonly use narratives, expressions, and metaphors, and these are language-specific and can vary from culture to culture.

Interviews were held in Dutch; therefore, it was easier for all participants to understand and reply, support openness and richness in these conversations. Social-emotional wellbeing is a complicated concept, and it is important the collected data is not influenced in a negative way, because the participants experience language barrier during the interview. Dutch is their first language or the language they use during their work. Not all participants feel comfortable being interviewed in English although all participants feel comfortable reading and understanding written text. The first phase of the data (gathering data, transcribing and first analysis and coding) will all be in Dutch to prevent any data being misconstrued. Translation occurred in the last phase of writing the thesis, after the data analysis. Especially with using IPA, it is important to make sure the interpretation does not get lost in translation and important phenomena and meanings are recognized within the context of the interview. The possibility to re-listen the interviews while double-checking the data analysis is why I choose to do the translation in the final stage of the research. If there is any possible miscommunication or doubt about the interpreted data, the participant will be asked to read the transcript before it is being used as research data and translated. This descriptive information of the process of translation is to provide a better insight in the possibilities and weaknesses of working with two languages and which procedures have been followed (Squires, 2009).

3.4.3 Data analysis

After the data collection comes analysing the data. One of the great strengths of IPA compared with other methods is that evidence can be collected from multiple sources to support a better understanding of the data. Triangulation uses evidence from different sources to confirm the same fact or finding. The contextual database of the evidence gathered needs to be collected to support IPA. This base can include observant notes, contextual documents that are collected during the data collection, interview notes or transcripts, and analysis of the evidence.

This research explored the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and its purpose was to develop themes regarding the understand and beliefs of school professionals. Therefore, it was necessary to choose the most suitable methods of data analysis to ensure that the data is treated thoroughly, and the conclusions drawn can be substantiated.

Interviews will be recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Analysis of the transcripts are executed using a qualitative software package. Qualitative research software supports organizing and analysing unstructured information next to a data analysis model that helps structure and analyse data from the start of the data collection stage. Multiple qualitative software packages were contemplated as possibilities in this study: NVivo, MAXQDA, and ATLAS.ti. All three packages offered similar capabilities with regards to qualitative data analysis, organization, and coding. All three were also available through the universities IT department. They provide tools for analysing unstructured qualitative data from interviews.

Of all three, NVivo is most used in the Netherlands. The software has query tools that analyse data and detected trends. The data analysis will be in Dutch to prevent any loss of important underlying data (think of expressions who might be difficult to capture in another language). Therefore, NVivo was selected as the qualitative analysis software for this study. Along with NVivo, the model of data analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) will be used as a visual representation and reference in how to approach the data (see Figure 3.4.3).

Figure 3.4.3.
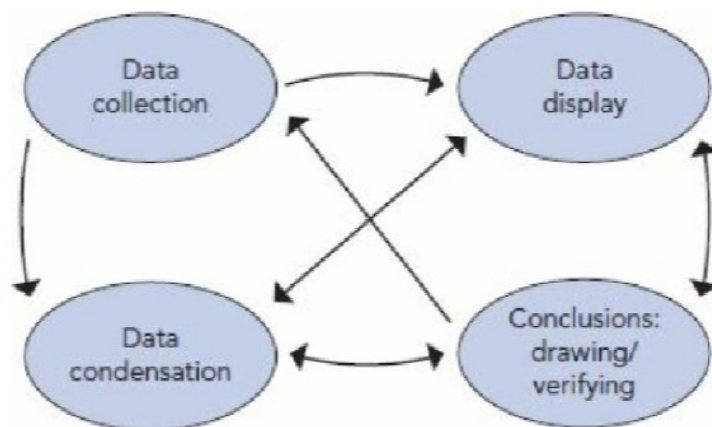
The model of Miles and Huberman (1994) is well-known and presents data analysis as a continuous process where all four phases can be looked at separately and simultaneously. These four phases will be essential to this study. In addition, the central and guiding questions will always be displayed to support the focus of the study and prevent straying of the analysis. IPA analysis generates codes and themes from the data, rather than using pre-existing theories to identify codes and themes. IPA does not test theories, but the relevance of IPA often lies in the development of existing theories. Using NVivo as part of the IPA data analysis, there are a few options to collect data:

1. Divide the data into 'meaning units' and import it in tabular form, with blank columns to left and right then import the tables and work with those.

2. Use the NVivo notation/ comment option for specific short comments on text.

3. Use the NVivo see-also links (in association with memos) for longer comments on text.

The data from the interviews will be transcribed, and the text will be analyzed in Dutch. Translation from Dutch to English will be done after the analysis. In this research, and with IPA, recognizing and understanding the meaning behind a given answer is highly important. Therefore, the translation was as late as possible to prevent important data to get lost in translation. Additional comments will be added to highlight and develop insights into the participants' experience and their personal perspective. Emerging codes will develop throughout, and these will be catalogued, and this will form the basis for looking for patterns in the codes.

These patterns will form different key themes. Themes can identify something that has meaning to the participants such as certain topics or an object of concern or reveal something of the meaning and emotion of that thing, for the participants. Some themes will eventually be grouped into broader themes called 'superordinate themes'.

At the end of the data analysis the final set of themes are summarized and placed into a table or similar structure where evidence from the text is given to back up the themes produced by a quote from the text. The founders of IPA use a seven-step data analysis guide which is complementary to Figure 4. These seven steps illustrate how the data is approach with the help of NVivo and Figure 4. these seven steps reveal the emerging of themes and patterns and how these are connected to interpretating and understanding of the data (see figure 3.4.4.)

Figure 3.4.4. The seven steps of IPA data analysis (Charlick et al., 2015 adapted from Smith, 2009)

01 Reading and re-reading
Immersing oneself in the original data.

02 Initial noting
Free association and exploring semantic content (e.g. by writing notes in the margin).

03 Developing emergent themes
Focus on chunks of transcript and analysis of notes made into themes.

04 Searching for connections across emergent themes
Abstracting and integrating themes.

05 Moving to the next case
Trying to bracket previous themes and keep open-minded in order to do justice to the individuality of each new case.

06 Looking for patterns across cases
Finding patterns of shared higher order qualities across cases, noting idiosyncratic instances.

07 Taking interpretations to deeper levels
Deepening the analysis by utilizing metaphors and temporal referents, and by importing other theories as a lens through which to view the analysis.

3.5 Ethical issues

The following chapters reveal possible ethical issues and how I approached these issues during this research. There are three major subjects to approach in relation to ethics. These are: confidentiality, my dual role and covid. Appendix D will contain the ethical review and approval.

3.5.1 Confidentiality

After a set of interview participants were identified in collaboration with the school director, the researcher contacted each participant to make arrangements for the interview. Before participant respond to the invitation for the interview, they are informed about the amount of time it costs, why I have collaborated with the school director in the sample selection and how confidentiality is guaranteed. Also, the possibility to decline will be addressed as well, to minimize the feeling of being pressured into participating, and in support of being open and approachable (to minimize the distance between researched and participants).

Because of the sensitivity of the topic and the importance of openness and trust, the interviews were conducted in an office that provided privacy while at the same time providing the participant with a comfortable environment that placed the interviewer and participant at a table with chairs that were alike and in a room that offered little to no distractions. The office was at the school or organisation of the school professional so there was familiarity with the space.

Interview arrangements were mostly made via e-mail, but telephone was utilized in a few cases when requested by the participant. By providing access to the researcher via phone, or e-mail, the participants were put at ease about the researcher's sensitivity to the privacy of potential participants. Each participant was given a pseudonym for her/himself. Transcript names were changed or deleted, as were the names of schools. Notes of names of individuals and matching pseudonyms were kept separate from each other, and other identifying information was kept in a secure place. The study was submitted and approved by the University's Ethics committee (see Appendix A).

3.5.2 The role as a school professional and researcher

As researcher and school professional, I must acknowledge the dual role and the possible effects during research. Having a dual role as both insider and outsider can lead to researcher vulnerability and the possibility of participants feeling inequality. Yet, it is important to state that my role as a school professional is working as part of the student support team at one of the schools. The participating school professionals are all professionals without a specialized supportive role and for that, have a different outlook on the concept this research focuses on. Because of my different role in the school, I am no one's superior and there is no dependence or inequality. Hewitt (2007) explains, depending on the types of disclosure, unintended consequences of trust, the difference in competence in communication skills and ethically sound reasoning of the researcher can influence the possibility of moral questions arising during in-depth interviews. It is important to maintain professional distance and protect personal boundaries during in-depth interviews (Richards & Schwartz, 2002; Kidd & Finleyson, 2006).

Given the use of interpretative methodology and the exploratory nature of the research question, it would have been great to start the study without any preconceived ideas or thoughts. While this is difficult to do in a fully-fledged way, considering my dual role, I was always seeking to be as objective as I possibly could by going through the data evidence and referring to the literature.

Yin (2009) even suggests that maintaining the chain of evidence (referring to the literature while analysing the data) increases the reliability of a case study. The privileged position of being the researcher versus the researched has been emphasized in the literature. This study depends on the willingness and openness of the participants.

The possibility of inequality in power balance during interviews and the ethical concerns connected to this imbalance are commonly described (Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009). According to them, it is important to recognize possible imbalance, but emphasize on the common epistemological ground all qualitative researchers have. The determination to minimize the distance of the relationship between researcher and participant. As a researcher in a dual role, I must acknowledge and comprehend the risk factors. Always trying to be an open, approachable partner in dialogue and a great listener. It is important to use supplementary questions and even revisit some of the subjects' multiple times during interviewing, not only to verify the answers being given but to create a safe and open ambiance. Some participants might need more time to feel comfortable during in-depth interviews. Revisiting some of the subjects can give added information, make the participant feel more in control because of the familiarity of the subject and verify my role as a researcher: do I really hear and comprehend the information given.

The position of a school professional and researcher, my dual role during this study, is expected to be advantageous. My role as a school professional is coordinating student care, being head of the student support team, and colleagues are used to discussing additional and special needs for students with me. Most students and colleagues see me as advisor. This means there is already a connection to the participants. They may feel more at ease discussing ideas of their own with a familiar person in an open-structured conversation, as opposed to having a researcher asking them questions, following a structured interview protocol. The school provides extra time for my role as a researcher, which means I will work less hours as a school professional. The school policy for employees who take on a study or research is that they have the possibility (with government funding) to work part-time but remain a full-time employee. This is a possibility for all school professionals and not based on favours. From a research point of view, this dual role can facilitate data collection by always being on the research site, interacting closely with the participants, building trust and a better understanding of their perspective in the school and on the subject.

3.5.4 Covid

This paragraph explains the effect Covid has on this project. The coronavirus (COVID) outbreak disrupted life around the globe. The virus was confirmed to have spread to the Netherlands on 27 February 2020, when the first Dutch COVID case was confirmed. In March 2020, the lockdown started in the Netherlands, closing all schools, bars, sport clubs, etc. The Netherlands has opted for what it calls an "intelligent lockdown" (de Haas, et all.) to fight against the coronavirus pandemic. With the schools' closing, it became more difficult to make arrangements for the final eight interviews that were left. During a timeline from March 2020 until February 2021, the government added more restrictions. In February 2021, the government spoke of a third lockdown to prevent a third Covid outbreak, adding a curfew for the nation. Thankfully, the lockdown, government advice, social distancing, and the general fear of the virus, did not affect this research project in a major way. Most of the data collection was finished. Although most of my data collection was done prior COVID, the outbreak influenced the remaining eight interviews in a small way, as well as my time to prioritize on writing (being homebound, having to work, study, and being a mother).

The remaining eight interviews were postponed until further information about the outbreak and perspective after lockdowns. The lockdown in the Netherlands started in March 2020. In May 2020 it became clear that Dutch secondary schools would not fully re-open until the new school year. The final eight participants were then asked if they felt comfortable in 'face to face' via video call interviewing. All eight participants felt comfortable doing so since they are familiar with working and teaching online during this pandemic. All participants were used to working with the office support app Microsoft Teams. For this reason, I used Microsoft teams for the remaining eight interviews.

Feeling comfortable with the usage of Microsoft Teams and being familiar with each other as colleagues came as close as possible (during this unexpected situation) as a face-to-face interview in person. The familiarity made the changed setting less awkward, and all participants stated they still felt it was possible to have an open and personal conversation about the subject. Because of this familiarity, I expect the data retrieved from the interview will be usable and comparable with the rest of the data. The same interview questionnaire was used. During these eight interviews I took a little more time in the introduction.

Covid-19 is a highly discussed topic, so I gave the participant time for some extra small talk. Using a little time to discuss Covid-19 and then consciously closing the subject, helped to focus on the interview. The subject of Covid-19 did not pop-up during the interview but was mentioned at the end of three interviews. These three participants highlighted the importance of wellbeing and supporting wellbeing during a pandemic. Although there was a positive response to interviewing via video call, it does seem the setting was of influence on the 'flow' of the conversation. All eight interviews via video call lasted approximately ten minutes shorter than the previous interviews in the old setting. This could be coincidence, but it is a remarkable difference. It does not seem to affect the quality of the data, so this indicates that meeting via video call cuts back on 'small talk.'

3.6 Summary

Chapter 3 gave insight in the chosen methodology, the rationale and limitations for this, possible ethical issues, the pilot study, and how the research was designed. With the help of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, this research is to gain insight into the school professionals' thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and reflections surrounding their experiences of supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of their students. IPA supports the contextual constructionist perspective. It separates itself from other approaches by combining psychological, idiographic, and interpretative factors (Smith, 1996). This approach is phenomenological. According to Husserl (1900), phenomenology is descriptive and should focus on consciousness. Smith (2008) stated phenomenology is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the phenomenologist and Packer and Addison (1989) describe how IPA is connected to hermeneutics and interpretational theories.

Many Dutch educational focussed studies are based on quantitative approaches. Research that is aiming to explore experiences of school professionals in-depth appear to be scarce. Since 2019 there has been a slight increase of national qualitative research reports. After the introduction of 'Education for all,' the new law on inclusive education in the Netherlands, the educational inspectorate wants to evaluate and combine quantitative research with qualitative research. This means a combination of a satisfaction surveys and a one-day analysis of schools (with observations and a group interview). These studies support creating a fuller image to evaluate on, it is still far from in-depth interviewing to create understanding of someone's perceptions.

There were three major stages during the data collection. The first stage contained contextual studies which supported the understanding of phenomenon and interpretation, which is crucial during IPA. These sources are interconnected and equally important. During the second stage the interviews were held using semi-structured interview techniques and the final stage was analysing the data.

One of the great strengths of IPA compared with other methods is that evidence can be collected from multiple sources to support a better understanding of the data. Triangulation uses evidence from different sources to confirm the same fact or finding. The contextual database of the evidence gathered needs to be collected to support IPA. Forty-eight participants were part of the sample, which is a unique and large sample size for IPA. A smaller size could have provided enough data to understand a school professionals perception, because of the in-depth research approach, however this research will be part of a larger local evaluation of the dynamics between education, youth (health) care and social care, having a large sample size supports the vocalization of a larger group of school professionals. Which will support the impact the findings and how these findings might reflect a larger group, which will pique the interest of the local politics.

The next chapters (4, 5, and 6) will reveal the data analysis and findings. The following final part of chapter 3 (3.7) will be an introduction to the next chapters and will explain the framework, emerging themes and how these are connected to the research questions. Chapter 5 will reveal the findings connected to the first supporting research question and chapter focusses on the school professionals understanding of the concept and their role. The findings connected to the second supporting research question will be revealed in chapter 6. This will give insight in what school professionals are already doing to support their students and what challenges they face. Chapter 7 will focus on the last supporting research question which will reveal the recommendations and ideas school professionals have for improving the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

3.7 Introduction to the Research Findings and Data Analysis

This final part of chapter 3 is an introduction to chapter 4, 5 and 6 where the research findings will be presented. This chapter describes the analysis of data followed by the research findings. The aim of this chapter is to present the findings in relation to the three sub-research questions to support the central question: *"What is the role of the school in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in secondary education?''*

The three supporting sub-questions:

1. *How do school professionals understand their role in relation to social-emotional wellbeing?*
2. *What are school professionals doing to support students' social-emotional wellbeing and what challenges do they experience?*
3. *Do they have any recommendations or ideas for improving the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing?*

Data was obtained from a total of forty-eight semi-structured interviews held within all four state schools for secondary education in one city in the Netherlands. Participants were working in the schools as part of the education support staff or teachers. The three areas of understanding, doing and ideas about improvement are being dealt with separately for the purpose of gaining in-depth insights into each aspect. The findings are based on qualitative analysis of data: in-depth open interviews, based on a combination of Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) with the support of contextual study. I am aware that the three different aspects are interwoven. As this research is qualitative, searching for interpretation and phenomenon, and the data was collected via semi-structured interviews, multiple instruments were used to give structure to this research. In this chapter these instruments will be explained, starting with the framework and then the emerging nodes and themes.

3.7.1 Framework

To support the finding of accurate data I used a framework diagram to give structure to the semi-open interviews and within this framework I prepared my interview questions (as seen in the chapter 3). This framework came forth from the combination of the literature study (contextual, empirical, and theoretical) and pilot study.

The framework diagram provided structure and prevented deviation from the research question while maintaining an open and conversational approach during the interviews. The type of interview questions I used were open interview questions and Figure 3.7.1 shows a few of these questions (full interview schedule in appendix B).

Figure 3.7.1

Wellbeing	• **How do you understand the concept of social-emotional wellbeing?** • **What do you find particularly interesting about the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of the school?**
Social-emotional climate	• Do you feel social-emotional wellbeing is an important concept in schools? Why or why not? • How does the concept of social-emotional wellbeing affect student-school professional relation? • And do you think there is an interaction between social-emotional wellbeing and didactics?
Methods	• What type of sources or methods do you use to support students social-emotional wellbeing? • Do you think these sources and methods are helpful in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing?

3.7.2 Nodes and emerging themes

As explained in the methods chapter, the nodes are based on the framework. During the literature study and pilot study, hypothetical themes were formed that came from the literature. These were used to start with 'broad-brush' coding to organize the data into broad topic areas. Since working with phenomenology, I found it helpful to making the nodes in advance. I used the word frequency query to help find additional topics and after reviewing and discussing these topics, altered some of the topic-titles. After that combined and re-group the nodes into related categories as seen in figure 3.7.2.

Figure 3.7.2
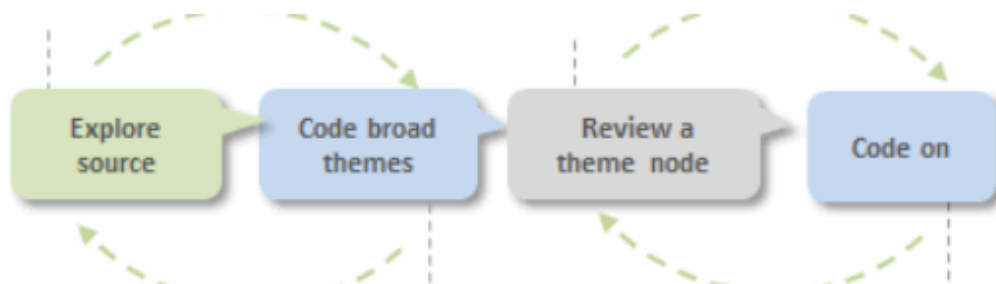
Some previous selected topics from the original framework such as 'classroom management' did not come forward as expected. Themes such as 'safety' and 'social interaction' are connected to classroom management but came forward as important themes on their own. Full node trees will be included in the appendix. During the interviews and analysis, it became clear that the topic of 'personal narratives' was also important to add to the list of emerging themes. Not only is this an important theme in understanding the context and interpretation, but in all forty-eight interviews participants used personal narratives to explain, answer or underline important meanings behind given answers. The superordinate and subordinate themes will be presented and discussed in connection to one of the three sub-research questions. Although themes have been separated during the analysis process, many of them are related and this is apparent throughout the narrative account. It is important to consider each theme in relation to the hermeneutic circle. Transcripts extracts in the form of quotations will be included to present the phenomenological core from which my interpretations have developed. Text which is underlined signifies those words have been replaced to ensure anonymity. Extracts from the participants who related to each subordinate theme will be included to support the claims made (Smith, 2011). Figure 3.7.3 shows the connection between the three sub-questions and the emerging themes.

Figure 3.7.3

	Superordinate Theme	Subordinate Theme
1. How do school professionals understand their role in relation to social-emotional wellbeing?	**Understanding of the concept**	Social context Relation – interaction Resilience Mental health
	Measuring wellbeing	Social skills Coping mechanism Approach to life
	Personal Narratives	Personal reflection Personal experiences Interconnection work and personal life
2. What are school professionals doing to support students social-emotional wellbeing and what challenges do they experience?	**School context**	Academic level Citizenship Communication Collaboration Teambuilding (student and staff)
3. Do they have any recommendations or ideas for improving the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing?	**Role of the school**	Role clarity Safety Self-reflection Social interaction

Separating the different themes can be helpful to understand them more fully, although we need to keep in mind their interaction in the process of understanding the role of the school in relation to social-emotional wellbeing. Five superordinate themes emerged from the interpretative analysis, and these were shared by all participants..

During the data analysis it is important to understand the context and interpretation behind given answers. I will refer to the different recurring themes and core themes, but also distinguish between teaching staff and educational support staff. With the teaching staff I will refer to teachers and mentors (who all are also teachers). The educational support staff contains every educational support member in school from school director to concierge and receptionist. Because of privacy and anonymity, it is impossible to further discuss and connect the different roles to the key findings. All school professionals seem committed in taking care of their students, but their different roles in the school are of influence on the kind of relationship they have with the students.

For example, the school director tries to positively influence students' social-emotional wellbeing with policymaking but does not have as much one on one interaction with students compared to teachers and mentors. When asked about wellbeing, you can hear the schools' vision on safety, education and they talk about citizenship in a miniature society. When asking teachers about wellbeing, they think about situations inside the classroom and personal stories of students.

The educational support staff has one on one relationships with students, but on a different level. The concierge might talk regularly with a small group of students who, for example, stand out because of behaviour. When asking them about wellbeing, they seem more likely to think about behaviour and the social context of the school (how do we treat each other). From another point of view, school professionals who have a personal mental health story to share or a story from a student they are reminded of, seem to think of mental health when asked about social-emotional wellbeing.

Therefore, it is important to not only ask similar questions during the interviews but look for the interpretation behind the data. The findings show that it is possible to draw conclusions from the data, while explaining the interpretation. I will use quotes to illustrate different interpretations and different types of answers. To help understand the data collection in the right way, I have collected other data as well. Let us begin with two important findings when looking into the organization as a whole.

Chapter 4: Understanding of the concept and their role

Introduction

Chapter 4, 5 and 6 will present the findings from the data collection. Findings will be presented by the reoccurring superordinate themes and subthemes that emerged from the data. Each chapter will focus on one of the three supporting research questions, although it is important to recognize the interconnection between the different research questions and themes. Chapter 4 will present the findings which are most connected to the first supporting research question: How do school professionals understand their role in relation to social-emotional wellbeing? To answer this question, we must look at the emerging themes related to this question. There are three superordinate themes connected to this question: 'understanding of the concept', 'measuring wellbeing' and 'personal narratives.'

These superordinate theme and subordinate themes highlight the personal interpretation of the participants understanding of social-emotional wellbeing. Their understanding and interpretation of the concept is vital for answering the main research question. The data shows the complexity of the concept. The participants interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing is influenced by personal and work-related experiences, their personal point of view on the subject, contextual factors (such as their role in the school), and personal wellbeing. What also shows from the data is that no one refers to understanding the concept of social-emotion wellbeing as a teaching subject, part of school policy or the direct effect of school staff training days.

During the data collection, it became clear we must consider the different roles participants have in school because they are important for interpretation. Although all participants have the experience that a student in need asks for help, the type of role they have in the school might influence if students will go to them for help. I will make the distinction between school director (SD), department leader (DL), teacher with a mentor role (MT), teacher (TS) and educational support staff (ESS). This will give more insight if the role of the participant is of influence on the type of answer given and the understanding of the social context.

Participants are numbered. The number can be traced back to one of the four schools, which was sometimes necessary during the data analysis to understand the context and interpretation. This research does not focus on making the comparison between the four schools, instead it explores the in-depth understanding of school professionals. Some themes (such as collaboration and communication) revealed remarkable differences between the four schools. If this is the case, I will make a statement about these differences. However, this will not be the case with every theme.

Understanding of the concept

Figure 4.1
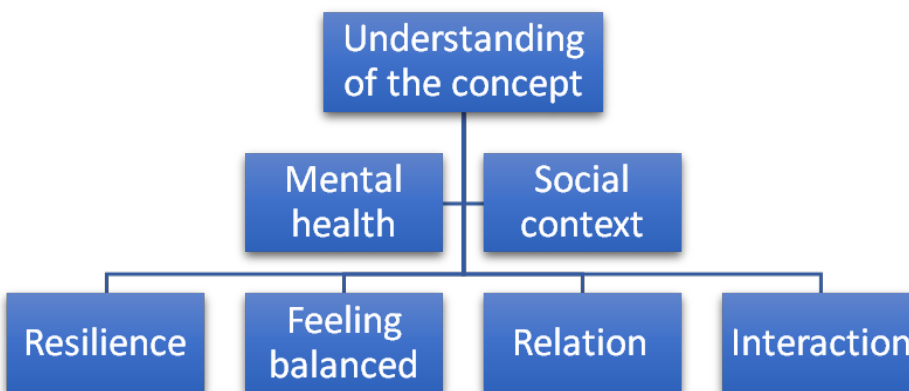
Figure 4.1 illustrates the superordinate theme 'understanding of the concept' and underlying themes. All themes will be discussed separately but each theme is interconnected as we are discussing qualitative data and findings by having used IPA. The interpretation and contextual knowledge are vital to understand the meaning behind given answers. As we discuss the data and findings, we must still be aware of this interconnection between the themes.

Understanding of the concept is a key factor in answering the research question, this theme was chosen as overarching theme and inserted as node, based on the first sub-question and was part of the questionnaire used during the data collection. The six connected sub-themes came forth from the data analysis. They reflect the most repeated or highlighted themes during the data collection and are therefore approximated as most important themes to explain how school professionals understand and interpret social-emotional wellbeing.

All forty-eight participants explained, during the beginning stage of the interview, the complexity of the concept. It seemed difficult to capture the concept in one sentence and all participants used examples from work experiences and personal experiences to further explain what they meant by their vision on the concept of social-emotional wellbeing.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about understanding the context of social-emotional wellbeing:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"A complicated concept, how do I explain this in the right way, the concept of understanding wellbeing can be very personal, this concept can't be described in a few words."*	TS2
2.	*"To me social-emotional wellbeing is an enumeration of different factors; I think about happiness, confidence, emotional stability."*	ESS5
3.	*"The concept of social-emotional wellbeing is a very personal interpreted and complicated concept, but at the same time it is a concept we all find equally important."*	SD3
4.	*"Social-emotional wellbeing can be explained in numerous ways. We use this concept when discussing mental health, students' social skills or students with special needs, yet it can also come up when someone's emotions take over."*	MT8

This underlines why it is an important theme to discuss and learn to understand someone's interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing before answering the research question. During the data collection when asking participants about their explanation and understanding of this theme, participants used personal experiences or work-related experiences to help explain their interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing. The subordinate themes that follow below show the emerging themes that arose from the data throughout discussing the understanding of the concept.

Social context

According to the data, the social context is the surroundings, the people, the occasion that influences how you interpret things, how you speak, what you speak about, or how you act. How you react in a social context also has something to do with experiences you may have had beforehand. All participants referred to school as a strong social context where students face the challenge of being a teenager and sharing a building with over five hundred or a thousand other teenagers (depending on what school they attend). The social context of teenagers has an important extra challenge: puberty.

Teachers with a mentor or counselling role, school directors and department leaders explained another challenge in the social context and Dutch school system; classes are based on age and school level, not so much on personal similarities (interests, hobbies, upbringing, believes). At the end of primary education all students receive some advice for school level. This, combined with a few subject choices, are decisive for placement in a class.

Twenty-three participants talked about appropriate social behaviour. Often discussing appropriate social behaviour referring to anti-social behaviour such as: bullying, rudeness, locking out others, disobeying school rules. If a student is showing anti-social behaviour for a longer amount of time, this can be a signal something is wrong. Although six participants added they do not always recognize this as a worrying signal, sometimes they react to the behaviour and not to the reason behind the behaviour. These participants explained the concept by using both context and behaviour. This underlines the complexity of the concept. There is not one short description to explain how someone views a concept such as social-emotional wellbeing.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers given to different questions during the data collection:

Question	Types of answers	Reference
How do you understand the concept of social-emotional wellbeing?	*"Social-emotional wellbeing is self-knowledge, adaptability, resilience, the ability to access social situations and act on it, the effect it has later on in life."*	*SD2*
	"Social-emotional wellbeing is about how well someone is able to cope with setbacks and how someone shows flexibility in unexpected (social) situations."	*MT7*
	"Social-emotional wellbeing is appropriate social behaviour."	*ESS4*
	"Although it is difficult to grasp in one sentence or short description, I think about balance. Balance between school and homelife, balance between feeling down and feeling happy. Someone's wellbeing, especially students' can easily be affected by the people around them.	*TS3*

As quote one and two illustrate, different answers from (even from different schools) can have similar meanings. Both talk about resilience and adaptability using different words. Quote three illustrates a short definition made in a similar way by multiple participants from different schools.

Participant ESS4, participant SD1, participant MT12 also referred to social behaviour when asked about social-emotional wellbeing. This suggests the consensus about the connection between social behaviour and wellbeing is not affected by school contextual differences. The quote number four illustrates the difficulty participants experienced in finding a clear description. Most of the participants needed time to think their answer through. Some did by thinking out loud, others reflected shortly in silence as I affirmed them to take their time.

Social context is seen as an important factor in explaining social-emotional wellbeing, although different descriptions were used. The different social contexts of the participating schools do not seem to affect the understandings and explanations of social-emotional wellbeing in this particular research.

Mental health

A number of thirty-seven participants thought about mental health when being asked about social-emotional wellbeing. Although only eleven participants of these thirty-seven used mental health as a description for social-emotional wellbeing. Mental health is often used in Dutch to describe severe psychological or emotional problems. While wellbeing is seen as a much broader and approachable concept. The thirty-seven participants had personal reasons for thinking about mental health in relation to social-emotional wellbeing. Some have had a history with mental health problems personally or with someone close to them. Others were triggered in thinking about certain students with mental health problems and how important it is for these students to feel supported in the school. Other participants who thought about mental health in the context of school feel critical about the responsibly the Dutch government has placed with schools since implementing the new educational law. These participants feel pressured.

All school professionals discussed their commitment in helping students, however also revealed their struggle in doing so. Explaining that there is not enough time to focus on your teaching and time for one-on-one conversations with students. Students who need professional help often face long waiting lists, in the meantime they are still in school, facing their everyday challenges. This underlines why schools have an important role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. But this also raises the question of whether school professionals have enough knowledge, and whether schools have enough people, resources, and time to do so.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about mental health when asked about social-emotional wellbeing:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Social-emotional wellbeing is finding balance in mental health. This can be a lifelong search for some, while others experience far less challenges."*	TS5
2.	*"Social-emotional wellbeing is a description of being in balance and happy with your life and life choices. When I think of mental health among students, I think of students dealing with psychological or severe emotional problems"*	MT9
3.	*"If happiness is the goal, we are setting students up for failure. Maybe we are focussing too much on talking about and fixing mental health and too little on helping them accept that being unhappy from time to time is ok."*	DL6
4.	*"Students with mental health problems need support and treatment outside of school, we can't be teachers and specialized caregivers at the same time."*	TS12

As quote two and four illustrate; mental health and social-emotional wellbeing were viewed as two different concepts. Seven out of twelve teachers thought about mental health in a way these two quotes illustrate. As well as all four school directors, six of the department leaders, seven mentors and five educational support staff members. The concept of mental health seems to be interpretated in relation to mental healthcare organizations, while social-emotional wellbeing is a concept more related to education.

The influence on the interpretation of teachers seems to come from a pressure they experience in teaching. These seven teachers explained themselves in relation to the second and fourth quote. They feel schools gained too much responsibility these past few years when it comes to caring for their students and these seven teachers feel they do want to take care of each student in their class, but there is not enough time for one-on-one conversations and guidance, and they feel it is not always the place for addressing some of the requests for help. Some requests belong outside of schools.

Participants who mentioned mental health also talked about the feeling of unhappiness or depression (see quote three). Wellbeing is often referred to as feeling balanced or happy as well. All forty-eight participants have used either happy or balanced at one point during the interview. To understand their interpretation, we must look at the different examples or explanations they gave. 'Feeling happy' is a popular statement, but not so easy to explain.

The following quotes are an illustration of some of the explanations of happiness used during the data collection:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Happiness is a state of mind. A life choice, a lesson we can teach our students to always try to look at positive things in life."*	*SD4*
2.	*"Being balanced or happy is to feel at ease and relaxed in your life choices, to have created a balance between personal life and work life."*	*MT10*
3.	*"Feeling balanced and happy is not something we should let our students try to achieve. The adolescent phase makes it impossible to not feel negative sometimes. We should teach our students to enjoy the happy moments, but also give room for negative feelings. They are part of growing up."*	*SD2*
4.	*"The number of students dealing with feelings of unhappiness and even depression is increasing. I am not sure if this is because more teenagers battle some sort of depression or because more teenagers talk about feeling unhappy and depressed."*	*TS1*

The first and third quote illustrate different explanations and personal interpretations on 'feeling happy'. Both quotes come from school directors, working on different locations but for the same organisation. Which could imply that when it comes to a concept such as 'feeling happy' connected to students' social-emotional wellbeing, there is no general school vision. This concept in this organisation leaves room for personal interpretation.

Quote four illustrates the teacher worrying about the changes experienced among the student population regarding depression. These concerns were raised by other participants as well. Connected to the concept of happiness and depression the contextual influence stood out and is worth mentioning. All four department leaders from the locations where higher educational levels were offered shared these concern as well as the two school directors that are part of these locations. The data collection shows that feelings of unhappiness and depression were mentioned by school professionals from all locations, but more often by school professionals working on these two locations.

It is remarkable that all four school directors and six of a total of eight department leaders made the distinction between mental health and social-emotional wellbeing. Looking at the data this could have multiple reasons.

- To make a clear distinction between talking about student care in relation to their organization or outside of their organization: where to draw the line between education and healthcare.
- A personal experience where they felt there wellbeing was at risk because of mental health problems, therefore they feel that mental health is separate from social-emotional wellbeing.
- Mental health organizations and youth care organizations who they collaborate with still focus on mental health as a concept on its own. It relates to social-emotional wellbeing, but when a student's wellbeing is a risk because of how they feel emotionally, and there is a certain tenacity in this feeling; most collaborating partners discuss this as mental health problems.

These eight quotes in total illustrate the different types of answers talking about happiness or balance, they also show opposite views on the concept of happiness and the interpretation of mental health. While some participants answered balance and happiness should be the goal and mind-set are seen as an important skill, others say students (teenagers) are supposed to experience unhappiness. It is part of growing up. The distinction made between mental health and social-emotional wellbeing seems influenced by personal experiences and not so much by policy. These findings suggest mental health and wellbeing are viewed as separate concepts, yet personal experiences with both concepts affect and form someone's understanding and interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing

Relation - interaction

All forty-eight participants connected the ability to engage in relationships to social-emotional wellbeing. These quotes reveal different participants views on the concept of social-emotional wellbeing being connected to relation and interaction. The short statement is a reoccurring one, while others might use a slightly different choice of words to explain a similar view.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about relation and interaction when asked about social-emotional wellbeing:

Nr.	Type of answer	Reference
1.	*"Social-emotional wellbeing is also the ability to engage, have relationships. It is not only the ability to contact others, but it is the ability to react and reflect for longer relationships. However, this is where most teenagers still struggle, it is something most of them are still learning."*	*MT4*

2.	*"Social-emotional wellbeing is how people react in social situations and if they can empathize and connect with others. Without these skills, school can be difficult as students' must deal with their peers and school professionals five days a week."*	DL1
3.	*"If someone feels unsure and unsafe in social situations, it tells us something about their social-emotional wellbeing."*	ESS3
4.	*"Interaction plays a key part in school, we rely on (non-verbal) communication and for good communication we need relation and trust."*	SD1

When discussing relationships all participants referred to the interaction between students and others. Although different examples were given when asked about their interpretation of engaging in relationships it was remarkable that a large group of participants made the distinction between different types of relationships and interaction within the context of a school. According to twenty-one participants, the type of relationship affects interaction. The nature of someone's relationship and the dynamics within that relationship affect a person's openness, honesty, and vulnerability. Among these participants, all different roles within the data sample were represented. Six types of interaction emerged from the data:

Teacher – student interaction:
The data revealed three different understandings of teacher and student interaction. 1.) student is not afraid to ask for help. Help with their academic work, but also asking for help when in (emotional) need. For example, when they feel unsafe and need advice or counselling. 2.) Student and teacher understand each other's non-verbal communication. 3.) Language is an important factor within education and teacher student interactions support participation and learning. According to the data, all three types of interaction between teacher and student are vital for building a connection and see this as the base for offering students support on social-emotional wellbeing. However, this can be challenging. Teaching is a dynamic profession and although teachers try to affect the context and group in a positive way, some classes offer more room for differentiation and personal approach than others.

Student – student interaction:
Student feels safe amongst classmates or peers. Can enter friendships and maintain that friendship. Some participants stated that positive peer-interaction is more important for students' wellbeing than interaction with the school professional. Group dynamics and peer pressure are important factors for how a student feels in the school and within its group.

Educational supports staff (ESS) – student interaction:

The ESS explain they mostly interact with students within a fixed context. The receptionist can be the first they ask for help when this effects the student's attendance or when a student calls in sick. The janitor is the person who students see when they have detention. If you look at the ESS and student interaction context is a leading factor in the type of interaction that takes place. There is less frequent student interaction and for that they see their role in signalling and monitoring students social-emotional wellbeing as smaller than it is for their colleagues. However, they do have a signalling and monitoring role and when a student seems in need of support, they will act on that.

School director – student interaction:

All school directors highlighted the importance of interacting with their students. Two school directors re-entered their teaching profession for a short period of time to enhance their understanding of the interaction inside the classroom. Although all school directors discussed the misbalance in power and the effect it might have on the interaction with students. They suspect some students might think they are not accessible enough to ask for help. School directors refer to the importance of interaction in this. Other colleagues who see and interact with a certain group of students on a daily basis, are more accessible, and more familiar, which can result in students feeling seen and supported. However, school directors are committed in supporting their students' social-emotional wellbeing and will be (via policy making and managing) the indirect influence on that.

Mentor – students' interaction:

A mentor is a teacher with a counselling role to their students. A mentor tries to support students social-emotional and with their school progress. The mentor is also the first school contact for parents. The mentors explained that although they have a similar role, finding a connection with your students can be very personal and they do not feel automatically connected to everyone. This will probably feel the same the other way around, so sometimes students prefer a teacher over their mentor to be confidant. School policy: this teacher will inform the mentor if necessary (when it affects the students' wellbeing or school progress). The data revealed the importance between interaction and relation. Although school policy refers to the mentor as main contact, not all students feel supported or understood by all mentors. The mentors explain that sometimes for example, personalities do not match, and this will affect interaction. The students' mentor changes every year.

This can be a positive thing when a student and mentor had a difficult relationship and you know it will change next year, but for students in need of social-emotional support, trusting someone can be difficult and building that trust can take more than one school year.

Department leader- student interaction:

The department leader is also part-time teacher. They have a lot of different roles, and this can affect the interaction and relation between them and their students. Sometimes they are teachers, they can be confidant, but they are also policy makers and monitor evaluators. The role they have depends on the situation, which is a major influence on the type of interaction they have with their students. It can be difficult when a student needs support but also keeps breaking school rules. The department leader needs to set boundaries yet is also responsible for making sure support is offered.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about the different types of interaction and relationships that were explicitly mentioned during the data collection:

Nr.	Type of answer	Reference
1.	"It can be difficult during class, when teaching a challenging group, to interact with all students in such a way they feel supported and looked after. Yet, I always try my best to connect with my students."	TS5
2.	"Even the best student coaches cannot bring as much support as a positive and supporting peer group. Groups where there is trust, openness and friendship often rely less on their mentor for individual support than other groups I have mentored."	MT1
3.	"When a student seems upset and is looking for help, we definitely try to offer support, but most students take trust in someone they speak to more often."	ESS3
4.	"Students more often experience direct support from other school professionals in the school, because of their interaction on a more personal level. Our role is different. As a school director I set out the guidelines for my staff in how to support our students' wellbeing."	SD2
5.	"As a mentor, some students confide in me on a more personal level. I try to be their confidant. Although not all my mentor students see me as a confidant. Maybe because they don't feel the necessity or maybe because they have a better connection with someone else."	MT8
6.	"My role in the school changes depending on the situation and type of interaction. Students might come to me in need or for practical school related questions, but there are situations where I have more tense conversations because of something a student did. That is why different roles of school professionals are so important. If I need to be the person explaining consequences for breaking school rules, someone else takes on the role of confidant."	DL3

These quotes reveal how participants made the distinction between the different types of interaction and underlines why it is important to highlight these in this chapter. Context and the school professional's role will affect interaction because of factors such as trust, accessibility, relationship, various concerns. All participants agreed on the fact that engaging in relationships is connected to social-emotional wellbeing and it is important to recognise the different roles within the school when it comes to supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. According to the data, school professionals have different roles who offer different types of support, yet all school professionals feel their role is to support students in the best way they can. Although for some of them it was difficult to clarify how their role supported students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Resilience

During the data collection eighteen participants mentioned resilience as important part of social-emotional wellbeing. According to them resilience is about the process of becoming, which students understand once they develop a firm belief about their place in the world. When students believe that they are worthy and capable of overcoming challenges, they become resilient. These eighteen participants connect resilience to confidence in life.

Twelve participants refer to resilience in the context of being solution oriented. Resilience is the ability to not let setbacks feel like failure, but work through your problems, set new goals, and ask for help if needed. Three participants added that vulnerability shows resilience, because when you can show vulnerability, you are working towards progress. According to the data, all participants see resilience as an important skill which can be developed and should be developed throughout the years. When discussing resilience, all participants give the illusion as if this concept is something which can be developed or broken down by environmental factors. Which means that school can play an important factor.

All four school directors think helping students building resilience and a good coping mechanism is the most important role of the school. Two school directors made a side note about the important role schools must play in helping students become good and stable people, especially when their background or upbringing is unstable.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about resilience when asked about social-emotional wellbeing:

'Resilience explained as confidence.'

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Social-emotional wellbeing is being able to handle setbacks, no matter what life throws at you, staying confident and being able to trust better days will come."*	*ESS1*
2.	*"Confidence is key when handling challenging situations, whether it is a social situation or something in your personal life".*	*SD5*

'Resilience explained as solution-oriented.'

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"A healthy and strong approach to wellbeing and mindset is if someone is able to keep pushing forward, although life has become complicated, or school has become difficult."*	*MT3*
2.	*"If someone is unable to keep moving, if a student completely falls still social, emotional, and educational, I definitely worry about their wellbeing and development".*	*SD2*

'Resilience explained as being vulnerable.'

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Being resilient is the courage of being your own individual in a context full of peer pressure yet being able to show vulnerability and ask for help when needed".*	*MT2*
2.	*"Showing vulnerability is showing strength. The hardening of society is not something we should teach our students".*	*TS8*

These quotes illustrate there are multiple key words being used when explaining resilience. Key words such as, handling setbacks, confidence, vulnerability, and courage are connected to resilience. Although these four quotes are very different from one another, when looking into the interpretation behind the quote, all participants have a personal story that explains why they emphasize certain key words. What they have in common is that each story is about rising again, finding yourself and taking care of yourself. Some used the term 'self-love'.

The implications of this for their understanding of wellbeing is that wellbeing is seen as something dynamic, that is affected by context, environment, and circumstances. Therefore, to maintain good wellbeing, one must weather the storms and be resilient to change. This dynamic character of the concept is important to our understanding of how professionals interpret it.

Measuring wellbeing

Figure 4.2
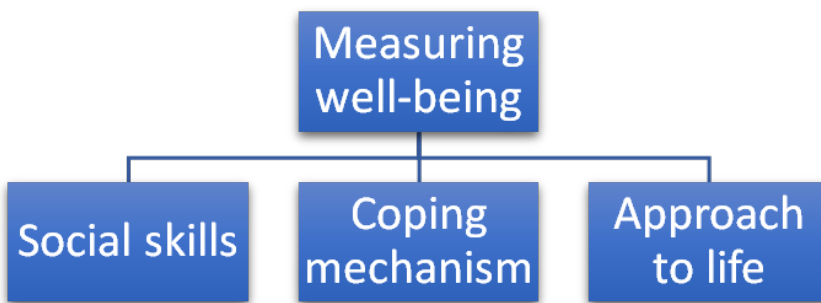
Figure 4.2 shows the superordinate theme 'measuring wellbeing' and underlying themes. All themes will be discussed separately but each theme is interconnected as we are discussing qualitative data and findings by having used IPA. The interpretation and contextual knowledge are vital to understand the meaning behind given answers. One major outcome of the previous these is that measuring wellbeing, using clear indicators, was used in how someone understood or explained social-emotional wellbeing. Therefore, measuring wellbeing is an important theme to answer the research question. As we discuss the data and findings, we must still be aware of this interconnection between the themes.

The superordinate theme of 'measuring wellbeing' comes from the conversation that developed during all forty-eight interviews. All participants understood the complexity of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and while explaining their interpretation of the concept, participants used different ways in how they measured wellbeing among their students. Measuring wellbeing is another explanation for 'signal, monitor and guard'. These terms are used often during the data collection. It is common for school professionals to be expected to signal and monitor their students. Most conversations about signal, monitor and guard focusses on the student inside the classroom and participants described these three stages in how they assess their students' wellbeing.

Some participants explained they use specialized forms to make a clear observation, others stated their assessment was based on personal knowledge, experience, and the ability to compare students to peers (age-appropriate behaviour). During the data analysis it became clear all participants used the three underlying themes when discussing the importance of measuring social-emotional wellbeing. Therefore, these three themes were highlighted for further analyses and this chapter will reveal the results.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about measuring social-emotional wellbeing:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"In order to signal and monitor our students' social-emotional wellbeing, we first have to get to know them, have a relationship with them, so when something is different about how they respond or behave, we notice."*	*MT1*
2.	*"We monitor social-emotional wellbeing among students with different measuring tools on social skills, bullying, personal reflection. Also, their grades and attendance tell us something about their wellbeing. And it is up to us to connect these different tools to the personality of the student to signal and act when needed."*	*DL4*
3.	*I do not have a role in the school where I consciously measure wellbeing, although when students come to me for questions or to call in sick, etc. you get to know some students better than others and I do tend to sense when something is different or off. And I share those signals with mentors, department leaders and parents.*	*ESS2*
4.	*To me, when measuring social-emotional wellbeing, I start to worry if students are not able to handle setbacks, are not able to connect with their peers and teachers and feel disconnected with life. Schools can help young people form into great citizens. We need to teach them life skills and that is or should be the goal for all school professionals working here.*	*SD1*

During the data collection this question/ subject showed the different roles of the school professionals. All four school directors talked about the school as a mini society and emphasized the importance of social-emotional wellbeing and their student's approach to life. According to them, school can make a big difference on someone's life. One school director even shared that schools are so important when it comes to social-emotional wellbeing and to influence wellbeing in a positive way, that students with complicated home-situations and risky behaviour, can be send on a different and positive path if they have a supportive school.

The school directors mentioned different measuring tools but did not emphasize on these. They did emphasize on schooling their teaching and educational support staff on how to signal and act on abuse and neglect and teaching their teaching staff about the six roles of the teacher (the host, the presenter, the didactical, the pedagogue, the closer, the coach). According to the schools and the theory behind the six roles, these roles are vital for being an effective and excellent teacher. These roles illustrate that education is more than transferring knowledge. It is about connecting with the students.

Most of the department leaders seemed to think more in the direction of measuring tools (what does the organization do about measure and monitoring wellbeing). Five out of eight department leaders directly started to talk about different measuring tools or collaborations with health-care organizations who measure different subject amongst school population. One department leader did not mention measuring tools, two department leaders mentioned measuring tools later. They both answered by gives examples (different student cases) and this seemed to trigger the reminder of these measuring tools. These tools focus on subjects such as social skills, resilience, bullying, mental health, physical health (height and weight), home-situation.

The teachers with a role as mentor seemed to focus on relation. Nine out of sixteen talked about getting to know their students and monitoring or signal by following their instinct. Some explained this as 'sensing something is off'. This only works if you know your mentor-students well. Nine out of sixteen is a small majority. Other mentoring teachers had the same approach as the department leaders or explained the focus of their mentor lessons (mostly social skills, grades and an overall 'how it's going'). Although it was clear all mentors used examples close to their heart; this was noticeable in how they talked about different student cases. These mentors not only described the case, but also how they emphasized with their students, how much effort was put into it and how they stayed in touch with some of the students throughout the years.

The teaching staff was less united. Some teachers seemed very informed about different methods and measuring tools (four out of twelve), others explained their personal approach to measuring wellbeing, paying attention to sudden differences in behaviour and grades (five out of twelve). Three teachers were triggered by this subject to talk right away about the pressure they experience in teaching. They feel it is not always possible to signal and monitor well if you have groups of thirty-two students and you only teach them three times a week for forty-five minutes.

They want to make sure the whole group has an effective and interesting class, and they feel there is not enough time to pay attention to some of the students who have a need for one-on-one time. Although this subject returned in the conversation with most of the school-professionals.

The educational support staff members fulfil very different roles in the school. The overarching factor is that they can have an important signaling function. The concierge observes student behaviour inside and outside the school (do they follow school rules, are they hanging around outside, etc.), the front desk employee registries students calling sick, skipping class, or coming late. These ESS members share this information with mentors or department leaders.

The main way of different school professionals to measure wellbeing is by signaling and monitoring during class. There does not seem to be a unified approach in how wellbeing is measured. According to the data there are measuring tools available, however it became clear that these four schools have a more qualitative approach to measuring wellbeing than quantitative approach. The impact of the combination of different factors can vary from one person to another. They use the data from the student tracking system for first signals of reduced wellbeing. Indicators can be attendance, grades, consequences because of behaviour, and mentor notes. This type of data is seen as the first signal, yet when discussing measuring someone's wellbeing, three key themes came forward from the data: social skills, coping mechanism and approach to life. There seems a consensus that assessing someone's wellbeing is not something to take lightly and cannot be assessed by the data from the student tracking system. According to the data, a more personal assessment needs to be made.

Social skills

Social skills were an important theme to emerge when analyzing the way participants discussed social-emotional wellbeing. Social skills are one of the first subjects' participants seem to think about in how to support social-emotional wellbeing and how to measure this concept. A possible explanation for this is that most primary and secondary schools work with methods to improve social skills and with these methods often comes a measuring tool. Teaching social skills and supporting students to develop social skills is part of school policy since the start of inclusive education in 2014 and is well-known and integrated in the school system.

Another explanation is that behaviour, and especially an obvious change in behaviour, is a key signal for all forty-eight participants in measuring social-emotional wellbeing. Examples such as: sudden aggressive behaviour, increasing sick leave, students who seem to go quiet or seem to be holding back, were all commonly cited. Behaviour, especially the term 'appropriate behaviour' is often connected to social skills. Measuring social skills or competences can comprise a variety of methods, ranging from self-ratings or self-reports of behaviour, values, and motivations; direct behavioural observations (in natural situations or under experimental conditions); behaviour rating scales (to be completed by parents, teacher, students).

All participants seemed familiar and comfortable to talk about the role of the school in supporting students' social skills. Although some participants needed a little extra direction when discussing a subject like this. A lot of general quotes were used in the beginning about the importance of social skills and with the help of additional questions it was possible to talk about the participants role and experience in supporting and measuring students' social skills.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about supporting students' social skills:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"For example: all first-year students have a week of introduction, and we use this week to work on social skills by focussing on getting to know each other, teambuilding, relation, activities were the have to collaborate and trust and even some counselling. All second-year students receive an extra teambuilding program in the first school period. This supports group formation and works preventative against bullying."*	*DL2*
2.	*"As a mentor I am very aware of the importance of developing social skills, not only for a positive group dynamic, but especially for lifelong personal growth: students need to collaborate, interact with peers and teachers and we also want to give them skills to handle setbacks, ask for help and communicate about their needs."*	*MT14*
3.	*"This school alone teaches to 1300 students. Students are challenged to use their social skills daily. Not only inside the classroom, but also during their lunchbreak, walking through the corridors, etc. We have a responsibility to help students develop and maintain social skills."*	*SD3*
4.	*"I think the school system supports developing students' social skills, but the system is not inclusive. There are still students who have difficulty in developing their social skills and maintaining grades on a certain level."*	*TS3*

Quotes one, two and three illustrate the different approaches to the importance of the role of the school in supporting students' social skills. Quote four shows a different view on the matter. The example of this teacher illustrates there is a limit to what schools can do in supporting student's social skills. I will use the four quotes to explain the different interpretation about social skills.

Quote one explains the preventive programs of this school in supporting students' social skills. They seem to focus on a positive group formation. All four schools of this organization have similar preventive programs to prevent bullying and support a positive group formation. All four schools have anti-bullying programs and policies and the basic support policies of all four school have student counsellors available to coach students one on one if needed (following the preventive programs).

The mentor of quote two illustrates that the importance of social skills is more than a positive group formation. It can be also about life skills, school as a mini society. This interpretation on the importance of supporting social skills is shared by many others. Twenty-three participants talked about the bigger picture of social skills. This is also illustrated by the third quote. Most of these participants belonged to school directors, department leaders and teachers with a mentor role.

Most teachers and the ESS members connected to illustrative quote four. They emphasised on the limits of the school. They agree on the importance of supporting students' social skills, but if students are not able to develop appropriate social skills for the environment they are in, schools should not be held responsible. There was a discussion about how much time and effort to put in social skills development. Sometimes students need more support than the school can offer. Most measuring tools focus on what students need, but not so much if this is something the school can offer. Every school environment is different, which can be a major factor on how someone is developing their social skills according to these participants. Five teachers indicate that students who struggle with behaviour problems, often struggle with school skills as well.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about using social skills as a way of measuring wellbeing:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"How a student interacts with their peers socially reveals a lot about their wellbeing. It is not the absence of social skills or the increase, it is about signalling sudden changes in their social abilities. As a mentor I can invest the time to get to know my students, which makes signalling easier than with other students. At the end of the day, it is a gut feeling."*	MT11
2.	*"One of the key indicators for me is seeing a student stand out socially. I do not teach, but I do see students interact outside their classrooms. Some students seem distant from their peers or not acting age appropriate. If a student stands out, I will ask a colleague about their observation or report to the mentor or department leader".*	ESS2
3.	*"I am alerted when a student seems alone and becoming distant, or the group dynamic seems to shift suddenly. Although it is not always easy to see students becoming more distant during class".*	TS6

Social skills are seen as an important measuring tool. The data reveals all participants look for social signals when trying to assess a students' wellbeing. School professionals are alerted by deviation (age appropriateness, sudden changes, contact with peers and adults). It can be stated that according to the data social skills are a commonly used measuring tool, although it is important to state that these are all personal assessments and can be affected by a school professionals personal experience, work experience and surroundings. Most participants also discuss the importance of not acting alone. If they are alerted by someone's social skills in relation to wellbeing, they will consult a colleague.

The implications of this for their understanding of wellbeing is that wellbeing is seen as a dynamic concept, and sudden changes in someone social abilities is an important measurement tool for assessing someone's wellbeing. Therefore, to support students' social-emotional wellbeing, school professionals must be able to signal important social changes.

Coping mechanism

Coping mechanism is the second of the three themes' participants used when thinking about measuring wellbeing. Coping mechanism in this case is explained by most participants as how students handle stressful situations inside and outside of school. Participants often referred to active coping strategies as the goal; acting in finding a solution for the stressful situation, often needing the school professional to activate the student. Important signals in measuring coping mechanism are students who cannot think of any solution, lose self-control, are in denial or avoid confrontation.

As the following quotes reveal, there is an important cross node thread. Social behaviour can signal a dip in wellbeing, as can a change in coping, therefore it is important to monitor social skills and coping mechanisms to guard against issues with students' social-emotional wellbeing.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about students' coping mechanism:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"It is important to signal in time when students have difficulty coping. Once a student is frustrated, unmotivated and lost confidence, it is very difficult to activate someone."*	*TS10*
2.	*"Coping mechanism is a key life skill and school skill. Students need to learn to be resilient in life, and how to accept or solve their challenges. Not only when they experience personal, social, and emotional problems, but learning to cope will also help them solve school questions and learning to prioritize."*	*MT3*
3.	*"Measuring coping mechanisms is one of the more difficult things to do. There is no format or measuring tool. I signal during classes, but do I take action on the first signal, or do I wait, because someone can have an off day."*	*TS6*
4.	*"To measure a concept such as coping mechanism, we need a collaboration between school professionals who signal and measuring tools from the local health service organisation".*	*SD2*

These quotes illustrate the different approach to the theme and the different ways a conversation about this theme can develop. All forty-eight participating school professionals discuss the importance of coping mechanisms in handling school questions and developing life skills, although not all participants agreed on how to measure a concept like this. There does not seem to be a clear policy or guideline. Everyone seems to interpret the concept of 'coping mechanism' in a similar way but understanding and measuring are two different things. Measuring is about where to draw the line, and this seems unclear.

The first quote emphases on the importance of signalling on time. Frustrated students without coping skills are very hard to get out of the negative circle. This takes time and effort from school professionals and a school year only lasts for forty weeks. One half term lasts for seven weeks. If in those weeks a student is unable to focus, it will show in results, and this will only add to the frustration. This quote is an example of the time crunch schools experience.

The second quote illustrates the importance of developing coping skills. All participants reacted strongly on the importance of coping skills. Although all participants agree on the importance of coping skills, they disagree on who is responsible for helping students develop these skills. There is a debate on education and upbringing. The majority of the teachers and mentors experience pressure from the expectation of society that schools are also responsible for upbringing. According to them developing a healthy coping mechanism should start at home, supported by environmental factors such as schools.

Quote three illustrates that these participants feel the concept of coping mechanism is difficult to measure. Along with this participant, many others felt the same. Out of forty-eight participants, nineteen used the word 'difficult' in the first two sentences when discussing measuring coping mechanisms. When asking these participants about why they felt this to be difficult, these explained that it is not always that clear to see if students experience difficulties coping and there is no clear measuring tool for them to use. How someone copes with things can be very personal (what works for you) and most school professional rely on the team of student counsellors to advise them on this subject.

The importance of collaborating with other health or youth care organisations is illustrated with quote four. Most department leaders and school directors discussed the importance of collaboration. One possible explanation for this is that these school professionals have an active role in school collaborations. Most teachers, mentors and ESS members did not mention collaboration with these types of organizations when discussing measuring wellbeing, although a few mentors talked about the measuring tool the local health care organisations uses. Every year a few classes are invited to take part in health research, where the school nurse measures height and weight, and mentors are asked to use one of their mentor lessons to let their mentor class take a digital health test. This test measures wellbeing: coping skills, happiness, home-situation. This test uses a digital questionnaire for students and based on this questionnaire, some students are invited for a person conversation with the school nurse. It is up to the students if they want to share personal information or not and the information goes directly to the school nurse/ health care organisation. Mentors only receive information if necessary and if the student agrees to share this information with the school or mentor.

Participants who did talk about the importance of collaborating with other organizations to measure coping mechanism had several reasons for this. Some explained; this way there is a shared responsibility between schools and other organizations, so schools are not alone in supporting students with coping difficulties. This also would be helpful, according to the participants, so parents and students have someone to fall back on outside of school. Youth health care organizations are specialized in measuring coping mechanism and wellbeing, so it will be more effective. Sometimes it is better for students to work on personal growth outside of school, this helps them remain focused in school. It can be confusing if schools take on the role of caregiver. Students need clarity and for some, school is the only place where they can feel 'normal' or who they want to be. That is why, according to the data, collaboration is so important.

Participants used their assessment of someone's coping mechanism as part of assessing someone's wellbeing, although a large group revealed the difficulty of doing so. Measuring coping mechanism is done with the help of observation lists, the research by the school nurse and mainly by their own interpretation of the coping mechanism of their students. The data underlines the difficulty of measuring someone's coping mechanism, yet also reveals the possibility of signal someone's ability to handle difficult or unexpected situations. The implications for understanding measuring wellbeing are understanding the complexity of this dynamic concept and the importance of a more in-depth and personal assessment using multiple measuring tools.

Approach to life

Measuring or reviewing someone's approach to life is not something we do on an everyday basis, at least not consciously. Specialists such as psychologists and therapists look at a clients' approach to life, but this research is about the interpretation of school professionals. The theme 'approach to life' came to be about indicators that someone (in this case a student) has an approach to life that withholds them from living a positive and successful life. Standard indicators to measure the quality of life include wealth, employment, environmental factors, physical and mental health, education, recreation and leisure time, social belonging, religious beliefs, safety, security, and freedom. The concept of approach to life can be interpreted in many ways.

Some participants thought of students struggling with depression, others were reminded of students who were very angry at life and with their surroundings. Overall, participants interpreted measuring someone's approach to life as looking for signals that someone has a very negative approach to life.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about students' approach to life:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"I find it worrying that more and more students feel overwhelmed and pressured and fail to prioritize. They do not seem to control life, but life controls them."*	*MT15*
2.	*"Someone's approach to life, attitude and mindset can be formed by so many factors, and we can be a positive factor for someone. A small gesture can have a big impact."*	*TS8*
3.	*"Student counsellors advise us on a daily basis if we need to monitor or observe a student for indicators or if there is a student who feels down/ disconnected, so we can be considerate of this."*	*TS2*
4.	*"The combination of life experiences, aptitude and mindset can be determinative, and this can cause difficulties for students and for school professionals as well".*	*ESS7*

These quotes illustrate the interpretation most participants have on approach to life. As explained before, approach to life is the collection of different indicators and in this case when someone has a negative approach to life. Because this theme is a collective name, it is impossible to distinguish between the different roles of school professionals.

Overall, most participants started their explanation of this theme with an example (case or situation) where counsellors or health care measured a students' approach to life and outlined a plan of action. Most mentors, teachers and ESS members were then asked to be part of this plan. Some then have a monitoring role, others were asked to be considerate, be a tutor or confidant, or whatever the student needs at that time.

With the help of a few additional questions such as "what do you notice during class (thinking of the given example)?" and "What kind of signals or indicators are noticeable in class?" participants were asked to think smaller and to think about their role in measuring students' wellbeing. The types of answers given are dividable in two categories:

1. **Personal assessment**: where the school professionals follow a 'gut feeling' based on their own life experience, the relation with the student or knowledge they have of a student, and the assessment something has changed. There seem to be two groups of school professionals who rely on personal assessment. There are school professional who explain their choice for personal assessment because of the relationship with this particular student. They state to know this particular student very well, because of personal conversations or because of knowing this student for many years. Other school professionals who rely on personal assessment seem very confident about following their 'gut feeling' because this was successful in the past. There is also a group of participants who want to act on their personal assessment but experience doubt to do so. They state the increase of having to keep records on everything creates professional distrust and therefore it feels like taking a risk to act on 'just' personal assessment.

2. **External triggers**: behaviour is an important indicator according to the data. School professionals are triggered when a student's develops negative behaviour. Side note: not all negative behaviour is a direct indicator. Sometimes it is difficult to tell if a change in behaviour is a signal for help, or if this is a phase that is part of the adolescent stage. Students who are angry or rude, are not always seen as looking for support. Students who become silent or sad are more likely to be offered support. Their behaviour is more approachable than a student who reacts offensive or aggressive. Overall, participants feel confidant to act on external triggers, because is most cases there is more than one trigger and it is very noticeable.

Both personal assessment and external triggers are often supported by other data from the student tracking system to assess the students' wellbeing. Key word in measuring students' wellbeing is 'change'. Sudden changes within social skills, coping mechanism and approach to life alert school professionals and are highly important in signalling students' need for support. Social skills, coping mechanism and approach to life are interconnected in measuring wellbeing. If schools aim to support students' wellbeing, it is important school professionals know what measurement tools to use and how to act on important signals.

Personal narratives

Figure 4.3
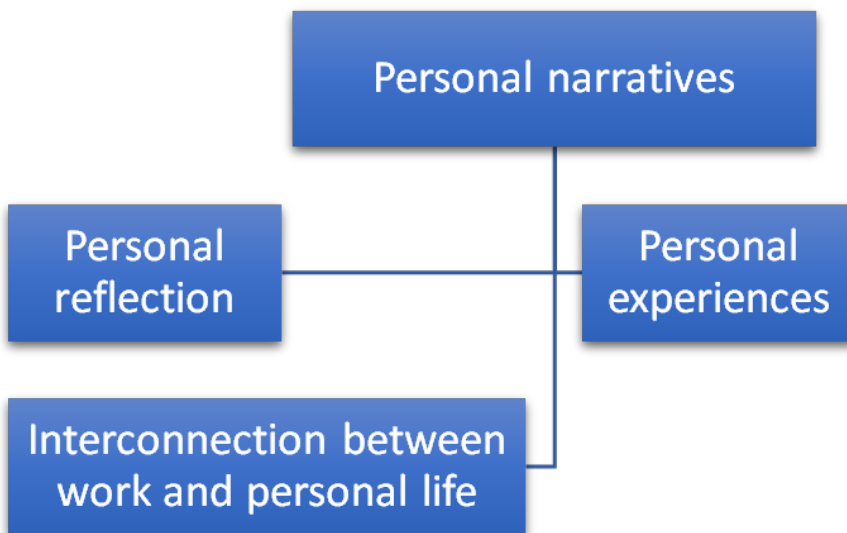
Figure 4.3 illustrates the superordinate theme 'personal narratives' and underlying themes. Again, all themes will be discussed separately but each theme is interconnected as we are discussing qualitative data and findings by having used IPA. The interpretation and contextual knowledge are vital to understand the meaning behind given answers and see the interconnection between the themes.

The superordinate theme 'personal narratives' is a theme that reoccurs throughout the entire data collection. Participants used their personal narratives to explain their interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing and the different sub-themes. Which means that all participants used their personal experiences and conclusions to help build their understanding of their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Personal narratives were chosen as a node, based on the literature, and confirmed by the data outcomes. Analyzing the data around personal narratives brought three underlying themes forward as emerging themes: personal experiences, personal reflection, and interconnection between work and personal life. These support understanding the influence of personal narratives on the interpretation of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of the school in this matter.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about personal narratives in relation to social-emotional wellbeing:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"My understanding of wellbeing comes from life experience. Because of my own (sometimes negative) life experiences I am able to signal in time if I see others make the same mistakes."*	*ESS3*
2.	*"To me, understanding and recognizing social-emotional wellbeing is, is the sum of different indicators society agrees on and my own personal and work-related experiences."*	*TS7*
3.	*"If I try to assess someone's situation or feelings, I try to look at visible indicators such as behaviour and make use of my experience as a teacher, mentor, mom, daughter, wife, etc. These factors are what some might call a gut feeling, and these helps determine to take action or not".*	*MT12*
4.	*"A concept such as wellbeing might be interpreted differently in NL then somewhere else. Economic factors, personal factors, environmental factors could influence how we or I understand wellbeing".*	*DL3*

All four quotes illustrate that participants connect personal narratives to understanding the concept of social-emotional wellbeing. All four quotes are examples of different ways participants discussed the connection between personal narratives and social-emotional wellbeing. Participants seemed aware that their personal life experiences were of impact in forming their interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing. Quotes two and four illustrate some participants clearly differentiate between personal narratives and other factors. Quote three illustrates that some participants used personal narratives and other indicators to assess students' social-emotional wellbeing.

All forty-eight participants used personal experiences, work related and from their personal life, as example or argument to explain their understanding of social-emotional wellbeing during the data collection. None of the forty-eight participants referred to a policy-document in connection to explaining their understanding of social-emotional wellbeing.

Personal reflection

The subordinate 'personal reflection' is an important theme in understanding 'personal narratives' and how these narratives were formed. As all forty-eight participants used personal narratives to explain social-emotional wellbeing, most participants used personal reflection as indicator. In this research personal reflection stand for self-assessment and self-reflection. A strategy often used by teachers in education and in this research a returning strategy amongst participants in understanding social-emotional wellbeing.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations where personal reflection is used as indicator in understanding and assessing social-emotional wellbeing:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"It is important to ask yourself why someone is behaving the way they do. I try to empathize with students, although some students do not make it easy".*	*TS11*
2.	*"As a mentor I try to assess the situation with information from others and my own assessment coming from experience. This is based on the relation I have with my students; I look for changes in attitude, behaviour, and non-verbal communication to estimate the situation."*	*MT16*
3.	*"Within this organisation we try to work with purpose, the 'why'. I always ask new candidates why they want to work in education. We need school professionals to work with their hearts and not just their minds. They need to work in education because of the children and have their wellbeing come first."*	*SD1*
4.	*"To really assess someone's wellbeing we need time. Time to invest in a positive relation with students, time to invest in contact moments. As a teacher I assess the situation from my own perspective and a positive relation with students will help assess the situation in the right way and simply discuss with students why they do the things they do."*	*TS5*

The 'why' runs like a thread through the data collection. It is part of the organisations vision and mission and the school directors, department leaders, and most mentors discussed the 'why' in one way or another. When talking about the 'why' they are talking about choosing this profession because they are motivated to help students grow from being a child in becoming young adults. These participants explained the importance of being motivated, open, caring and committed to helping students and this helps them in understanding and assessing students' social-emotional wellbeing. Building a trusting relationship will help students ask for help and for the school professional to notice non-verbal signals.

Most teachers and ESS members did not discuss the why. Five out of twelve teachers and two out of eight ESS members talked about the why, emphasizing on the importance of investing in students' wellbeing by getting to know them, the ability to have open discussions, empathize and sympathize. All these school professionals used self-assessment (how would I have experienced this or why is this student behaving this way) or recognition from personal experiences to assess a students' situation during class. The five teachers who did discuss the why, discussed this together with their concern over the lack of time to really invest in building a trusting relation with their students (illustrated with quote four).

Two teachers underlined the lack of time as a reason for falling back on personal reflection as their tool for assessing a situation. When it comes to understanding and assessing a student's social-emotional wellbeing they follow their gut feeling and rely on their experience as a professional and as a family person and being an adolescent and student themselves once.

Several mentors and teachers explained the tension field they feel they are in. On one hand they are teaching and focussing the 45 minutes of class on mandatory subjects with a group of twenty-five to thirty students. On the other hand, they need to be aware of personal needs and issues students might experience. Sometimes they need to be strict with a group, but one vulnerable student might take it personally. These participants explain they have trouble assessing wellbeing in situations like these. Schools are trying to provide an emotionally and physically safe environment, but not every student might experience a feeling of safety in a similar way. This is something that is not always solvable during class, according to these participants.

Personal experiences

According to the data collection, many school professionals use personal reflection as a strategy to assess a situation. Personal reflection and personal experiences are interconnected. Their reflection comes from experiences. For example, if a coping strategy worked for the school professional, they seem more likely to advise a similar coping strategy to a student. Especially when there is a trusting relationship between a school professional and student, the student is more likely to open up, but so is the school professional.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations where personal experience is used as indicator in signaling social-emotional wellbeing:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Not all students show visible indicators that they are not feeling well, sometimes it is just a feeling or maybe recognition from personal experience. It is not easy to explain, but most times I have concern about someone's wellbeing, I am rightly so."*	*MT5*
2.	*"If a student asks for help or is emotional and feeling down, I draw back from my own life experience. I think most school professionals do when challenged to take on a more counselling or parenting role".*	*ESS2*

3.	*"I think there is a natural pull towards someone when you are looking for a confidant. I have experienced so in my personal life and I see students do the same. They pull towards peers with a similar approach to life and they pull towards teacher who they trust because of life experience."*	TS7
4.	*"There is no clear measuring tool for social-emotional wellbeing, because wellbeing is an abstract concept, formed by personal experiences in the context of environmental factors."*	DL5

As the first and third quote illustrate, these participants use two different examples to explain a feeling, a natural pull, which is not easy to explain. Following this so-called feeling is a returning explanation when assessing wellbeing. All forty-eight participants discussed at some point during the interview the (mostly positive) influence of (negative) personal experiences on their signalling skills on students social-emotional wellbeing. Nine participants made the remark that having life experience is a necessity to be a good role model for students. Because of the experiences that people go through in life, they develop certain beliefs, needs, ways of thinking and personality traits. Students' individual backgrounds and experiences affect them as learners and affect their performance in the classroom.

School professionals are aware students need to be seen through different lenses: level of development, learning preferences, language, culture, background, gender, beliefs, and peer groups. According to the data collection participants are very aware of all these different factors, but this awareness is not always in the foreground. According to them to really understand and sympathize with students and their needs, you need life experiences so you can draw from personal recognition. Not everyone has a natural ability to empathize, that is why having your own personal experiences to draw from is helpful and this is often something done unintentionally. These participants feel more supported to draw from personal experiences than from theoretical backgrounds.

As quote four explains, most participants experience wellbeing as an abstract concept. Although they also agree there are clear indicators to measure and assess someone's wellbeing. This debate between wellbeing being received as abstract, but the different subthemes are received as evident is a returning debate. Quote two illustrates that some participants not only referred to personal experiences to help them asses a situation or understand a student's context. These participants, mostly mentors talked about a different role from being a school professional. They made the comparison with parenting roles or the role of being an extended big brother/ sister for some students. This is a clear example of drawing from experiences outside of school.

Interconnection between work and personal life

As the different subthemes above already indicated, there is an interconnection between work and personal life. Not only did participants explain the effect of their personal life experiences on assessing and understanding students' social-emotional wellbeing, but most participants also discussed the balance or lack of balance between work life and personal life. The interconnection between work and personal life stands for the balance between the two and the effect work and personal life have on each other. During the data collection a majority of mentors, department leaders and school directors explained they experience an increasing demand of being reachable after school hours, some explained to be reachable in the evening via e-mail and WhatsApp. This means work and personal life are literally and figuratively intertwined.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about the interconnection between work and personal life:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"I have contact with parents and students outside of school hours (evenings) on a regular basis, meaning more than two times a week. Parents appreciate the possibility to consult us outside of their working hours. Although I am not sure if this is a positive development for the future."*	DL2
2.	*"We invest in parent involvement and collaboration, although this comes with the consequence that parents ask us for all kinds of things via e-mail, telephone and WhatsApp. Not only about their child's school development, but also to discuss home situations/ education. Sometimes I feel like a co-parent".*	MT4
3.	*"To me being a good teacher is being real. Which means that when something bad has happened in my personal life, it might be noticeable during class. Although I keep it professional, being open and real can provoke interesting conversations. So yes, my personal life does affect my work life and vice versa."*	TS12
4.	*"When I try to support students with extreme personal situations, it does affect me and my personal life. I build a relationship with my students and although I try to have a separate work and private life, it is difficult to stop caring."*	DL3

The first two quotes illustrate what mostly mentors and department leaders mentioned during the interviews: the role of the school in collaboration with parents. These participants feel there is a consequence of increasing parent involvement and collaboration and that is an increasing demand of contact moments.

Eleven out of sixteen mentors feel they there is an increasing demand in contact moments and nine mentors said to honour these parent contact requests in evening hours. When asking them why they honour these request, different answers were given. Some said they find it difficult to say no in general. These participants explained in their own words they set high standards for themselves, and they do not want to disappoint anyone (in this case students and parents). There was also a feeling of responsibility and to not want to miss any important signals.

They seemed to want to please these parents to prevent any discussion or disagreement. Others explained they find it difficult to say no to parents but did not find it difficult to ask colleagues or other organisations to wait until the next day. One of the returning reasons here as well is these participants want to build a positive relationship with the parents of their mentor students. Again, partly to prevent any future discussion or disagreement. There were a few mentors who said it was convenient for them as well. After teaching they went straight home to take care of their own children and when their children went to bed, they used that time to catch up on work.

Five out of eight department leaders said to be working after school hours and again mostly to follow up on parents contact requests or to update student files. Quote one illustrates that they worry about the increasing demand or normalisation of always being available. Two department leaders said they have experienced a significant change in the past five years when it comes to being available and reachable. Schools have developed into organisations who can offer education to more children with special needs. Teachers are trained in student differentiation, in teaching special needs children and there is a team of counsellors specialized in student-care.

 Although this is a positive change, it comes with a sometimes-difficult side effect according to these participants. School becomes a gathering place for all kinds of questions and when it comes to mental health or wellbeing, parents prefer rapid response and short-term perspective. Schools want to keep a positive relationship with these parents, so they tend to take on the responsibility they are given.

Quotes three and four illustrate a different kind of response on the interconnection between work life and personal life. This is not about pressure, feeling the demand of sharing responsibility, this is about human emotion.

The example of quote three is supported by mostly teachers and mentors. According to them it is important to stay professional but still show emotion. If you have been through something difficult it does not help teaching to keep a mask on. According to them this will only create distance between the teacher and student and the student will stop paying attention to class.

Quote four illustrates a returning type of answer, there is no preference to be found within the different roles of school professionals. When a student and their personal story touches them, it is not easy to stop caring at home. Some stories are difficult to shake off and these participants indicate that they will think of these students outside of school. When these school professionals also have an active role in supporting the student, all participants who said to find it difficult to stop caring, also said to commit to supporting these students outside of school. Not endlessly, but they will call, app or e-mail in evenings or weekends.

Conclusion

Exploring the understanding of school professionals on students' social-emotional wellbeing and their role in supporting the wellbeing of students it became clear this concept is dynamic and difficult to capture in one short description. School professionals often use social context to explain their interpretation of someone's wellbeing and the four different school contexts did not influence this approach. The majority of school professionals made the distinction between mental health and wellbeing when asked about it, although the two concepts were used together quite often. Personal experiences affect the school professional's interpretation of social-emotional wellbeing.

There are many different roles school professionals have and these different roles affect their role in supporting students' wellbeing. The main differences are found in the implementation of support. The type of relationship and interaction is of great effect on supportive role a school professional has. Because of these dynamics, school professional found it difficult to explain their role in relation to supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Wellbeing is a dynamic concept, affected by personal interpretation, context, environment, and circumstances. Supporting and maintaining wellbeing asks for flexibility and understanding of each other's interpretation.

Because of the dynamic nature of the concept, there is not one unified measuring tool. School professionals have an important role is signaling, monitoring, and guarding students' social-emotional wellbeing, and their using tools such as, personal assessment, external triggers and student tracking records to do so. Someone's social-emotional wellbeing can only be assessed by a more personal and in-depth approach and to do so, school professionals need to provide a positive and safe environment where they can form a relationship with their students. Keeping in mind that personal narratives are commonly used to recognized and explain social-emotional wellbeing and it is important to being able to empathize with your students, yet there is a fine line between personal approach and a professional approach.

Chapter 5: The effort of school professionals in supporting their students

Introduction

The previous chapter explored the understanding of school professionals on social-emotional wellbeing and their role in supporting students. This chapter will zoom in how schools take on such a role. The second supportive research question is: 'What are school professionals doing to support students' social-emotional wellbeing and what challenges do they experience?' To answer this question, we must look at the emerging themes related to this question. There is one superordinate theme connected to this question: 'school context'. The literature and methodology underlined the importance of a contextual approach to understand a phenomenon therefore, school context was an important node to highlight. The data analysis revealed five themes that were most discussed in relation to school context. These five themes summarize reoccurring subjects throughout the data collection and all participants used these themes when explaining what they are doing in relation to supporting students' social emotional wellbeing in the school. All participants also made the connection to what the school is or should be doing and how the school context is of influence on supporting student's social-emotional wellbeing. Therefore, the school context is the overlapping superordinate theme.

This superordinate theme and the connected subordinate themes illustrate what the data tells us about what the school professionals are doing to support students' social-emotional wellbeing and the challenges they face. These superordinate theme and subordinate themes highlights the personal interpretation of the participants understanding of social-emotional wellbeing. Their understanding and interpretation of the concept is vital for answering the main research question. The data shows the complexity of the concept. Discussing a superordinate theme such as school context, is important to fully understand not only the interpretation of the participants, but also the context they work in and how this might affect their ability or interpretation of what a school professional should be doing to support students' social-emotional wellbeing.

School context

Figure 5.1
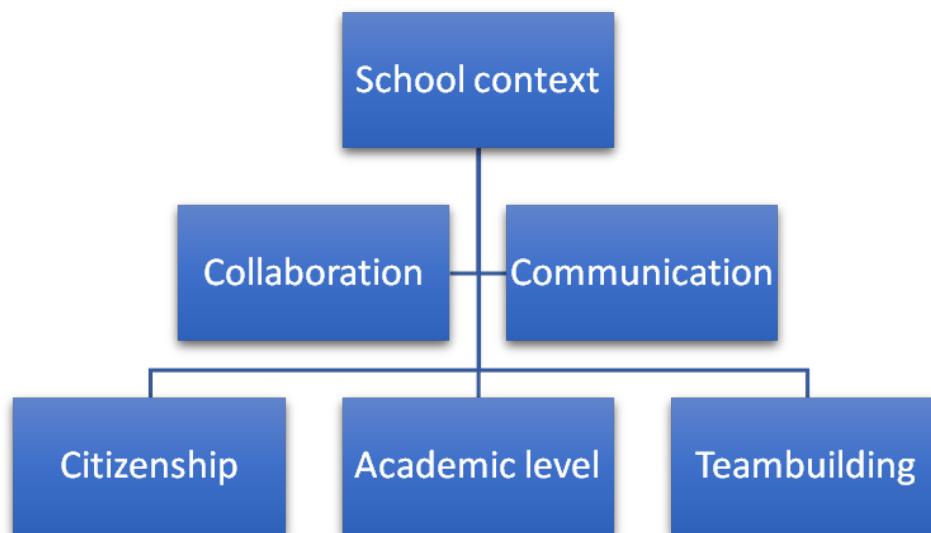
Figure 5.1 illustrates the superordinate theme 'school context' and underlying themes. As explained earlier in this chapter, all themes will be discussed separately but each theme is interconnected as we are discussing qualitative data and findings by having used IPA. The interpretation and contextual knowledge are vital to understand the meaning behind given answers, while staying aware of the interconnection. These data results are vital in understanding how the interpretation of students social-emotional wellbeing and support by school professionals

All participants discussed the influence of the context of the school on their role and on students' wellbeing in one way or another. Some mentioned the different school factors such as surroundings or differences in student population based on academic levels), which can influence chosen teaching methods, communication between teacher and students, coaching methods, student-student interaction, and the overall ambiance in the school. Others discussed school context in a more personal setting; how they feel in the school they are working in and if they feel supported in their role or shy to act. There seemed to be a third way to look at the theme; in a practical sense, what types of programs the schools have in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and which school professional has a role in these programs.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about the different ways the school context was discussed during the data collection:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"There are different students' support programs in the school; teambuilding programs, anti-bullying, coaching on resilience, etc. We also have a team with specialized student counsellors."*	*DL7*
2.	*"For example, teachers who work here are coaches first and teachers second. Students need a positive student-teacher relationship, and we have to be committed in coaching them to be healthy and happy young-adults."*	*SD4*
3.	*"I do not feel shy to act and I feel supported by the educational support staff and student counsellors to go to when I am worried about a student, but what I do miss is time. Time for one-on-one conversations with that student, time in between classes to be there for a student in need."*	*TS3*
4.	*"Ambiance is key. You can have all the student support methods in the world, but you need to create a positive ambiance. And for this you need more that methods. It is the sum of student and school professional population, the building and surroundings, the chosen teaching methods, collaboration with parents of other partners of the school, etc."*	*SD1*

These four quotes illustrate the complexity of asking about the role of the school professional in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Although it can be interpreted as a straightforward question where participants sum up the different students' support programs or tasks of the school professional regarding students' support, these answers illustrate it is not a simple straight forward question to answer. Personal interpretation, personal context within one of the schools and school context influence the types of answers given.

The first quote illustrates one type of response; summing up different programmes the schools have to offer in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. The data shows most department leaders and school directors explaining the different programs. Although all school directors and a small majority of the department leaders (five out of eight) completed their response with a comparable answer as illustrated with quote four. Talking about school ambiance seemed to be a returning topic during the data collection and it also seemed as complicated as a concept to explain as social-emotional wellbeing is. These two concepts are, according to a majority of the participants, key concepts in guiding students to young adulthood, but also are difficult to fathom. Ambiance is explanatory on its own, but participants had difficulty explaining how they managed this positive ambiance in the school. Is there a must have program or policy to create such an ambiance. This seems unclear in the data. As quote four illustrates: it seems to be the sum of different factors within the context of the school.

Quote two illustrates a similarity between all four school directors. They all spoke about the importance of hiring school professionals that choose this profession because they want to work with young-adults, and they are there to help them. The school professionals at these schools should strongly believe in education as a mini society where pedagogics skills are the foundation of being a good school professional. According to these school directors this is an important element during the interviews of new applicants. This data shows all four schools, even with their own different context and population, have a similar approach in searching for new school professionals and share the same vision when it comes to (according to them) describing a great school professional.

Quote three illustrates a different interpretation of the question about the role of the school professional. Most teachers, mentors and educational support staff used a personal evaluation to answer this question. Although eleven out of sixteen mentors and six out of twelve teachers also completed their answer with a sum-up of different student support programs. As quote three illustrates, this teacher does not experience any shyness to act, but does feel pressured to work within a certain timeframe. There is not enough time to really invest in a student-teacher relation. The majority talked about time and especially the lack of time. A total of thirty-seven out of forty-eight mentioned the lack of time during the data collection. Which is worrying, because building a relationship with your students takes time and therefore is vital for given school professionals the ability to support students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Although the teacher of the third quote does not experience any shyness or inability to act, the data shows there are many school professionals (a small minority) who worry about their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. They describe an increase of special needs students and not only experience lack of time but sometimes also feel an inability to act on those special needs. The data show that within one of the four schools, the majority of the teaching staff sometimes feels unable to fulfil their role in supporting students' social emotional wellbeing.

The educational support staff seemed to find it difficult to explain their role in supporting students' social emotional wellbeing. Six out of eight does not think they have an important role in supporting students' social emotional wellbeing. They feel this role should be with the teacher, mentor, or student counsellors. The role they give themselves is the role of the observer and incidents or worrying signals will be passed onto mentor or department leader.

It is important to understand the context where students and school professionals interact with each other. The context in which school professionals are challenges to provide support on social-emotional wellbeing. There were five returning subthemes discussed when having a conversation about the school context, the role school professionals take on, and the challenges they experience. According to the data, collaboration, communication, citizenship, academic level, and teambuilding are returning themes that help understand the context of the school.

Collaboration

As mentioned before, many participants look at the school as a mini society and with that comes many collaborating partners. Parents are one of the most important partners to collaborate with. All four schools speak of the triangle "school, child, parents". Schools have a role in educating young adults. Education is more than creating knowledge about different subjects. These four schools state they have the goal to guide these students to adulthood. Although these schools state they do not want to take the parenting role and bring that inside the schools, collaborating with parents is important to create a safe environment with clear expectations and evaluations.

But there are many other partners schools must consider. For example, attendance officers, health care organizations, local police and social workers, the residential area surrounding the school, local government, etc. Most of these partners have policies of their own, so working together can be challenging, but is also very important. Schools are an important place to find information, signals and monitor, and these partners can support schools in their role supporting students' wellbeing.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about the collaboration and the possible effect on the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"The collaboration between school, students and parents is more active than ever, however this brings new challenges. Sometimes it feels education and parenting are overlapping more than ever. This can be a good thing when school and parents think alike, but it can also be confusing when parents feel they have a say in school policy or schools feel they should be parenting. Where to draw the line."*	MT11
2.	*"Although school is a finding place for information for a lot of organizations, we are not always seen as partner which makes it more difficult for me to determine my role in cases like these."*	DL8

3.	*"I find it helpful to communicate directly with parents (via e-mail) and not always communicate via mentor. This helps to keep expectations clear and questions are answered faster."*	*TS1*
4.	*"Working with all these different organizations with different policies doesn't make my job any easier."*	*ESS6*

The subordinate theme 'collaboration' and the illustrative quotes belonging to this theme, illustrate some of the challenges participants experience. During the data analysis it became clear that collaborating with different partners is one of the most challenging aspects the participants experienced. As quote one illustrates, schools feel they have accomplished a more active collaboration within the triangle with parents, but this new accessibility also brings new challenges. Some participants even stated they feel pressured to co-parent, while others do not feel pressured at all. Looking at the data and searching for the connection between feeling pressured within these collaborations and their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, it can be stated that school professionals who are more personally involved in building a positive relation with students and with that supporting them in their social-emotional wellbeing, also feel more pressured and experience extra workload from collaborations. They are committed to their role and their students, and they need clear boundaries and expectations to help them set boundaries. Most participants (thirty-two out of forty-eight) zoomed in on one of the biggest challenges: do not become to personally involved, stay professional. But to stay professional, the role of the professional needs to be clear.

Quotes two and four illustrate the challenges when working with other organizations. Quote four illustrates the practical challenges; the different policies and procedures from different organizations, although all organizations are part of the same local government. The participants who mentioned similar challenges, do not experience a lot of pressure. They just do not think it is efficient, especially since everyone experiences a lack of time. Quote two is the illustration of something that, according to the data, does add to the workload of school professionals and does not support their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Although most teachers and educational support staff did not mention anything during the data about this challenge, this can be explained. Most teachers and educational support staff do not collaborate with these organizations, so they might not be informed about possible consequences for the school.

It is unclear if there is a majority of school professionals that have knowledge of this fact and student counsellors or school social workers did not participate during this research, but this information might be very important in answering the research question. According to a handful school professionals at each school, schools are not seen as partner for many health care organizations. Not only does the law makes it very difficult to share any personal information, but when collaborating partners reach out it is more often to gather information from school then to share important information.

Health care organizations, police officers or local social workers are not allowed to share any information with the school (without permission of student and parents). Although these school professionals are all understanding of someone's privacy, not knowing critical information can create unsafe situations in school and it makes it difficult to take on the role of the supporter for students' social-emotional wellbeing. Furthermore, the feeling of not being seen as a partner in supporting these students, but also feeling pressured to support these students, creates extra unnecessary stress amongst school professionals.

The third quote illustrates the importance of clear communication and accessibility. In secondary education the first contact is the mentor. But when it comes down no practical questions or maybe something that happened in class, seven out of twelve teachers shared the preference of communicating directly. According to them this supports clarity surrounding their students. It helps to communicate quick and effectively. When questions stay unanswered for a while, this created tension and uncertainty. This will negatively affect the collaboration within the triangle. The five other teachers explained why they preferred the information to go via the mentor. This helps the mentor to create a full picture of what is happening within their mentor class and in some cases, it helps not be too accessible. They experience an increase in contact requests from parents, mostly because there is a sense of insecurity, and the want to keep their role as a teacher clear (and not become a co-parent). These five teachers believe it is more effective for the collaboration to communicate indirectly.

The context of the school reaches further than the dynamics between a student and school professional. The previous chapter reveals how dynamic social-emotional wellbeing is and that it is necessary to understand these dynamics and flexibility in interpretation to understand the role of the school professional. When it comes to wellbeing, many other partners are involved such as parents and health care.

They are part of the dynamic concept of wellbeing within the school context because they affect how school professional can take on their supportive role. Participants experience challenges within these different types of collaboration, and this has a direct effect on their role. School professionals can feel pressured to take on roles they should not take on or become insecure or frustrated which affects their functioning at school.

Communication

The previous subordinate theme already introduced the importance of communication in collaboration. Communication is one of the main topics in education and is interconnected with the subordinate theme collaboration. Not only is it important collaborating with other local partners, but communication is also a key ingredient for transferring information, which is needed for teaching, educating, coaching, and supporting. During the data collection all participants initially focused on verbal communication methods or informative methods such as e-mail. This form of communication was mostly focussed on transferring information and not so much on relation. Only seven out of forty-eight participants mentioned using non-verbal communication to support students' social-emotional wellbeing. With that they used examples such as: an encouraging look, a smile or eye contact. Anything that might help a student who is feeling down, to feel seen.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about the importance of communication and different types of communication:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"It helps, when I speak with worrying or critical parents, to ask them for help as well. This way I am not the only one with a to-do list at the end of the conversation. We are in this together"*	*TS10*
2.	*"The Dutch education system is focused on verbal communication, but not all students have the same skillset when it comes to communication. We need to be aware what this might do with their wellbeing and school results."*	*DL7*
3.	*"There are multiple ways we inform parents about any school updates: via email, student tracking system, school app, calling, weekly online journal. Although even with all these methods, we do not always seem to be on the same page."*	*MT13*
4.	*"When communicating with students or parents, I try to connect and adapt on their ability to discuss certain things. Although sometimes these conversations are easier than others. Emotions, language, and capability all are major factors in how a conversation flows."*	*MT6*

Forty out of forty-eight participant mentioned communication as an important requirement to be successful within the education system. Not only to understand each other during teaching and the teaching material, but also in asking for help and support on a more personal level. There was no distinction made between verbal and non-verbal, although most participants used examples with verbal-communication regarding the communication between teacher and student.

As all four quotes illustrate in different ways; communication can be a fragile understanding. When communicating, many other factors play a role in how you understand each other. Quote one illustrates a choses strategy where the chosen communication method helps to collaborate and reduces the risk of becoming opposed. Quote four underlines what is meant with the first quote; when communicating with parents and students, especially over personal issues, you need to connect and empathize. Both quotes were supported by examples where the school professional received critical questions or had to be the bringer of bad news. When emotions become part of the conversation, communication is under pressure. In these types of situations school professional feel the weight of their word. Discussing someone's wellbeing and progress not only asks for communication, but communication also needs to be used to make a connection and prevent the different parties from standing against each other.

Quote four can also interpreted in a different way. There were a few department leaders and mentors from the schools with academic lower levelled education, who used a comparable quote. They explained the importance of adapting to your target audience. Their students more often have low-skilled parents. Digital communication will not bring the message across, neither will official meetings or phone calls. If they want to reach these parents/ families for a positive collaboration, they need to invest in the connection and use other communicative skills and methods. During the interviews this was a returning topic mostly amongst the department leaders and school directors. Most department leaders of the academic higher levelled schools also mentioned how complicated communication sometimes can be. The parents of these students (often with busy careers), have very strong verbal communication skills, but are not always active collaborators. It seems the challenge lies with schools; they need to adapt their communication skills on targeted audience and the desired outcome.

The second quote shows a different viewing on communication and the role of the school. This participant discussed a possible pitfall of the system, which stands in direct relation with the supporting role schools have. The Dutch education system is based on communication and mostly verbal.

Not all students have the same talent to communicate. Does this mean these students will end with a lower-level diploma than they should or does this add to the workload of the school professional to be creative in finding other ways to help this student to be the best they can. Out of forty-eight participants, fifteen participants asked similar critical questions about the education system.

Communication is a broad concept within the context of a school. There are many different types of communication which take place. Although all types of communication are important for a student's progress in the school, there is one type of communication most important when it comes to supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and that is the ability to use communicative skills to make a genuine connection.

Academic level

Another important factor to consider when discussing the role of the school is the academic level it is offering. In the Dutch education system students are tested at the end of primary school. This test decides which level they will start in secondary education. The educational level, as illustrated before, is interconnected with the other subordinate themes connected to the superordinate theme 'school context'. Throughout the data collection it became clear that teams of teachers and mentors are formed to teach on a certain level as well. There is limited crossing between the different academic levels.

The school professionals have indicated this academic level influences not only teaching methods, but also communication methods, mutual expectations between the triangle school-student-parents, conception of the world and with that; the role of the school professional in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Overall participants agree the school has an important role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. But contextual factors of the student, school or school professional seem to influence the understanding and interpretation of this role.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about the different academic levels in the different schools:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Our students more often have low-skilled parents. This means we have a responsibility as a school to provide a safe and homelike setting for our students who will not be able to find that safety and guidance at home."*	DL4
2.	*"I have been a teacher at many levels and although I do not want to generalize, I do experience overall differences based on levels. The lower-level students can be more challenging in behaviour but are also more practical when looking for solutions. The higher-level students will not stand-out as much in behaviour but can be challenging in wanting to discuss everything and are not easy to convince to try something."*	TS9
3.	*"The academic levels might tell us something about the way students learn and which teaching method to choose, it does not tell us anything about the people they become. If all school professionals can take on a role as coach, all students should feel supported by the school."*	SD2
4.	*"Maybe this whole levelling idea is dated. Maybe students are limited in personal and educational growth because of this system."*	MT12

During the data collection the influence of academic levels on the role of the school professional supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing seemed a sensitive subject. This theme evoked more outspoken responses. A majority of the school professionals working at a lower-level school seemed more critical about this levelling in education and what this stigma might do with the confidence of the students. The school professionals working at the highest level did not have much critique on the system. Some school professionals working at the school with medium to higher levels also were critical of the systems and the limitations it brings. They feel this system is outdated and students should be able to feel challenged to complete subjects on a higher level but have the possibility to complete some subjects on a lower level if this is more fitting with the talents of the student.

The lower levelled schools focused on social-emotional wellbeing, making school results subsidiary. The medium and higher levelled schools also had their focus on social-emotional wellbeing but often make the connection with results. Good support should translate in wellbeing and in stable results, and the other way around, otherwise disappointing results can cause stress and anxiety and because of these factors, students might need extra support. School professionals from the medium levelled school seemed to focus more on wellbeing than the school professionals from the higher levelled school. Although all schools, as discussed before, have the same mission and vision.

The illustrative quotes have a general outcome. All participants agree that the academic level might tell us something about which approach to teaching, communicating, and collaborating to choose to make sure the triangle is working. But these factors (or details as some describe it), should not influence or change the role of the school professional. The overall mission of school professionals is to help these students grow in greater older versions of themselves. This mission was shared by thirty-eight out of forty-eight participants. As stated before, the experienced lack of time is an issue. The educational system is still mostly designed to teach by transferring information to a classroom full of students.

However, school professionals feel motivated and pressured to take on a more guiding role. Motivated, because they would like to invest in a positive student-school professional relationship and the majority of participants feel investing in such relationship will affect academic level in a positive way. Pressured, because this new approach needs to be fitted in the old system. According to participants who feel pressured, new educational approaches feel like extra tasks upon previous ones (because of the current outdated system) and it does not feel as educational innovation to them.

It seems important to highlight both sides of the academic levels the Dutch system works with as part of the school context. It is clear the role of the school professional is affected by the academic level of students, mainly because of the programs connected to academic level. Although school professionals working at higher level schools feel a disbalance between focusing on student wellbeing and progress, students within lower levels often feel unable to move forward (level-up). Both situations will affect the role of the school professional and students' social-emotional wellbeing. Again, it is noticeable how many school professionals feel the need to take on a more supportive role yet have trouble explaining how to do so and what their role entails.

Citizenship

Citizenship plays an important part in understanding the school context. Al four schools discussed their role in guiding children to adulthood, being very aware of the fact they are preparing young adults for life after school. To understand the school context, and with that, understand the role of school professionals, citizenship is an important theme. All participants agree that the role of the school is to support the development of students to adulthood and as illustrated before, this vision is an important part of the application procedure for hiring new school professionals.

The school professionals at these schools should strongly believe in education as a mini society where pedagogics skills are the foundation of being a good school professional. If schools are a mini society, this means the role of these schools and school professionals is to support good citizenship. Citizenship education is part of the standard curriculum in secondary education and develops knowledge, skills and understanding that students need to play a full part in society as active and responsible citizens. In this theme the focus lies on the social side of citizenship, where school is seen as a mini society.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about the role of the schools regarding citizenship:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Students attend school five days a week with hundreds of other students and a large team of school professionals. It is a mini society under a magnifying glass."*	DL5
2.	*"Students are challenged to be aware of each other, have a sense of responsibility for their surroundings, learn to work together and to take part in a group dynamic. This can be challenging for some and as a teacher I try to support and guide them in a positive way."*	TS11
3.	*"The subject of citizenship will be extended. It is now part of subjects such as history and civic education, but schools must extend their program on citizenship and provide a more social-cultural outlook."*	SD1
4.	*"Do we do enough to support good citizenship? To me it feels like we can do more, but we have to make it an important part of the timetable and not something to do in-between other things."*	MT8

These quotes illustrate different approaches to life in school as a mini society. Citizenship is something the government is promoting for school to take on. It has been a part of the curriculum for a long time, but mostly to teach students about Dutch society during history and civics class. As quote three illustrates, there is a change in the approach to citizenship in the school's curriculum. The government wants schools to expand their citizenship program with a more social-cultural approach. The starting date for this new approach is the first of august 2021.

This starting date was a year away from the time of the data collection. So it could be that the participant of quote four is not feeling this way anymore, but during the data collection the lack of time was a returning topic. This quote illustrates the search for balance between the motivation a lot of school professionals must take on a supporting role and the lack of time or workload they experience which makes it hard to take on that supporting role.

Nine out of sixteen mentors and five out of twelve teachers had similar ideas about expanding the role of the school regarding supporting good citizenship. They believe good citizenship will have a long term and broader effect. Students will be more motivated in schools, but also will develop responsibly and coping mechanisms. The mentors and teachers who feel less enthusiastic about expanding the role of the school regarding good citizenship are cautious. They feel schools are pressured to take on many roles and be the driving force behind social changes. This does not always help the quality assurance of education according to them.

The first and second quote illustrate how schools are seen as a mini society. The first quote uses the comparison of the mini society under a magnifying glass. This comparison was used because of how intense and challenging school can be for some students. They not only have to concentrate during class on different subjects, they also are in a crowded place, full of peers, five days a week. This asks for skills such as: social skills, communicative skills, taking responsibility, feeling confident in social situations, being able to prioritize, etc. These are all also important life skills, and therefore schools are seen as a mini society. The second quote illustrates that teachers recognize these challenges students might face and they see a role for themselves in supporting these students in their mini society. All participants see a supporting role for themselves in supporting students finding their place in the school, but there is confusion amongst participants in where to draw the line. It remains unclear to them when is it still a role for the school professional and when other partners or specialists step in.

Citizenship and wellbeing are connected. The data implies school professionals believe they should take on a role in guiding children towards adulthood and helping them become skilled, stable, and resilient adults. Education is about more than transferring information and working towards a degree. Students are growing up, learning to write their own handbook and, under the supervision of school professionals and caretakers, learn to deal with setbacks or unexpected events. Students are learning important life skills that may not have a clear connection with their final exam yet do have a clear connection with their social-emotional wellbeing. School professionals are aware of their role in this and motivated to support students' social-emotional wellbeing yet remain confused and unsure about the 'job description' connected to this role. It remains difficult to clarify the role of the school professional.

Teambuilding

The subordinate theme of citizenship following the school as a mini society, also made another subordinate theme rise: 'teambuilding. Participants spoke of teambuilding to promote positive group dynamic between students as part of the curriculum. Teambuilding has different names at the different schools, yet teambuilding captures the essence of all four methods. It is an important part of understanding school context because these teambuilding methods were discussed by the majority of the data collection.

According to the data, these methods focus entirely on (group) wellbeing and are part of the annual program. Other support programs on wellbeing are offered curative and focus on the individual student. Department leaders and school directors also spoke of teambuilding to promote a stronger team of school professionals. This subordinate theme seems to be an important part of the factors that create the positive ambiance. And this ambiance they speak about, seems to be one of the most important reasons for students to choose one of these schools to go to.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about teambuilding and how this affects the role of the school:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Teambuilding is part of the curriculum for first- and second-year students. It is a preventative method to positively influence group dynamic. It was developed as a preventative program a few years ago because of the difficulties we signalled during these schoolyears"*	DL1
2.	*"Students are placed in a group based on academic level and age, not based on personal interests, skills, hobbies, social qualities, or family situation. So, it is more likely that they have nothing in common, than something in common."*	MT5
3.	*"Some schools are further in their teambuilding development than others and this is noticeable in school ambiance. Social safety plays a major part in how students and professionals feel and behave in the school."*	SD4
4.	*"Without a positive group dynamic, it is more challenging to teach. The group dynamic is very important in creating and maintain a safe learning environment."*	TS12

Quote one illustrates that this particular school teaches teambuilding to first and second graders as part of a preventive program to support positive group formation. According to this and five other participants working at this school, teambuilding not only supports positive group formation but also prevents bullying, supports the mentor role, and gives a positive platform to discuss social skills with these first and second graders.

It is remarkable that this school teaches teambuilding and is able to support the positive outcomes, but other schools of the same organisations do not teach teambuilding. Each school chooses their own methods. This might be because of the differences in student population, but this remains unclear in the data. The third quote also zooms in on the differences between the different schools. But in this particular quote, this participant is talking about teambuilding amongst the team of school professionals. According to seven participants, working as a school professional has changed over the years. If they look six or seven years back it was normal that every teacher had its own classroom and its own so-called island. Teambuilding amongst school professionals mostly contained internal viewing with co-workers who teach the same subjects or have the same role.

The past years school professionals are challenged to look behind the scenes; become acquainted with chosen teaching methods and different professional approaches to the role of school professional. This happens through collegial visitations, team training or observations/ shadowing days. The difference this quote illustrates is that there are still schools and school professional where it is not accepted to look behind the scenes. It remains unclear is this is because of the school structure that does not provide any possibilities for the team to do so, or the team might feel unsafe and unsure to do so. Out of forty-eight participants, twenty-one participants feel comfortable to do a collegial consultation. Twenty-nine feel comfortable asking for a collegial consultation. Six participants do not see the value of having a look behind the scenes, they prefer to focus on their own role as a school professional.

Quote two illustrates the starting point for all students in secondary education and the challenges this brings for group formation. It is difficult to predict how some group formations develop. Therefore, it is so important to invest is a positive group formation.

All eight department leaders and sixteen mentors underlined the importance of investing in a positive group formation. Quote four illustrates the importance of a positive group formation. Without a positive group dynamic, teaching becomes difficult, and students' wellbeing can be at risk. Teambuilding might not be a returning method in all four schools, all schools have their own methods to support group formation. They all speak of teambuilding in a way.

All four school directors set new objectives for upcoming years and one of these objectives is to build a stronger team who is not only a teacher, concierge, mentor, or teaching assistant, but also feels comfortable in the role of coach, host, and pedagogue. The objective is to train the school professional, so they have the skillset to train the student. Offering teambuilding methods in school as part of a preventive program on maintaining wellbeing underlines that these four schools are taking on a supportive role towards their students' social-emotional wellbeing. These schools aim to support positive group formations, good classroom management, providing a solid and safe base for students to build from. Again, underlines that the context of the school and the context of the classroom (how does the group interact and how capable is the school professional in guiding their students) affects the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Conclusion

To understand the role of the school professional, there needs to be understanding of the school context. Although in chapter 5 it became clear that the different school contexts had no effect on how school professionals understood the concept of social-emotional wellbeing, the context of the school does affect how school professionals understand their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. The data reveals that within discussing school context collaboration, communication, academic level, citizenship, and teambuilding are themes the majority of participants referred to.

School professionals feel pressured when it comes to collaboration with others outside of school often because of a sense of inequality or lack of clarity in who does what. Leaving them with a feeling of responsibility for their students, yet unsure about their role in the matter. Communication is key when it comes to collaboration, although the data mainly focused on the importance of communication in relation to wellbeing. The most important goal is to use communication to connect.

School professionals recognize the importance of connection and relation when it comes to supporting students' wellbeing, yet sometimes feel blocked by the educational system to do so. Working with academic levels might provide groups of students with comparable educational needs, yet school professionals feel this approach does not benefit wellbeing. The data reveals school professionals working at higher level schools experience more pressure on learning outcomes and experience less time to focus on wellbeing. While school professionals working at lower-level schools worry about students feeling blocked to move forward to another level, which could have a negative effect on students' wellbeing.

Some say the current education system is outdated. School professionals agree on having an important role in guiding children towards adulthood. Preparing them for life after school, recognizing students might be working towards a degree, yet also need to build life skills. These four schools offer a preventive teambuilding program to support students (group) wellbeing.

Other programs are curative and more individual, making it possible to offer a personal approach, although it does not become clear what that approach could be and what role the school professional has. Schools are seen as a mini society, with increased attention for wellbeing, yet also with confusion on what roles the school should take on in this mini society.

Chapter 6: School Professionals' Recommendations and Ideas regarding their Role

Introduction

Chapters 4 and 5 explored the understanding and role of the school professionals regarding supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. These findings underline the complexity of such a dynamic concept yet also reveals the motivation and effort of school professionals to try to take on a supportive role for their students. These findings also revealed the discussion on what could be done to improve the role of the school professional.

The third and final supportive research questions is: 'Do they have any recommendations or ideas for improving the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing?' To answer this question, we must look at the emerging themes related to this question. There is one superordinate theme connected to this question: 'Role of the school'. The goal of this research is to understand the school professional's outtake on their role in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing. This superordinate theme reflects the data collection on how school professionals think schools should understand in implement this supporting role. This superordinate theme and the five connected subordinate themes explain what the data shows about possible recommendations and improving the role of the school.

These six themes summarize any recommendations, expectations or critical question participants have about improving the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. During the data analysis of the previous research questions, it became clear school professionals are motivated about their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, but not always feel supported themselves to take on such a role. The data shows the lack of time participants experience, there seems to be confusion about who does what, there are several non-school factors who influence the role of the school regarding supporting their students and not all four schools have a similar approach to the execution of the supportive role of the school professional.

This superordinate theme and the five connected subordinate themes illustrate the data analysis about the recommendations and ideas from school professionals for improving the support of students' social-emotional wellbeing. Personal interpretation on the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the previous themes will affect participants ideas for improvement and possible recommendations. It is important to, again, be aware of the complexity of the subject.

Role of the school

Figure 6.1
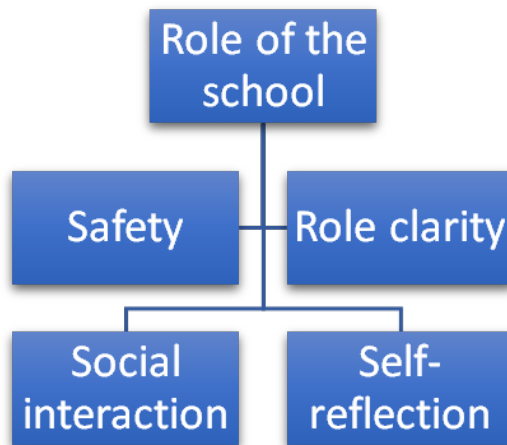
Figure 6.1 illustrates the superordinate theme 'role of the school' and underlying themes. As explained before, all themes will be discussed separately but each theme is interconnected as we are discussing qualitative data and findings by having used IPA. This results chapter reflects the outlook of school professionals on the role of the school. The superordinate theme the of 'role of the school' comes from the main research question. In order to find answers, the overarching node (role of the school) was created, and during the data collection participants were asked directly about their outlook on the role of the school. They were also asked about their role as a school professional and how they interpretate their role in relation to supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. The four underlying themes reflect important topics that came forward during the data analysis. These subthemes reflect topics that were discussed repetitively and reflect the beliefs and understanding on the role of the school by the majority of participants. Not only is it important to find out how they interpret their role, it also became clear that many of these school professionals are very motivated to support students' social-emotional wellbeing but are unsure about the execution of the their supportive role or have different ideas about the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about the role of the school and possible ideas from participants about this role:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"I have a strong opinion about the role of the school, so to me it is clear where I draw the line. But I feel pressured to take on a role that is not supposed to be the role of a school professional."*	*TS4*
2.	*"The role of the school in society seems to be shifting and I'd like more clarity in what to expect and what others will expect from me. I feel like I have less time to teach, but I have all these other roles such as: police officer, family coach, confidant, educator, and activator. I'd love more time for a smaller group of students, so I can invest in different roles, but mainly build a positive relationship since students find it more and more difficult to stay motivated."*	*TS6*
3.	*"I think there is a positive development in school where school professionals have a stronger supportive role and school professionals are able to develop other talents than teaching, but if we want to live up to this role and these talents, we need to update the way we look at education and the methods we use".*	*MT1*
4.	*"My ideas for improving the role of the school are to have a clear policy about what the role of the school in different contexts will be. So, we have the power to say yes to a supportive role, but also to say no."*	*MT14*

During the data collection this question generated four types of responses:

1. The critical thinker: the school professional who wants to focus primarily on their role as a school professional but feels pressured to become a co-parent or caretaker. Some participants said to feel pressured by school management, others explained this pressure comes from the changes in educational law from the government. A third group of participants thought of a changing, busy society with the result of adding pressure to school because this is the place where these young adults are most visible.

2. The participant who experiences confusion: This group of participants focused on clarity regarding to this question. They had no strong opinion about the role of the school, although they experience change as well. They are willing to embrace any change, as long as it is clear why, who does what and what is expected from them. And to them, at the moment of the data collection, this is missing. They feel unsure about who is responsible for creating clarity. The participants are divided on this matter. Some say the local government, others say national government and there is a group who feels the school management team is responsible.

3. The positive thinker: This group of participants focused on the positive changes within education. These participants explained to have affinity with taking on a more supportive role towards their students and, according to them, the fact that this necessary supportive role is acknowledged these days creates new opportunities for students with special needs, but also for this group of participants who want to do more than their primary role in the school. With this being said, even the positive thinkers see the supportive role of the school as 'extra'.

4. The practical thinker: the school professional who thinks of practical ideas for improving the role of the school, such as implementing new (coaching) methods, write clear policies and think about task divisions. These practical thinkers have a strong opinion about the role of the school and mostly discussed needing a clear policy to protect schools, students, and the role of the school professional and to clarify the line between taking on the role of a school professional or social worker. These participants expect clarification is the main issue in why school professional experience a heavy workload and why students, parents and other organizations keep asking school to take on extra supporting roles.

All four types of responses have one thing in common. All forty-eight participants, when discussing the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, interpreted a supportive role as an extra or different role than their primary role as a school professional. During the data collection most participants also indicated that every school professional should be able to empathize with students, signal and monitor and invest in the connection. These factors were, according to a majority of the participants, basic principles for working as a school professional. Factors that could be interpreted as supportive skills. So, it is remarkable that all forty-eight participants, when thinking about ideas for improvement, think about the supportive role as an 'extra' role. A possible explanation for this comes from the data as well.

Most of the participants explained to feel worried about the shifting role of the school. These past few years emphasises is placed on the individual student. Schools and school professionals are asked to customize their program to the individual student, not only to customize different teaching levels, but also to create understanding for a student's personal story and development. This not only adds to the workload, because the education system is not equipped for these customizations, it can also create high expectations or confusion within the triangle (school, student, parents).

During this research it became clear school professionals believe schools have an important role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and that this role seems to be expanding. This research gives voice to motivated school professionals who are not afraid to take on a different role, yet it remains unclear what this role is. The upcoming subthemes are safety, role clarity, social interaction, and self-reflection. According to the data these four subthemes are key themes in discussing what the role of the school should be.

Role clarity

This research reveals school professionals have trouble explaining their role. Out of forty-eight participants, twenty-two participants shared to experience a feeling of confusion to their role as a school professional is in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and the general role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. This group of participants consists of two out of eight department leaders, ten out of sixteen mentors, nine out of twelve teachers, no school directors and one out of eight educational support staff members. The data analysis shows the complexity of the concept of understanding social-emotional wellbeing and the feeling of confusion about their role might underline the complexity of this concept as well. All forty-eight participants have spoken about role clarification during the interview. Not all forty-eight participants feel the need to clarify the supporting role of the school. Fifteen participants feel no need to clarify this role. They feel there is enough clarity and a complex (and often personal) concept such as these, need room and flexibility for personal interpretation.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about role clarity:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"How do we create a clear description of the supportive role of the school, when it remains unclear what we understand by supporting social-emotional wellbeing?"*	*MT13*
2.	*"Let's not add more policies and other documents, let's just focus on the children and use our common sense. Educational innovations have been adding uncertainties and unnecessary work stress, common sense always kept me grounded".*	*ESS8*
3.	*"To provide clarity is a basic need for creating a stable working and learning environment. This might be a complex theme; people still need clarity. I need guidelines and boundaries".*	*TS9*

4.	*"If we can shed light on the role of the school in supporting students' wellbeing, we can follow up with other practical steps such as: improving workload, what do students need to feel supported, do we have enough expertise, etc."*	DL2

Although not all participants are unanimously pro role clarifying, the majority of school professionals are. Quote two illustrates one of the explanations of being against role clarifying. Participants who used a similar approach to explaining their interpretation on role clarifying, shared their thoughts on experiencing an overload in policies and documents these days. Not just in schools, but everywhere. Everything must be documented these days and, according to them, the time that goes into documenting is not being spend supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Other justifications for not clarifying the role had to do with the complexity of the concept. Complex and personal concepts should not be over-clarified according to these participants. According to them clarification creates limitation, and if you want to support or help someone, you should use common sense, empathy, and a personal approach, not categorize and overthink.

The first quote illustrates another point of view on role clarity. Participants with a similar viewing on the subject do not share a strong opinion about the pros and cons of role clarity, they do experience a lot of questions about the feasibility of clarifying the role of the school in relation to the subject of social-emotional wellbeing. They have strong doubts if clarification is possible, especially since a lot of these participants have indicated to feel unsure about their role in relation to social-emotional wellbeing.

The third and fourth quote illustrate strong opinions about the importance of role clarification. Quote three underlines the importance of a clarity in general. This participant states this is a basic need for a stable working and learning environment. Participants with a similar approach explained that knowing where you are supports the feeling of a safe environment. Quote four also underlines the importance of role clarity and thinks about the practical follow up steps. Both quotes illustrate in their own way that clarity comes first and improving practicalities is the next step. Their justification for this quote comes from the critique about workload, the feeling of having to do a lot of extra work and participants who used a similar viewing on the matter, all feel the solution for reducing workload, stress and anxiety amongst school professionals and students lies in creating clarity. If school professionals know what is expected from them, they might feel more comfortable doing so, asking for help or ask for training.

The same goes for students. According to these participants, it is expected that role clarity helps students feel more comfortable asking for support, because they know where and who to ask for support. And drawing a clear line between the role of the school and, for example the role of the caretaker, also helps to redirect students sooner if needed. Which will help them to tackle the problem sooner and with a proper expert.

It is clear school professionals have trouble explaining their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. The lack of clarity has clear implications on the role of the school. When school professionals do not know what is expected from them, there is no guarantee every colleague will take on a supportive role. When they do, it is expected the implementation of student support will be affected by personal approach and interpretation. This means there is no consensus, school professional experience uncertainty and work pressure, and students are at risk of not receiving proper care.

Safety

When talking to school professionals about the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, creating a safe learning environment is often something they speak about. Safety can be interpreted in many ways. Schools have different policies and methods to ensure and improve the safety of students and school professionals. Examples of some of these policies and methods are anti-bullying policies, school regulations, attendance coordinator, behavioural policies, social skills training, student counselling team. All four schools used safety or similar descriptions in connection to school ambiance. All four school directors want to create a school environment where students and school professionals feel safe. According to them this is a basic need to encourage a positive development. Three out of four school directors supported this claim by saying schools are a mini society and an extension from home.

Participants are confident about four factors schools are doing to ensure safety, but one is causing uncertainty. Physical safety, school transportation, background verification of staff and a visitor management system are all factors used to describe how participants recognize the school insuring safety. This is where participants feel there is clarity in the schools' approach to ensure the safety on these four factors. Psychosocial safety causes uncertainty amongst participants. Although participants are able to recall different methods being used to support psychosocial safety, there is a debate about what role schools and school professionals should have regarding psychosocial safety.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations given about school safety and possible ideas for improvement:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"If you feel safe, you feel comfortable enough to try new things, ask for help, develop new confidence and being able to learn to cope with setbacks. This is the state of mind and body were children and teenagers are able to learn new things."*	MT2
2.	*"A safe learning and teaching environment is the base for a successful school career. The question to me is not if schools have a role in supporting students who feel unsafe and have their wellbeing at risk, it is how".*	DL6
3.	*"I think schools are more successful than ever in creating a positive and safe environment. There is open communication and with that comes a more personal approach."*	TS7
4.	*"It would help me to know more about the role of the school. What can we do to support, what are we allowed to do and when do we need to redirect. Clarity and predictability can improve the feeling of safety."*	MT11

These four quotes illustrate four personal approaches to the theme of safety in schools. Although the consensus is that all participants to this research agree on the importance of creating a safe learning environment. All forty-eight participants acknowledge safety as a basic primary need for students and school-professionals. Without safety, students are unable to develop properly. Quote one illustrates the effect feeling safe has on other important factors to be successful in school. According to this participant, feeling safe is feeling comfortable. And if students feel comfortable, they will more likely ask questions or ask for help. Feeling safe and at ease will make it easier for students to cope with setbacks or handle feedback. These are all skills students need in education but also in life. Most participants had a similar interpretation of the importance of safety when discussing the theme of safety and the role of the school.

Yet this general consensus about the importance of creating a safe environment also created new questions. Quote two illustrates one of these questions. Some participants feel unsure about how to support students and students' safety in the best way. Out of forty-eight participants, nine participants felt unsure about how to support (psychosocial) safety. Twenty-nine out of forty-eight participants shared their concerns about role confusion and the effect this has of school safety. Quote four underlines this statement as well.

The most common descriptions used during the data collection to explain these safety concerns due to role confusion are:

- Confusion or uncertainty can reduce self-confidence of the teacher and student. Low self-confidence has a direct effect on learning abilities and the ability to make contact.
- Being unsure about your role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing can create unsafe situations because a student might become too dependent on the school professional or might lose trust because the school professional is unclear and maybe even comes across unprofessional.
- Confusion causes unpredictable situations. One school professional might take their supporting role to the level of caretaker of social worker, while another school professional from the same school redirects immediately. In this setting the collaborating triangle (school-student-parents) is unstable as well. Parents and students do not know what to expect from the school and nobody is directing the situation.

Quote three paints a more positive picture of safety in school. Although the majority of participants raised concerns about safety with the interconnection with role clarity, many participants who have been a school professional for more than a decade are positive about the safety in schools. According to these participants there are less incidents in school involving aggression or physical violence. Teachers seems more accessible to students, which supports open communication and a positive relation. To these participants, the openness of students is a direct result of a safe learning environment. This accessibility and openness do come with additional side effects. The consequence of open communication is that students, parents, and other professionals feel the liberty to want to co-define. This brings new challenges for school professionals in communication and collaboration.

There is an interconnection between the theme's role clarity and safety. Concerns about school safety, in this research, are explained as concerns about providing a healthy and safe social-emotional environment for school professionals and students. Most participants feel physically very safe in the schools yet worry about the wellbeing of school professionals and students. One of the possible explanations for increase in stress is the pressure school professionals feel in taking on different roles which lack clarity. Role confusion can affect someone's wellbeing in a negative way, while predictability and clear role assignment are seen as key factors on creating a healthy and safe environment for school professionals and students.

It becomes clear how interconnected all these emerging themes are. Both safety and role clarity illustrate the importance of positive interaction, interaction and communication define (a positive) collaboration. Participants have used the phrase "school as a mini society" and in society social interaction plays a key role. Students are challenged to interact with peers, school professionals, parents or caretakers and other professionals. And this is only a small description of the group directly related to school. School professionals have the same challenge in interacting with different groups of people. This theme comes from the appeal schools make on interacting socially. It is clear interaction is needed during class, but this research focusses on the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. And when asking participants about this role, they made the connection between interaction and relation. The role of interaction in this concept is to connect with students, invest in relation, safety, and trust. This asks for social skills, and therefore this theme is called 'social interaction'.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about social interaction in schools and possible ideas for improvement:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Teaching is not just transmitting information. If you really want to motivate students and trigger their interest and memory on a subject, you have to make a connection. Unfortunately, there is limited time and sometimes you need more time to connect."*	*TS4*
2.	*"Why teachers don't learn more about social studies during their studies is a huge, missed opportunity"."*	*TS5*
3.	*"Sometimes I must use all the conversational skills I know to make sure everyone is on the same page. And with everyone I mean: student, teacher, parents, psychologist, or social worker attendance coordinator. So many parties concerned where I need to insure a certain balance between the various interests."*	*DL3*
4.	*"How to preserve a positive ambiance with over a thousand teenagers and hundreds of colleagues? If I have to describe job skills for my role at this school then key elements would be communication, social skills, empathy and flexibility."*	*ESS1*

The first quote illustrates the importance of interaction socially during teaching and why this will help improve teaching and the learning environment of students. According to this participant and the majority of participating teachers (seven out of twelve) the interaction with students can make or break good teaching. This quote also illustrates that time, according to the data, is limited.

And that time is essential when it comes to investing in interaction, making the connection and to really see the individual students. That, according to thirty-four out of forty-eight participants, is missing. And these participants feel limited in their role as a school professional because of the lack of time.

Quote two shines light on a different matter. According to this participant teaching studies do not educate future teachers enough on social studies. This observation was shared with three others. Because of the (small) repetition of this observation, it is important to explain. These four participants, when asked about possible recommendations, shared their thoughts. They feel improvement should start at the base: during teaching studies. Future teachers need to feel competent. Not only to teach a certain subject, but to take on a supportive role in supporting young adolescents.

Quotes three and four have a connection with the second quote. These participants also speak of much needed social skills or communicative skills to take on a positive role as a school professional. And quote four illustrates that many of these skills or key elements are very socially orientated. Quote three comes from a participant who shared his feelings on this matter and share to experience feelings of being overwhelmed and usure as a result of taking on a role that is new or unclear. This feeling of being overwhelmed was shared by a few others as well. Eleven participants shared to experience this feeling when trying to maintain a positive relationship with different partners of the school. According to them, schools did a great job in taking on a supporting role and looking at the individual students. But maybe they did to good and now there are all these expectations of schools and school professionals.

Social interaction is seen as a key part of protecting and improving students learning environments. Although school professionals are very proud and satisfied with the social supportive role schools take on, taking on this supportive role created more expectations. Not all school professionals feel prepared to take on this supportive role. They would like more knowledge on social studies and communicative skills. This would benefit supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Self-reflection

Self-reflection, self-awareness, introspection, learning to be critical about yourself and your work, receiving and giving feedback. All used terminology during the data collection when discussing possible ideas for improvement. The term of self-reflection was used to describe what students might need to learn in school and it is not about reflective teaching, where the teacher is the one who uses self-reflection to improve their teaching. These participants encourage the idea of learning students how to be critical thinkers, who will give them a set of life skills they will benefit from in education but also in society. Some of these participants believe that teaching students about critical thinking, will help them feel supported as well. Because they will learn to look at setback differently, learn how to cope with things and how to go from problem to solution. The idea of self-reflection and learning to be a critical thinker was shared by nine participants, all working in a medium to higher levelled school.

The following quotes are an illustration of the types of answers and quotations about self-reflection and why this is important for improving the role of the school:

Nr.	Quote	Reference
1.	*"Self-awareness will help students be more aware of their decisions and actions as well as their surroundings. When you make decisions with intention, you make them in alignment with your values and goals."*	*DL8*
2.	*"When someone can look at themselves, without judgement, and become aware of personal patterns of behaviour, they are often more motivated and open to advice. Which will help their learning."*	*MT15*
3.	*"We need critical thinkers. Not only for learning in school, but to learn from personal habits in social situations, in problematic personal situations, etc. Becoming a critical thinker might prevent someone to fall silent."*	*TS2*
4.	*"Critical thinkers are often practical thinkers, thinkers who can transfer their thoughts into action and we need more of those. In this setting we can take of the supporting role, instead of becoming the initiator."*	*MT9*

All four quotes illustrate why it is important to teach students to become more self-aware and develop a sense of self-reflection. The nine participants who shared their thoughts on teaching self-reflection all shared similar viewings on this matter. These participants believe this will help support students' social-emotional wellbeing because this can be a preventive method in coaching students to become critical and practical thinkers. According to these participants, students who need support, more often have the risk to fall silent.

This method might prevent that or help students learn about different coping strategies, ask for help sooner and still feel confident and motivated during the time they need extra support. It might help students to distance themselves a little from their personal feelings of stress and anxiety. This way schools not only have to look at their students' support system and possibly expanding this system or team, but schools are also teaching students to support themselves in a way.

The ability to self-reflect is seen as a key skill for students and school professional to improve overall wellbeing. According to the data, self-reflection will affect communication, connection, openness, resilience, and autonomy in a positive way. School professionals' goal is to guide students into personal growth and practising self-reflection is key. To some school professional, self-reflection should be a compulsory subject for all students, being a preventive method to support students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Conclusion

School professionals are motivated to take on a supporting role in relation to students' social-emotional wellbeing. However, they have trouble explaining this supportive role. The lack of clarity results is uncertainty and work pressure amongst school professionals and in the end puts students at risk for not receiving proper care. School professionals made the distinction between physically safe school environment and a social-emotional safe school environment. Recognizing potential risks on wellbeing because of role confusion, lack of knowledge, and lack of time to focus on social dynamics and self-reflection.

Not all school professionals feel competent enough to take on a supporting role and there is a debate about what kind of supporting role school professionals should take on and when do they redirect. Not all school professionals seem to have a great deal of trust in the supporting system outside of schools. And then there is the matter of time. The majority of school professionals explained to experience a lack of time. They would like to have more time to connect with the individual student, but time appears limited, and deadlines must be met. They recommend more time, more clarity on the role of the school, and more knowledge on social studies to support their students more effective.

Chapter 7: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in the previous chapter in the context of the literature review in order to analyse the central research question: ''What is the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing?'' To explore the school professional's role in relation to students' social-emotional wellbeing, several definitions of social-emotional wellbeing were analyzed (Keyes, 2002; Squires, Bricker & Twombly, 2003; Laevers & Depondt, 2004; DOECS, 2005; Krause, 2007). After this introduction, the chapter will discuss the five most important themes emerging from the data and where applicable, link the literature and context to the research outcomes.

The five returning key themes from the data are personal narratives, mental health, measuring wellbeing, collaboration & context, and role clarity. These five themes are seen as key themes because the data results reveal the interconnection they have with all twenty-four themes of the findings-chapter. Each key theme will be discussed separately with the research question, data outcomes and literature as guideline. After discussing the different themes, a summary of the discussion chapter will follow. This will be the framework of this discussion chapter. The conclusion and limitations will follow in the next and final chapter.

7.2 Complexity of the concept

To have a meaningful discussion about the central research question, we must zoom in on why this research is important to education. The international trend towards inclusive education in richer nations and with that the increasing global interest in the concept of wellbeing being connected to schools, the role of the school seems to change. For the Netherlands in particular, the first major change began with a new policy aimed at inclusive education being introduced in 2014. The idea of inclusive education and that schools have a significant role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing might at first seem quite straightforward, namely that supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing is seen as a natural part of the role school professionals have.

However, translating a concept such as social-emotional wellbeing into policies, strategies and concrete actions is a far more complex and challenging task. The research findings confirmed the complexity of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and with that the lack of translation into policies and strategies. The concept's complexity does not seem to prevent school professionals from acting. Although it is admirable to see how schools fulfil these different roles, as there are risks involved. If supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing depends on the personal understanding of the school professional, different approaches will be used during a brief period. Students who need support, are often in need of clear guidance, trust, and transparency. Without it, there is the risk of destabilizing students because of different approaches.

The data reveals most participants underline that schools, and with that school professionals, have a responsibility and role when it comes to helping and supporting students. The data also reveals that these school professionals acknowledge their role, but they have difficulty explaining what their role is. All forty-eight participants highlighted the complexity of the concept of understanding social-emotional wellbeing. According to the literature, schools have a prominent role improving children's wellbeing through systematic social and psychological support. Defining social competence can be complicated as it is affected by socially framed knowledge and non-uniform development. (Mental Health Taskforce, 2004; Denham & Weissberg, 2004).

This understanding is critical when professionals assess or interpret the social and emotional competence and wellbeing of children. Looking for the interpretation behind the answer was a key part of understanding the data. All forty-eight participants used personal narratives and experiences to explain their understanding of their role in relation to supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. So, it is important to not only realise that children bring their own lens to experiences, so do the school professionals. According to multiple school directors who participated, this dynamic depends on communication and relation and is difficult to capture in measuring tools or policies. The literature suggests that the core of wellbeing is the subjective experience of social sufficiency of individual existence. The implementation of the new national education policy is loaded with many social expectations, one of them being: schools can support psychological development and social consistency of children (Raver & Knitze, 2002; Raver & Zigler, 2004).

Using in-depth open interviews was a key factor in understanding and discussing the role of the school. Participants have different roles in the school system, and different experiences with the social-emotional wellbeing of students, can provide different comments on the questions. Overall, the data agreed to school being an important factor when it comes to students' social-emotional wellbeing. They all seem to believe wellbeing is important for succeeding school and other important milestones in life, although there are different opinions on how far the school should go in supporting social-emotional wellbeing.

7.3 The role of the school

Schools play a key role in supporting emotional development in education (McLaughlin, 2008). And although the data agrees on the key role schools seem to have in supporting emotional development, it does not make a clear case on the types of support schools should provide. Some might refer to the psychological aspect of supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and after questioning they clarify their answer by explaining the importance of school professionals recognizing certain psychological aspects amongst students, yet they do not feel they should be the professional to counsel these students. The data reveals that the majority of school professionals believe this should be done by a specialist.

The role of the school in the literature is often described as an extended family, where positive role models can change students' lives in a positive way (Howard et al., 1999). This is in line with the data, which reveals the importance of hiring motivated school professionals who are not focused on transferring information but are prioritizing on the needs of their students. Even non-academic instructors (such as educational support staff) are confidants and positive models for personal identification when showing personal and sincere interest in their students, according to the four participating schools. Again, the question remains if this is a helpful approach in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing or if it needs more clarification.

The data reveals a debate between the different roles' schools seem to have. Not only because of the personal approach to understanding the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, but also because participants feel differently about where to draw the line between providing support at school and where a student needs a specialist to support them.

This debate is in the literature as well. De Bruyckere (2018) explains the conflict between wellbeing and education. When discussing wellbeing we often think is should be improved, but looking at the PISA monitor, the children in the Netherlands score better on happiness than the children in Finland (OECD, 2017; PISA, 2015). Which is remarkable, considering Finland's education system is used as an example for connecting social-emotional wellbeing and education. According to the JOP monitor (Youth Research Platform, 2019) schools have almost no influence on youth wellbeing. Schools mostly deal with wellbeing that is influenced by external factors.

Which highlights the debate about the role of the school were it might be highly important to support social-emotional wellbeing of students or this newfound responsibility and pressure school experience are the result of societies pressure, new management or ambitions. They may not be the main influence on the state of student's social-emotional wellbeing, school professionals seem right in feeling important in supporting wellbeing among students. In recent years the issue of mental health problems in the school setting, and the broader concept of promoting resilience for all students, has grown in importance in education. Conversely, teaching in ways that promote resilience may help to prevent mental health difficulties and improve behaviour and learning outcomes (Zins et al., 2004; Lewinsohn et al., 1999). School professionals have the power to affect a students' social-emotional wellbeing in a positive way. School professionals cannot prevent bad things, yet they can support their students in building relationships, learning life skills, experiencing personal growth. These are powerful life tools and can be life changing for the individual student.

7.4 Returning themes

There are five key themes help connect the data to the main research question and define an answer to this question. Although each theme will be divided in a subdivision of this chapter, it is important to understand the interconnection between the different themes. It was expected, when investigating a complex concept such as social-emotional wellbeing, there would be an interconnection between different themes. The themes will provide structure to interpreting and reading the outcomes, but always need to be understood as dynamic and interconnected when it comes to answering the main research question. The different approaches to describe wellbeing amongst others (Keyes, 2002; Squires et al., 2003; DOECS, 2005; Krause, 2007) illustrate the complexity of the subject and how someone can have a different interpretation or understanding.

With the help of IPA, the data was analysed. Although IPA is normally used on a much smaller data collection, during this research with a larger data collection IPA was necessary to do justice to the complexity of the concept as well as creating impact within the local community and politics. The size of the data collection supports being a small representation of the local school professionals and their understanding of the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing. With the help of IPA 'personal narratives', 'mental health', 'measuring wellbeing', 'collaboration and context', and 'role clarity' came forward as key themes in finding out how school professionals understand their role in supporting students' social emotional wellbeing. These themes represent important factors affecting the role of the school and therefore affecting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

7.5 Personal narratives as key to understanding and enacting wellbeing

All forty-eight participants used personal experiences, work related, and from their personal life, as example or argument to explain their understanding of social-emotional wellbeing during the data collection. None of the forty-eight participants referred to a policy-document in connection to explaining their understanding of social-emotional wellbeing. There was not a clear and unified understanding of social-emotional wellbeing and their role as a school professional from the data, although all participants were similar in their approach to explain these concepts; they all used personal narratives to explain their understanding. In line with the literature, social-emotional wellbeing is described as a difficult concept to explain in one short sentence.

Different descriptions and examples were used to describe social-emotional wellbeing, often using personal narratives and experiences to support their interpretation of the concept, although participants seem to mean the same thing. This will become clearer discussing the key theme: measuring wellbeing. There is considerable debate in the literature about what constitutes 'social and emotional competence and wellbeing,' how it is defined and how it should be assessed. Research in and about wellbeing has increased throughout recent years (Kahneman et al., 1999; Diener et al., 1999; Keyes et al., 2002; Stratham & Chase, 2010; Seligman, 2011).

However, Ryff & Keyes stated and identified in their research in 1995 that the absence of theory-based definitions of wellbeing is puzzling' (pp. 719–720). Terminology such as social competence, emotional wellbeing, emotional literacy (Weare, 2004), emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996), and mental health abound in the literature and add to the difficulty of clearly defining this construct.

Data reveals the concept of social-emotional wellbeing is described differently by the participants, although the integrated approach to the concept reveals similarities. Data reveals wellbeing is often described with short descriptions such as being able to engage in relationships or feeling safe, adaptability and resilience. These different indicators leave room for interpretation. According to the data, school professionals are more likely to interpret and possibly act on certain indicators based on previous personal or work-related experiences. There seems no difference in the usage of personal narratives between an experienced and less experienced school professional. According to several researchers, a professional identity is a dynamic process and not a fixed characteristic and is never ´complete'. It is about continuously reinterpreting meaningful experiences from the teacher taken from his or her practice and biography (Verloop, 2003; Beijaard et al., 2004; Mansvelder-Longayroux, 2006; Flores & Day, 2006).

Sharing or oversharing

There is a thin line between sharing and oversharing. Some participants used this example as well, they sometimes struggle with the thin line between keeping a professional student-teacher relationship with a mutual feeling of openness and trust. According to them it is important to invest in being open and have a personal approach to building a positive student-teacher relation. They feel that if they keep too much distance, students are less likely to stay motivated and interested during class. Yet, it is difficult for them to explain 'too much distance.' Several participants reveal that when they share personal experiences, students are more likely to open-up. Personal narratives and storytelling are an important part of the working environment, especially when professional have a large social aspect to their role (Ebeling, 2020).

A few school professionals reveal they do not feel insecure about oversharing personal stories, but they might be oversharing in time. These participants feel the pressure to be fulltime accessible in support of their students. This illustrates the search of the school professionals in how to take on that supporting role in a healthy way for everyone. Being available 24/7 might send the wrong message to students, although they might also appreciate it. It is also very unhealthy for school professionals to be 'at work' 24/7. According to Long et al. (2017) much of what determines 'what is oversharing' and 'what is healthy self-disclosure' is in the eyes of the person who is on the receiving end of what is being shared.

Also, from a psychological point of view, the personal narrative could give clues as to how a person dealt with a particular personal experience and how they may approach future experiences. You can gain insight into how the narrator looks at themselves, which can influence how other people look at them (Bauer et al., 2008).

Using personal narratives to understand social-emotional wellbeing

Most participants experience wellbeing as an abstract concept. Although they also agree there are clear indicators to measure and assess someone's wellbeing. This debate between wellbeing being received as abstract, but the different subthemes are received as evident is a returning debate. The data does not reveal if all forty-eight participants consciously use their personal narratives to support their role as a school professional. It seems normal for them to use their personal experiences in relation to understand wellbeing or to help them connect to their students. During the data collection some participants seem to become more aware of their usage of personal stories in support of their role as a school professional. According to the research of Beattie (2000) and the research of Craig (2011), personal and professional narratives are interconnected when you are a teacher; "Consciously we teach what we know, unconsciously, we teach who we are" (Hamachek, 1999, p. 209). Most participants used personal reflection as indicator for understanding social-emotional wellbeing. In this research personal reflection stand for self-assessment and self-reflection. A strategy that was mentioned multiple times amongst participants in understanding social-emotional wellbeing.

Personal narratives can support understanding a concept such as wellbeing and these personal narratives are a considerable influence in interpreting the concept of social-emotional wellbeing. Findings suggest that narratives may have a positive influence when used as inspiration and empowerment tools to stimulate policy inquiries, as educational and awareness tools to initiate policy discussions and gain public support, and as advocacy and lobbying tools to formulate, adopt or implement policy. Van Manen, Dutch-Canandian pedagogue wrote 'the tact of teaching' and empathizes the importance of relation and making a connection to make an impact.

It is clear in the findings that personal narratives are an important part of the professional identity of school professionals. This is supported by Vloet & van Swet (2009) who explains understanding this professional identity as a dynamic process leaves room for personal growth. In the Netherlands, competence profiles are often used as working instruments for school-professionals in training.

A disadvantage of this approach is the difficulty in measuring. Personal growth can be measured with the help of this competence profile, but an average school with over 100 employees (comparable with the participating schools from this research) cannot use personal growth as an overall measuring tool for professionalism and wellbeing. The interconnection between different themes, and between the different indicators used to explain social-emotional wellbeing leaves room for personal interpretation. To prevent any confusion around interpretation, communication is key. This can be understood as the usage of language or by setting clear boundaries with the usage of school policies. The data reveals school policies are missing or not implemented because most participants did not mention any school policies or general agreement within the schools they work.

The professionalism of school professionals

The data provides us an insight in how school professionals experience the challenges and possibilities of using personal narratives at work and how this affects their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. All school directors shared the importance of the motivation and drive when hiring new school professionals. Newly hired school professionals are asked about their drive and passion to work with adolescents first and about their training in becoming a school professional second. Some experienced teachers have the extra role of coach and are connected to new colleagues for some guidance in their first and second year. New teachers receive minimal training on pedagogy and psychology during their study in becoming a teacher.

The participating schools seem to invest in their school professionals. However inclusive education compels schools to take on a more specialized role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, therefore it is expected more training and specialization is needed and school professionals this day are not optimally prepared to do so. This base for school professionals feels a little thin compared to the discussion there is to find about the different roles' schools have in supporting their students. This might be because schools should not take on a specialized supporting role.

The ongoing debate reveals the confusion. It remains vague what the government expects from school professionals, and therefore it is impossible to find a unified and clear answer in what school professionals expect their role to be. Once there is more role clarity, it is possible to make detailed statements about the type of training they might need.

Inclusive education needs teachers to become tactful and mindful teachers, but they only have individual experiences to take from and no professional framework outside their discipline. According to some of the data, new teachers who studied for four years, only received pedagogies and didactics during one of those four years. Smale-Jacobse et al. (2019), underline this data by explaining the need for improvement and upscaling pedagogies and didactic skills among unexperienced teachers within secondary education. The national government recognizes the lack of preparation for these new teachers as well, one of the twenty-five measures in their report on improving inclusive education is to provide more knowledge on inclusive education during teacher training to help new teacher prepare in the best possible way (Central government, 2021).

Although it is admirable how motivated school professionals are in taking on a supportive role and the inspection reports of these four schools underline how well schools can function with highly motivated staff, providing inclusive education solemnly based on personal motivation and school policies is risking the social-emotional wellbeing of students. Without clear guidelines and proper training of school professionals, schools are challenged to form their own understanding of students' support on wellbeing. Which causes extra work pressure and considerable differences in approach, and therefore instability in the schools' support system. A clear example of the impact of personal narratives on understanding wellbeing is people's approach to the concepts of mental health and wellbeing and how these two concepts are sometimes used interchangeably.

7.6 Mental health

Mental health and wellbeing were used intertwined by the participating school professionals throughout the data collection. Understanding that the participants interpretation of mental health might differ from the definition given by the WHO was important during the data analysis. Although the definition of mental health has been clarified by the World Health organization in 2004 (Rosenbaum & Stewart, 2004), social-emotional wellbeing is still often confused with mental health. Thirty-seven participants referred to mental-health when explaining their understanding op social-emotional wellbeing.

Their interpretation was based on personal reasons. Some have experience with mental health problems in their inner circle, others were triggered by work related stories, students with mental health problems. The findings show schools feel pressured in providing the right support for their students.

The specialized care facilities have long waiting-lists and with the new educational law, schools are bound to provide care for their students. Although wellbeing is a broader concept than mental health, most school professionals used mental health because to them this underlines the type of support students need and the pressure, they experience in providing for their students. All school professionals seem motivated and committed in helping students, but there seems little time for one-on-one conversations.

The Dutch abbreviation GGZ stands for mental-health care organizations and is still used, however should reflect all social-psychological care. Trimbos (2020) released a statement and article where they explain the importance of further clarification of defining and measuring mental health amongst youth. During their research with RIVM and the Amsterdam UMC on mental health of Dutch youth, data showed 8,3% of the Dutch youth between 12-25 is psychologically unwell, 20% of the Dutch youth between 12-16 experiences emotional problems and 14,4% of Bachelor students rapport severe anxiety or depression complaints. Three different descriptions and measurements, which makes it unclear and difficult to read according to Trimbos. This is underlined by the data. Participants used different terminology. Some used words as balanced or feeling happy while others talked about the feeling of unhappiness and depression. Feeling happy was a popular statement during the data collection, but not so easy to explain or clarify.

All school directors and most of the department leaders did make a clear distinction between mental-health and social-emotional wellbeing, mainly based on severity of the problem and context, and although they can divide the two, the school-professionals who are part of their team did not make a clear distinction between the two. This can indicate two things: the lack of a clear policy about what the school understands by social-emotional wellbeing or there is a policy, but the communication and implementation is insufficient at this time. Which is what also was revealed during the discussion of the previous theme.

Schools as educators and caregivers

The law on inclusive education brought extra focus for schools on supporting mental health issues. Part of the new law is the so called 'duty of care' for every school. This duty of care makes schools responsible for every registered student, providing inclusive education for every child with or without special needs.

If the school is not able to provide the support needed, schools are responsible to find a suitable place (National government, 2016). With this new law, schools invest in professionalism on providing student care. Amongst the four schools of the data collection there seems to be professionalization of the student care teams. Student counsellors used to be teachers with an extra task or interest in student care. Now there is an increase of student counsellors with a background and bachelor's degree in social work. This reveals schools are providing more specialized care, yet it remains unclear if this is something that schools should provide. Especially since it is a personal choice of the school to do so. All schools are obligated to have a student care coordinator, but this can also be a teacher with an extra task.

There seems to be a tension field between the role of the school and the role of wellbeing organizations when it comes to supporting students. The Duty of care implies schools being responsible for student care and wellbeing. And with that they increasingly provide coaching on mental health with the support of student counsellors or student care teams. Less shyness to act can result in an increase in what school-professionals can act on and will act on. Which means more specialized care inside schools instead of at specialized organisations. Jacobs et al. (2013) talk about the importance of integrated care at schools. Verschueren & Struyf (2016) question if transferring specialised care from outside the school into the school is a formula for success. Vrielink (2011) underlines the importance of an extensive collaboration between schools and youth-care but also explains the importance of separating these two surroundings.

Although this research did not contract data from student care professionals, the school professionals often referred to the student care team and the care schools offer to students with mental health challenges. Participants of this research raised their concern of the presumed increase of mental-health issues amongst students. According to the measurements amongst scholars in 2021 by Trimbos and the Nation institute for Public Health and Environment (RIVM), there is an increase in students who experience feelings of depression and anxiety.

The concern of school professionals might be justified, but to be sure we need a complete picture. It is possible the concern of the school professionals from this research is also influenced by the pressure participants describe with the fact that schools have more responsibilities since the implementation of inclusive education.

The law on youth health care separates specialistic support and education (Youth Act, article 2, 2014). This separation within the law is remarkable and can be an explanation for the tension field that rises between the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing. How can schools be held responsible for providing the right care for their students, if they play no part within the law that described the guidelines for youth health care. This could indicate that schools might have a smaller role than what the data suggests. A possible explanation for the pressure these school professionals feel could be coming from the confusion around their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and not so much from providing inclusive education. Although the confusion seems to be caused by two national laws who make opposite statements about education and youth care, this confusion also leaves room for schoolboards to create their own guidelines fitted to the context of their school.

The confusion about mental health and wellbeing stems from a dated description of mental health. There has been clarification and school professionals seem to understand the differences between the two, however some school professionals still use both concepts interchangeably and so do health care workers. The lack of clarity is not bound to the concept of wellbeing and mental health. The law is unclear as well. Making statements about the new role of educationists as caregivers yet exclude education as a youth care partner. This does not seem a solid base for a collaboration between education and youth care. Activating school professionals to take on a more specialized supportive role yet making it difficult to measure because it is unclear who is responsible for what.

7.7 Measuring wellbeing

Wellbeing is a difficult concept to define, therefore measuring wellbeing is a dynamic process and a key factor in understanding and assessing someone's wellbeing. Most participants who work as a mentor focused on relation and not on data-based measuring tools. The recent literature is critical on the development of data-based education and the school directors emphasized on the role of the school professional, yet most department leaders who participated in this research, thought of data, and measuring tools to measure and monitor wellbeing. The measuring tools they suggested or thought of measured factors such as social skills, resilience, bullying, mental health, physical health, and home-situation. The teaching staff was less united, some seemed very informed about different methods and measuring tools, others explained their personal approach.

The fact that the response to this theme triggered so many different approaches can be interpretated as unclear. There is lack of clarity about the school's chosen approach, there may not be a general approach or policy, or the policy has not been successfully implemented or enacted.

All participants understood and underlined the complexity of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and while explaining their interpretation of the concept, participants used diverse ways in how they measured wellbeing among their students. According to most participants, measuring wellbeing can be seen as another explanation for 'signal, monitor and guard'. According to Pollard & Lee (2003) and Dodge et al. (2012) wellbeing is a complex construct with multiple facets that has continued to elude researchers' attempts to define and measure'. There is still no clear statement of definition being used to describe wellbeing. With the missing of a clear definition of wellbeing that is widely accepted and implemented, schools are searching for other ways to explain and measure wellbeing.

It is important to agree on a definition or explanation of how to measure wellbeing. The participating school sites have over 250 school professionals and almost 2000 students. Each student is connected to a group and a group-mentor, but this mentor or coach changes every year. This means that if there is no consensus on how these schools understand their role in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing, or even in how to measure wellbeing, students have to deal with possible different approaches to them and their need for support. This means the risk on destabilizing students and for students with mental health issues or social-emotional issues, this can negatively affect their life and sometimes can be life threatening.

Quantitative or qualitative measuring tools

The sub-themes from the findings chapter connected to the overarching theme of measuring wellbeing are social skills, coping mechanism and approach to life. These three themes that are seen as key factors in measuring wellbeing by the data, are not part of the student tracking system used in schools. The data reveals schools use some quantitative measuring tools, such as questionnaires about behaviour and mindset, students' results, attendance, to signal students' wellbeing based on data about numeric variables. However, schools more often the act on the combination of different tools and factors to assess their students' wellbeing (sudden changes in behaviour or appearance). This tells us that wellbeing, according to the data, needs a more personal and qualitative approach and cannot be captured in numbers.

According to the literature you can measure the effect of interventions on wellbeing via evaluation on these interventions, yet it is difficult to measure someone individual wellbeing. (Loretto et al., 2005; Derkzen et al., 2021). Interventions are concrete and demarcated choices and because of this can measure, however someone's wellbeing is seen as a more abstract concept.

The Dutch Central bureau for statistics (CBS) use eight dimensions to measure and report on the personal wellbeing index. These eight dimensions are: Material life standard, economic risks, education and career, health, social relations, social participation and trust, safety, living environment (CBS, 2015). Education is seen as one of the eight dimensions and although these eight dimensions clearly are of influence on someone's state of happiness, schools are unable to be informed or support all eight of these dimensions. All Dutch schools use specialized student tracking systems: a digital educational support device that reveals an overview on grades, attendance, behaviour, and reports on support. This device is connected to each student and only school professionals with a direct connection to the students have insight in the students' data. This device is not only insightful for school professionals, but also for students and their parents/ caretakers. With this device everyone involved can follow the student's progress.

Although there are other tools and ways to measure a student's progress or wellbeing, the four participating schools all use the student tracking system. The data revealed that the different roles of school professionals in the school clearly have different views on how to measure wellbeing and what needs to be measured.

All four participating school directors chose not to emphasize on measuring tools (although mentioning them), they emphasized on the importance of committed and well-trained school professionals and the different roles they have in guiding their students through this miniature society. Durkheim (1972) and Dewey (1907) both argued that school is a miniature society and both educationists are still rereferred to by many articles in more recent years (Davies, 1994; UNESCO, 2001; Abott, 2009; Thompson, 2017). Durkheim (1972) argued that school is a miniature society preparing us for life. According to Dewey (1907), the school is the society itself.

Although the four participating school directors share an overall vision on the importance of well-trained school professionals who should be able to measure and monitor their students' personal and education progress, there is a debate about whether this type of measurement is sufficient.

Vanderputte (2014) discusses the importance of broader evaluation, which will personalize a students' learning curve and help them stay motivated. Quantitative measuring tools will not be able to hold into account personal or environmental factors. Although testing students on their educational skills stays important to define a level. This statement underlines why the student tracking systems, with the different tracking components, can be a useful tool. Students, parents, and school professionals have access to the same information. This can benefit the students' feeling of responsibility and facilitate communication between school, student, and parents. And not to forget, this can create transparency and clarity in the role of the school in supporting their students educational and personal progress.

The four participating schools have different methods and measuring tools when it comes to measuring wellbeing. All four schools use the digital education support device that provides a student tracking system, there is no consensus on how they approach measuring wellbeing. Every school has their own interpretation of how students' social-emotional wellbeing needs to be supported and this is written down. Every school is obligated (since the new law on education) to write a policy document called SOP which stands for Basic Support Program, and this document explains the student care route in the school and what the schools offer in signalling, monitoring, and offering students (extra) social-emotional support and how they support special learning needs. This is a public document and for everyone to read. (National government, 2014).

The school directors explained that, according to all four of them, there cannot be one general approach, since all four schools have a very different demographic. They stated that demographic is leading when it comes to social-emotional support. These four schools all have similar goals for their students, but approach and working methods cannot be based on age alone. They take other personal factors into account as well: environmental factors, intelligence, background, cultural aspects, etc.

Measuring or controlling

Van Lommel et al. (2021) state that intuitive evaluations of students' competences were a solid base for decisions for many years and that it is only recently that teachers have been expected increasingly to use data. These personal evaluations are what is missing in the student tracking system according to the data as well. Although mentors and teachers can add personal notes, the quantitative data is most used from this system. Schools, students,' and parents want a quick overview, and this is often the page where the attendance or test results is displayed. The data reveals several responses where school professionals explain the lack of time is withholding them from measuring and monitoring students by a more personal approach.

Participants seem eager to use a more qualitative approach but are unable because of the system world. School reports on the quality of the school are still primarily focused on quantitative data such as grades, attendance, (potential) dropouts, success rates, although there is more interest in a more qualitative approach. School professionals would like more time to invest in a more personal approach for their students, although also rely on quantitative testing to measure progress on knowledge. They make a clear distinction between the two. Quantitative measurement tools are fitting for measuring certain knowledge yet is not fitting to assess someone's personal growth and wellbeing. Changing the law and given schools duty of care asks for a change in school quality measurements, using a more personal approach and measuring the success of schools by reviewing the students' wellbeing instead of success rates.

Around 2002 – 2004 the digitalisation of education developed and with that the development of more integrated digital learning environments that would be able to provide easy access in sharing knowledge, monitoring progress and provide hard data. Hargreaves (2003) states that the focus on data-based learning might give short-term positive results, long-term consequences will be disastrous. Biesta (2012) underlines this vision and speaks of the 'the unlearning' of education, which stands for the unlearning of pedagogical values in education. Both Hargreaves and Ravitch were encouraging the economization and data-based approach of the education system and then came back from their initial statements (Ravitch, 2010).

Although there might be confusion on a school professional level on what measuring tools being used or should be used to measure students' wellbeing, the Dutch education system still emphasizes on evidence-based methods. This could explain why department leaders were quicker to think about measuring tools. They are the ones who write reports on their department's progress and can be held accountable. It is not by personal interest or choice that schools are working with evidence-based learning methods and measuring tools. The current inspection policy measures the quality of education by using the CITO results. CITO stands for Central Institute for Test development and these tests primarily focus on students' knowledge.

According to Biesta (2012) this 'unlearning' of education unknowingly added new values to education: economic values. Schools need to be effective, efficient, and customer oriented. And this is a problem says Biesta because services where the wishes of the 'clients' (parents and government) need to be met, make schools unlearn their primary focus which is the pedagogical climate of the school. Although the economic status was not something that came forward from the data, school professionals did express their concerns on what is becoming of education. According to them, it should be based on mutual trust and relation, and it is becoming a system where everything must be monitored and checked. This approach is teaching students that they are not to be trusted. Schools need to teach by example. Personal development and self-reflection should not be educated as something scary that needs monitoring and being checked. Students should not feel like there is no room to make mistakes. If wellbeing is something schools should support, it cannot be based on a controlling system and a quantitative approach.

Social-emotional wellbeing is, as stated above, a complex concept, and cannot be captured in a questionnaire or solid numbers. Although the law has been changed, schools are given more responsibility in supporting students' wellbeing, and school professionals are highly motivated to take on this supportive role, schools measurement systems are still quantitative and result oriented. A dynamic and complex concept such as social-emotional wellbeing asks for a more qualitative and person-oriented approach. To do so, it is highly important to invest in a positive collaboration with others involved in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

7.8 Collaboration and context

There is an agreement in accepting the dynamic and complex nature of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing. These dynamics should be considered; therefore, it is important to understand the context of the schools. The difference in demographic mentioned by all four school directors indicates the importance of taking the context into consideration for a positive collaboration. Not only do schools have to collaborate with a lot of different people in the schools, but all schools also have a regional role and collaborate with regional partners. Especially when looking at supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, there are a lot of external partners schools must collaborate with.

The way this collaboration takes form depends on the student and parent population they are working with and the school's ability to build a positive relation and form of communication. This is supported by the literature. Hiemstra et al. (2013) discuss the importance of handling with individual differences on a pedagogical and didactical level and adapting your approach to these differences. Smeets et al. (2017) did a first measurement on inclusive education after the implementation of the new educational law and stated the importance of recognising the interconnection between the need for support and types of support needed in cohesion with environmental factors. Most teachers and mentors mentioned parent collaboration. Other collaborating partners were mostly mentioned by school professionals who have a supporting or managing role in the school.

Dynamic triangle

The dynamic triangle is an important visualisation for the collaboration between school professionals, students, and their parents. All four schools emphasize on the dynamic triangle between school, parents, and students in their school policies, during registration days for new students and during the data collection. Out of the forty-eight participants, thirty-one participants mentioned the dynamic triangle at one point during the conversation. Mulligen et al. (2014) describe this dynamic triangle to be the most important condition in creating a positive environment for the student and a positive collaboration between student, school, and home situation.

If one of these three end the collaboration or two of these three stands against the third, there will be an imbalance in the triangle, and this will affect the learning environment of the student. This dynamic triangle is part of the registration procedure within the four participating schools and new students, and their parents even receive this in writing.

The dynamic triangle is part of the system-oriented approach, often used by social workers. Within this approach the social worker sees itself and others as components of different but interconnected systems which influence each other (Nabuurs, 2007; Mameren-Broers et al., 2018).

Although the education system is a dynamic system which is influenced by the living environment and personal factors of all parties involved, it is remarkable that schools choose an approach which is more likely to be used by social workers or therapists. This raises the question if mutual expectations are clear or if this causes any confusion. The data does not reveal any confusion amongst the school professionals about using the dynamic triangle. All participants were familiar with the dynamic triangle when discussing collaboration in and around the school although no one mentioned the system-oriented approach. It seems working with the dynamic triangle in education is something that is widely accepted, at least in these four schools.

Many participants indicated that the reason for committing to this collaboration is because schools are seen as a miniature society. Not all participants could explain why the dynamic triangle is used in education. For most of them the triangle is a visual explanation of the dynamics in the school and the underpinning of why it is important to have a positive collaboration with parents. Some said it is important to recognize how much school life and homelife connect. Others revealed a more critical outlook and explained this connection can be risky. When schools are trying to recreate homelife, the educational function can become unclear for some students. They state some students prefer a clear distinction between life in school and outside of school. It is important to respect the dynamics within the context of the school and within the life of a student. Schools can invest in collaboration, the dynamic triangle, and still clarify their role within these different contexts. Investing in a more societal function of the school, while remaining the predictable educational environment where students know what to expect.

Parental involvement

The data reveals the importance of parental involvement and positive collaboration, but the data also reveals that collaboration with parents can sometimes be challenging. All four schools invest in building positive relationships with their students and the parents of these students, and all four schools feel they have more parental involvement than before. As a result, some participants stated to feel pressured by parents to co-parent instead of building a teacher-student relationship.

The literature underlines the importance of parental involvement in education. Various research projects illustrate that parental involvement had a significant positive effect on the functioning of students in school, their cognitive functioning, school results and work attitude (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Squires et al., 2004). Epstein states, "student learning, development, and success, broadly defined, not just achievement test scores, are the main reasons for school and family partnerships" (1994, p.42).

The data reveals that school professionals who are more personally involved in building positive relationships with their students, also feel more pressured and experience extra workload from different collaborating partners. According to Adams (2007) and Hoy & Tschannen-Moran (1999), education needs a culture of collaboration and trust. Trust is not a straight-forward concept or something to agree on, trust can be fragile and very personal. Trust among individuals in a social system like education develops over time and through positive social interactions. Here lies the difficulty. Students (and their parents) deal with ten or more different school-professionals with different types of roles each school year. So, if trust is something that needs building over time, and a school year only has forty weeks to build this before starting a new year with a possible new team of school professionals, this only reveals how important it is to have clear communication and similar approaches within the school. Otherwise, the dynamic triangle needs to be rebuilt every school year and that adds extra pressure in keeping a positive relationship with students and parents. Investing in positive relationships and social interaction takes time and effort. Participants repeatedly mentioned feeling the lack of time to invest in a more personal approach to support their students. Potential outcomes resulting from a trusting relationship are weighed against potential risks associated with the relationship (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996).

Demographic differences and pressure

All four schools have a different demographic, and the data reveals schools see this difference in demographic as an influential factor in parent collaboration. Schools who offer lower levels of education reveal they must invest more in parent involvement. These families seem to divide education and home life more often. The schools with the higher level of education reveal that their parents do not hesitate to contact school with all kinds of questions, only this sometimes results in a collaboration under pressure. Often the higher educated parents seem more compelling in their questions or demands. According to the data a possible explanation for this is the pressure to succeed or the fear of failing.

According to these school professionals, parents often contact school when they worry about their child failing classes. Often focused on the end results and given possible explanations for these disappointing results such as their child feeling pressure to perform, unhappy in class or injustice being done by the teacher.

The feeling of being pressured by parents was something that came forward from the school sites who offer the higher levels of education. The possibility of a student's demotion to a lower level, even if this is to support student's wellbeing, is often seen a failing by the student and their parents. These cases need to be handled with care. To have a building conversation about painful subjects like these, there needs to be a relationship and trust. Two key factors who cannot be captured in numbers or by the system world. These factors are constructed with time, effort, and mutual interest from both sides.

The HBSC research reveals that this pressure to perform does not come from parents, but from schools. According to HBSC, the pressure by schools has increased in the past decade. Research from UNICEF and Trimbos counter that statement by revealing pressure and workload from school declined these past two years, although it is still very high. Trimbos also did research with the Social Cultural Planning Agency (2018) and this study reveals the number of students who experience pressure to perform has been increasing since 2001. These statements are very different and there seems no unified answer and different studies (Stevens, 2018; Kreutzer 2020; De Boer & Kuijpers, 2021) reveal multiple explanations. The most important ones are the higher ambitions amongst students and the pressure from parents and schools investing in breaking the culture of mediocrity.

Although it remains unclear in the literature where the pressure comes from, fact is the increase in pressure to perform is experienced by students, parents and school professionals and explains why the dynamic triangle is not only important but also fragile. The line between being partners or opponents can be thin depending on the stakes for each party and, according to the data, on the communicative abilities from the school professional and his ability to steer a difficult conversation in a positive direction.

Pressure can be of risk on the students' wellbeing, although it needs to be assessed what the implication of pressure is. Students' need to experience a healthy amount of pressure to help them focus and perform, but is should not risk their wellbeing.

The data reveals different parties (school, government, parents) pointing at each other to take responsibility for, and action to reduce this pressure amongst students. This illustrates the role confusion very clearly and the need for better guidelines and role distribution. It is vital for the students' wellbeing to let them experience setbacks and support them in building resilience to handle future setbacks. This will teach them important life skills. It is worrying that this role confusion is causing unwanted discussion about who does what, creating extra tension, mistrust, and pressure amongst students in a time where they are looking for stability.

Other collaborating partners

As stated before, each of the four participating schools have a regional function, and this means they have multiple partners to collaborate with all in interest of support students social-emotional wellbeing and overall development and healthcare. Some of the external partners in schools are paediatricians, social workers, guest lectures, health care workers, attendance officer. According to the data, schools are often a place for other collaborating partners to collect information, but not so much share information. This is one of the arguments on why school professionals feel these collaborations add to their workload and do not always feel like a mutual collaboration. According to Messing & Bouma (2011) the introduction and implementation of inclusive education is a complex and far-reaching operation where education and healthcare are partners and should work as partners.

It is remarkable that all participants thought of parents or external collaborators instead of other school professionals and their students when talking about collaboration. They were often driven by challenging personal or work-related experiences and themes such as work pressure and challenges in partnership. These were returning themes throughout their explanation of their interpretation. This also indicates that collaborating with students and colleagues does not cost as much negativity. Another explanation could be that participants did not think about this as much because there is clear expectation on who does what when it comes to collaborating with colleagues and students.

In 2020 the National Education Guide was released, sharing teachers experiences on inclusive education. The evaluation reveals inclusive education is not doing what was hoped for. Teachers experience an increase in workload and students do not always feel supported. These teachers state that special needs students do not flourish in regular overcrowded classrooms and there is no clarity or structure in the implementation or guidelines. This statement is confirmed by the data from this research and underlined by the actions from the local board for collaborating schools.

This local board is responsible for the local implementation of inclusive education and have an advising role for schools. They had several research projects amongst schools to establish which basic support can be provided and what is still missing. With the help of this data, they are affirming its intention to create clear guidelines for schools and their role in inclusive education. Unfortunately, this board had been trying to do so for several years. There is still no clear policy yet and we have been trying to set of inclusive education for eight years now.

Collective responsibility or clear boundaries

Although the returning confusion in the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing is a possible explanation for the experienced difficulty in collaborating with other partners, it is important to revisit the difficulties the data reveals about these collaborations. Without reviewing the collective responsibility there is in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, it is not possible to make a clear statement about the role of the school. Students attend school five days a week, but when it comes to providing social-emotional support, this might still be necessary after school hours. And it can be confusing, not only dangerous for students, if school professionals and other professionals choose different approaches in understanding and providing the much-needed support.

The data revealed school professionals do not feel like as equal partners in these collaborations, yet the report on 'the state of education' reveals difficulties in the regional collaboration to provide inclusive education and the increase of unauthorized teachers because of the shortage of teachers. The report states a need of collective responsibility to take on this societal challenge and not everybody is taking their responsibility now. (Education inspectorate, 2020). A year later Defense for Children (2021) released a report in collaboration with the NCOJ (Dutch Centre Education and Youth health care) where they reveal the problem in providing mental healthcare for children and adolescents. According to this research there are deficiencies in the partnership between education and youth-mental healthcare. The report states all children have the right to education and the right to adequate care to take part in education, so this includes mental healthcare. It is not self-evident schools offer mental-health care or that it is integrated in their student support policy. Mental healthcare workers are seen as specialists and as external partners, however schools experience pressure and uncertainty to take on the role of specialist. Schools should not provide specialized care, yet students in need of such support are obligated to attend school even when their specialized health care has not started yet. Creating a situation where schools feel pressured to take on different non-educational roles.

The data reveals school professionals not feeling like being seen for the professional they are, and the literature reveals critique on education for not taking on their role to provide youth health care, yet the answer does not only seem to lie in motivation or taking responsibility. As stated before, according to the law, the responsibility of the implementation of the law on youth health care lies with the local government. This law described that most individual help that comes from this law (specialistic mental and social health care) will not take place at schools (Youth Act, article 2, 2014). There is no article of reference in this law that connects inclusive education with youth health care. Yet, several recent reports are critical of schools not taking on their collective responsibility which, according to this law, is not their responsibility. In 2021, the Education Council released a report that stated there lie too many responsibilities on the shoulders of individual teachers. This results in not being able to focus on giving and developing education. And this will affect the quality of education.

The committee recommends investing in expanding the team of school professionals and framing the school professionals' activities so they can focus and prioritize. However, this seems rather impossible. Schools cannot clarify their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing when the law is unclear and contradicts itself. This is not a responsibility for each individual school and asks for a more unified approach. The pressure school professionals feel comes from not knowing what is expected from you, yet still being stressed about taking responsibility. All this room for interpretation can also lead up to other collaborating partners, such as mental health workers or paediatricians, to use their own interpretation as guideline for what they expect from schools. Even with the best interest at heart, it is still risky to let others decide for you. The support of students' social-emotional wellbeing support of students should not be decided by personal interpretations.

Schools are a dynamic context with many collaborating partners who all share the common interest of supporting students in the best way they can. However, not only are school professionals unsure about their role and what is expected from them, other partners not seem to know either. This is creating situation where professionals and parents must rely on communication to create clear expectations and set boundaries. Leaving the quality of collaboration in the hands of someone's communicative skills.

Setting clear guidelines and boundaries to role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing is needed to protect students from not receiving proper care and protecting school professionals from taking on too many roles they are not qualified for, leaving them overworked and not being seen as the educational specialist they are. The following chapter will further discuss the importance of role clarity.

7.9 Role clarity

Out of forty-eight participants, twenty-five stated that their role in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing is unclear to them. Other participants weren't so direct, although had trouble explaining their role, often referring to the complexity of the concept of wellbeing. All forty-eight participants have spoken about role clarification during the data collection, fifteen of them feel no need to clarify their role and the main reason for this is because they feel a complex and often personal concept such as social-emotional wellbeing is difficult to capture in a policy, according to them it needs room and flexibility for personal interpretation. These numbers reveal that a majority states there is role confusion, but not all the majority stated the need for clarification. Honingh & Ehren (2012) state there is no general definition of quality when it comes to education and the roles of the school professionals because of the polycentric nature of the Dutch education system.

The common thread in all four themes above and all twenty-four themes of the findings chapter is role clarity or missing of. What is missing throughout all data is clarity in understanding the concept of social-emotional wellbeing, in policies about this concept, in dividing the different roles between education and healthcare. When trying to understand the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, it became clear the understanding of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing is strongly influenced by personal narratives and school professionals seem unclear (and unsure) about their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Dodge et al. (2012) underline the complexity of the concept. They discuss different approaches to the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and state defining wellbeing as a challenge.

This chapter zooms in on the three different roles school professionals experience in the school and how this affects their understanding of the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Secondly, it will discuss the lack of policies on wellbeing and the possible upsides and downsides of missing these policies.

Educationist, specialist, and caregiver

School professionals discuss three overarching roles they find themselves in: the educationist, specialist, and caregiver. The role of educationist seems to be clear for all school professionals. It is the combination with the other two roles that causes uncertainty and confusion. School professionals feel society is pressuring schools to become caregivers. There is a debate about school professionals not being valued as educational specialist and pressuring them into the role of support specialist or social worker. It seems expectations are unclear, which causes others to use their own interpretation and necessity to form their expectations. Which makes it impossible for school professionals to live up to these expectations.

All forty-eight participants agreed that schools have a supporting role in the development of students to adulthood. They might all agree that schools have a societal function, and the institute needs to provide so much more than sharing knowledge. There is disagreement on how this societal function looks. Some state the school is already an example for a mini-society, and they do enough to help students prepare by guiding them through the school system as much as needed. Others state schools should do more to support good citizenship, but the timetable will not allow it. According to these participants, there are too many different tasks.

The nature of education consists of social interaction, but in 1999, Bronneman- Helmers already spoke about the increase of pressure on schools to fulfill this societal role and so did Turkenburg (2005). She pinpointed the confusion behind these social tasks and how this negatively affected the quality of education. So did the ministers of OCW (education, culture, and science) in 2009. They sent a letter to the parliament to share their concerns about the increase of pressure on education and on school professionals. The parliament acknowledged the role of the government is important in canalizing the pressure on schools and referred to the report of the Commission Dijsselbloem (2007–2008, 31 007, nr. 17) and stated that the government should be incredibly careful in giving new assignments to education. As stated before, there is a lot of confusion in the use of terminology as well. Mental health and wellbeing are often mixed. This does not only lie with the schools. Many mental healthcare organizations offer more than specialized care. They offer primary care through coaching. If multiple organizations with different specializations (as education and healthcare) offer the same primary care, how do students know where to go for help.

If it is unclear in who does what and we can only rely on communication in these types of situations, we are putting students at risk. The referral for specialized care might go too quickly, or too slow, both risking over pressuring students. According to the parliament (2009) and the Dijsselbloem report (2008) schools have the responsibility to signal, monitor and guard when it comes to student care, acting on these signals is up to the network of specialists around the schools. Yet, in 2014, the new law on inclusive education was implemented without a period of trial, giving schools a new assignment. Most participants were extremely critical of this educational law and according to them it has only added pressure and confusion on who does what.

Not only is it unclear for the school professional, parents and students are often searching for who to ask for help because of the lack of clarity. Causing unnecessary frustration and delay. It remains unclear which types of support lies with the schools and which types of support lies outside of the schools, although this new law has been active for over eight years. Although the roles of educationist and caregiver are nothing new within the social context of the school, the pressure of taking on other roles is causing school professionals to feel underappreciated in their role as an education specialist and unprepared for these other roles. With these other roles, school professionals mean the role of a social worker or mental health coach. These are serious professions and should not be valued as an extra task for the school professional. Clear national guidelines and school policies in which each role is described, framed, and valued could solve this problem, creating a clear mutual expectation.

Confusion with the lack of policies verses flexibility and room for professionalism

This research reveals the lack of clarity in the role of the school professional, tracing this role confusion back to laws and guidelines who are vague or inconsistent. It is safe to say that clear policies on the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, which should entail some sort of job description or role distribution, is missing. School directors have received descriptive guidelines from the government and will interpreted these within the context of their school.

The missing of clear guidelines creates multiple risks that have been discussed before (different interpretations, variations in supportive roles and the implementation of those and with that the risk of students not receiving proper support). However, lack of policies can also bring opportunities for schools to invest in the supportive role of the school professional best fitting for the context of their school.

The four participating schools have stated to invest in school professionals' personal growth, professional identity, and professional preferences. School professionals working in this organisation have the possibility to add additional tasks and training of their preference. The minimal level of professionalism connected to supporting social-emotional wellbeing seems unclear. All schools specialize in certain educational approaches, fit for their student population. This means that there is no unified approach to the separate roles of school professional by the umbrella organization.

Policies provide a general approach and vision on student wellbeing. Each school is obligated to write and share their school support profile to explain their additional and special needs support programs or extra support structure in the school. This policy document reveals information about the different student care routes in the school but does not reveal the minimal criteria of the role school professionals in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. All four schools have different policies on their school support profile. The missing of clear guidelines and basic criteria by national government or local government could be a possible explanation for school policies being unclear. According to Arnold (2000) the development of effective policies to improve schools are impeded by the lack of a consistent definition. He states that diverse needs, need flexible policies.

Role clarity is the degree to which employees have a clear understanding of their tasks, responsibilities, and processes at work. This clarity is not limited to their own role; it also includes their colleagues' roles. Clarity is an essential precursor of productivity, and a lack thereof can cause stress and confusion (Birkman- Fink & Capparell, 2013). The participating schools use 'The six roles of the teacher' by Slooter (2018) as a framework to train their teaching staff. All schools have the freedom to choose methods and framework for continuing professional development of their teams of school professionals.

All four schools invest in hiring motivated and driven professionals, and this can be a challenge since the organisation is growing but there is a national shortage of qualified teachers. This means an increase in unexperienced teacher with the need for proper guidance and guidelines. This could indicate the necessity of clear policies about the role of the school professional in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. There are different views on the necessity of providing minimal criteria on the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

According to some the minimal criteria is necessary to provide clarity for school professionals, students, and their parents about who does what (Wartenbergh-Cras & Kessel, 2007; Allers, 2020), others suggest schools are a social environment where it is important to leave room for personal interpretation; some connections between students and teachers or affinity with supporting students social-emotional wellbeing is something you cannot capture. It is natural and social process (Peters et al., 2012; Van Engen, 2017). The Dutch education inspectorate wrote a guideline with the title 'Room within rules' to explain how much flexibility the national law on education and inclusive education offers. According to inspector general Jonk (Educational Inspectorate, 2015) you only need to register and plan things you really use. With this statement he refers to the opportunity schools have in implementation the law as effective as possible, without unnecessary documentation and fitted to the context of the school, stating that schools should not be micro-managed by the government.

According to the definition from the literature, the data should have revealed school professionals are experiencing role clarity since all four schools score adequate or more on tests from the education inspection. To do so, schools need to function as a whole and are tested on classroom environment, quality of teaching, students' support programs, results and student and parents' experiences as collaborating partners (Education inspectorate, 2020). Most of the data revealed a feeling of role confusion amongst the participants, in terms of social-emotional wellbeing. Most participants who were unsure about their own role were working as a teacher or mentor. Participants who seem confused about what supporting role lies with the school and what outside of school were more often working as a department leader or part of the educational support staff.

This can be explained by the fact that teachers and mentors are the school professionals working with students in a classroom setting, while the department leader has an overarching role. It is interesting to see there four schools functioning on a high level (positive report from the educational inspectorate, yet most participating school professionals express their concerns about role confusion. This could be the result of the ability of school directors in hiring motivated school professionals or maybe the role of the schools is not so unclear after all.

Another explanation could be that these schools and staff have a solid base, which makes them resilient and flexible in handling new things, but this is not a long-term solution. It is difficult to make a statement about this, but it is something that should be recognized.

The report on 'the state of education' reveals confusion within education; For years, the Dutch teacher's union (AOb) advocates for the definition of objectives of the basic support system in schools and what is expected from schools and teachers. The minimal standard needs to be clear. National politics have responded with a workgroup who will examine the minimal standards and the role of the school (Education inspectorate, 2020). Increasing workload: overcrowded classrooms and swarmed with administrative tasks.

The Board of education (2021) released a statement that it is time to focus and shared an advisory report to reduce the workload. According to this report there is too much responsibility on the individual school professional. Being an educator is much more than transferring information. The data revealed all school professionals have multiple tasks within the school and these participants all think teachings is more than transferring information. Chaudron & Dujardin (2019) stated that a teacher's workday often contains of a little bit of teaching, writing call reports, filling in papers for health care institutions and writing to parents. The extra tasks and high demands increase the workload and distract from teaching. The data reveals similar statements. Participants indicate teaching should be about more than teaching, but with that they mean investing in student-teacher relation and not increasing administrative tasks. Most of the data reveals school professionals feeling pressured but also still very motivated to invest in their students. It reveals an inner debate between what must be done and what they feel should be done.

As far as this research reveals, there are implication to the role of the school because of missing clear guidelines and policies. The connection between policies, policy supervision and improving the quality of education is researched by different studies. This research reveals the effect of the policy and supervision on several outcome variables such as the extent to which teachers and school leaders reflect on the quality of education. This research states policy and supervision contribute to the quality of self-evaluating schools and the implementation of improvement measures (Chapman, 2001; Dedering & Müller, 2011; Hardy, 2012; Penninckx et al., 2014; Ehren & Shackleton, 2016).

Several studies also reveal the negative effects of the overusage of policies. Some state that using policies can promote strategic behaviour instead of openness and motivation (Shaw et al., 2003; Klerks, 2013; Matthews & Sammons, 2005; Luginbuhl et al., 2009; Hussain, 2012; Allen & Burgess, 2012). The data reveals schools are not so divided as the literature.

According to the data, participants have different approaches to the necessity of policy making, yet a majority reveals their need for clarity, so they feel better informed and protected in their role as a school professional.

Although these four schools are functioning well, the foundation for this could be vulnerable. According to the outcomes of this research, their functioning is the sum of a majority of highly motivated school professionals, within the right context, supported by their superiors. It seems connected to personal interpretation, interest, and atmosphere. All factors which could 'easily' be affected within a short period of time under the influence of unexpected external factors such as pressure (teacher, student, external partners), collaborators who take on different roles or teacher shortage. The lack of a clear description of the role of the school makes school professionals find their own understanding and interpretation. Making it impossible to have a similar approach to their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. The implications of this are far stretching. Not only reveals this vulnerability in the school's system and extra unnecessary pressure for school professionals.

Students who depend on school professionals to guide them through their school years and support their social-emotional wellbeing are dependent of the school professionals' personal approach and knowledge. Making it impossible to value and evaluate the schools' approach and risking the wellbeing of students because of the possibility of an incorrect approach in supporting their wellbeing.

7.10 Discussion summary

The outcomes to this research indicate all school professionals understand and agree that their role is to support students at school and that this role goes beyond transmitting information. Yet, there is confusion about what schools understand by students' social-emotional wellbeing and how to fulfill that supporting role. The literature is divided about the effect schools can have on improving social-emotional wellbeing, yet the data reveals most school professionals believe they can be a positive influence in the personal and didactical development of their students. The data and literature agree on the complexity of the concept. School professionals' interpretation of students' social-emotional wellbeing is influenced by personal narratives, personal and work-related experiences, working environment and other school related dynamics.

The findings were divided in twenty-four returning themes that emerged from the data analysis (see chapter 4) and five of these themes were part of the discussion in this chapter because these five themes emerged through all the findings and different themes. They make the common thread throughout this research. It is important to state that all themes are interconnected. The complex concept of social emotional wellbeing is a dynamic concept and so is the research site. Schools are a dynamic environment, and those dynamics cannot be captured in just one theme.

The discussion started with personal narratives, and it reveals the influence personal narratives and storytelling have on how school professionals interpreted the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the possible negative effect this can have on the interpretation and outcome of student support. It can be stated that personal narratives and storytelling are an important part of the working environment, especially when there is a social aspect to the role of the professional. Having a working environment which supports being social and using personal narratives to support the development of interpersonal relationships, this can also add the risk of personal stories affecting work negatively. The data reveals all school professionals use personal narratives to explain their understanding of social-emotional wellbeing. It also indicates these personal narratives are sometimes used unconsciously, and the influence of personal narratives in relation to understand wellbeing or to help them connect to their students is seen as 'normal' and broadly accepted.

During this research it became clear personal narratives can support understanding a concept such as wellbeing and these personal narratives are a considerable influence in interpreting the concept of social-emotional wellbeing. It can help school-professionals empathize with their students and it can help students connect to their helper. It is clear personal narratives are an important part of the professional identity of school professionals and it is important to understand this professional identity as a dynamic process. This leaves room for growth, but also indicates the missing of clear structure, policy, or training.

New school professionals are described as motivated and well-educated on their subject, but many of them received little training in pedagogies during their studies. This could be a possible explanation on why school professionals not only use personal narratives to understand social-emotional wellbeing because it is normalized and accepted. With this approach they are missing guidelines from their studies to help them fulfil their role in understanding and supporting students social-emotional wellbeing.

Research reveals the four schools who form the research site, do invest in training their school professionals in taking on a supporting role. Yet, these trainings are supplied and chosen by the schoolboard and not always in consultation with specialists on social-emotional wellbeing.

Social-emotional wellbeing and mental health were often mixed by participants. This research reveals there is no clear distinction made between the two by the majority of participants. This research indicates there is confusion on what terminology to use. Not only by the research data, but this is also confirmed by the literature. There are different descriptions and measurements used in different research projects, which makes it unclear and difficult to read and compare. All school directors and most of the department leaders did make a clear distinction between mental-health and social-emotional wellbeing based on severity of the problem and context. Yet, the school-professionals who are part of their team did not make a clear distinction between the two. This can indicate the possibility of missing clear policy and guidelines or there is a policy, but the communication and implementation is insufficient at this time. The discussion about terminology and wellbeing versus mental health, also revealed the tension field between the role of the school and the role of health care organizations when it comes to supporting mental health.

The new law on inclusive education implies schools are obligated to provide care for students with mental health problems and schools are professionalizing their student care teams to expand their ability and knowledge on subjects like these, while the law on youth health care still makes no connection to education and according to this law, health care organizations are responsible for mental health support and this specialized help will not take place at schools. This separation between laws is remarkable and can be a possible explanation for the tension field that rises between the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing. There is no clarification from the law on who does what when it comes to supporting social-emotional wellbeing and/ or mental health, and without it, students are at risk of not receiving the support they need, by the specialist or educationist they need it from.

Although there is no clear consensus on the definition of social-emotional wellbeing, the data reveals wellbeing is still measured with the help of indicators and measuring tools. Schools often use multiple tools as indicators and do not act on one. The most used (and therefore) important indicator seems to be 'sudden changes'.

For this indicator to be recognized it is vital that school professionals know their students. There must be an established relationship and sense of knowing the student. Social-emotional wellbeing is a dynamic concept and needs a more personal and qualitative approach and cannot be captured in numbers. There seems to be confusion on what measuring tools being used to measure students' wellbeing. The Dutch government emphasizes on evidence-based methods being used within education. All schools work with a student tracking system which can hold quantitative data and qualitative data. Qualitative data is affected by the interpretation, knowledge, and thoroughness of the person collecting the data.

School professionals' understanding of wellbeing is affected by personal narratives, this means the concept is difficult to define and assess. However, even without a clear definition school professionals feel strongly about taking on a supportive role for their students' social-emotional wellbeing. Their main concern is role confusion. There is a strong need for clear descriptive guidelines on the role of the school. These guidelines would make a solid base for schools to build from, creating a clear expectation between students and school professionals, protecting the atmosphere of the school, the people working there and the students who go there.

The role confusion does not only affect school professionals, yet it also creates a tension field between education and youth health care and seems to affect the school's collaboration with different partners. All four schools use the dynamic triangle as framework for the collaboration between school, student, and parents, yet this framework originally stems from the system-oriented approach used by social workers. Parental involvement is very important, but also brings challenges.

Participating schools speak of a high parental involvement or at least, easy access for parents to contact school. As a result, some of the data revealed school professionals feeling extra pressured by parents. Investing in positive relationships and social interaction takes time and effort. All four schools have a different demographic, and the data reveals schools see this difference in demographic as an influential factor in parent collaboration. According to the literature not only is there pressure on schools, the pressure and workload from schools is too high.

Students feel pressured as well and this can affect the dynamic triangle. The data reveals the confusion of the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing affects parental involvement. Confusion means a lot of room for personal interpretation and without relation and communication, school, students, and parents might have very different expectations. These different expectations can have major consequences. If school professionals are confused about their role and society is pressuring them into a role they are not prepared for, schools are set up for failure. When it comes to students' social-emotional wellbeing, making mistakes can cause great risks.

One of the main goals of education is guiding children to adulthood, becoming stable, resilient people with sufficient life skills. If students need specialized support on their wellbeing, it should not be the role of the school to offer this support and carrying all the responsibility. However, there should be a collaboration between students, parents, schools, and health care to offer the best guidance as possible.

Schools have multiple collaborating partners, and the data reveals a similar tension field between the different collaborators because of confusion between mutual expectations. There are no guidelines or minimal demands on what the role of the school is in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and collaboration with other partners often depends on willingness and communication. According to the data, it is important for schools and health care to work as partners, yet the law does not allow so. Currently, it is up to local governments to re-evaluate the collaboration between education and youth health care.

Each local government works with a local board for collaborating schools and they are responsible for the local implementation of inclusive education. There are intending to establish which basic support can be provided by local schools and what is still missing. Their intention is to create clear guidelines for the schools and their role in inclusive education, however it remains unclear when these clear guidelines will be stated and implemented.

As this summary reveals, confusion or role clarity is a returning topic and the possible risks for students and school professionals need to be considered. School professionals recognize the importance of supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing yet have trouble defining what that role is. They are missing clear guidelines and policies where this role is described. Current documents are too vague.

With the missing of clear guidelines, school professionals, students and others involved are using their own interpretation to define the role of the school. Which causes misunderstandings, different expectations, and a vulnerable situation for students. The schools participating in this research are doing very well, however this is mostly related to the quality of school professionals and atmosphere.

The social-emotional wellbeing of students cannot depend on personal interpretations and communicative skills of school professionals. Not only is the missing of clear guidelines adding to the work pressure of school professionals, but this is also putting students at jeopardy. Without clear guidelines and boundaries, no one can be sure if the right support is offered by the right specialist. With the subject of social-emotional wellbeing being related to mental health, it can be life altering if a student does not receive proper care.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter offers some final reflections on this research. In the light of the previous discussion, the main findings and conclusions will be reviewed as well as explaining the contribution of this research to the literature. Then the limitations of this study will be highlighted and finally, this chapter ends with the proposition of some recommendations and further research in the field, based on previously discussed evidence.

The aim of this study was to explore and understand the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Two important components that were under investigation were understanding of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and what role the school professionals have played in supporting this or should have, according to them. Within the education field and its social context, social-emotional wellbeing is often connected to schools. Research, governments, and society in general emphasize the social and societal role of the school. Yet, we can conclude that the concept of social-emotional wellbeing lacks clear definition and one's interpretation is based on their personal lens of experience (Kahneman et al., 1999; Diener et al., 1999; Keyes et al., 2002; Squires et al., 2003; Stratham & Chase, 2010; Seligman, 2011).

Without a clear definition or guidelines, it is safe to say that there was a lot of room for interpretation. There is not only more focus on the wellbeing of students, but schools are also given the responsibility to provide support for every student. Within the context of this responsibility, missing clarity in the concept and guidelines, and using your own personal lens to understand and assess someone's wellbeing, I was extremely interested in how school professionals translate these different components into their work at school.

This is the main guiding question that shaped this research:

What is the role of school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing in secondary education?

To address this question, three supporting sub-questions were explored:

1. How do school professionals understand their role in relation to social-emotional wellbeing?

2. What are school professionals doing to support students' social-emotional wellbeing and what challenges do they experience?

3. Do they have any recommendations or ideas for improving the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing?

Figure 8.1.
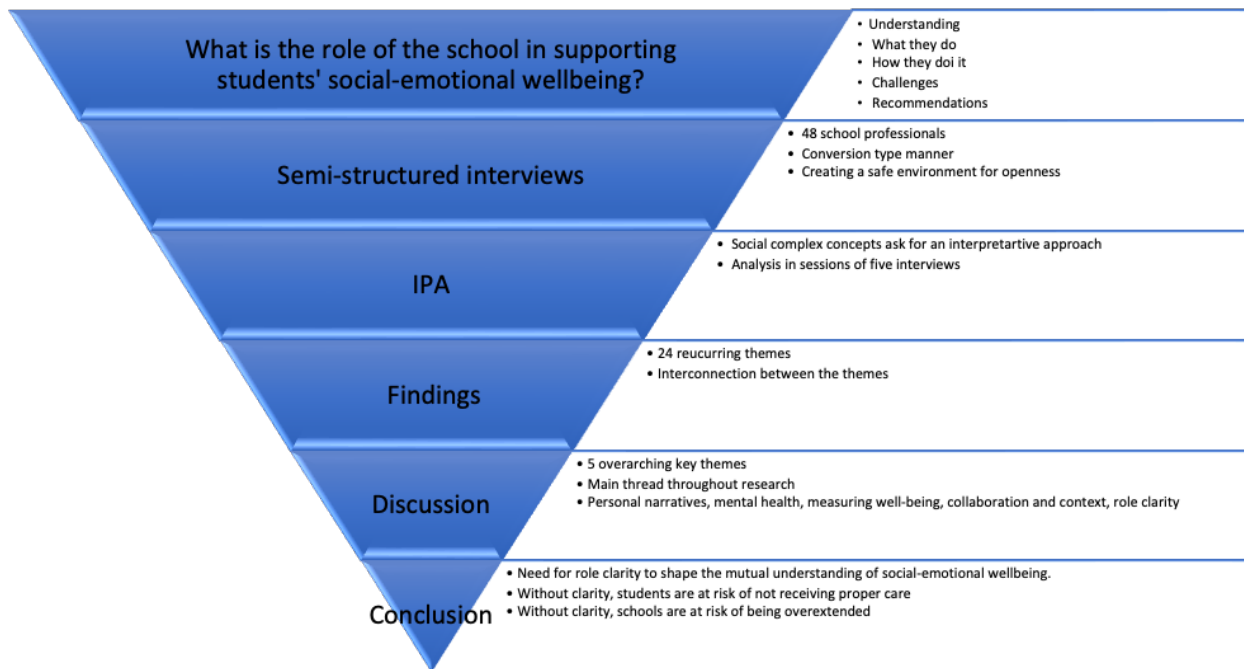
Figure 8.1 visualizes the structure of this research. This qualitative research design used a research site of four schools, all part of one school management. These were regular state schools who offer secondary education on various levels. Forty-eight school professionals participated in this research and semi-structured interviews in a conversational manner formed the data collection. These forty-eight school professionals have different roles within the schools. Some have a managing role; others are teacher or mentor, and some participants are part of the educational support staff. All participants were very motivated to participate, and this resulted in openness, in-depth conversations, and helpful data.

The data was collected over a period of two school years. The final eight interviews were conducted via videocall, because of the worldwide lockdowns. Although the setting was slightly different, and there could be the potential of slight differences in the data, the quality of the data seemed not to be affected by this. The fact that participants knew who I was, made it easier to create an atmosphere for open conversation as similar as possible to the previous interviews. The data from the final eight interviews was compared to the other interviews and did not deviate in a remarkable way.

Contribution to knowledge

This research underlines the complexity of working with the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and revealed the lack of clarity on the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, and how this can affect their role as a school professional, and the risks this brings for their students. The effect of role confusion is the main thread throughout all the emerging themes and theories.

This research contributes to knowledge regarding the understanding and interpretation of school professionals on their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. This research revealed highly motivated and involved school professionals who were searching for answers of their own about their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. The findings of this research reveal that defining wellbeing is difficult, yet also reveal that a clear definition of wellbeing is not necessary. The role of school professionals in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing does not depend on a clear definition of wellbeing.

However, how to implement such a supportive role does need clarification According to this research, school professionals use their personal narratives to define social-emotional wellbeing. This does not have to be a problem. Working with a dynamic concept such as wellbeing can be structured into a general approach if the professionals working with it, define and describe their role in detail. That is why using measuring tools is important. These tools help define social-emotional wellbeing. Although most measuring tools still seem to be quantitative, school professionals describe the need for more qualitative measuring tools. They believe relation is pivotal for providing a successful student support system and relation is difficult to assess with quantitative measuring tools.

Clarification is key. Not by finding a general accepted definition on social-emotional wellbeing. There needs to be a consensus in who does what, a clear job description for education, and a general approach needs to be found in the assessment of student wellbeing (and training school professionals accordingly). Giving school professional the tools to take on a supportive role and providing clear boundaries. School professionals need to be valued as educational specialist and not take on roles they are not trained to do so, especially when it comes to the wellbeing of their students.

This research will be presented to the school management of these four schools and the local government, to support the innovations they are trying to make on a local level. They are trying to improve clarity on the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing and describe what this means for schools, students, and healthcare. This research brings the voice of these school professionals to the policy makers.

With this research I have explained the interconnectedness between understanding social-emotional wellbeing, the role personal narratives play in this and the importance of role clarity within education. Using evidence from the data and building on existent literature, I identified some of the gaps between education and health care policies, the enactment of these policies and the interpretation by school professionals and what this means for the school and the risk this brings for students. All these different factors are interconnected and need to be approached as such. The pressure school professionals experience comes from confusion. The misconceptions in expectations toward schools comes from confusion. Students who are waiting for support or receiving unfitting support, comes from confusion. It is hoped that this insight in the role of the school professionals in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing provides a basis for further research and reviewing in this area.

8.2 Summary of the findings.

The findings will be summarized and concluded with the help of the supporting sub-questions that framed this research. By answering these sub-questions, the answer to the main research question will be revealed and this will be the final conclusion. In the findings (Chapter 4) a total of twenty-four emerging themes were explained in their connection to the research question of this study. Throughout these twenty-four themes, there were five overarching key themes that came forward and were part of the discussion (Chapter 5.)

8.2.1 How do school professionals understand their role in relation to social-emotional wellbeing?

Three overarching key themes are connected to this first sub-question and the conclusions of these themes will be explained separately. These three themes are personal narratives, mental health, and measuring wellbeing. Because of the complexity of the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the lack of a clear definition, school professionals use other resources to help them understand and interpret their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Personal narratives

There is evidence in this study to show that school professionals' personal narratives are of profound influence on the understanding of social concepts when there is no clear guideline from the working environment. The themes connected to this theme are personal reflections, personal experiences and the interconnection between work and personal life. Personal narratives are commonly used for the interpretation and understanding of social settings.

In this study, it is revealed that personal narratives are the main indicator for school professionals understanding of social-emotional wellbeing. This creates the risk of misunderstanding each other when school professionals must collaborate in support of students' social-emotional wellbeing. Someones personal narrative is unique and therefore difficult to compare with others, so it is expected these school professionals will have different understandings op social-emotional wellbeing and will not share a unified approach to this. This creates different working methods, while students in need of social-emotional support need school professionals to have a similar approach.

If school professionals want to support a safe environment, especially for students who feel social-emotionally unstable, they need to provide clarity and stability. On the other hand, the use of personal narratives supports empathy, connection and mutual understanding between students and school professionals. Which is vital for creating an environment where the student feels safe to share their need for support. There is a need for guidelines to help school professionals guard their professional role in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing, yet still feel comfortable in using personal narratives to empathize with these students.

Mental Health

The concept of mental health and social-emotional wellbeing are used interchangeably in the schools, but also outside of schools. Both are looked at as collective names for students who feel unbalanced or unhappy. Mental health issues can be explained as the lack of social-emotional wellbeing. Using these two concepts interchangeably is confusing and creates misunderstanding. This also affects the experienced pressure and expectation that schools should provide mental health support, yet the law does not allow schools to provide specialized care. This is where the educational law and health care law are unclear; the Educational Act gives schools the responsibility of the Duty of Care, which states that schools are responsible for providing support for students with additional and special needs or find a school or organization that can. Yet, the Youth Care Act prevents schools from taking on this responsibility, since they are not considered partners in Youth Care. This makes it extremely difficult for schools to provide clarity in their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Measuring wellbeing

Even in discussing diverse ways of measuring wellbeing, the research revealed the complexity of capturing a concept such as wellbeing in numbers. Often indicators such as social skills, coping mechanism and approach to life were used to assess students' social-emotional wellbeing. Schools have different instruments to monitor and keep progress on students' social-emotional wellbeing, both quantitative and qualitative. There is a consensus that a complex and dynamic concept such as wellbeing should be assessed with a more qualitative approach. However, these assessments are affected by the personal interpretation of the school professional. The quality of the assessment will be affected by the school professional and student relationship, communicative skills of the school professional, and knowledge about social-emotional wellbeing. School professionals have spoken about the lack of time to invest in these relationships and assessments.

Although they experience pressure and lack of time in their work, school professionals stated the importance of trying to find some sort of alignment in measuring social-emotional wellbeing. This alignment will support school professionals who feel unsure about their role and motivate them to take on such a role, which will clearly benefit students. It is expected more students will receive the support they need if more school professionals feel confident in their role.

Understanding of social-emotional wellbeing and the school professional's role
As to the understanding of school professionals in their role on supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, there is no easy answer. Yes, school professionals have trouble defining their role. There seems to be lack of clarity about the role of the school and this is explained by the three themes. Without a clear definition, personal narratives affect someone's understanding of wellbeing in a substantial way. This is visible in the way mental health and social-emotional wellbeing are used interchangeably as well. Personal experiences, emotions and knowledge play a part in someone's interpretation of complex and dynamic concepts such as wellbeing.

Although defining social-emotional wellbeing is difficult, measuring instruments are used to clarify the assessment of wellbeing and providing some sort of mutual approach. However, these measuring tools are optional and are no part of any guidelines, leaving room for deviation. Stating that, how school professionals understand and execute their role leaves room for interpretation, however school professionals agree on the signaling and monitoring role of the school. They feel schools have an important role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, however they are missing a general approach, clear guidelines, and boundaries.

8.2.3 What are school professionals doing to support students' social-emotional wellbeing and what challenges do they experience?

According to this research, school professionals have a role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and are very willing and motivated to take on that role. Yet, there is also a sense of anxiety and stress, because of the many innovative ideas and changes the field of education endures. The most discussed topic was the collaborative context they are in and the societal role the schools have.

Collaboration and context

Both mental health organizations and schools provide coaching with the help of social workers. It seems unclear why both these organizations offer the same types of support. Because of this confusion, not all students with similar needs receive the same support by the same organization. Although school professionals seem positive about offering social work-related support in schools, they do notice an increase of students who want to make use of this type of support. This raises concern among them, and they also underline the confusion in the different roles the school takes on. These school professionals feel that their role is changing, and schools are pressured into taking on a more societal role. School professionals raise their concern and fear this innovation is not a positive change, if not implemented properly. Schools who function well have motivated school professional who do not avoid an innovative challenge. However, the changing role of the school results in confusion about the role of school professionals, creating unnecessary pressure and wrongful expectations. School professionals experience being undervalued as an educational specialist and pressured into other roles. However, results show school professionals share the common vision on investing in student relationships, citizenship, and social interaction. Yet, these subjects take time and there seems to be none. The educational system has not changed, it only added new targets for schools to meet.

Implementation and challenges

School professionals are providing social-emotional support for their students by investing in positive relationships, classroom management, and using the signal and monitor method (screening for sudden changes). There is no clear support program, although guidelines for the schools' basic support have been set. These guidelines focus on classroom management and the role of the teacher. However, because of the complexity of the concept and the dynamic school context most of these approaches are based on the knowledge of the school professional involved, collaborating partners, and practicalities such as time.

Often there are many partners involved, and with the missing of a clear definition on social-emotional wellbeing and the role of the school, different interpretations and different expectations from partners add to the work pressure of school professionals. It is difficult to find a unified approach with multiple collaborators involved (school, student, parent, specialist). This role confusion results in room for personal interpretation and unnecessary tension field between the people involved. Which means there will be significant differences in approach, professionalism, and knowledge.

Creating a vulnerable situation for school professionals and with that putting students at risk. Students in need of social-emotional support do not thrive within different tension fields. This is expected to affect their social-emotional wellbeing in a negative way.

8.2.4 Do they have any recommendations or ideas for improving the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing?

The main thread throughout this research was role clarity or role confusion. Many of the participating school professionals were searching for answers to the same question as what this study is based on. The literature underlines this confusion. Most school professionals feel unsure about the changing role of the school and feel undervalued as an educational specialist. Experiencing pressure to change your professional role, yet not knowing what this change will bring and how to fulfill this role can create feelings of being underprepared, anxiety, and this will add to the work pressure.

Role clarity

There are huge differences amongst each individual school professional and how they see their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing in the future. These differences create imbalance for school professionals and students. Other emerging themes that underline the importance of role clarity are safety, social interaction, and self-reflection. School professionals feel unsure and with that unsafe in their changing role. The data reveals the discussion about school professionals who feel they are pressured in becoming social workers. Although they do not wish to remain educationists, they do express their need of gaining knowledge and tool to take on a more social role in support of their students. Making an important remark about the lack of time to invest in their students. New innovative ideas should not be stapled on top of the old educational system. There is need for a new balance between didactics and the societal role of the school.

There is no clarity on what is expected from them, and this will influence their confidence and work pleasure. Someone who feels underqualified for their job will respond to this feeling. They might try their best yet remaining insecure and developing feelings of anxiety and becoming overwhelmed or avoid situations where they feel pressured. Either way, the lack of role clarity will affect school professionals. And with the shortage in teachers, this is not a risk the government should take.

School professionals feel pressured to take on roles they are not prepared for. Not only does this undervalue them as educationists but this also undervalues the specialistic roles social and health care workers have. If a student needs support by a specialist, yet not receiving any, this creates unsafety for students. Not knowing what types of supportive role, the school has also created unsafe situations for students. Without clarity they do not know where to go for support. If the professional who is providing the support is not qualified to do so, this again will have unsafe implications for students. This does not only refer to students in need of specialized support. All students, especially during the adolescent phase, need clear guidance, boundaries, and predictability to feel safe, and a sense of autonomy within this safe environment to protect and support their social-emotional wellbeing.

Self-reflection is an important part of school professionals' development and is one of the competencies students aim to learn. To reflect you must know what to reflect on. Everyone's interpretation of wellbeing and the role of the school is different, reflecting and enacting on this role will be very different as well. This creates unnecessary risks for staff and students. School professionals' risk being overcharged or criticized because of wrongful expectations. Students risk being overlooked or receiving the wrong type of support or hugely diverse types of support, which means that for some students their social-emotional wellbeing will be affected in a negative way and their personal problems can deteriorate.

Recommendations and ideas

It is vital to provide clarity. Not by overly detailed and long policy documents, but there is a need for policy or guidelines with a clear description on the role of the school and what is expected from the school professional. A social setting like education asks for flexibility because of the social dynamics, yet the basic understanding of the role of the school in supporting social-emotional wellbeing needs to be clear for school professionals, students and their families and other collaborative partners.

School professionals believe in the changing role of the school yet recommend a critical look on the 'outdated' education system. Innovative ideas should replace some of the previous ideas that are not working anymore. This will reduce work pressure and support a general approach. This research states the general approach is vague because there are too many interpretations and approaches to take into consideration. There should be a healthy balance between standardized testing and investing time in student-teacher relation, fitted to the needs of this generation of students.

Both role clarity and reviewing the schools' program will bring, according to this research, more stability in the school and a stable environment is a necessity for protecting students social-emotional wellbeing.

8.3 Limitations

Despite having valid data which reveals how school professionals understand and experience their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, there are some limitations to this research study which need to be addressed.

8.3.1 The research sites

This research was carried out from 2016 to 2022. Most of the data retrieval took place in 2019 but was extended to 2020. Because of the research outcomes where personal narratives and role clarity take on such an important part in understanding the role of the school professional, it is important to state that some of the school directors and other school professionals in a managing role have changed position. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the timeline of this study and the dynamic between participants and outcome of the data. Although, the data collection was provided by a large group of participants, so it is expected the overall study results remain the same.

8.3.2 The role as a school professional and researcher

One of the main criticisms of having a dual role as a school professional and researcher is to be both insider and outsider (Tabach, 2011). This can lead to power relations and researcher vulnerability. Conducting in-depth interviews with a dual role can have unintended consequences of trust and emotional closeness as well as varying competence in communication skills and ethically sound reasoning on the part of the researcher (Hewitt, 2007). Intrusive interviews mean exploitation and might harm participants (Richards & Schwartz, 2002; Kidd & Finleyson, 2006).

By being fully aware of this vulnerability in the dual role, as well as the vulnerability of the participants, this dual role has also been seen as an advantage in this research. Conducting in-depth interviews with a large group of participants, trying to understand their understanding of such a complex concept, is dependent on openness and willingness of the participants to share. In this case, being a familiar face supports the conversation like manner of the interview, supporting openness and depth of the interview. It is also important to state that my dual role is limited.

As a pedagogue and student care coordinator, my role in the school is different from the group of participants. I have no preference or stake in any outcomes of the data. This is no evaluation of the system or of their functioning as a school professional.

This research is a response on the increasing tension and pressure school professionals experience because of the change in law and inclusive education. My sincere interest is in understanding how school-professionals, without any background in social work, understand their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. As a researcher I am depending on the participants' willingness not only to take part, but also share their experiences and thoughts about the subjects in question (see 'Chapter 3; ethical issues'). This research will give a voice to school professionals, and I will present their voice to the school board and local government to make sure they are heard.

8.3.3 Size of data collection

The size of the data collection is notable in relation to using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Most IPA research contains a data collection under the double digits because of the in-depth interview techniques and the interpretative analysis afterwards. Yet, this research contains a large data collection with the use of IPA. It is important for this research to search for the interpretation behind the data, especially since this research focusses on the complex concept of social-emotional wellbeing and how school professionals understand their role in supporting this complex concept among their students. The literature illustrates the complexity of describing wellbeing (Keyes, 2002; Squires et al., 2003; DOECS, 2005; Krause, 2007). Therefore, interpretative analysis is important, someone can have a different interpretation or understanding of the concept.

It might have been easier and more manageable to do a smaller data collection in combination with IPA. Yet, it was not possible to downsize the group of participants because the outcomes of this research will be used by the local government to re-evaluate the collaboration between local-healthcare and secondary education. The size of the data collection supports being a small representation of the local school professionals and their understanding of the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Although IPA is normally used on a much smaller data collection because of the in-depth data analysis, during this research with a larger data collection IPA was necessary to do justice to the complexity of the concept and utterly understanding the interpretation of the data.

The total size of my data sample is rather large for IPA standards however, the sample contained smaller groups of participants (school directors, department leaders, mentors, teachers, and educational support staff.

To do this research and research method justice, it was crucial to conduct the data analysis by a structured stepwise approach and a lot of time was devoted to do so. I have set a limit of five interviews per session to maintain focus and quality during the analysis of the data. The combination of smaller groups within the sample size, a limit of five interview per analyse session and a stepwise approach made it time consuming yet manageable. IPA did justice to the exploration of the complex and dynamic concept of social-emotional wellbeing through the eyes of school professionals.

8.3.4 Covid

Although Covid seems to have had minimal effect on this research study, it is important to discuss, because there was some effect. Although most of my data collection was done prior Covid, the outbreak influenced the remaining eight interviews. Worldwide the response to Covid were lockdowns to prevent the virus from spreading. The Netherlands went into their first lockdown in March 2020. This was at the end of my data collection. The remaining eight interviews were postponed until further information about the outbreak was given by the government. In May 2020 it became clear that Dutch secondary schools would not fully reopen until the new school year. The final eight participants were then asked if they felt comfortable doing the interview via videocall. All eight participants shared they felt comfortable doing so.

The data revealed no remarkable deviations from these eight interviews compared to the other data. Although it is notable that the duration of the online interviews was shorter than offline/ in-person interviews. My dual role as a researcher and colleague was helpful in this situation. Online interviewing can create a distance, but this was compensated by the fact that there was some type of familiarity through the screen. These unforeseen circumstances created extra challenges, however with the help of technology and my dual role it was possible to adapt and finish the research successfully.

8.4 Recommendations for practice

Based on the evidence discussed in this thesis and experiencing the confirmation of this evidence daily in my role as a pedagogue in education, some recommendations can be made to enhance the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

8.4.1 Define social-emotional wellbeing within the context of the organization

Social-emotional wellbeing has been analyzed in this study through the eyes of the school professionals and existing literature. Although there is no clear definition of social-emotional wellbeing and no collective understanding of this concept, schools can investigate defining social-emotional wellbeing within the context of their schools. Based on demographic, academic level, environmental factors, the compilation of school professionals and their background and knowledge, schools can define their take on social-emotional wellbeing (Koning et al., 2014). This study has shown that school professionals are motivated and committed to supporting their students but are missing clarity in how to approach social-emotional wellbeing.

Defining wellbeing within an organizational context can develop clarity for the school professionals on how to interpret, approach and assess students' social-emotional wellbeing.
This will not only create clarification on the definition of the concept, but this will also support clear communication about the school's view on students' social-emotional wellbeing between school professionals, students and others involved. Clear communication will support clarifying mutual expectations and therefore will have a positive effect on collaboration. Schools can define the concept of wellbeing within the context of the school with the help of the indicators from measuring tools (such as 'sudden changes') and provide a clear description on the role of the school professional and who does what. Not only creating guidelines, but also setting boundaries. Protecting students and school professionals.

8.4.2 Create clear guidelines and measuring tools or indicators

This research suggests the development of guidelines and other resources is needed to clarify the school's position on supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing and how they do it, yet still be flexible and acknowledging the social dynamics of the school (Walker, 2006; Michalos, 2017).

The findings of this study revealed none of the forty-eight school professionals referred to a policy or guideline to explain their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. There are school policies about the schools' basic support program and guidelines from the government. However, these are very descriptive and leave room for interpretation. With a clear definition of social-emotional wellbeing within the context of the school organization, it is possible to develop guidelines in how the school assesses and supports students' social-emotional wellbeing. The findings state that students' assessment supports the clarification of the dynamic concept of wellbeing. These assessments reveal specific indications for school professionals and students to act on, facilitating a clearer starting point in communication and approach. Without a similar approach school professionals are unable to support their students' social-emotional wellbeing, leaving students at risk because of wrongful approaches or not receiving proper care.

There a many measuring instruments for assessing students social-emotional wellbeing, yet most of these qualitative tools need a personal approach, take time and are dependent on the knowledge of the professional using it. It would be help school professionals to take on a supportive role, and be more confident in this role, if the school or government decide which measuring tools are used and train the school professionals accordingly. Using similar resources, indicators and guidelines will support a more unified approach to supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. It will also help new school professionals to expand their knowledge about supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing, since it is not always part of a school professionals' education (Ten Dam & Volman, 2000; Pels et al., 2011). However, investing in this supportive role means providing a context for the school professional where there is sufficient time and knowledge to take on this role. It also means that if schools are clarifying their role in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing, they are setting boundaries. Meaning there needs to be a consensus between education and health care in who does what. Otherwise, students are at risk of falling through the cracks.

8.4.3 Regularly review guidelines

To implement the definition and guidelines around the support of students' social-emotional wellbeing, it is important to regularly review existing guidelines. Not only to protect the quality and validation of the documents, but, in the light of this study, more so to encourage all school professionals and students to remain aware of the organizational approach of the school to students social-emotional wellbeing.

This study has underlined the importance of providing an educational environment for students that is safe, predictable, and organized. Developing a collective approach to social concepts such as wellbeing will support this environment. To protect and maintain the collective approach and with that, protect students' wellbeing, guidelines need to be reviewed by school professionals and students. Done consistently, on a regular basis, it is noted that repetition will influence knowledge and behaviour on a subconscious level (van den Heuvel, 2016). This approach to implementing guidelines on social-emotional wellbeing within education can be helpful to support the school professionals and students to make these guidelines their own.

8.4.4 Connect with local government and collaborative partners

As stated before, schools must deal with confusion from national educational and health care policies and laws (see chapter 2.2). Multiple reports on education and wellbeing contradict each other and educational innovations follow each other quickly. This does not make it easier for schools and policy makers to interpret the evolving role of education. Although these contradictory and unclear policies also provide flexibility and room for personal interpretation. Evidence from this study reveals the importance of collaboration with other partners, such as social work, health care, the collaboration within the district and the local government. These are all collaborative partners, with an interest in the support of children, who are searching for alignment between health care and education. To come to an alignment, there needs to be an understanding of each other's approach and interpretation of the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

Especially when it comes to supporting special needs students, students with mental health issues, or developmental disorders, collaboration with other specialists is vital to succeed. Yet, this can be negatively affected by misunderstanding each other when it comes to defining social-emotional wellbeing and who does what in supporting students. Students need to be protected from being overlooked or falling between two stools and this research also indicates the importance of protecting school professionals from taking on the role of supporting specialists when they are not qualified to do so and already feel like they must take on too many roles. In this study, there has been an emphasis on understanding the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Findings have shown that the interpretation of this concept is profoundly influenced by personal narratives and role confusion. Overall, the recommendations for practice highlight the importance of role clarity. Protecting and supporting students does not mean school professionals should take on all kinds of supportive roles.

Protecting students, supporting these children, means schools support the search for appropriate help, and if this type of support is educational, schools should offer the support. If the type of support is personal and extremely specific, the right type of specialist should offer this support.

8.5 Recommendations for further research

This study underlined the complexity of defining social-emotional wellbeing and revealed role clarity as a key factor in clarifying such a concept in an educational context. The outcomes of this study do not only hold recommendations for practice, but there are also some areas which hold potential for further research. These research recommendations can be a further supportive factor in defining the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing.

8.5.1 Studies about students' needs and understanding of the concept

This study focused on the understanding and experiences of school professionals. It is through their lens of experience that the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing was reviewed. According to present findings, personal narratives and role clarity are key factors on interpreting the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. These two factors are very much personal and only related to the context of school professionals. It would be valuable to review the role of the school through the eyes of students and reveal their interpretation or definition of social-emotional wellbeing. Studies have shown that the perception of students can be quite different on educational issues (Struyven et al., 2005). To have both school professionals and students understanding of the concept, would help clarification of the support schools should offer to students and the development and implementation of guidelines. Instead of the more usual top-down approach by policymakers, these two studies can support a more bottom-up approach for implementing policies and guidelines (DeLeon, 2002).

Schools who develop their student care policy enactment based on a bottom-up approach by involving the voice of school professionals and students, will create a school atmosphere where there is role clarity, students' needs will be met or at least clarified to involve the right type of specialist, schoolboards can invest in a targeted manner. Downside to this approach is that this type of research amongst school professionals and students in one particular school context needs to be revisit every five years to keep the data up to date. However, by doing so: schools can impact emotional, social, and financial stability for the organization and everyone in it.

8.5.2 Different research sites or design

Despite the strength of this study, this approach is not very common. IPA is normally used on smaller sample sizes and multiple schools are often reviewed through case studies or, if there is a large sample size, by a more quantitative approach. Depending on the focus of the study, other research designs could be considered. For example, it would be interesting to change the research site, by collecting data from other types of schools, schools with a specific demographic or age group. This would be interesting to compare and to explore if the change in context changes the outcomes on the interpretation of the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. The literature suggests that students' wellbeing in primary and secondary education needs a different approach (Lester & Cross, 2017).

A different approach to researching the concept of social-emotional wellbeing is using a different research design. This could be by using a case study approach, to come to a more comparable outcome or use IPA on a smaller scale, for example, by asking educational social workers to participate. These two approaches can influence different outcomes and add valuable information to this area of research (Roffey, 2010). Because of the complexity of defining social-emotional wellbeing and the different roles school professionals have, exploring this concept from a different perspective can support clarifying this concept in relation to the role of the school.

These several approaches, as well as many others, are not exhaustive. In conducting any of these studies, it would be helpful to start with collecting contextual information of the research site or sample. Whether this is to help the researchers understanding the interpretation of a phenomenon (IPA) or understanding and comparing different case studies (Waring & Wainwright, 2008; Shinebourne, 2011). Researching a social concept which lacks definition needs a whole-based approach where different contextual factors can support the understanding of the data.

Overall, I would like to make a case for studies who try and bridge the gap between qualitative and quantitative studies. In this case by using a rather large sample size, put in the extra time, to make sure IPA was used in the most qualitative and thoughtful way, yet still have a sample size large enough to create more impact. Quantitative studies are still the most used by policy makers on community or national level, but the usage of mostly quantitative approaches deprive complex concepts such as social-emotional wellbeing from being understood and clarified.

8.5.3 The impact of role confusion

This research reveals role clarity or the lack of clarity as a key factor in the conclusion. School professionals experience confusion in their role, and this has a direct effect on their levels of work pleasure, anxiety, and work-related stress. confusion makes it impossible to reflect and evaluate properly on the role of the school professional in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Although this study reveals the impact it has on school professionals and the risk this brings for students, it would be valuable to research the impact of role (un)clarity further. It would be interesting to know on what levels role clarity (and with that, working with clear guidelines) is necessary and on what level it has little effect. Lynn & Kalay (2015) researched the effect of role clarity on team performance and stated that vision clarity has a positive effect on the performance of the team. However, most studies about role clarity focus on economic organizations.

Exploring the impact of role confusion in social contexts can help review some of the policy documents connected to social-emotional wellbeing as well as defining when development of policies and guidelines is necessary and when time should be spent otherwise. Social organizations often focus on values, mission, and vision, stating the importance of supporting their students social-emotional wellbeing and describing their intention on how to take on this supportive role. However, descriptive documents leave room for interpretation and role confusion. The impact of this confusion, based on this thesis, should not be overlooked. Exploring the implications of role confusion might tell us more about the alignment of education and health care. If, hypothetically, taking on multiple roles is unwise, maybe the changing role of the school should be revisited.

8.6 Conclusion

The aim of this research was to explore and understand the role of the school in supporting social-emotional wellbeing. This research confirms there is a significant role for schools to support students' social-emotional wellbeing, yet it remains to be unclear what the description of that role is. This research revealed highly motivated and involved school professionals who are committed to provide extra support to their students and believe schools should take on a more societal role fitted to this generation. However, school professionals have trouble defining this role and feel pressured to take on social health care related roles they are not prepared for.

The role confusion school professionals experience is traced back to fast changing educational innovations, educational laws and unclear national reports, and descriptive policies, yet schools will be measured on how they understand and take on this supporting role for students. This confusion within the context of feeling pressured and responsible, brings multiple risks within the organization. Work pressure and role confusion are connected. Without clarity, school professionals might take on too many tasks or become avoidant. School professionals can be over solicited and feel discontent and eventually disconnected to their workplace. Role confusion results in school professionals feeling undervalued in their role as educational specialists and undervalues the role of other specialists supporting social-emotional wellbeing. Risking the de-professionalization of education.

Although these risks need to be recognized and addresses, this research also revealed the importance of working from the heart (using their personal narratives) instead of policy documents. These four schools score highly on inspection reports and student wellbeing, yet these school professionals are not able to define their role in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. Using their personal motivation and experience to connect with their students seems of great value in supporting their students social-emotional wellbeing.

Confusion on the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing can have major implications for their students. If school professionals understand their role differently, students will receive different types of support throughout their school years. This can create a disbalance, anxiety or even a deterioration of the students' social-emotional wellbeing. Confusion makes it impossible to reflect and evaluate properly. A possible solution for this would be to establish which measuring tools and indicators will be used within the context of the school and train school professionals accordingly. This will compensate the complexity of the concept of wellbeing and align the school professional's approach. Taking on a supportive role for students' social-emotional wellbeing is a vital part of guiding them through their young adult years and teaching them life skills. This role needs to be valued accordingly, investing in time and professionalization, making this an essential part of the schools' program.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Participants Information and Consent Sheets

Appendix B: Interview questionnaire

Appendix C: NVivo9 Node Categories and Definitions

Appendix D: Ethical Review and Approval

Appendix A: Participant Information and Consent Form

School director information and consent form

Dear school director,

Suzanne de Gier is currently carrying out a research project to research the role of the school in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in Dutch secondary education. The proposed study will use qualitative methods to discover the beliefs of teachers, counselors, and other school professionals regarding the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of Dutch secondary schools in a community in the Netherlands. I would like to use this letter to inform you about activities which will be taking place in connection with the proposed study.

What would this mean for my organization?

Participants who consent to be interviewed will be given the opportunity to view the basic interview schedule prior to the interview in order to have time to consider their responses, with the explanation that this schedule is a guide for the interview and questions may not necessarily be asked in that order. It is hoped that this will encourage more meaningful replies, which, in turn, will provide richer data. Spontaneous replies will be able to be included by asking clarifying questions. Thus, it will be possible to elicit both planned and unplanned responses that will again aid in gathering meaningful data.

It is intended that the interviews with members of staff take no longer than forty-five minutes and permission will be sought from each participant to use a tape-recorder to record the interview. It is anticipated that most interviews will take place at the participant's place of work and at a time that is most suitable for them.

The interview itself, although based around the guiding questions, will be conducted in a more conversational manner in order to place the participant at ease and to aid rapport.

No participant will be asked to judge school policy or the law in any way.
At the conclusion of the interviews at a school, each participant will each receive a written transcript of their interview and will be invited to make any changes they deem to be necessary.

The data collection will take part in calendar years 2019 and 2020.
The participants are selected to represent a larger group. Selecting a smaller group of participants, means less comparison, but more in-depth information. They provide the most valid or credible results because they reflect the characteristics of the population from which they are selected.

Participants profile

- Participants are over two years employed, so they can be expected to be familiar with school policies.
- Native language: Dutch
- The group of participants show the diversity of professionals in the school such as teacher, student administrator, mentor, department leader, concierge, etc.

Who:
- Managing director
- School (location) director
- Department leader
- Mentor
  The lowest level of education offers a minimum of four years in school. Interviewing mentors from each year (1-4) at each school will give a semi comparable sample. Another factor should be that each mentor has previous experience (a minimum of two years) as a mentor.
- Teacher
  Three teachers on each school. Teachers with the extra task of coaching new colleagues are preferred. Being a teacher and a coach suggests they can represent a larger group.
- OOP (staff in support of education; receptionist, concierge)
  Two interviews on each school. Both fulfilling other roles in the school. If school A samples a concierge and technical assistant, so should school B. Although qualitative research doesn't provide a clear comparison like quantitative research, similarities between the interviewees on ground of work-related factors is preferred.

Anonymity

The data that you and your colleagues and students provide (e.g. tape recordings of the interview, notes from observations, gathered policy documents) will be stored by code number. Any information that identifies people will be stored separately from the data. All data will be anonymous, and no one will be identifiable in any publications related to the research.

Storing and using your data

Data will be stored on a password protected computer. The data will be kept for 5 years (as are student files) after which time it will be destroyed. The data may be used for future analysis and shared for research or training purposes, but participants will not be identified individually. If you do not want your data to be included in any information shared as a result of this research, please do not sign this consent form.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time during data collection and up to 6 weeks after the data is collected.

You will be given the opportunity to comment on a written record of your interview.

Information about confidentiality

The collected data may be used in anonymous format in different ways. Please indicate on the consent form attached with a ☑ if you are happy for this anonymised data to be used in the ways listed.

Please note: If we gather information that raises concerns about your safety or the safety of others, or about other concerns as perceived by the researcher, the researcher may pass on this information to another person.

I hope that you will agree to take part. If you have any questions about the project that you would like to ask before giving consent or after the data collection, please feel free to contact Suzanne de Gier by email (sdg517@york.ac.uk) or by telephone on 0031(0)183 6586868 or the Chair of Ethics Committee via email education-research-administrator@york.ac.uk

Please keep this information sheet for your own records.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Yours sincerely

Suzanne de Gier

Consent Form

Please initial each box if you are happy to take part in this research.

I confirm that I have read and understood the information given to me about the above-named research project and I understand that this will involve the organization taking part as described above.

☐

I understand that the purpose of the research is to research the role of the school in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in Dutch secondary education. The proposed study will use qualitative methods to discover the beliefs of teachers, counsellors, and other school professionals regarding the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of Dutch secondary schools in a community in the Netherlands.

☐

I understand that data will be stored securely on a password protected computer and only Suzanne de Gier will have access to any identifiable data. I understand that all data will be anonymous, and no one will be identifiable in any publications related to the research.

☐

I understand this form is for informational use only. All interviewees will be asked for personal consent to take part in the proposed study.

☐

Staff member information and consent form

Dear teacher or member of the educational support staff,

Suzanne de Gier is currently carrying out a research project to research the role of the school in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in Dutch secondary education. The proposed study will use qualitative methods to discover the beliefs of teachers, counselors, and other school professionals regarding the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of Dutch secondary schools in a community in the Netherlands. I am writing to ask if you are able to take part in the study.

What would this mean for me?

Participants who consent to be interviewed will be given the opportunity to view the basic interview schedule prior to the interview in order to have time to consider their responses, with the explanation that this schedule is a guide for the interview and questions may not necessarily be asked in that order. It is hoped that this will encourage more meaningful replies, which, in turn, will provide richer data.

It is intended that the interviews take no longer than forty-five minutes and permission will be sought from each participant to use a tape-recorder to record the interview. It is anticipated that most interviews will take place at the participant's place of work and at a time that is most suitable for them. The interview itself, although based around the guiding questions, will be conducted in a more conversational manner.

No participant will be asked to judge school policy or the law in any way.
At the conclusion of the interviews at a school, each participant will each receive a written transcript of their interview and will be invited to make any changes they deem to be necessary.

The data collection will take part in calendar years 2019 and 2020.
The participants are selected to represent a larger group.

Anonymity

The data that you provide (e.g. tape recordings of the interview, notes from observations, gathered policy documents) will be stored by code number. Any information that identifies you will be stored separately from the data. Any information that identifies you will be stored separately from the data. Your data will be anonymous, and you will not be identifiable in any publications related to the research.

Storing and using your data

Data will be stored on a password protected computer. The data will be kept for 5 years (as are student files) after which time it will be destroyed. The data may be used for future analysis and shared for research or training purposes, but participants will not be identified individually.

If you do not want your data to be included in any information shared as a result of this research, please do not sign this consent form.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time during data collection and up to 6 weeks after the data is collected.

You will be given the opportunity to comment on a written record of your interview via email, within a month after the interview has taken place.

Information about confidentiality

The collected data may be used in anonymous format in different ways. Please indicate on the consent form attached with a ☑ if you are happy for this anonymised data to be used in the ways listed.

Please note: If we gather information that raises concerns about your safety or the safety of others, or about other concerns as perceived by the researcher, the researcher may pass on this information to another person.

I hope that you will agree to take part. If you have any questions about the project that you would like to ask before giving consent or after the data collection, please feel free to contact Suzanne de Gier by email (sdg517@york.ac.uk) or by telephone on 0031(0)183 6586868 or the Chair of Ethics Committee via email education-research-administrator@york.ac.uk

Please keep this information sheet for your own records.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Yours sincerely

Suzanne de Gier

Consent Form

Please initial each box if you are happy to take part in this research.

I confirm that I have read and understood the information given to me about the above named research project and I understand that this will involve me taking part as described above.

I understand that the purpose of the research is to research the role of the school in supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of students in Dutch secondary education. The proposed study will use qualitative methods to discover the beliefs of teachers, counsellors, and other school professionals regarding the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of Dutch secondary schools in a community in the Netherlands.

I understand that data will be stored securely on a password protected computer and only Suzanne de Gier will have access to any identifiable data. I understand that my identity will be protected by use of a code.

I understand that my data will not be identifiable, and the data may be used ….

in publications that are mainly read by university academics

in presentations that are mainly attended by university academics

in publications that are mainly read by the public

in presentations that are mainly attended by the public

freely available online

I understand that data will be kept for 5 years after which it will be destroyed.

I understand that data could be used for future analysis or other purposes ☐

I understand that I can withdraw my data at any point during data collection and up to 6 weeks after data is collected. ☐

I understand that I will be given the opportunity to comment on a written record of my responses ☐

Appendix B: Interview questionnaire

Guiding interview questions

- What is your role in the school?
- What is your role in relation to the students?
- Do you feel happy and fulfilled in your role in the school?
- What do like the most about your role in the school?
- How do you understand the concept of social-emotional wellbeing?
- Do you feel social-emotional wellbeing is an important concept in schools? Why or why not?
- What do you find particularly interesting about the concept of social-emotional wellbeing and the role of the school?
- What type of sources or methods do you use to support students social-emotional wellbeing?
- Do you think these sources and methods are helpful in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing?
- How does the concept of social-emotional wellbeing affect student-school professional relation?
- Do you think there is an interaction between social-emotional wellbeing and didactics?
- What types of methods does the school provide to help you in supporting social-emotional wellbeing among students?
- Is there a policy or general vision on supporting students social-emotional wellbeing that you know of?
- What types of challenges do you face or experience in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing?
- Do you feel supported and prepared for facing these challenges?
- Is there any occasion in particular that you remember that displays the role of the school in supporting social-emotional wellbeing? This can be a positive example or a memory that shows difficulties. Can you tell me about this occasion and why this is an occasion that grabbed your attention?
- What type of signals do you pick up when you raise concerns about a student's social-emotional wellbeing?
- How do you analyse signals about students' social-emotional wellbeing?
- What types of action follow after picking up these signals?
- Do you encounter any difficulties when analysing signals that raise concern?
- Do you have any ideas in how to improve the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing?
- What do you think the school needs? And what do you need?

Supportive interview questions

These were added as a result of the pilot study.

- Would you be able to explain some more?
- What was your experience like?
- Do you feel comfortable in providing an example with this, so I can understand better?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about this topic?
- How does this affect you as a school professional?
- And how do you try to address these challenges?
- Is there anything else you would like to comment about the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional wellbeing?

Appendix C: NVivo9 Node Categories and Definitions

Categories and Definitions

1. **Description of the Organisation:** Aims, objectives and mission of the organisation and its size, structure and funding sources, population, types of offered education.

    a. **Aims and Objectives:** Stated aims or mission of the organisation.

    b. **Population:** Description of the student, teaching, and educational support staff population. Inclusivity and exclusivity.

    c. **Organisation structure:** Structure, size, and financing of the organisation.

2. **Wellbeing and education:** Why supporting social-emotional wellbeing in education is important, how it is defined by the organisation; the methodologies and policies in the organisation.

    a. **The role of the school in supporting Social-emotional Wellbeing:** The role of the school in supporting social-emotional wellbeing. The understanding within the organisation of the relationship between the role of school professionals and students' wellbeing.

    c. **Definitions and Terminology:** How social-emotional wellbeing is defined and used by the organisation. Different definitions and are they connected to location and population.

    d. **Subjects Covered:** Statements topics, themes, and issues which are discussed in relation to the subject of supporting students social-emotional wellbeing.

    e. **Methodologies:** The methods used by the organisation, and comments about which tend to be prioritised.

    f. **Importance of supporting social-emotional wellbeing:** Views and statement about why it is important to support students social-emotional wellbeing in schools.

    g. **Room for improvement:** Ideas and suggestions in improving the role of the school in supporting students social-emotional-wellbeing

3. **Theoretical Framework and Epistemology:** Deeper analysis of social-emotional wellbeing from the perspective of the different theories and approaches.

    a. **Theoretical approach:** different approaches used to describe social-emotional wellbeing.

        a.1 **Similarities and differences:** the similarities and differences between the different theories on social-emotional wellbeing.

        a.2 **Interpretation and understanding of the concept**: The way social-emotional wellbeing is interpreted and the relation this has with a concept of truth and facts or personal understanding. Understanding the concept in its context.

    b. **Individual knowledge:** Personal knowledge about the concept and the way this is has a place in the organisation. How does the organisational knowledge and personal knowledge intertwine?

        b.1 **Questioning and Assumptions:** Evidence of participants questioning their own assumptions and the assumptions that may lie behind sources of information they access.
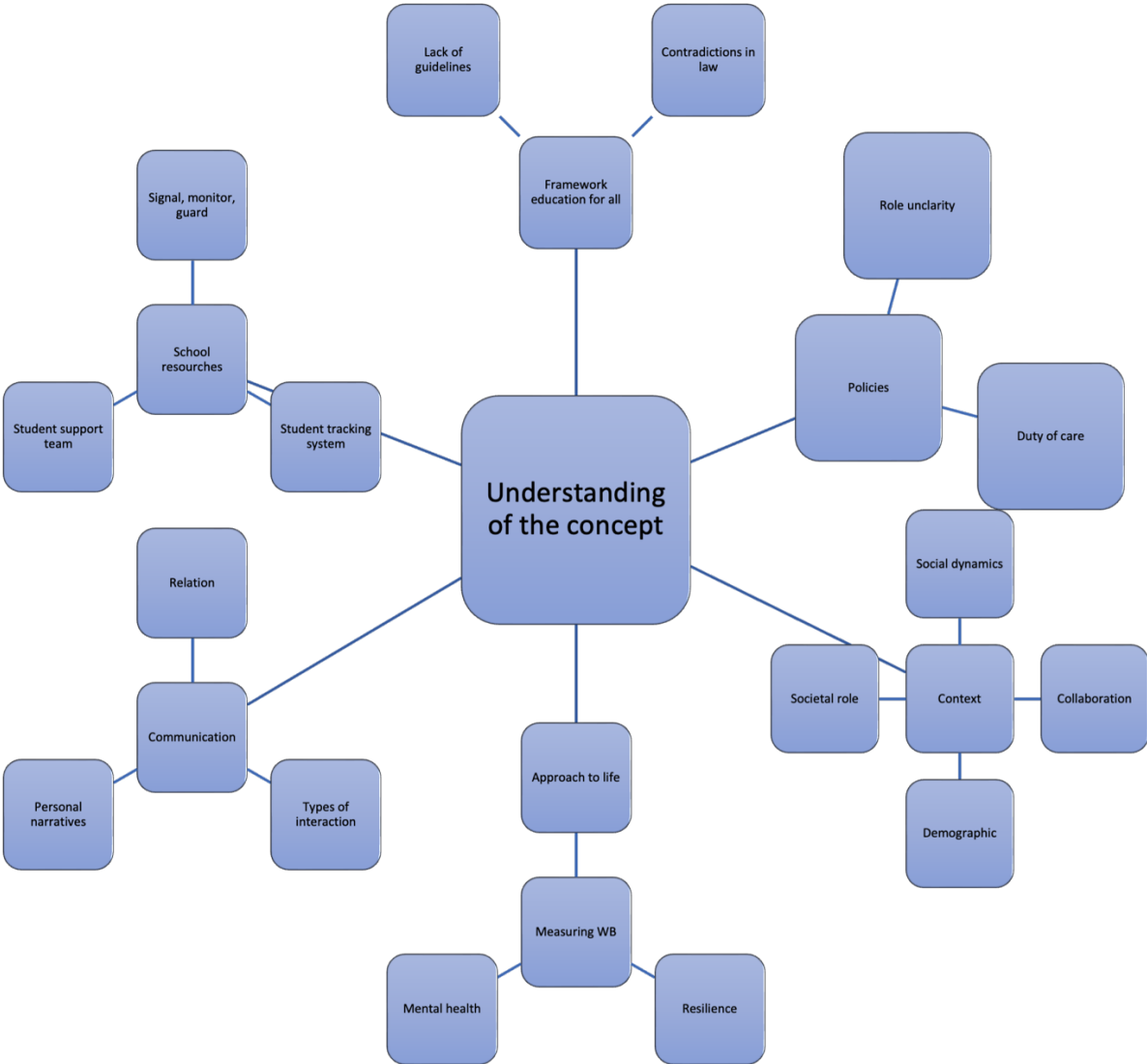
    c. **Role of the school:** Discussion of how schools can be of meaning in helping adolescents create happy and meaningful lives and find their place in society.

        c.1 **Analysing wellbeing and study results:** Analysis regarding the approach to education from the perspective of critical pedagogy, moral issues and (philosophical) contradictions.

Recurring themes connected to the research questions

How do school professionals understand their role in relation to social-emotional wellbeing?	What are school professional's doing to support students' social-emotional wellbeing and what challenges do they experience?	Do they have any recommendations or ideas for improving the role of the school in supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing?
Personal narratives	Providing safe environment	Smaller classes; more time for relation and signalling
Social context	Citizenship part of study program	Less healthcare tasks in the school
Relation - interaction	Teambuilding (training)	Happy with the collaboration between the schools' social workers and the teaching staff.
Resilience	Extra support (cognitive and social-emotional) - Tutoring - Counsellors - Social workers - Anti-bullying program - Anti- performance anxiety program	Aligning the task of social-emotional support with the task of good quality education within a timeframe of 40 weeks; pressure from inspection.
Providing safe environment	Blurry line between education and healthcare	Customization of the education program where possible.
Mental health	Large classes, little time for relation	Clarity → policy
Dare to be vulnerable	Classes based on level and age, not on personal similarities	Self-reflection: teaching the teacher and trying to teach students to be critical thinkers
Mentor/ adviser	Educational levels bring extra pressure among students to maintain level	Safe environment for school professionals and students; respect is key
Confidential counsellor	Verbal communication	Support each other: safe haven
Social skills	Parental involvement	
Approach to life	Increase of different tasks of the school	
Teacher in secondary education have a different student teacher relationship compared to primary education	Commitment to provide extra student social-emotional support and commitment to provide good quality education	
Citizenship: school reflects society	Interconnection personal life and work life.	
Wellbeing and life skills over grades	Student and teacher population: a lot of opinions and different backgrounds.	

Copy of the node mapping

Lack of guidelines

Contradictions in law

Signal, monitor, guard

Role unclarity

Framework education for all

School resources

Policies

Student support team

Student tracking system

Duty of care

Understanding of the concept

Relation

Social dynamics

Communication

Societal role

Context

Collaboration

Personal narratives

Types of interaction

Approach to life

Demographic

Measuring WB

Mental health

Resilience

Ethical audit form

UNIVERSITY *of York*

Education Ethics Committee
<u>Ethical Issues Audit Form</u>

This questionnaire should be completed for each research study that you carry out as part of your degree. Once completed, please email this form to your supervisor. You should then discuss the form fully with your supervisor, who should approve the completed form. **You must not collect your data until you have had this form approved by your supervisor (and possibly others - your supervisor will guide you).**

Surname / Family Name:	De Gier
First Name / Given Name:	Suzanne
Programme:	Centre for Research on Education and Social Justice (CRESJ)
Supervisor (of this research study):	Dr Eleanor Brown and Professor Ian Davies

Topic (or area) of the proposed research study:
Research Questions **Central** The central question that will be addressed by this study is as follows: "What is the role of the school in the social-emotional well-being of students in secondary education systems? A case study approach of public schools in one city in South NL.'' **Guiding** There are three additional subjects that will shape the study. These are: - Who is responsible for student well-being in the education system (top down) and how is this monitored? *(documentary analysis and interviews)*   - How do school professional's understand their role in relation to student well-being? *(documentary analysis and interviews)*   - What are school professional doing about children's well-being and how do they value educational psychology? *(interviews)*
Where the research will be conducted:
The Netherlands; South-Holland. All regular public schools for secondary education in one city.
Methods that will be used to collect data:

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Qualitative research using three stages and the IPA method:

The first stage will involve gathering data from the case schools regarding the school policies on student care, the socio-economic standing of the school's population, the ethnicity of the students.

The second stage will consist of interviewing the participants. The quantity data from the first stage will be of influence of the quality data and has to be regarded while interviewing. The type of interview technique that will be employed is that of the semi-structured or focused interview.

The third stage of data collection will occur once the initial data has been analysed and themes emerged. It is intended that a focus group interview will take place to confirm or refute these themes. The focus group consist students from the four different schools.

Analysis in IPA generates codes from the data, rather than using a pre-existing theory to identify codes that might be applied to the data.

Participants who consent to be interviewed will be given the opportunity to view the basic interview schedule prior to the interview in order to have time to consider their responses, with the explanation that this schedule is a guide for the interview and questions may not necessarily be asked in that order. It is hoped that this will encourage more meaningful replies, which, in turn, will provide richer data. Spontaneous replies will be able to be included by asking clarifying questions. Thus it will be possible to elicit both planned and unplanned responses that will again aid in gathering meaningful data.

It is intended that the interviews take no longer than forty-five minutes and permission will be sought from each participant to use a tape-recorder to record the interview. It is anticipated that most interviews will take place at the participant's place of work and at a time that is most suitable for them. The interview itself, although based around the guiding questions, will be conducted in a more conversational manner in order to place the participant at ease and to aid rapport.

The focus group interview will be carried out with a similar approach as the individual interviews. It is expected that the focus group will need longer, to give each group member the opportunity to respond to the different themes and respond to each other.
The timeframe will be a hour and a half for focus groups. With a flexible timespan of 30 minutes shorter or longer as needed. Participants will be notified prior as to how long the focus group is intended to last.

If you will be using human participants, how will you recruit them?
All participants will be personally recruited by me (in collaboration with the school director) and asked if they want to participate in this research. If so, they will be informed and asked to sign a consent form. Students who will be recruited must be old enough to choose for themselves (16+). Even so, in collaboration with department leaders, the students' parents will be informed. Students will be asked to sign a consent form and to let their caretakers sign as a confirmation of reading the information.

All supervisors, please read *Ethical Approval Procedures: Students*.

Taught programme supervisors. Note: If the study involves children, vulnerable participants, sensitive topics, or an intervention into normal educational practice, this form must <u>also</u> be approved by the programme leader (or Programme Director if the supervisor is also the Programme Leader)

Research student supervisors. The application is a joint one by the research student and supervisor(s). It should be submitted to the TAP member for initial approval and then to the Higher Degrees Administrator who will seek a second opinion from a designated member of Education Ethics Committee.

All students: forms may also require review by the full Ethics Committee (see below).

First approval: by the supervisor of the research study **(taught students);** or TAP member **(research students)** (after reviewing the form):

Please select one of the following options.

I believe that this study, as planned, meets normal ethical standards. I have checked that any informed consent form a) addresses the points as listed in this document, and b) uses appropriate language for the intended audience(s).	☐
I am unsure if this study, as planned, meets normal ethical standards	☐
I believe that this study, as planned, does not meet normal ethical standards and requires some modification	☐

Supervisor/TAP member's Name (please type):	
Date:	Click here to enter a date.

Taught student supervisors - If the study involves children, vulnerable participants, sensitive topics, or an intervention into normal educational practice (see *Ethical Approval Procedures: Students*), please email this form for second approval to the Programme Leader (or Programme Director if the supervisor is also the Programme Leader). For this second approval, other documents may need to be sent in the same email e.g. the proposal (or a summary of it) and any informed consent and participant information sheets. If the study has none of the above

characteristics, the supervisor should email this completed form to the Programme Administrator. This signals the end of the approval process and data collection can begin. The member of the EEC will notify the Programme Administrator only when the final outcome has been decided.

Second approval: by the Programme Leader; or Programme Director; or designated Ethics Committee member for research students:

Please select one of the following options:

I believe that this study, as planned, meets normal ethical standards. I have checked that any informed consent form a) addresses the points as listed in this document, and b) uses appropriate language for the intended audience(s).	☐
I am unsure if this study, as planned, meets normal ethical standards	☐
I believe that this study, as planned, does not meet normal ethical standards and requires some modification	☐

Name of Programme Leader; or Programme Director; or Ethics Committee member (please type):	
Date:	Click here to enter a date.

The supervisor should now <u>email</u> this completed form to the Programme Administrator, unless approval is required by the full Ethics Committee (see below).

Approval required by the full Education Ethics Committee

If the application requires review by the full Education Ethics Committee, please select one of the following options then forward the application to the Research Administrator (education-research-administrator@york.ac.uk).

The study involves deception	☐
The study involves an intervention and procedures could cause concerns	☐
The topic is sensitive or potentially distressing	☐
The study involves vulnerable subjects	☐
Other reason:	

Name of Programme Leader; or Programme Director; or TAP member (please type):	
Date:	Click here to enter a date.

FOR COMPLETION BY THE STUDENT

Data sources

1   If your research involves collecting secondary data only **go to SECTION 2**.

2   If your research involves collecting data from people (e.g. by observing, testing, or teaching them, or from interviews or questionnaires) **go to SECTION 1.**

SECTION 1: For studies involving people

3   Is the amount of time you are asking research participants to give reasonable?   **YES**

4   Is any disruption to their normal routines at an acceptable level?   **YES**

5   Are any of the questions to be asked, or areas to be probed, likely to cause anxiety or distress to research participants?   **NO**

6   Are all the data collection methods used necessary?   **YES**

7   Are the data collection methods appropriate to the context and participants?   **YES**

8   Will the research involve deception?   **NO**

9   Will the research involve sensitive or potentially distressing topics? (The latter might include abuse, bereavement, bullying, drugs, ethnicity, gender, personal relationships, political views, religion, sex, violence. If there is lack of certainty about whether a topic is sensitive, advice should be sought from the Ethics Committee.)   **YES**

If YES, what steps will you take to ensure that the methods and procedures are appropriate, not burdensome, and are sensitive to ethical considerations?

> The research zooms in on students well-being, educational policy and child rights. Students who participate, will only participate in a group. Which means there will be data based on group information, not on a personal level. It provides a safer environment for students to speak freely. School professionals will be asked about their visions, experiences, etc.
> No participant will be asked to judge school policy or the law in any way. All participants will be anonymous when the data is been transcribed.

10   Does your research involve collecting data from vulnerable or high risk groups?   (The latter might include participants who are asylum seekers, unemployed, homeless, looked after children, victims or perpetrators of abuse, or those who have special educational needs. If there is a lack of certainty about whether participants are vulnerable or high risk, advice should be sought from the Ethics Committee. Please note, children with none of the above characteristics are not necessarily vulnerable, though approval for your project must be given by at least two members of staff; see above).   **NO**

If YES, what steps will you take to ensure that the methods and procedures are appropriate, not burdensome, and are sensitive to ethical considerations?

11   Are the research participants under 16 years of age?   **NO**

If NO, go to question 12.

If YES, and you intend to interact with the children, do you intend to ensure that another adult is present during all such interactions?   Choose an item.

If NO, please explain, for example:

i) This would seriously compromise the validity of the research because [*provide reason*]

> Dutch students who are 16, are free to choose in participating in research (or guidance) without their parents' consent. Also, students who are 16 or 17 can be expected to be familiar with student policies. The students also are familiar with interview or debate techniques during classes and for that can be expected to find it less difficult to participate.

ii) I have/will have a full Disclosure and Barring Service check (formerly Criminal Records Bureau check).   **YES**

iii) Other reasons:

> The Barring Service Check is also mandatory when working in Dutch education or care organisations.

Payment to participants

12   *If research participants are to receive reimbursement of expenses or any other incentives, including financial, before or after the study, please give details. You should indicate what they will receive and, briefly, the basis on which this was decided.*

>

It is often considered good practice to consider what the researcher might offer the participants, in the spirit of reciprocity. Some ideas of what this might be include: materials at the end of the study, a workshop summarising the results of the study, a delayed treatment/intervention at the end of the study, an indication about where the findings might be accessed at a later date, a letter or token of thanks. Please ensure that you have considered the potential for reciprocity in your research.

If your study involves an INTERVENTION i.e. a change to normal practice made for the purposes of the research, go to question 13 (this does not include 'laboratory style' studies i.e. where ALL participation is voluntary):

If your study does not involve an intervention, go to question 20.

13   Is the extent of the change within the range of changes that teachers (or equivalent) would normally be able to make within their own discretion?   Choose an item.

14   Will the change be fully discussed with those directly involved (teachers, senior school managers, pupils, parents – as appropriate)?   Choose an item.

15   Are you confident that *all* treatments (including comparison groups in multiple intervention studies) will potentially provide some educational benefit that is compatible with current educational aims in that particular context? (Note: This is *not* asking you to justify a non-active control i.e. continued normal practice)   Choose an item.

Please **briefly** describe this / these benefit(s):

| |
| |

16   If you intend to have two or more groups, are you offering the control / comparison group an opportunity to have the experimental / innovative treatment at some later point (this can include making the materials available to the school or learners)?   Choose an item.

If NO, please explain:

| |
| |

17   If you intend to have two or more groups of participants receiving different treatment, do the informed consent forms give this information?   Choose an item.

18   If you are randomly assigning participants to different treatments, have you considered the ethical implications of this?   Choose an item.

19   If you are randomly assigning participants to different treatments (including non-active controls), will the institution and participants (or parents where participants are under 16) be informed of this in advance of agreeing to participate?   Choose an item.

      If NO, please explain:

General protocol for working in institutions

20   Do you intend to conduct yourself, and advise your team to conduct themselves, in a professional manner as a representative of the University of York, respectful of the rules, demands and systems within the institution you are visiting?   **YES**

21   If you intend to carry out research with children under 16, have you read and understood the Education Ethics Committee's *Guidance for Ethical Approval for Research in Schools*?   **YES**

Informed consent

22   Have you prepared Informed Consent Form(s) which participants in the study will be asked to sign, and which are appropriate for different kinds of participants?   **YES**

      If YES, **please attach the informed consent form(s).**

      If NO, please explain:

23   Please check the details on the informed consent form(s) match each one of your answers below. Does this informed consent form:

a) inform participants in advance about what their involvement in the research study will entail?

YES

b) if there is a risk that participants may disclose information to you which you may feel morally or legally bound to pass on to relevant external bodies, have you included this within a confidentiality clause in your informed consent form? **YES**

c) inform participants of the purpose of the research? **YES**

d) inform participants of what will happen to the data they provide (how this will be stored, who will have access to it, whether and how individuals' identities will be protected during this process)? **YES**

e) if there is a possibility that you may use some of the data publicly (e.g. in presentations or online), inform the participants how identifiable such data will be **and** give them the opportunity to decline such use of data? **YES**

f) give the names and contact details (e.g. email) of at least two people to whom queries, concerns or complaints should be directed? One of these people should be on the Education Ethics Committee (please use education-research-administrator@york.ac.uk) and not involved with the research. **YES**

g) in studies involving interviews or focus groups, inform participants that they will be given an opportunity to comment on your *written record* of the event? **YES**

If NO, have you made this clear this on your consent form? Choose an item.

If NO, please explain why not:

h)   inform participants how long the data is likely to be kept for?   **YES**

i)   inform participants if the data could be used for future analysis and/or other purposes?

YES

j)   inform participants they may withdraw from ACTUAL the study during data collection?   **YES**

k)   provide a date/timescale by which participants will be able to withdraw their data and tell the participants how to do this? (NB. If your data is going to be completely anonymised, any withdrawal of data needs to happen before this.)   YES

NA if your data will be anonymous at point of collection

If your answer was NO to any of the above, please explain here, indicating which item(s) you are referring to (a-j):

24   Who will be asked to sign an Informed Consent Form? Please <u>select all</u> that apply:

CATEGORY	
Adult research participants	☒
Research participants under 16	☐
Teachers	☒
Parents	☐
Head/Senior leadership team member	☒
Other (please explain)	☒

Teachers and educational support members (like concierge or receptionist).

25   In studies involving an **intervention** with under 16s, will you seek informed consent from
      parents?

      If NO, please explain:

      ┌───┐
      │   │
      │   │
      └───┘

      If YES, please delete to indicate whether this is 'opt-in' or 'opt-out'

      If 'opt-out', please explain why 'opt-in' is not being offered:

      ┌───┐
      │   │
      │   │
      └───┘

SECTION 2

Data Storage, Analysis, Management and Protection

26   I am accessing data from a non-publicly available source (regardless of whether the data
      is identifiable) e.g. pupil data held by a school or local authority, learners' work.   NO

      If YES, I have obtained written permission, via an informed consent document, from a
      figure of authority who is responsible for holding the data. This informed consent a)
      acknowledges

      responsibility for releasing the data and b) confirms that releasing the data does not
      violate any informed consents or implicit agreements at the point the data was initially
      gathered.

27   I have read and understood the Education Ethics Committee's *Guidance on Data Storage
      and Protection*   YES

28 I will keep any data appropriately secure (e.g. in a password protected file/ locked cabinet – delete as appropriate), maintaining confidentiality and anonymity (e.g. identifiers will be encoded and the code available to as few people as possible) where possible.   YES

29 If your data can be traced to identifiable participants:

a) who will be able to access your data?

No one, besides myself, is able to identify participants or have access to the data. The data isn't stored in identifiable format.

b) approximately how long will you need to keep it in this identifiable format?

Two years minimum(during my PHD finalizing), after five years it needs to be destroyed.

30 If working in collaboration with other colleagues, students, or if under someone's supervision,   please discuss and complete the following:

We have agreed:

a) Suzanne de Gier will be responsible for keeping and storing the data

b) Suzanne de Gier will have access to the data

c) Suzanne de Gier will have the rights to publish using the data

Reporting your research

31 In any reports that you write about your research, will you do everything possible to ensure that the identity of any individual research participant, or the institution which they attend or work for, cannot be deduced by a reader?   YES

If NO please explain:

Conflict of interests

32   If the Principal Investigator or any other key investigators or collaborators have any direct personal involvement in the organisation sponsoring or funding the research that may give rise to a possible conflict of interest, please give details:

> Dutch secondary education foundation (Stichting OVO) is funding my PhD research, but has no particular input in the subject and has no beneficial interest in the outcome of the research. They provide a possibility for me to grow and educate myself, as is obligated by the collective labour agreement.
>
> During my previous project I collaborated with Unicef. They still have a particular interest in this research and gave feedback on the research proposal. Dominic Richardson, senior education specialist at Unicef Innocenti is contact person. This research will give data about a small community setting, if interesting they will consider researching this subject on a larger scale.

Potential ethical problems as your research progresses

33   If you see any potential problems arising during the course of the research, please give details here and describe how you plan to deal with them:

> Ethical dilemmas will be dealt with following a few steps from the handbook I use as a coordinator.
>
> 1. Identify the ethical issues.
> 2. Identify alternative courses of action.
> 3. Using ethical reasoning to decide on a course of action.
>
> The decision-maker evaluates harms and benefits of alternative decisions using a calculus approach.
>
> The rights theory follows and in that approach I would ask, before deciding, whether I would want others in my position to make the same decision for the same reason if they were faced with a similar dilemma. If so, my action has universal appeal and could be taken.
>
> Decision makers should act values-based and in accordance with certain morals of behavior, or character traits (such as truthfulness, respect, fairness, responsibility, objectivity, and integrity).

My actions should reflect these morals and those who my decisions effect, expect to be treated in accordance with these ethical values.

Ethical decision-making can be difficult when stakeholders of an organization may have competing demands. It is important to keep in mind that unethical decisions can lead to cover-up and more unethical decisions long-term. If I find it difficult to make a decision on my own based on the previous steps, I will contact my supervisors. They have no particular interest in the school community or Unicef and will ensure that the dilemmas are evaluated appropriately and fairly.

Student's Name (please type):	Suzanne de Gier
Date:	10 June 2018

Please <u>email</u> this form to your supervisor. They must approve it, and send it to the Programme Administrator by email.

NOTE ON IMPLEMENTING THE PROCEDURES APPROVED HERE:

If your plans change as you carry out the research study, you should discuss any changes you make with your supervisor. If the changes are significant, your supervisor may advise you to complete a new 'Ethical issues audit' form.

For Taught Masters students, on submitting your MA dissertation to the programme administrator, you will be asked to sign to indicate that your research did not deviate significantly from the procedures you have outlined above.

For Research Students (MA by Research, MPhil, PhD), once your data collection is over, you must write an email to your supervisor to confirm that your research did not deviate significantly from the procedures you have outlined above.

Confirmation of ethical approval

Approval via email by supervisor Professor Ian Davies.

This was common procedure in 2018.