

**Educational Psychologists' participation in
online social networking websites: A mixed-
methods study exploring use and perspectives.**

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Abstract

Social networking websites (SNWs) provide Educational Psychologists (EPs) with an opportunity to collaborate, reflect, and share knowledge. Examples of SNWs in use by (EPs) include Twitter and Facebook. SNWs provide EPs with opportunities for ongoing dialogue with colleagues outside their service who have different specialisms and approaches to practice. While there appears to be a growing number of EPs using accounts professionally, there is currently no research documenting what this use is and how it may impact EP's professional practice.

This research has two aims. Firstly, to document how EPs are using SNWs professionally, and secondly, to explore EP's perspectives around EPs' use of SNWs. This was explored using a mixed-method study with two phases. 112 participants completed an online questionnaire, and 7 of these participants continued to a second semi-structured interview phase. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Descriptive statistics were used to quantify the types and frequency of SNW use. The findings of this analysis included that the most regular use of SNWs was to read other EP's posts and find out about new ways of working. Reflexive thematic analysis was also used to support a description and understanding of EP SNW use.

Reflexive Thematic analysis was used to gather a picture of EP's meaning-making and perspective of using SNWs professionally. The 7 main implications of the study were identified and discussed, such as the importance of EPs, employers and professional bodies having a shared understanding of what constitutes safe and ethical SNW use. This study's strengths and weaknesses are presented, together with future directions for research.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Overview

Social networking websites (SNWs) allow billions of individuals worldwide to collaborate, reflect, create and share wisdom and knowledge (Cheung et al., 2011). Examples of SNWs in use include Twitter and Facebook (Gentina et al., 2021). SNWs provide an informal learning environment that is continuously accessible (McPherson et al., 2015).

Online social networking websites and platforms are not only used to socialise, as the name implies. Increasingly, SNWs are used to enable networking in the workplace. Some companies are adapting SNWs to become a business tool, offering opportunities for problem-solving and improving communication transparency (Burrus, 2010). Due to the digital trace, users can revisit and build on data posted online. This trace enables professionals to interact with, and develop, an online knowledge base (Irum & Pandey, 2019). Also, SNWs provide opportunities for ongoing dialogue with colleagues outside their service who have different specialisms and approaches to practice. In current literature, it is unknown how Educational Psychologists (EPs) are using SNWs. This phenomenon of professional SNW use may be expanding EPs' professional knowledge and potentially altering EPs' roles and practice.

This chapter will define social networking websites and then explore SNW use within global, national, and local contexts. The context exploration will first explore SNWs generally but then focus specifically on professional and workplace use. While the chapter explores these aspects, it also demonstrates how there is currently little research attention paid to EPs' use of SNWs, despite being a potentially influential

force on the profession's practice. Throughout this introductory chapter, a rationale for researching this topic area is also given.

1.2 Terminology

The key focus of this research is social networking websites (SNWs). In academic literature, social networking websites are also known as social networking sites (Techopedia.com, 2022). An early definition of SNWs is described by Boyd & Ellison (2007) as “1) websites where individuals construct public or semi-public profiles within a bounded system. 2) where users articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and 3) users view and traverse their connections and those made by others in the system”. However, since 2007 other SNWs have been created, and their meanings have evolved; for example, they do not always involve having a 'profile'. A broader definition that is more appropriate for contemporary SNW use is: "a website designed to help people communicate and share information, photographs etc., with a group" (Cambridge Business English Dictionary, 2022). Another definition explains that SNWs are different from email or instant messaging as they are a collective and systemic form of internet correspondence (Myers et al., 2012). Thus, the definition of SNW use is broader than socialising alone. SNWs are being used to share information and correspondence in many ways.

Knowing how social networking websites are often used is a helpful way to understand them further. A range of studies have tried to identify social networking use. One study found that SNW use includes friendship, communication and information (Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2010). Another study documented use as self-status seeking, socialising, entertainment and information (Park et al., 2009).

Communication and socialising are included in both definitions above; however, it is essential to note that SNWs provide a different form of communication to other mediums such as email, telephone, and face-to-face interaction. One key aspect is that other people can read and access any discussion or exchange. Social networking can occur on public or semi-public profiles (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). Users of social networks can choose to comment to join in interaction, post public comments and messages, post or send photos and videos, or share content posted by others (Pham, 2014). SNWs also include ways of giving instant feedback with "like" features (Dhir et al., 2019). Users can also engage in private chats such as instant messaging with a specific individual. As there is often an audience present for the communication on SNWs, there can be a sense that those participating must "present" themselves (Ellison et al., 2007).

This study uses the specific term 'social networking websites' instead of using a related term 'social media'. Because social networking websites are a type of social media. Social media has a broader definition that includes a range of new media such as newsgroups and massively multiplayer online games (Oxford Reference.com, 2022). The terms social media and social networking sites/websites are sometimes used interchangeably in academic literature.

With these definitions and uses in mind, this research views the following as examples of SNWs: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Reddit, TikTok, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, and Email forums such as EPNET. EPs may use all these websites and platforms, but currently, no academic literature or research exists which quantifies this use.

1.3 Global context: SNW use around the world

Social networking websites have been in use since the 1990s, and early examples include Six Degrees and MoveOn (Edosomwan et al., 2011). In the early 2000s, broadband connections became available to the public, increasing internet use (Warf, 2020). Furthermore, internet users became interested in participating and communicating online by uploading, creating and sharing content (Dewing, 2010). New SNWs emerged and developed. SNW use continued to grow in popularity. Facebook opened in 2004, and by October 2014, the SNW Facebook had 1 billion worldwide users (Wall Street Journal, 2014). This growth has continued exponentially over the last several years. In Q2 2021, there were 4.55 billion active social media users, 57.6% of the earth's population (Datareportal.com, 2021). Globally, Facebook continues to be the most used social network website, with 2,895 million Facebook users in October 2021(Datareportal.com, 2021).

Furthermore, people spend a large part of their time online using social networks. Global online consumers spent an average of 2 hours 26 minutes a day on social media, out of 6 hours 54 minutes spent daily on the internet (GWI.com, 2022). This data illustrates how social networks have become a significant part of daily life for billions of people. With this much time and importance to these networks, they will likely continue developing and evolving. Currently, quarter 2 of 2020 boasts the highest figures on record for global social media use. This record came as consumers were forced into widespread lockdowns due to the SARS-COV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic (GWI.com 2022). Research into online interactions during the pandemic has shown that SNWs reduce social isolation (Rodrigues et al., 2022). It is unclear currently whether the extremely high importance of online relationships and social networking will remain following a move into a post-pandemic world. However, even if

EPs are not using SNWs directly, their work is likely impacted by others around them using SNWs more. The families, school staff and professionals they work with, are likely to be using or be affected by others using SNWs.

While social networking websites appear to have many positive impacts, such as the ability to combat loneliness, other research is contesting whether SNWs can lead to social displacement; a phenomenon where engagement in these new technologies and forms of communication replaces in-person communication (Hall, 2020, p. 202; Hall et al., 2019). The full range of impacts of humanity's use of SNWs is still being assessed. Some examples of recent research into SNWs' effect on individuals include the following; both positive and negative impacts on individuals' psychological self-esteem (Marengo et al., 2021), individuals having lower subjective well-being scores (Masur, 2021; Wirtz et al., 2021) and individuals becoming addicted to SNWs (Cheng et al., 2021). As well as addiction, high SNW use can lead to structural changes in functional brain connectivity, especially in areas skilled in selective attention (Hu et al., 2021), which negatively impacts executive function skills and the ability to be productive (Ma et al., 2022). If EPs use SNWs frequently, they could be aware of some of these impacts on their lives and work.

SNWs not only impact on an individual level. They also appear to be affecting how society functions. Research suggests that SNWs may be altering how people interact with information and how they acquire and disseminate knowledge (Khan et al., 2021). SNWs have become a place to share political information and influence opinion (Brändle et al., 2022; Kubin & von Sikorski, 2021). Also the content shared on SNWs is often polarised or can even contain misinformation, where information is deliberately intended to deceive (Baumann et al., 2020). Cinelli et al. (2021) highlighted that information online can often become subject to an "echo chamber" effect. This occurs

as SNW users often create connections with like-minded others, and consequently, there can be a limit to exposure to diverse perspectives. The echo chamber effect leads to people assuming that they have the correct information or only relevant information. They have not been challenged with any information that disconfirms their beliefs. Whether SNWs' impacts EPs' relationship with the profession's information and knowledge base is unknown.

Similarly, the OECD (2019) suggests SNWs may limit users' experiences of different viewpoints. This restriction is due to algorithms tailoring content. Consequently, EPs might be interacting with an online discourse that privileges specific theories of practice.

1.4 Global context: SNWs use by professionals globally.

Research demonstrates that different professions worldwide are using SNWs to support their work. SNWs are being used to support social relationships with other professionals. Gandy-Guedes et al. (2016) found that closed Facebook groups provided an informal social space for US social workers (SWs). Ballantyne et al. (2017) also found SWs used an online Facebook, whose creators defined the closed group as a "safe space" for discussing issues relevant to practice. Twist & Hertlein (2015) found that family therapists also used SNWs to develop networking relationships. This study found that greater self-disclosure occurred when people developed relationships online than in person. This research suggests that online SNWs allowed for intimacy, and the development of relationships occurred more quickly. Thus, the SNWs may also alter how EP colleagues socialise, interact, and form relationships.

SNWs are also being used to communicate between different professions. Gilbert (2016) explored how a range of healthcare professionals came together to chat under

the same Twitter hashtag. #hcsmtca (Health Care Social Media Canada). Interviews found that those participating felt they were learning from other health care professionals, accessing novel information, and sharing expertise. These were all influential motivators for participating in this interaction.

Furthermore, Wright et al. (2020) also found that healthcare professionals on Twitter outreach to non-professionals. This study involved nurses using Twitter to draw attention to a clinical issue with global relevance. The nurses discussed antibiotic resistance using a specific hashtag for 24 hours. The posts from this hashtag reached 10 million accounts globally, including non-professionals. The authors concluded that the nurses effectively used Twitter to harness attention and focus on their posted content.

Such changes highlight how SNWs may significantly impact professional practice by supporting social interactions and providing professionals with knowledge and learning opportunities. They also offer spaces to outreach to others.

Over the last decade, internet use has generally increased in the U.K.. In 2011 45% of adults used SNWs; this increased to 66% in 2017 (Office for National Statistics, 2017). In a more recent survey, this number rose again to 68% in 2019 and 70% in 2020 (Office for National Statistics, 2020). Therefore, as there is a general movement for increased SNWs use, there will likely also be an increase in Educational Psychologists' use of SNWs.

1.5 Local context: SNW use by the Psychological Profession Globally.

There is a range of non-empirical research and opinion articles which explore how Psychologists globally are using SNWs. These papers provide information that may also give some insight into how EPs could be using SNWs. Two examples include

marketing their services to gain referrals and engaging in public consultation and outreach (Kolmes, 2012).

Several papers explore how SNWs can alter Psychologist's relationships with service users. SNWs have offered opportunities for Psychologists to develop new forms of potential therapeutic or extra therapeutic interactions and provide remote health services (Kolmes, 2012). Delivery of online services remotely is known as Telehealth or Telepsychology (APA.org, 2013; Kaslow et al., 2011). Examples include a new, more informal way to build relationships or track and provide support to interventions. Kolmes (2012) explained how some Psychologists have begun to use apps with a social networking element, such as 'Fitbit' or 'PTSD Coach'. Fitbit is an app that measures activity, exercise, and health-related outcomes and allows for social interaction. This example in the article demonstrates how Psychologists can use SNWs or social networking Apps to collect data and communicate remotely with clients; supporting activity, in this case, could relate to behavioural activation aspects of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Thus, SNWs provide a way for psychologists to communicate with clients between in-person sessions and can aid the implementation of therapy or intervention.

Another way psychologists' relationships with service users can be altered is by service users obtaining information about psychologists online. Or if a psychologist posts information to an SNW group that a service user also belongs to and can acquire information about that psychologist's personal life or read their opinions on sensitive issues and be offended (Chamberlin, 2007). Behnke (2007), an American Psychological Association Ethics Director, wrote his reflections on how before 2000, it was typical for intern psychologists (US trainees) to have discussions in graduate schools about the relationship between the public and private, the personal and

professional lives, and how these can intersect. When he was writing in 2007, Behnke was surprised by how many intern psychologists posted information online. The manner of personal information shared was a part of the social fabric of their lives. Behnke (2007) was concerned about the ethical impact that information shared by psychologists could have on relationships and outcomes for service users.

The reverse can also be true. Kaslow et al. (2011) presented case examples that explore issues of SNW use, such as how relationships with service users can be altered when psychologists use SNWs to find information on clients. This specific example arose as the psychologist felt like they were gaps in a service user's history. This psychologist then discovered that his client had been convicted of a range of crimes, consequently significantly altering the therapeutic relationship.

There is only limited information on Psychologists' use of SNWs globally, but a crucial recurrent focus of these articles is the ethical issues that arise from such use. A moral and ethical issue of client relationships, privacy, and boundary violations are discussed in a range of non-empirical papers (Bressler et al., 2021; Kaslow et al., 2011; Lannin & Scott, 2013; Wester et al., 2013). British EPs have a range of ethical guidelines to uphold, discussed later in this introduction. However, without research, it is unclear whether British EPs have had similar ethical issues arising from their use of SNWs.

1.6 Local context: SNW use by Educational Psychologists in the U.K..

There is evidence of several EPs who appear to be using SNWs to inform their practice and professional development. Data accessed from a Twitter analysis website (Trackmyhashtag, 2020) shows that several prominent practising U.K. EPs have a following of more than 3,000 users. "Tweets" from these EPs can be delivered to the newsfeeds of 26.59k users. Further data from this website showed that within 42 hours

(From 5pm on December 1 to 11 am on December 3, 2020), 100 tweets with the hashtag '#TwitterEPs' were sent. Hashtags are used by SNWs to define content for a specific theme. Other hashtags that U.K. EPs are using to share information include '#dayinthelifeofanEP', '#educationalpsychologist', and '#educationalpsychology'. On Facebook, EPs have created closed groups to discuss specific topics. Examples include a Dynamic Assessment group. There is currently no literature base that explores the specific content of the posts or how these spaces are being used.

EPs' use of the internet is not a new phenomenon; Cameron (2006) mentioned using the email forum 'EPNET' in a discussion paper exploring the EP profession's distinctive contribution. EPNET is a popular mailing list for EPs and other educational professionals, and around 2,800 people are subscribed to the service. Cameron (2006) used examples of debates on EPNET to support the illustration of the EP profession having an identity crisis. In Cameron (2006), EPs were using EPNET to debate a definition of an educational psychologist's 'core' or 'basic' work. Using this online platform to debate, the EPs ultimately produced a one-sentence description of EP work. Finally, this paper suggests that EPs use SNWs to discuss and collaborate.

A small-scale research project confirmed that EPs are using EPNET for collaboration: A non-peer-reviewed exploration of EPNET was conducted and published via the blog website edpsy.org.U.K. (Langford, 2020). This research looked at the users of EPNET and their reasons for use. 314 people responded to the questionnaire. The findings of this study were that 60% were EPs or assistant EPs, 20% were Trainee EPs (TEPs), and 10% were Senior and Principal EPs. Other users were 5% of other psychologists, 4% school workers, e.g., SENDCOs, and 1% of participants were retired EPs. The study found that the main reasons for participating in EPNET were watching discussion (93.3%), resource gathering (73.2%), and gathering information/advice

(66.9%). Only 28.7% said that had actively participated in discussions online. It is unclear whether EPs may be using other social networking websites similarly to EPNET, and using them as a resource to refer to, or observe, rather than a place for active participation.

Langford (2020) also conducted a thematic analysis of EPNET using the same group of participants. These participants were only asked to comment on EPNET. Langford (2020) found both positive and negative themes. The three positive themes were 'valuable', 'knowledge' and 'community', suggesting that EPs value EPNET and use it for a professional knowledge base and feel socially part of the profession, making professional connections and relationships. The opposing themes included 'intimidating', 'unprofessional', and 'poor interface'. These negative themes suggest that online networks like EPNET cannot always feel like a safe space and may include inappropriate behaviours or interactions. The 'unprofessional' finding from Langford (2020) suggests that British EPs may have some ethical concerns around boundaries, like those raised by the research above into other psychologists around the world. This blog was the only research found on how EPs use SNWs professionally. Furthermore, no specific literature explored whether, or how, EPs feel SNWs are altering their practice.

1.7 Local context: Current policy and guidelines around U.K. EPs' use of SNWs.

The global research into psychologist's use of SNWs mentioned above suggests that some psychologists are using SNW in a potentially unethical way. In the U.K., there is a range of ethical policies and guidelines. These documents have been created by organisations at the national and local levels to ensure EP's use of SNWs is appropriate and safe. The British Psychology Society (BPS) created a document

containing supplementary ethical guidance on psychologists' social media use (British Psychological Society, 2012b). All British psychologists must adhere to the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (British Psychological Society, 2018). This supplementary guidance provides information on how the ethical code can be applied and transferred to a social networking context. Psychologists are provided with practical advice for using websites and platforms responsibly. This BPS guidance included protecting personal privacy, declining client friend requests, and keeping personal and professional lives separate. The guidelines also suggest that psychologists report misconduct on such social networking sites to relevant parties like the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the BPS themselves. The BPS also has published further guidance, specifically for qualified clinical psychologists (British Psychological Society, 2012a). This guidance includes detailing appropriate ways of interacting with service users and transmitting information to service users via social media and SNWs. While this is not for Educational Psychologists, it could be extended to them as the content is still applicable where the EP and Clinical Psychologist roles overlap. The HCPC is another professional body with its own set of published guidelines regarding the use of social media (Health & Care Professions Council, 2017). British Educational Psychologists registered with the HCPC also adhere to this policy. Advice includes asking professionals to avoid posting both offensive material or information that could identify a service user.

Many EPs work for services within local authorities. Most London boroughs and county councils have social media policies that all employees must adhere to. Often when EPs are inducted into their service, they will be asked to read and sign to acknowledge their understanding of such documents. New employees agree to comply with such policies. Many of these policies are kept on private intranets, but some are available

online. For example, the Gloucestershire County Council's social media policy includes employees not making online posts that support unlawful acts (Gloucestershire County Council, 2019). This policy also explains that employees should not post false or misleading statements or politically or commercially sensitive information. They also suggest that employees should be aware of intellectual property laws when sharing material. Salford City Council asks employees to add a personal disclaimer to their social network profiles. Such as: "These views are my own". To ensure that any opinion pieces they share are understood to be personal and not reflect on the council (Salford City Council, 2013). Wirral council spends a significant section of the policy reminding their employees about protecting themselves on social networks. The guidance recommends that employees assume that anything posted on social media, even when privacy settings have been used, is publicly available material (Wirral council, n.d.). All policies mentioned here explain that breaking such guidelines can lead to disciplinary action or dismissal. It is unclear how this would impact trainee EPs who are not employed by the council but still work as officers. Some universities where TEPs are trained also have policies relating to online behaviour. Behaviours such as harassment or discrimination online are disciplinary offences (The University of Manchester, n.d.).

Despite there being clear guidance from a range of sources, without research, it is unclear whether U.K. EPs using SNW are aware of policies and whether their use is appropriate, safe, and ethical. As online trends on SNWs evolve and develop rapidly, ethical committees that attempt to stay up-to-date and regularly review guidance, may still miss some critical developments in EP use. The HCPC recognise that their guidance document "cannot deal with every issue that might come up". It is currently unclear whether EPs consider ethical guidelines and policies when making decisions

regarding their own SNW use. It is unclear whether these policies impact their decisions to be active and post online.

The HCPC guidance also offers some information regarding social media (Health & Care Professions Council, 2017). These benefits include giving professionals the ability to develop and share their skills and knowledge, helping the public understand what they do, networking nationally and internationally, and raising their professional profile.

1.8 Personal background to the research interest

This study has arisen from personal interest. As someone whose trainee Educational Psychology journey was suddenly made virtual by a global pandemic, this research concept came from having to depend solely on online communication for training, development and learning. This shift to a hyper-digitalised lifestyle was a challenging experience that took time for this researcher to adapt to. At first, I found lectures and placements feeling distant and unreal, similar to a first-generation scenario computer game! I used this time to reflect on my own and my peers' adaptation to this new way of working. Part of this was the use of social networking websites in a professional capacity.

I found that peers used social networks to ask questions and find answers to problems. Sometimes peers would log into our tutorials or seminars with new innovative ways of working or resources that had inspired them. They had gleaned these ideas from SNWs. I, too, began searching SNWs for creative practices, feeling renewed, restored, and inspired by others' creativity and passion. Social networking websites provided me with a window into the profession. It was still real, alive, and doing its best to make a difference! I found I could be revitalised by reading EP Twitter. I was not alone in

this sentiment; peers who were more isolated than me, or had less supportive placement experiences, informally told me that EP social networks helped them continue to feel motivated. I also noted that some peers would post about being a TEP online, and I began to wonder about the feedback and response they were getting and whether this gave them a sense of belonging to the profession, despite the virtual ways of working.

In a pandemic world, it seemed like social networks became the primary way people could have "water cooler" moments to ask questions to more knowledgeable EPs informally. As the physical experiences we once would have had as trainees had now been erased, social networks offered a potential substitute. Thus, I became interested in EPs' use of social networks and its possible effects on the profession because it had now become part of the journey to train as EPs.

However, despite all the excellent and creative content and friendly online discussions, I could not openly post myself. It felt too 'big' or 'scary' to upload or post something so publicly. Therefore, there was a second reason for my interest in SNWs. I was aware of my reactions to posting as a trainee EP; more of my anxieties about posting online are documented in a later reflexive statement in chapter 3. Therefore, another reason for this project is that I was interested in how other TEPs and EPs viewed SNWs, and I wanted to understand others' perspectives on this issue.

My final reason for this project was a growing curiosity regarding the potentiality of SNWs. I saw that SNWs were being utilised by some EPs. SNWs were connecting EPs from different parts of the country to enable them to discuss their practice. However, I was also aware all EP professionals were not using SNWs. I felt that research into perspectives and uses of SNWs could provide an opportunity to

understand more about the potentiality and possibility of such online tools. I also felt that if it was a case that SNWs were impacting or influencing TEP and EP practice, it was essential to begin to understand how or in what ways. I am aware that as humanity's use of technology continues to evolve, the role of online communication methods becomes more paramount and central to the world of work. I felt this research would take the first step in helping the profession understand its relationship to and with the online sphere.

1.9 Summary

This introductory chapter has offered context regarding social networking website use globally, generally, and specifically concerning Educational Psychologists in the U.K. The information presented in this introduction has provided an overview of how SNWs offer opportunities for collaboration and learning to the EP profession. Consequently, online social network use might be transforming how EPs view the profession's knowledge and evidence base; it could simultaneously expand or limit knowledge. SNW use has implications for how EPs may apply or construct their knowledge and evidence base for their work with service users. However, it is currently unclear how EPs utilise these sites for their work and practice. Due to SNWs' potential to be a functional but ethically risky tool for EPs, it is an area worthy of research. This thesis explores how British EPs are currently using SNWs and EPs' perspectives of such use.

Chapter 2: Systematic Literature Review

2.1 Introduction and Purpose

This chapter aims to establish what research exists concerning the professional use of social networks. Once the evidence base related to Educational and School Psychologists has been confirmed and explored, a second search expands to other related professionals. The second search exists as the first search only generated limited results, which was not enough to establish how EPs could use SNWs. A criterion was needed to ensure the remit was not too broad when selecting which professions for the second search. One decision is to include other psychologists as their work is similar and overlaps with EPs in research, consultation, and intervention. As well as containing other psychologists, the second search also includes teachers and other educational staff, as EPs often work alongside and with this professional group. Hopefully, understanding the functions and purposes of other educational professionals' use of SNWs will provide a reference point for EPs' use. Thus, this literature review aims to establish themes of professional SNW use to inform areas to investigate with EPs.

This literature review hopes to answer and explore the following question:

- How are EPs using online social networks professionally?

2.2. Method for review

2.2.1 Method for review: Databases used

This literature review explored four relevant and available databases on EBSCO Host Discovery. Table 2.1 lists the databases included in the search alongside a brief description of their disciplines.

Table 2.1:

Database	Discipline
APA PsychInfo,	behavioural science and mental health
Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Collection	emotional and behavioural characteristics, psychiatry & psychology, mental processes, anthropology,
Education Source	education
ERIC	education

Databases included in the search

2.2.2 Method for review: Identifying Key Terms

A scoping exploration of subject heading thesauruses enabled the establishment of key terms. The thesauruses from all the separate databases were checked. This check ensured that the words selected had appropriately related synonyms and similar themes. This search helped establish whether the terms specified were appropriate in meaning and scope.

The terms are shown in Table 2.2. The table also explores the search terms set and the rationale for their use.

Table 2.2:

Key Term:	educational psychologist	social network*
Subject heading synonyms:	"educational psychologist" "educational psychology" "school psychologist" "school psychology"	social media, online social networks, virtual communities, internet forums, communities of practice
The decision around search terms and rationale for the decision.	<p>This review aims to explore Educational Psychologists' practice concerning social networks. However, the term 'Educational Psychology' is also related to an entire discipline area and generates many articles not about EP practice or the profession.</p> <p>Therefore: this term will be isolated when used in the search using "Educational Psychologist" and "Educational Psychology" and "School Psychologist", and "School Psychology".</p> <p>Subject expanders were not included to keep this search specific</p>	<p>Another aim of this review is to explore whether online social networks are used. The term social network* when exploded, consists of various similar terms.</p> <p>Therefore: this term will be exploded when searching to include other equivalent subjects or related words.</p>

Search terms used for the first literature search

2.2.3 Method of review: Search Strategy 1

Once key terms were isolated, a systemic literature search for search one was undertaken on the 20th of October 2021. The search was broad in scope and included the seven databases hosted via the EBSCO research platform. The search terms and processes are displayed in Table 2.3. Abstracts and Titles were searched for

Educational Psychologists and School Psychologists as the aim was to find studies that were explicitly about these professional groups.

The initial sample search yielded 22 results. All abstracts from this search were hand-searched so that only articles about School Psychologists/ Educational Psychologists' use of social networks were included. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for this search are shown in Table 2.4. Figure 2.1 depicts the flow chart of this literature search. Examples of excluded papers, and the reasons given, are in Appendix A. Only two articles met all requirements for this first search. Therefore, a second search was also needed, which is described below.

Table 2.3:

Search number:	Search Terms:	Search Options:	Results:
S1	AB "Educational Psychologist" OR "Educational Psychology".	Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase	7,325
S2	TI "Educational Psychologist" OR "Educational Psychology"	Search Mode: Boolean/ Phrase	3,533
S3	S1 OR S2		9,294
S4	Social Network* OR online social network*	Search Mode: Boolean/ Phase Expanders- Apply equivalent subjects, Apply related words, Limiters- Peer-Reviewed	126,529
S5	S3 AND S4	Search Mode: Boolean/ Phase Expanders- Apply equivalent subjects Limiters-	9
S6	AB "School Psychologist" OR "School Psychology".	Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase	7,320
S7	TI "School Psychology Psychologist" OR "School Psychology"	Search Mode: Boolean/ Phrase	4,046
S8	S6 OR S7	Search Mode: Boolean/ Phrase Limiter: Peer reviewed	8,625
S9	S8 AND S4	Search Mode: Boolean / Phrase	13
S10	S9 OR S5	Search Mode: Boolean / Phrase:	22

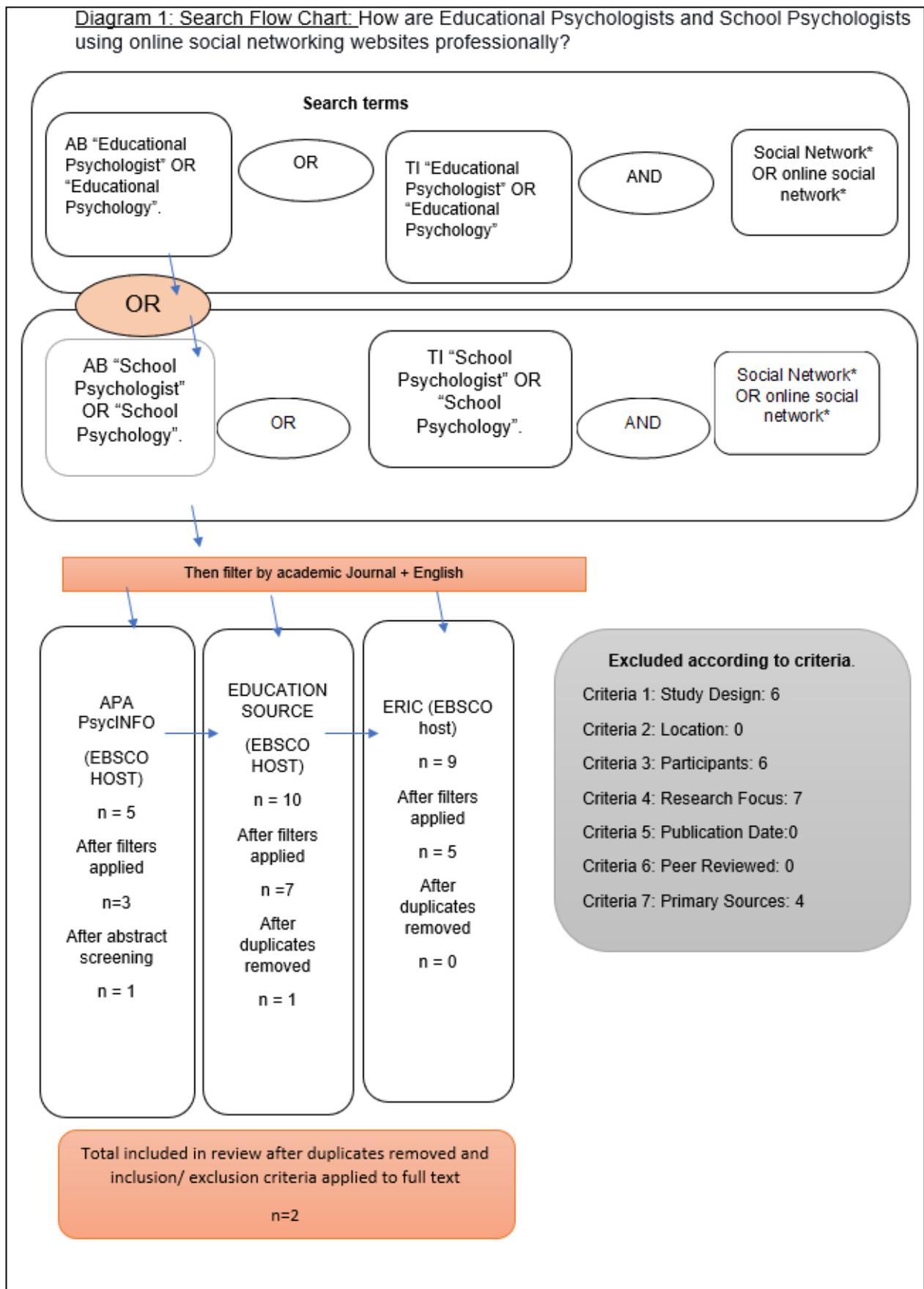
Search terms and processes for the first literature search.

Table 2.4:

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Rationale
Study Design (1) Studies were included if they were empirical, had an experimental or quasi-experimental design	Studies were excluded if they were not reporting the results of an empirical study, for example, opinion pieces or position papers.	This review focuses on what is currently occurring and what is taking place rather than some ideas around what practice could be.
Location (2) Any location was accepted.	There were no location limits.	As this is a new research area, it was appropriate to see what other Educational and School Psychologists are doing globally.
Participants (3) Studies were accepted if participants were Educational Psychologists/ School Psychologists/EPs.	Studies were excluded if participants were from other professional groups (e.g., teachers or counsellors), or were children or young people.	The author is interested in what is being used in EP practice.
Research Focus (4) on use of online social networks/ social networking websites	Studies were excluded if the core focus was not on how psychologists are using online social networks. Papers discounted included topics such as cyberbullying by teenagers, where social networks were mentioned, but E.P.s were not utilising the platforms in the study.	This review focuses on how E.P.s and School Psychologists (and trainees) may use social networks professionally.
Publication date (5) If published in a journal over the last 25 years, studies were included to provide a comprehensive and contemporary review.	Studies were excluded if they did not appear in a peer-reviewed journal in the last 25 years.	The quality of studies will already have been checked if published in a journal. Twenty-five years will allow for any early internet systems like internet forums to be included, allowing for all relevant research.
Peer-reviewed in a peer-reviewed journal (6)	Not peer-reviewed	The peer-review process upholds the quality of the research.
Primary Sources (7)	Secondary sources (e.g., Book Reviews)	This review focuses on what is currently occurring and what is taking place, rather than some ideas around what practice could be.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the first literature search

Figure 1.2:



Flow chart of the first search

2.2.4 Method of review: Search Strategy 2

Due to only having two papers for the first literature search. A second search was conducted to answer the following question:

- How are those in psychology and education professions using online social networking websites professionally?

The second literature search started with a scoping of the review to isolate key terms. Table 2.5 details the key terms selected as relevant to the question and included in all four databases. A systemic literature search for search two was undertaken on the 24th of October 2021.

Table 2.5:

Key Term:	professional practice	psychologists	Teach* Or education	social network*
Subject heading synonyms:	professional practice, evidence-based Professional practice, research based.	psychologists school psychologists clinical psychologists psychiatrists, counsellors, psychotherapists physicians	teachers educators college teachers academics lecturers college faculty university faculty	social media, online social networks, virtual communities, internet forums, communities of practice
The decision around search terms and rationale for the decision.	Therefore: this term will be exploded when searching.	Therefore: this term will be exploded when searching.	Therefore: this term will be exploded when searching.	Therefore: this term will be exploded when searching.

Search terms used for the second literature search

The search was broad in scope and included the four databases documented in Table 2.1. All databases were hosted via the EBSCO research platform. The search terms and processes are displayed in Table 2.6. The initial sample search yielded 168 results. All abstracts from this search were hand searched, and only articles about professional use of social networks were included. Other inclusions and exclusion parameters are described in Table 2.7. These parameters left 24 papers in total for the second search. Figure 2.2 illustrates this second search process. Examples of excluded papers are in Appendix A.

Table 2.6

Search number:	Search Terms:	Search Options:	Results:
S1	Social media OR social network*	Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase Apply equivalent subjects	120,261
S2	Psychologists OR education OR teach*	Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase Apply equivalent subjects	3,434,033
S3	Professional practice	Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase Apply equivalent subjects	30,542
S4	S1 o S2 AND S3	Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase Apply equivalent subjects	173
S5	S1 AND S2 AND S3	Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase Apply equivalent subjects Limiters- Peer- Reviewed	168

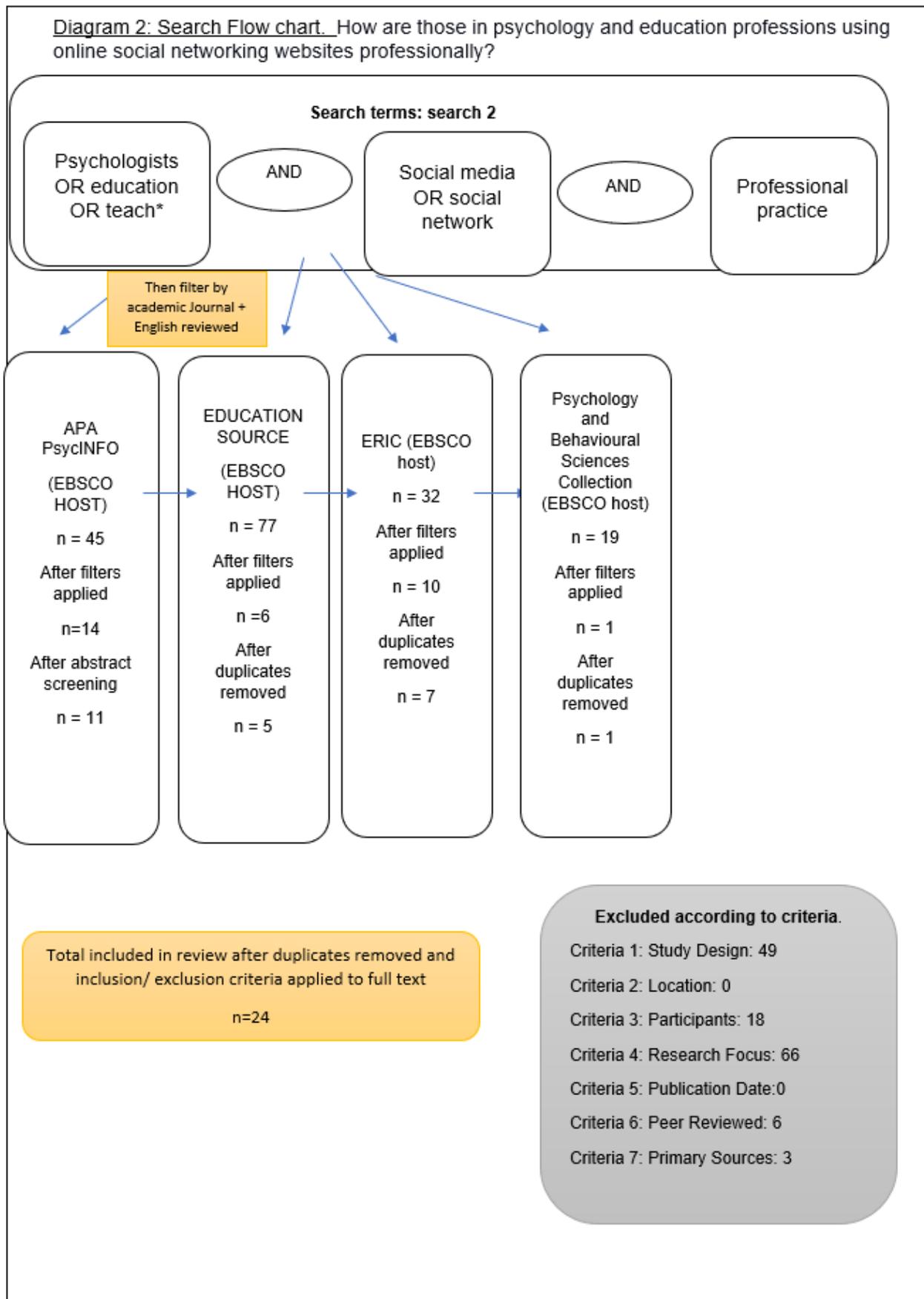
Search term and processes for the second literature search.

Table 2.7:

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Rationale
Study Design (1) Studies were included if they were empirical, had an experimental or quasi-experimental design	Studies were excluded if they were not reporting the results of an empirical study, for example, opinion pieces or position papers. Several papers were not included as they were opinion pieces on ethical and legal issues around social media and use of social networking websites.	This review focuses on what is currently occurring and what is taking place, rather than some ideas around what practice could be.
Location (2) Any location was accepted.	There were no location limits.	As this is a new research area, it was appropriate to see what other Educational and School Psychologists are doing globally.
Participants (3) Studies were accepted if participants were any professional Psychologists/ teachers or lecturers and academics from all phases of education. (Early years through higher education).	Studies were excluded if participants were from other professional groups or were children or young people.	In the U.K., EPs work with young people aged 0-25 so teachers and lecturers from all phases of education were included. The EP role is diverse and includes research, so academic researchers included. These were also included as their research and knowledge dissemination roles have some professional overlap with the research aspect of the E.P role.
Research Focus (4) on use of online social networks/ social networking websites	Studies were excluded if the core focus was not on how psychologists or teachers are using online social networks.	This review focuses on how psychologists and school staff may use social networks professionally.
Publication date (5) Studies were included if published in a journal over the last 25 years to provide a comprehensive and contemporary review.	Studies were excluded if they did not appear in a peer-reviewed journal in the last 25 years.	The quality of studies will already have been checked if published in a journal. 25 years will allow for any early internet systems like internet forums to be included, allowing for all relevant research to be included.
Peer-reviewed (6)	Not peer-reviewed	The peer-review process upholds the quality of the research.
Primary Sources (7)	Secondary sources (e.g., Book Reviews)	This review is focused on what practice is currently occurring and what is taking place, rather than some ideas around what practice could be.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the second literature search.

Figure 2.2:



Flow chart of the second search

2.3 Synthesis of Literature

The literature review below explores how Educational Psychologists, other psychologists, and education professionals use online social networking websites professionally. Twenty-six papers are included in this review in total. Appendix B contains a table with summarised information about the 26 articles. This table synthesises information following the critical appraisal process described below. Appendix C synthesises the findings of the literature review search.

2.3.1 Critical Appraisal

The 26 articles were sorted into groups to be critically appraised by appropriate tools. The three groups included surveys, and qualitative and mixed methods. Sometimes the articles included content analysis and no specific appraisal tool was found. These articles were reviewed using the mixed-methods tool as this rubric was comprehensive in scope and could suitably ask broad enough questions to be helpful when critically exploring content analysis. The critical appraisal for each of the 26th articles can be found in Appendix D (survey), Appendix E (mixed methods) and Appendix F (qualitative).

26 articles were still included in the literature review following the critical appraisal process as all met enough basic requirements to be assessed as worthy of inclusion. The basic requirements for all papers included were that there was a clear statement of the research aims and that the methodology selected was appropriate and clearly explained. Once these both were established, if the research design appeared to be appropriate to address the research aims, these articles were considered valid for inclusion. However, Interestingly, there are some overall weaknesses of the papers. Many articles do not justify or highlight why the chosen methodology was used, and

they only describe the process that occurred. Also, the studies' authors rarely explore the relationship between themselves and the participants. Only a few authors were reflexive or reflective on their role and their relationship to the research. There was limited consideration of their potential bias or how they may influence the data collection, analysis, or how the results are presented.

2.3.2 Organisation of Information

Articles were sorted initially into groups based on the data type collected and the professionals in the report. Table 2.8 depicts this and depicts which social networks were the focus of each of the studies.

Table 2.8:

	Educational/ School Psychologists (Search 1)	Psychologists (Search 2)	Educational Professionals (Search 2)
Quantitative	Multiple SNWs (2 studies)	Multiple SNWs (1 study)	Multiple SNWs (3 studies) Twitter (1 study) Facebook (2 studies)
Qualitative		Multiple SNWs (1 study)	Multiple SNWs (2 studies) Twitter (4 studies) Facebook (4 studies)
Mixed methods		Multiple SNWs (1 study)	Multiple SNWs (2 studies) Twitter (2 studies) Pinterest (1 study)
Total	2	3	21

Organisation of papers

Following an initial exploration into the SNW and platform, the articles were considered regarding the revised literature review question: How are those in psychology and education professions using online social networking websites professionally?

The central theme that emerged is that social networks are used professionally as a tool for learning and communicating with others internal and external to the profession. The following section will explore each of these themes and subthemes in turn, discussing the importance and quality of the findings. The two separate searches and research questions will be synthesised and explored to compare the different professions.

2.4 The literature review

2.4.1 Learning

Finding relevant professional information

One prominent use of social networks in the literature was to search for and find new relevant professional information. Tucker (2019) used interviews, focus groups, and excerpts from Twitter and found that teachers use Twitter to discover new content. (Nochumson, 2020) used an online survey and semi-structured interviews to find that teachers report using Twitter to learn from others' experiences and gather inspiring ideas. School psychologists also use Twitter to keep alert of relevant professional news and updates (Pham et al., 2014). This finding came from an online survey of over 200 US school psychologist participants. Many of the papers exploring Twitter use document how it is used to find professional knowledge. This finding is consistent across the professions included in this review.

A few studies explain why they use Twitter specifically to find new professional information. Davis (2015a) used interviews and tweet excerpts to explore teachers' use of Twitter and found they often use Twitter in this way as it provides instant access to ideas and a constant flow of new information. Another reason for using SNWs is to create "portable repositories" where relevant knowledge and information can be

collected and stored (Jordan, 2019). This finding came from a study exploring academics' and lecturers' use of multiple SNWs. This literature highlights how SNWs can become a personal resource to which professionals can curate and return.

This knowledge-seeking use appears to contrast with the collaborative uses of SNWs mentioned later in this review. The above studies highlight that some professionals use SNWs like search engines instead. Macià & García (2018) concluded that some Teachers might prefer using Twitter to search for other's practices rather than share their practices or talk to others. They found that many of their participants did not frequently make posts on Twitter. They found that only 6.4% shared classroom activities or materials. Only 4.6% contributed to debates or posted their opinions, and only 0.8% of participants requested help or answered questions on Twitter. This study suggested peripheral participation and silence in teachers, as newer users are more likely to watch rather than post. However, the teachers in this study were not new users of SNWs. Therefore, the study does not adequately investigate or propose a reason as to why the participants did not contribute. The study only interviewed 7 'bridging teacher's and these teachers contributed extensively. Therefore, any conclusions the article makes about non-contributing teachers are merely speculative and not based on the evidence they collected.

Other literature from this review documents that some SNW users choose not to interact. Lu & Curwood (2015) used mixed methods to investigate how online identities develop in a closed Facebook group of 115 Australian teachers. From online observations, excerpts of posts, and interviews, the authors found that some participants prefer to remain 'lurkers' who silently observe whilst still learning. These participants observe and use the information posted without contributing their ideas or views.

However, the qualitative data from interviews in Lu & Curwood (2015) suggests that the role of remaining silent may still be caused by social processes. The interviews gave insight into some who chose not to post in the Facebook group. Some participants did not have anything they felt was relevant and lacked the desire to post. Other participants expressed a more modest reason stating that they felt their contribution would be “not interesting enough”. Moreover, some participants chose to ‘lurk’ as they disagreed with the group’s personal, political, and religious comments. This finding highlights how in professional SNWs, any narratives that may challenge the Groupthink (Janis, 2008) or status quo may be left unsaid. This study also shows that people can compare and judge themselves against others in the same way they may do in offline environments. Both offer essential insights into the weaknesses of the closed Facebook group. Overall, the literature in this section highlights the importance of exploring the overall process behind online users of SNWs who do not contribute and only observe.

Finding information about service users

As well as finding information for professional development purposes, some studies also included professionals searching for information about service users. There is evidence that school psychologists and other psychologists use social networks to find information about service users. In one survey (Pham et al., 2014), 9% of 112 School Psychology graduate students reported searching for information on clients' online profiles, and 3% of 70 School psychology Faculty Staff reported doing the same. Similar results were found by Segool et al. (2016). This study found that 22% of 182 School Psychologists and 7% of 390 school psychology graduate students had searched for parents/children on SNWs. Neither Pham et al. (2014) nor Segool et al.

(2016) explored psychologists' reasons or purpose for searching for service users, so it is unclear what influenced such behaviour among their participants.

Further studies in this literature also explore how psychologists search for service users. Van Allen & Roberts (2011) found that the psychologists surveyed in their study were concerned about cases of inappropriate access or sharing of client data. Tunick et al., 2011 Found that 32% of 246 American child psychologists responded to an online survey to state that they had read their client's social network site or blog. Harris & Kurpius (2014) investigated the ethical implications of online behaviours. Their participants were counselling and psychology graduate students and interns in the U.S. Their survey results were comparable to the above studies, with 1/3rd of those with supervised clinical experience disclosing that they had searched social networks for client information. More than 80% of these individuals had not sought client consent for the search. This study also found that the School Psychology students were more likely to endorse disclosure of their online searches than the other psychology students. The authors suggest that this may be because school psychologists work closely, interact, and share information with other professionals in schools.

Consequently, it may feel more acceptable to share information about clients. However, as the methodology used was a survey with mainly closed questions, the authors could not ascertain whether these differences in perception and beliefs exist across different types of psychologists. Without discussing this with school psychologists, the authors are only hypothesising about the reasons for the difference.

Harris & Kurpis (2014) and Tunick et al. (2011) did uncover some of the Psychologists' reasons and motivations for searching for client data. Harris & Kurpis (2014) found that personal curiosity was the most endorsed reason, followed by verifying what a

client had said in a session. Tunick et al. (2011) found that participants also list personal curiosity as a primary reason. Participants also detail how some Child Psychologists encountered concerning material on their clients' SNWs, such as substance use, bullying, sexual promiscuity, and depressive thoughts. The study also suggests that Psychologists who meet this material are likely to address these concerns with their clients. Tunick et al. (2011) found that these psychologists would raise their concerns about underage SNW use, concerning material, and concerns around the lack of privacy restrictions on SNWs with their clients. Therefore, these professions argued that using SNWs in this specific way enables them to have an alternative way to safeguard their clients.

All four articles note the ethical issues with psychologists searching online for information about clients. There are several ethical concerns with such practices, as the information sought on social media may influence how the Psychologists work with that service user (Pham et al., 2014; Segool et al., 2016; Tunick et al., 2011). Whilst social networks often contain public information, accessing someone's information without consent appears to be disrespectful and crosses a personal or professional boundary (Harris & Kurpius, 2014). Additionally, it could be considered an observation of that participant without their consent (Tunick et al., 2011). Due to the ethical issues related to such behaviour, the number of psychologists who have participated in online client searches may be higher. Also, these statistics may impact social desirability bias, and consequently, the design of this methodology may underreport this issue.

Furthermore, Harris & Kurpis (2014) used a regression analysis to explore possible correlations to the online behaviour of searching for information about a client. They found that participants' higher levels of disclosures and online searching were related to lower scores on a measure of ethical decision-making. Participants who were firm

and more likely to rate a scenario as ethical were also more likely to rate disclosures of client information sought online as unethical. When concluding, the authors suggest that social media teaching, social media policy and ethical guidelines may need to be revised and disseminated among Psychologist professionals.

Different countries may have different cultural reactions to SNW and client interactions. Evans (2014) Found that 100% of South African Psychologists would ignore a Facebook friend request from a current client, and 6 of the 92 participants specifically mentioned how Facebook had the potential to threaten the therapeutic relationship. Only 1 participant in this study felt that Facebook could be used beneficially to interact with adolescents. Currently, no similar research has been conducted in the U.K. to see whether Educational Psychologists have also been accessing information on clients via SNWs.

However, within this literature there are two papers which contain incidences of teachers interacting with their students or families on Twitter. But, in both studies, the interactions were from professional accounts and had a dedicated purpose, such as sharing homework (Henthorn & Cammack, 2017; Trust et al., 2016). Also, the parents and students consented to the contact and interaction with the education professionals in these studies. There are no similar findings regarding education professionals searching for information without consent in the other literature accessed for this review. This lack of similar findings may suggest that this phenomenon of searching for clients' social media is not prevalent in other professions or that academic research has not investigated this topic area.

Changing practice

One study explores the interactions that promote professional development in more detail. For example, (Rutherford 2010b) documents how teachers learn from one another on SNWs. This study observed interactions in a closed Facebook group of 8,000 Canadian teachers. The teacher's interactions were studied for a year. This process mainly started with a teacher who needed support. This teacher would pose questions or a scenario that solicited input from others. The community replied with their ideas for solutions and resources. This study found that the posts contained practical and pedagogical knowledge. The authors claim that many posts were classified as examples of continued professional development (CPD). However, the study did not detail whether any participants changed their classroom practice based on the discussions. This article was solely a content analysis. Consequently, it is impossible to conclude whether the impact of interacting with SNWs led to any significant changes and developments in classroom practice.

Rutherford, (2010b) is one of several studies in the literature review that mention how SNWs provide opportunities for professional development. However, many of these studies do not give specific examples of how these participants change their practice (Davis, 2015a; Jordan, 2019; Pham et al., 2014). One study, Evans (2014), surveyed South African Psychologists and found that 40% used online forums to support their informal CPD. No detail of how this impacted their psychological practice was given. The limited detail may be due to limitations of the research design through using a survey with mainly closed questions. The following studies provide detail regarding how SNWs have led professionals to change their practice.

Tucker (2019) found that as well as gaining information, educational professionals will use the SNWs to develop their own 'personal learning network'. This study took a group of U.S. educational professionals who were not initially using Twitter and mentored them to use SNWs. In this study, one of the most frequent uses of the personal learning network was gathering ideas and resources for lesson plans. The study highlights that the professional learning from Twitter was not always content posted by teachers, but sometimes accounts related to other experience of a teacher's role. One participant followed an anonymous account of a father who posted about his experienced parenting three children with autism, and another dedicated to new scientific discoveries. The teacher participant learned about being a parent with autism and cutting-edge scientific knowledge they could share with their students. When the teachers created a personal learning network on Twitter, they could expose themselves to a vast range of content that developed themselves in their role. 8 of the 9 participants in this study decided to continue to use Twitter. The participant who decided they no longer wanted to use Twitter was already using the social network Pinterest. They preferred this platform to search for a specific type of activity or resource and find examples. They found Pinterest a more immediate way to find worksheets and ideas to support their teaching. They recognised that Twitter was more about looking through, searching, and reading someone's opinion. This finding on Twitter use illustrates how different formats and functions of SNWs can become preferable to individuals depending on their professional development needs.

Other studies have explored teachers using SNWS to build 'personal learning networks. Trust et al. (2016) found that almost all participants in their study reported modifying their teaching practices due to "personal learning networks". This study recruited 1417 educators as participants. These had come from around the world and

represented 47 countries. They taught a range of ages, subjects and had teaching experience ranging from 1-43 years. Of the educators surveyed, 53% used Twitter, 26% Edmodo, 17% used Facebook, and 12% used Pinterest as part of their learning networks. The study gives examples of how these networks support teachers in making changes. One example is participants using 30-day challenges to set aims and take these aims from ideas to fruition. Other teachers learned about specific educational approaches and implemented these strategies. A more wide-reaching practice change came from the teachers who shared that SNWs helped them redefine their aims and role as teachers.

One study looked into why teachers chose to use SNWs for professional development. Nochumson, (2020) found that professional development occurs on SNWs due to continuous interaction and active participation. This study found that U.S. teachers reported changing their teaching practice based on their Twitter use. Interviews with teachers revealed that Twitter use enabled them to learn from others in the profession. The teachers participating expressed their disillusionment with traditional CPD, as stand-alone CPD courses do not frequently rehearse or revisit new knowledge. The study found that teachers appreciated the flexibility in the accessibility of SNWs. The accessibility made it easier for teachers to reflect on and apply new knowledge to their classroom practice, as they could choose when to participate. One strength of this study was its large population with participants from several cultures, allowing for perspectives from different physical and cultural locations. This strength allows for a study that appears to be generalizable with clear implications for practice, such as how moderated chats on Twitter can be used to hold international conversations and debates about education.

Another study explored how professional collaboration on SNWs changed the type of resource teachers use to lesson plan. Torphy et al's', (2020) study looks at teachers' behaviour using Pinterest and raises caution over the quality of online resources. Through a content analysis of 135,000 pins shared by one sample of U.S. Midwestern teachers, the authors claim that teachers are now mainly turning to one another for professional materials. They also note that some teachers use social media to become "grassroots teacher entrepreneurs", whereby they sell the classroom resources they have designed to other teachers. Torphy et al. (2020) suggests that this collaborative use of SNWs may be transforming the classroom curriculum in the U.S., creating a shift from content produced by publishers and researched educational bodies to teacher-driven projects. Some content uploaded to Pinterest is free and solely shared as the teacher creator wants to collaborate and gain feedback. However, as these resources are the creative efforts of some teachers, the authors of this study suggest that there is a concern that such material may be of lower quality and rigour.

However, another paper (Torphy & Drake, 2019) suggests that teachers use Pinterest content differently from a more traditionally published curriculum. In the study by Torphy & Drake (2019), 73 teachers were interviewed about their Pinterest use. The findings were that participants were careful about evaluating the credibility and quality of their resources. Furthermore, whilst the participants took inspiration from the resources, they found they would often adapt them to suit their students and own classroom's needs. This study suggests that the collaborative nature of SNWs may only go so far; professionals may take inspiration from the posts that they see but will still rely on their professional knowledge and experience to adapt and assimilate the content they find. Such findings suggest that the collaborative aspects of SNWs may not be diluting the quality of the curriculum, as suggested in by Torphy et al. (2020).

One limitation of these papers on Pinterest is the sole focus on teachers in the U.S. The marketisation and economic scenario around educational funding will be different from the U.K. It is unclear whether this generalises to the U.K. The evidence base has not suggested the same phenomena of educational professionals using SNWs is occurring in other countries, but it could be.

2.4.2 Communication within the same profession

Professional Collaboration

SNWs can be used in various creative ways to allow for professional collaboration. One case study looked into how SNWs can be used for ongoing mentoring (Goodyear et al., 2014). The data for this study came from the online interactions of five physical education teachers and two facilitators. Over two years, participants used Facebook and Twitter to communicate. The facilitators challenged and developed their practice, promoted teacher inquiry, and encouraged collaboration and innovation using the SNW to post and comment. This study demonstrated that all participants provided collaborative ideas via content analysis. This finding led the study's author to claim that SNWs are a successful alternative to professional learning. However, there are some methodological flaws with this conclusion. Firstly, the participants were never interviewed, so it is impossible to confirm whether they agreed that they found the space collaborative and supportive. Furthermore, the author has a long-established relationship with the education setting and discusses the connections, including her previous employment in the teacher's department. The participants are her direct colleagues. These long-term relationships could have skewed the success of the online mentoring and how thoroughly the participants engaged with this process. Finally, the author names the school setting in her acknowledgements. Therefore, the

data examples presented in the published journal could easily lead to the participants being identifiable and their comments becoming known. It is unclear whether the participants consented to this when they agreed to participate. Also, this paper is still a detailed case example of how SNWs can be helpful collaborative and developmental spaces for professionals. However, due to the precise case study approach used, it is unclear whether the findings are generalisable. The study explores a particular mentoring project that might not be relatable to other professionals' SNW use.

Other studies that have looked into professional collaboration do have more methodological rigour. Davis (2015) studied the benefits and drawbacks of teachers participating on Twitter. This study combines the analysis of Twitter message data alongside interviewing 19 U.S. teachers. These teachers viewed Twitter as a supportive space to exchange knowledge and reflect upon theory and practice. A key theme found in the data was 'collaborative inquiry'. This theme included participants using a specific hashtag (#Edchat) to work together. One example from the paper documents how one user of #Edchat responds to a post asking them to "Demo how students evaluate their work w/student created rubrics?". The chat also contains weekly polls where the participant members vote on a new debate topic. The debate topics included discussions about how teachers consider their role. Examples such as these show that Twitter is a forum where people feel comfortable asking for detailed advice and working together to find solutions and compare opinions. Furthermore, Davis (2015) found that their participants had an apparent reason for choosing to use Twitter. They suggest that Twitter was a learner-centred and supportive community, which their participants felt they lacked in their physical workplace.

Davis's (2015) findings of Twitter being a collaborative space seem to be reciprocated in other studies. Macià & García (2018) found that Twitter was the preferred SNW for

their participants. They also found that the highest percentage of their participant's Twitter activity (42.7%) involved collaboration through sharing information, resources, and media. This design was a small-case study with only ten teachers and potentially had limited generalisability due to its small scope. However, a similar case study also explored how Twitter is used for collaboration. This second case study examined the SNW use of teachers in three British primary schools. This study showed that the participants who were using Twitter effectively entered into discussions and created networks with teachers around the country and the globe (Henthorn & Cammack, 2017). These discussions supported the teachers in developing their classroom practice and reciprocated resources and advice.

The global reach of collaboration was also found in another study; Tour (2017) found that their participants' learning networks had allowed them to connect to other teachers around the world. An example includes one teacher posing a question about a project on indigenous cultures and a teacher in New Zealand responding. The final result was a skype call between the classrooms with the New Zealand children sharing Māori words and their cultural heritage with children in a U.S. classroom. Another teacher in Tour (2017) collaborates with other teachers by creating a live google document online. The teacher asked others to contribute their ideas on a debate topic via Twitter. Teachers from several countries came together to note their 'pros' and 'cons'. These studies show how SNWs can open opportunities to cross geographical boundaries and allow professionals to challenge their practice through access to ideas from different cultures and perspectives.

By contrast, Kelly & Antonio (2016) found that SNWs use in teachers did not include reflection on practice. This study used content analysis to explore posts on open Facebook groups. The teachers did not provide one another feedback or reflect on

practice. Instead, the advice shared was mainly pragmatic and practical responses. The authors document that a typical sequence in the data was an original post followed by comments that advocate functional responses with clear actions to help the user. Examples given include providing worksheets or activities for lessons, guidance on appropriate textbooks, or suggestions of picture books to support different learning topics. The authors found one post which did open with a reflective stance; it did not receive any responses from the community, suggesting that the Facebook group members were not open to using this platform for reflection. The authors consider that this may be because it is an open group. However, some of the above studies found that professionals collaborate on other public platforms like Twitter (Davis, 2015a). These differences may suggest that different qualities of the SNWs platform can develop, leading to various relationships and social interactions. The development of the profession's interaction on that platform also appears to depend on the culture that develops.

Another study which also explores how Teachers connect in a professional Facebook group was conducted by Lundin et al. (2020). This group was for Swedish teachers. Torphy & Drake (2019) investigated SNW data over three years and analysed them using meta-data selection criteria and computational analysis. They took an original sample of 2970 posts and over 16000 comments and found they were organised around four main themes. All four themes involve professional connection and collaboration. They include posts where teachers ask for concrete requests, posts where teachers initiate discussions about tools for teaching, posts related to pedagogical dilemmas and choices, and posts where teachers offer resources and material that they have self-produced. A strength of this study is that it uses an

extensive range of examples to demonstrate these findings and to demonstrate how teachers are using SNWs to collaborate.

Furthermore, some studies show how professionals use space depending on the virtual organisation's construction. Greenhalgh et al. (2020) studied teachers and other educational professionals using the #michED hashtag on Twitter. They found that the purpose of interactions differed based upon whether it was communication at a publicised and agreed 'chat time' or an asynchronous post using the same hashtag. Chat-related communication focused on social support. The non-chat communication contained knowledge sharing and resource dissemination. Similar findings were found by Jordan (2020), who found that different SNW platforms had another use. For example, HE lecturers and academics using Instagram would search for publishing advice, whereas Facebook was used to socialise humorously, and Twitter was used to discuss current news stories. This suggests that each platform has a different virtual organisation, which lends itself to further usage. Thus, whilst this literature review has mapped out how SNWs are used, one group of professionals may use different platforms for different purposes and reasons. This may be potentially due to how culture develops.

Social wellbeing and belonging

While collaboration appears to be a primary reason for using professional SNWs, some studies found that not all professions use them in this way. Lu & Curwood (2015) examined the online posts of 115 participants in an online Facebook group. They found that the numbers of requests and responses for practical help were relatively low. Many posts appeared to be about creating a social connection. They coded and found posts that they characterised as containing humour, chit-chat, anecdotes from

teaching, affirmation, and showing empathy and encouragement. Follow-up interviews with group members supported the initial content analysis findings; having an online sociable group was important for socio-emotional wellbeing. This finding may have been particularly relevant for this group as all members were from the same cohort, currently on a 5-year teaching degree course at an Australian University in New South Wales. Therefore, it was probably more critical for this group to use the online space to strengthen social ties. In contrast, other studies where participants may not know each other, might not post as much content focused on social wellbeing and belonging. However, a different study found that other Facebook groups for educational professionals also seem to focus on social belonging, even when participants do not know each other offline. Ranieri et al. (2012) surveyed the founders and members of five different Italian Facebook groups for educational professionals. This study found positive social outcomes even when the participants did not have previously established relationships. Ranieri et al. (2012) found that new connections can develop through online social networks. Alongside this, they found that the Facebook group membership provides a type of social capital for professionals and that through participation, teachers develop social norms, shared identity, and values. Furthermore, the development of social norms is related to the amount of time spent as a member of a group. The longer a participant has been a group member, the more likely they will participate in the Facebook group. The more likely they are to have assimilated the group identity and norms.

Kelly & Antonio's (2016) previously mentioned study into an open Facebook group found that teachers were not using the group to include reflection in practice. A key finding from this study is that participants were using SNWs for social support. This study agrees with Ranieri et al.'s, (2012) finding that teachers use SNWs to initiate

and maintain relationships and maintain the profession's social norms, customs, ideologies, and dispositions.

2.4.3. Communication with others

Engaging service users.

Another way in which SNWs are used is to engage service users. Rutherford, (2010a) found that HE teachers used SNWs to improve relationships and communication with students. Another study used SNWs to engage parents and pupils (Henthorn & Cammack, 2017). This study interviewed teachers about their Twitter and blog use in three different primary schools in England. A key finding from this study is that SNWs are a tool for engaging parents, pupils, and even former pupils. The analysis shows that schools and parents were sharing feedback and homework. Parents also engaged by commenting on photos of school trips and classroom activities. The teachers interviewed felt that this specific use of SNWs developed relationships with parents and motivation for the pupils. One school specifically used it as a tool to engage parents that could not attend events such as class assemblies, as a way for them to still be involved. The results of this study are developed through a thorough and detailed case study approach where a variety of methods were combined. The researchers used content analysis of the SNWs and used semi-structured interviews with teachers and observations of teachers to triangulate the information they found. Whilst there can be issues due to it being a case-study approach, the insights detailed can be used to inform practice in a wider context, demonstrating that CYP and parents will engage with education-related SNW content.

Impression management

A further purpose of using SNWs to communicate online is impression management and self-promotion. Veletsianos (2012) found that academics and HE lecturers participate in SNWs for various reasons, such as finding resources or debating social issues. However, one main reason is to create an online presence that gives out a good professional impression. This finding came through analysing 45 scholars' Tweets. This impression management is used for potential employers, collaborators, or students supervised by academics. Jordan also found a similar finding; academics and HE lecturers used SNWs to share an academic identity and build an online C.V. to promote themselves and their research. HE lecturers and academics were not the only professions to use SNWs in this way. Van Allen & Roberts (2011) found that psychologists also use Twitter and Facebook to present a public, professional identity. Consequently, it can be concluded that some professionals view SNWs as a platform for self-advertisement and self-promotion to improve their career prospects or attract new forms of work.

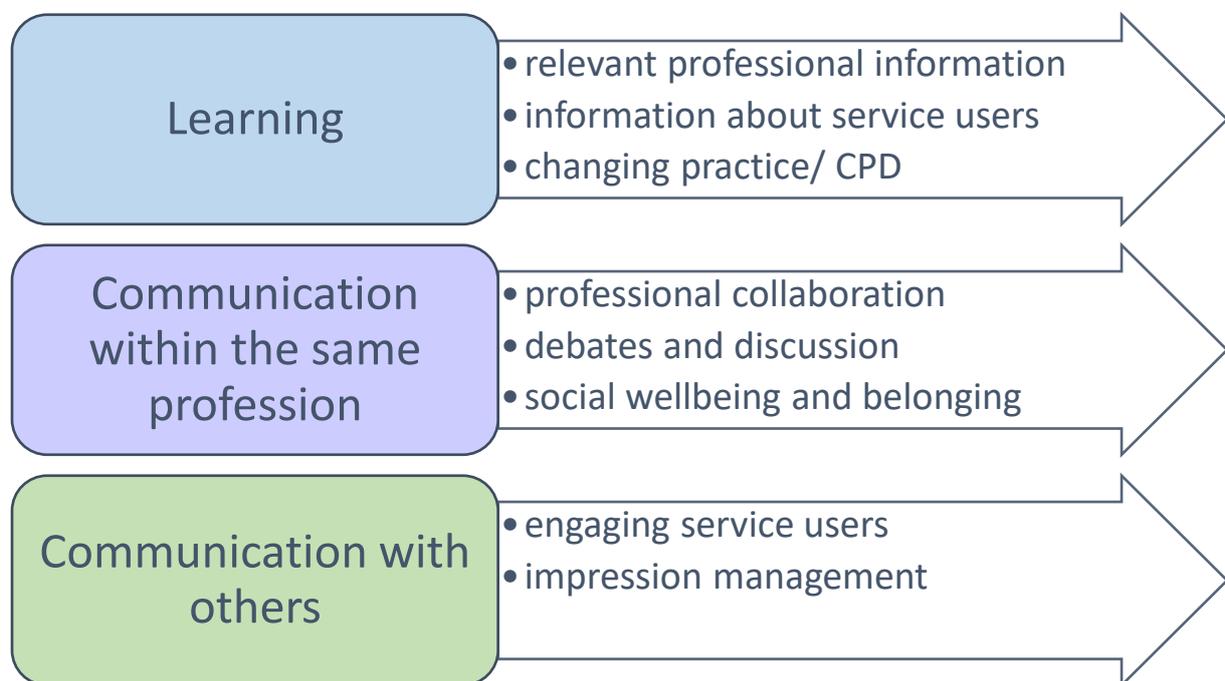
2.5 Conclusion and Summary

This literature review has provided information on a range of ways that professionals are using SNWs to support their work. From the 26 papers explored in this literature review, there is not one sole purpose or use of SNWs. They are used for learning and communicating within and without the profession. These communications include collaboration, emotional and social support, debates, and discussion. Figure 2.3 presents an illustrative summary of the ways professionals use SNWs in this review. These examples may provide insight into how EPs might also be using SNWs.

However, this cannot be confirmed without research. Thus, this study aims to research this area.

There are many positive reasons for SNW use highlighted in this study. However, the literature review has also uncovered some negative aspects of SNW use, such as seeking information about service users without informed consent. Such use raises ethical issues, and consequently, it will be essential to see whether similar ethical dilemmas arise for EPs in the U.K.

Figure 2.3



Key themes and subthemes in the literature.

Another key finding regarding SNW use is that professional use appears to vary depending on the platform or the culture formed by the professionals using that

platform. A summary table explores the findings organised by social networks. This can be found in Appendix C. From this table, it appears that professionals mainly use SNWs for all the reasons discussed in this review, and all of these uses can take place on a different platform. However, there are some slight patterns. Firstly, Facebook appears to be used more for communication within each profession, especially for collaboration and social well-being and belonging support. Whereas Twitter appears to be used more for finding relevant professional information and continued professional development. However, this difference may be inter-professional as teachers seem to gravitate more towards emotional support and collaboration than the other professional groups within this review. Whereas HE lecturers are more likely to communicate externally to their profession. It is currently unknown where EPs lie on this spectrum of providing online support to fellow psychologists or whether they use SNWs to communicate with non-EPs.

Also, some of these studies in this review explored professionals' reasons for using SNWs. These reasons provide commentary on other interrelated aspects of professional roles, such as the applicability of CPD or the need for social connection. It is currently unclear whether EPs use SNWs for these reasons or, more widely, what their perspectives are on SNWs. Thus, as different professional groups utilise SNWs differently, research is needed to understand and explore EPs' use.

The studies in this review have explored SNW use. However, their methods mean that it is sometimes unclear how this use directly impacts professional practice. The studies in this review only provided limited information regarding the participant's reasons or experience. Therefore, this study aims to do more than describe the pattern of how EPs use SNWs. It will also investigate EPs' perspectives on how SNWs influence their role and practice to understand the intersection between use and practice.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Chapter overview

The previous chapters have developed an argument for the need to research EP's professional use of SNWs. Firstly, this chapter explores this study's purpose and aims. This chapter then describes the research design used to research this topic. The philosophy, approach to theory development, methodological choices, strategies, and techniques used will be detailed in this chapter. This chapter also provides justification for the chosen method. Detail is provided on methods, participant sampling, measurement, validity, reliability and analysis. A description of the design choices will be presented alongside the rationale. Ethical considerations relating to the research process and ensuring the well-being of the participants are also outlined.

3.2 Purpose and Research Aims

3.2.1 Research Aims

SNWs are a tool that EPs use professionally. However, as shown in chapter 2, no current empirical academic literature documents how EPs use SNWs. Furthermore, there is no record of how SNWs are being used to support EP practice or EPs' perspectives on this use. This study hoped to begin addressing this gap in the literature.

This study aimed to firstly document how EPs are using SNWs professionally. This aim is descriptive in nature. The first part of the study investigated how EPs are currently using their professional SNW accounts. This aim included collecting information such as frequency and type of use. The hope was that the findings from

this question will document a range of ways that EPs are using SNWs as a professional tool.

The second aim of the study was exploratory. This aim investigated EPs' perspectives on how SNWs influence their role and practice. This aim was created with the hope that researching EPs' views would document why they have chosen to use SNWs in specific ways. This second aim was broad in scope and included both the positive and negative impacts of professional SNW use. This aim also hoped to consider EP's reasons for using SNWs. The second research question was designed to be large and broad, as Braun & Clarke (2021b), who provide guidance about the analytical method used, suggest that the scope of the research question should be open when using a reflexive thematic analysis approach. Furthermore, it was hoped that understanding EP's reasons for using SNWs may have provided a commentary on other interrelated aspects of the EP role.

3.2.2 Research Questions

The above aims are represented by two questions:

- Aim 1. Descriptive: How are Educational Psychologists using social networking websites in a professional capacity?
- Aim 2. Exploratory: What are Educational Psychologists' perspectives of using social networking websites for professional reasons?"

3.3 Researcher Orientation

3.3.1 Critical Realism

This section provides an overview of the researcher's philosophical position when designing and carrying out this research. Each researcher's philosophical orientation

impacts how the research is undertaken and reported. The researcher's critical realist position informs this research. This position has informed methodological choices and research questions. Braun & Clarke (2021b) state that the critical realist position can best be understood by combining ontological realism with epistemological relativism. Both ontology and epistemology are explained in more detail below.

One aspect of philosophical orientation is Ontology, the researcher's beliefs about reality (Creswell, 2012), being (Crotty, 1998), and existence (Burr, 2003). Braun & Clarke (2021b) describe critical realist ontology as singular; critical realists do not endorse the idea of multiple realities. Also, the critical realist perspective suggests that reality exists and is independent of human experience, but this reality can never fully be understood or known (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Thus, to assume a knowable world is an "ontic fallacy" (Pilgrim, 2014). Therefore, any data or research can provide information about what is occurring in a material, physical or social world, but only in a manner that directly mirrors reality (Willig, 2008). In other words, a reality exists but is too complex or challenging to capture, observe and fully represent.

Some critical realists, such as Bhaskar (1978) and Delorme (1999), believe that a single concept of reality is made up of three ontological domains (Heeks et al., 2019):

1. 'The real/ the deep structures' (Mechanisms that generate phenomena which cannot be captured fully as we cannot observe them).
2. 'The actual' (aspects of reality that occur but may not be experienced. These are influenced by what is generated by the mechanisms).
3. 'The empirical' (the most surface-level aspects of reality we experience directly or indirectly or an attempt to observe).

Taking this understanding of reality into consideration, critical realist research aims to infer the causal mechanisms and structures that have enduring properties. Therefore, any data collected in this study can only create a mediated reflection of reality. It will attempt to infer mechanisms and structures surrounding EPs' use and perspectives of SNWs.

Another aspect of underlying philosophical orientation is Epistemology, which is the researcher's beliefs about the nature and forms of knowledge (Cohen et al., 2017) and the methods of obtaining knowledge (Burr, 2003). Thus, the researcher must consider whether knowledge can be found through research or the research process. Positivist understandings of epistemology suggest knowledge can be obtained through objective analysis. Whereas constructionists posit that there is no singular truth; knowledge is created through the multiple realities of individuals interacting with the social world (Braun & Clarke, 2021b). Braun & Clarke (2021b) state that critical realists hold a position of epistemological relativism: a belief that it is impossible to access truth directly. This relativism is different from pure ontological relativism, which believes that a single reality does not exist. Braun & Clarke (2021b) posits that epistemological relativism combined with ontological realism to provide a positionality where a concept of special knowledge and truth is retained but also contains an understanding that human practices and the social world shape this truth.

Therefore, for critical realists, the epistemological belief is that knowledge or truth exists, but different perspectives, interpretations and representations conceptualise this. Also, the consequence is that all knowledge is positioned: it has a standpoint. Thus, a critical realist views that social power relationships and structures between outlooks organise the production of knowledge and truth. Also, because of the human

practices and structure at play, understanding knowledge and truth is mediated by language and culture and is socially located (Braun & Clarke, 2021b; Maxwell, 2012; Pilgrim, 2014). There may be single truth or knowledge, but individuals interpret this reality differently (Braun & Clarke, 2021b), and consequently, subjectivity can obscure this truth.

Due to this positionality, the data collected in this study creates a truth or knowledge which is interpreted and located through the participants' culture and language. Furthermore, the researchers' cultural memberships will also impact how analysis and interpretation occur, situating and interpreting the reality further (Braun & Clarke, 2021b). Critical realists view the qualitative researcher as part of the world they want to understand, so they cannot stand outside the social reality they observe (Pilgram, 2014).

3.3.2 Critical realist design and analysis

The critical realist positionality has influenced the research design and choice of analysis method.

Critical realists' perspectives can align with mixed methods research, as critical realist theorists argue that design should be dictated by the research problem (McEvoy & Richards, 2006). Critical realism focuses on methods used and analysed, not the selected method (Pratschke, 2003). Using a critical realist perspective appropriately provides this study access to a situated and interpreted reality. It allows for the contextualisation of the data. Critical realist research aims not to identify generalisable laws or to identify the lived experiences of social actors but to develop deeper levels of explanation and understanding (McEvoy & Richards, 2006). This positionality allows

this research to focus on the core aim of bringing greater explanation and understanding of EPs use and perspectives of SNWs.

The critical realist positionality also supports the exploratory nature of Research Question 2, where perspectives and views of SNWs are uncovered. This approach allows for variation in views and experiences. The EP participants exist in a social world that is a mixture of different practices and beliefs. This world is both heterogeneous and unique. This is particularly useful when researching SNWs as the social conditions and structures around this new technology are evolving. A critical realist stance allows the researcher to acknowledge their assumed reality regarding how EPs currently use SNWs. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to approach findings knowing that reality and truth are not static and will be shifting and evolving and only understood in a time-bound, culture-bound, and language-bound situation.

Critical realism is also appropriate for research question one's descriptive approach, as critical realism allows the patterns and commonalities participants use to be captured. Although it may appear more appropriate to address a descriptive question 'How' from a positivist perspective, this would possibly create a too narrow construction of reality to be helpful. A way to positively address this research question would be to collect objective information using software programmes that track EP's SNW use. However, due to this researcher's positionality, such an approach would be insufficient. It would only give insight into the mechanics of use (e.g., the participant visited X SNW and posted X number of times). It would not provide information about the situated context of this use. When taking a critical realist perspective, the 'How' becomes embedded in the participants' perceptions of the reality of their "use". (E.g. I use SNWs to help others). The participant's understanding of the reality and the language they use gives this research question on "How" its meaning.

3.4 Summary of Research Design.

3.4.1 Overview of Design

This study uses a mixed methods design, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. This data is collected concurrently via methods of a survey and semi-structured interviews. Both strands of data have equal priority and are mixed during the final interpretation of the data. The decisions and rationale for this design are discussed in more detail below.

It has been noted that nearly 40 different types of mixed methods designs are currently used in different research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Mixed method designs can be fixed or emergent (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The methods in this study were carefully considered to create a fixed mixed-method design. A fixed design means that the design has been predetermined and planned from the beginning of the research. However, as Gerber et al. (2017) suggest, it can be difficult for researchers exploring online spaces to devise their complete study at the start as they may discover new ideas, artefacts or ways of sharing meaning as they collect data. As projects involving online spaces evolve, methods may be inadequate (Morse, 2009). Therefore, whilst the design for this study was predetermined, there was an openness and flexibility in the researcher to explore any alternative methods that may have arisen due to collecting data using online methods. This meant that there was a possibility that the project could have developed an emergent design if circumstances changed during the data collection and analysis of the research project. For example, new ethical approval would have been sought if the proposed methodology was inadequate.

Using a mixed methodology adds complications, as different kinds of data cannot be combined uncritically. It can be deemed 'irresponsible' to draw from different traditions

without careful consideration (Gerber, 2021). To support the design of this project, the researcher explored several authors' frameworks to ensure full consideration of the design. Creswell & Plano Clark, (2006) stated that four key design decisions are involved in mixed methods design. Section 3.4.2 below discusses each of Creswell & Plano Clark's, (2006) design decisions and how they relate to this study.

3.4.2: Interaction, priority, timing, and mixing.

1. Level of the interaction of the quantitative and qualitative strands:

The level of interaction can be defined as the extent to which the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study are kept separate. It also includes the extent to which these strands interact. This study has what Creswell & Plano Clark, (2006) terms an 'interactive' level of interaction. This is because there are several direct interactions between the qualitative and quantitative strands. The qualitative and quantitative data are both collected using a survey. Another point of interaction for the qualitative and quantitative data is the research questions, as both types of data are used to answer both questions. If this study took an independent design, the two strands would not interact during data collection or research questions.

1. Priority of the quantitative and qualitative strands:

The priority of the strands refers to the relative importance or the weighting of the qualitative and quantitative strands. This study emphasises both sets of qualitative and quantitative data equally and then converge these during interpretation. Both aspects are important for addressing the research questions.

2. Timing of the quantitative and qualitative strands:

Timing is sometimes referred to as 'sequence' or 'implementation'. This design decision concerns the temporal relationships between the quantitative and qualitative data. This study uses concurrent timing: the qualitative and quantitative data were collected during one single data collection phase. Both types of data were collected through a survey. Also, while the survey was still open for responses, qualitative data from the interview was collected concurrently.

3. The mixing of the quantitative and qualitative strands:

Mixing is the extent to which the quantitative and qualitative strands are combined and integrated. In this study, mixing the quantitative and qualitative data sets occurs during interpretation. The quantitative and qualitative data were analysed separately and then mixed and integrated during the research's final stages after the findings' analysis. During this interpretation stage, the researcher incorporates both types of data through a written discussion which compares and combines the data, drawing conclusions and inferring what has been found from the two strands. This discussion allows for both data strands to be synthesised to form a final interpretation.

Design Summary: An illustration of the mixed methods design study can be seen in figure 3.1:

Figure 3.1:

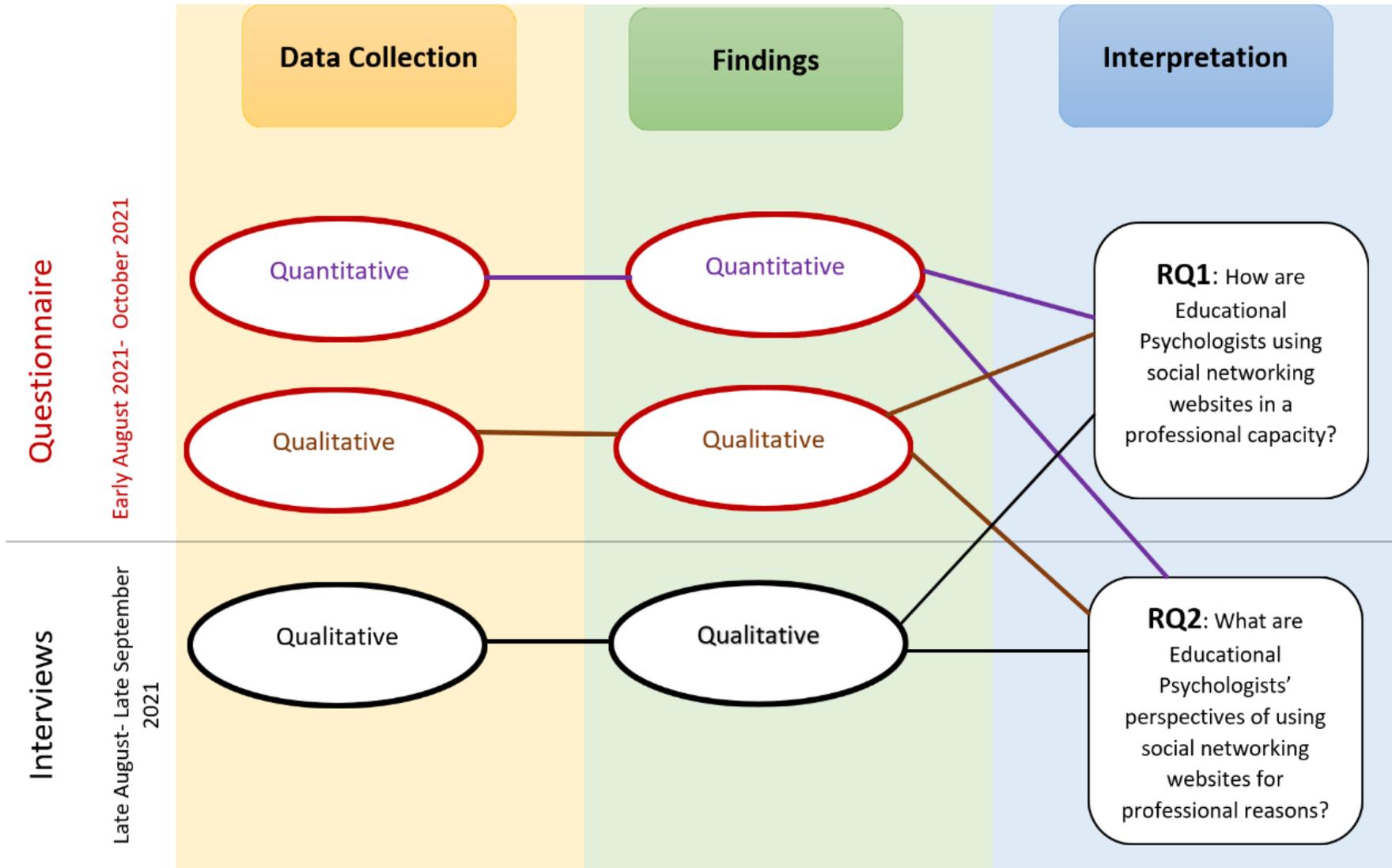


Figure 3.1 An overview of the research process and phase

3.4.3 The rationale for mixed methods design.

(Bryman, 2006) found that researchers have different reasons for using mixed methods. Bryman (2006) documented 16 different reasons why researchers may mix qualitative and quantitative data together. 3 of Bryman's (2006) reasons apply to this study, and illustrate why this research design has been selected:

1. Completeness:

One reason for this study's mixed method approach is that it allows for completeness. This study combines qualitative and quantitative data to provide a more comprehensive account and understanding of the EPs' use and perspectives of SNWs. For example, through collecting quantitative data, it will be possible to understand what percentage of participants use SNWs in ways listed in the researcher's pre-defined list. However, there may be more ways in which EPs use SNWs that are not contained within a pre-defined and given list, and only qualitative data can access this information. Using both methods together allows for a more complete understanding.

2. Offset:

This study also uses a mixed methods approach as it allows for Offset. Offset refers to the idea that both forms of data have a variety of strengths and limitations, and combining both makes it possible to offset some of the weaknesses. For example, Quantitative data was needed to gather a broad and clear description of many EP's use and views of SNWs. However, numbers cannot document the complexity and nuance of views. Consequently, a purely quantitative approach would have possibly oversimplified the complexities of human experience (Banyard & Flanagan, 2013), and not fit with the researcher's critical realist positioning. If only

quantitative data had been collected, the researcher's design of such questions and methods might have missed different stances and perceptions of such use. Using both methods allows for the strengths of both data types to be drawn upon. Qualitative data is rich but often only uses a select few participants. It is not possible to collate information from many participants through qualitative data. An understanding of many EPs SNW use, and their views is needed for the descriptive aim of this study, and using both methods allows for this.

3. Explanation:

One very clear reason for using a combination of mixed methods in this study was for explanation. As one set of findings can be used to help explain the results generated by another. The quantitative data is being used to collect overall descriptive statistics about use, but the data viewed in isolation does not fully explain EP use. The descriptive data can provide numbers and percentages of how many EPs are using SNWs and in what ways, but it does not provide any reasons or explanations for the participants' choices or actions. The qualitative data's purpose is to provide an explanation during the final interpretation stages. For example, providing an understanding of why certain platforms are preferred or why certain types of use are popular.

3.4.3 Data collection: Online survey/questionnaire

An online survey was selected for the first phase of the research and answered RQ1. An online survey was chosen as this data collection method is accessible to groups, and individuals, who may be challenging to reach through other means (Garton et al., 1997). Educational psychologists are geographically spread across the country, but an online survey was deemed appropriate as they are praised for gathering data

quickly from people separated by distance (Taylor, 2000; Yun & Trumbo, 2000). Questionnaires can allow for collection from many people in a short period (Langdrige & Hagger-Johnson, 2013).

Other benefits of online surveys have helped them flourish as a research method. As well as collecting information remotely, this method of data collection can save time (Wright, 2005). The data can be collected independently, which allows the researcher to work on other projects (Andrews et al., 2003). This was particularly useful for this project as it is a mixed-method project. This means that the researcher could focus on collecting and transcribing interview data whilst the survey remained open.

The questionnaire was initially published online in August 2021 and remained open for data collection until the 17th of October 2021.

3.4.4 Questionnaire Design.

The online questionnaire design was purposely relatively short, as longer questionnaires have a lower response rate (Rolstad et al., 2011). The survey was collected using an Online Qualtrics Form. A paper of the first survey draft was submitted for ethical approval. This initial questionnaire is in Appendix G, and the final version, which was developed following a pilot study, is in Appendix H.

RQ1 asks 'How' do EPs use SNWs. To answer this question fully, it was essential to record a range of responses regarding how participants are using SNWs professionally and whether they intend to use them in the future. If a participant signified that they do use SNWs to support them professionally, the online survey consisted of five sections:

- Demographic information such as job title.
- Questions on type of use and which platform.

- Questions on the frequency of use.
- Qualitative open response questions to address RQ2.
- Information about the next phase of the study.

If a participant signified that they do not use SNW to support them professionally, the online survey consisted of four sections:

- Demographic information such as job title.
- Questions on whether they would be interested in the use and barriers to use.
- Qualitative open response questions to address RQ2.
- Information about the next phase of the study.

The demographic information was collected for a range of reasons. study aimed to get a representative sample of the profession, so demographic information was needed to see how representative the sample was in terms of age, qualification, and role. This information also screened out anyone who is not a registered practising psychologist.

The survey design mainly utilised closed questions for quantitative data. However, open, and qualitative questions were included, such as EPs' main reasons for using SNWs and their perspectives regarding the positives and negatives of SNW use. These qualitative questions provided information for RQ2. Both EPs who use and do not use SNWs within their practice were asked questions on these aspects. As these perspectives might explain why someone has actively decided not to use SNWs in this capacity. The design process of this study's qualitative questions is described in the interview design section.

Most questionnaire questions were designed using principles outlined in Regmi et al. (2016), such as clarity, and signposting, to ensure a user-friendly layout. Some questions on the survey required specific research to support development. The

questionnaire matrix question was developed by adapting scales from similar existing studies. They were grouped into items based on themes from a very early literature search for a Research Protocol/ Proposal assignment. This literature search explored SNW use in a variety of caring professions. This process and the sources are documented in Appendix I. These items were collected from studies using the protocol/proposal literature review and other studies into the professional use of SNWs. Many of these items have already been used with larger sample populations and consequently will have some validity. Some of these papers were grey literature, not peer-reviewed, and on professions not relevant to this study's literature review. Therefore, some of these papers were not included in this project's systematic review.

3.4.5 Data Collection: Online semi-structured interviews

Data for the second methodology in this study was collected using semi-structured online interviews. Clarke & Braun (2013) suggest that semi-structured interviews are suitable for experience-type research questions and explore understanding, perception, and construction type research questions. The interview aimed to collaborate on RQ1 and provide detailed information for RQ2 as this research question is experience and perception based.

Semi-structured interviews were selected for the interview design. This choice included this design allowing for informal and less constrained discussion (Adams, 2015), as the interviewer does not need to rigidly hold to the interview guide. A semi-structured interview is not limited to precise wording or order and can be responsive to the participant's developing account (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This flexibility is supported by a sufficiently structured frame to ensure all relevant material is gathered (Galletta & Cross, 2013). There is scope for participants to raise issues the researcher

has not anticipated (Clarke & Braun, 2013). This allows for rich data to be collected (Percy et al., 2015). The open-ended nature of semi-structured interviews permitted this research both clarity and detail. For example, it explored both how SNWs are used and gathered detailed explanations for why they are perceived as helpful. This approach allowed for the direction of such exploration to be led by the participants' answers to allow for reliable data collection and analysis.

The semi-structured interviews were held online, as when researching an online phenomenon, it felt appropriate for data collection to be online. Research into the strengths and weaknesses of online methods is still in development. Historically, online interviews were conducted through typed methods such as email, as video quality was too poor (Gerber et al., 2017). This led to an issue of synchronicity, and consequently, a preferred method was instant messaging (Hewson et al., 2016). However, instant messaging and email interviews would have been too limiting for this project. One key issue would have been the limited information about biosocial attributes and body language; if the social interaction of the interview is rendered 'faceless', it transforms the construction of the data. Textual interview methods impact the ability to build rapport with participants and be responsive to emotions (Possamai-Inesedy & Gwyther, 2013). Also, as the questionnaire was written, this allowed participant language to be gathered and expressed separately. Furthermore, there is no way to check whether the respondent is the person they say they are in text-based interviews (Hewson et al., 2016; Seymour, 2001). Consequently, as image quality has improved, the decision was made to utilise a video-based software application (Zoom).

Further reasons for online video interviews being the selected research included practical considerations, such as an online interview being appropriate for social distancing or lockdown safety scenarios. At the time of designing this research, both

were currently common in the U.K. due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Furthermore, online methods were selected as they also mitigate any need for travel time or travel costs (O'Connor et al., 2008) which may mean it was more accessible for busy practising Educational Psychologists to find the time to participate. Furthermore, the pandemic has required more people to become literate and comfortable using videoconferencing platforms, and online interviews may now be more accessible (Atchison et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020). Previously participants may have been excluded due to not having the technological skills and competence to obtain the software or internet connection to allow participation (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). However, this methodology was chosen as the researcher felt that technological developments and cultural changes should have made teleconferencing more accessible to a broader range of participants.

There are some limitations to using an online video-based interview, and these were considered. Negative consequences include that the virtual nature can impact rapport and non-verbal cues (Lo Iacono et al., 2016). Adams (2010) provides advice on professionally conducting semi-structured interviews, highlighting the importance of managing silences, allowing the participant to guide, and ensuring emotional control. Many of these factors, such as poor internet connection, are complicated by being online. To try and limit such consequences in this study, participants were briefed at the start of the interview on how the researcher will attempt to mitigate these factors where possible. For example, the researcher explained that they would sometimes repeat back the information the participant had given to make sure they had understood fully and not missed any key information, this can be seen in final interview script in Appendix J. As well as impacting on data collection, missing out on non-verbal cues could also potentially lead to ethical issues such as risk, as interviewers may not

have picked up on participant distress. The procedures that were conducted to attenuate such risks are outlined in the ethics section, which is later in this chapter.

3.4.6 Design for semi-structured interviews

The interview questions were designed to collate data concerning RQ1 and RQ2. A broad approach and range of questions were needed to access a vast range of information about participants' perspectives. The researcher initially drew inspiration by considering aspects of a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis (Helms & Nixon, 2010). The initial SWOT analysis is contained in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are Educational Psychologists' perspectives on why they use social networking websites for professional reasons? • Do Educational Psychologists consider there to be negatives to using SNWs? 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do Educational Psychologists consider there to be negatives to using SNWs? • Do they feel the influences on their practice or positive, negative or both?
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are Educational Psychologists' perspectives on how social networking websites influence their professional practice? • Do EPs consider there to be further potential uses of social networking websites? 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is needed to facilitate these potential uses or potential opportunities?

SWOT analysis inspired initial questions

SWOT analysis originally stems from organisational and management research but provided a proforma for initial inspiration to springboard the development of the interview questions. This approach was chosen as it allows for a range of perspectives of a phenomenon to be considered. These questions were developed further, with subsidiary questions added.

Most questions written for the interview were designed to be opened-ended or closed with an open-ended prompt question. The open-ended nature of semi-structured interviews allowed for clarity and detail to be obtained. For example, exploring how SNWs are used, and gathering detailed explanations for why they are perceived as helpful. The direction of such exploration was designed to be led by the participants' answers to allow for detailed data collection.

3.4.7 Piloting the questionnaire and interviews

A pilot study was conducted to trial the interview and questionnaire items. The pilot study included 3 Trainee EPs (TEPs) for the survey and 2 TEPs for the interview. A pilot test was recommended to be best practice, as it can be a way to develop lines of questions and refine data collection procedures.

The pilot of the questionnaire led to the removal of the question "What platform do you use most frequently, select more than one option" as this was unclear and too like a previous question.

3.5 Participants

3.5.1 Eligibility and Inclusion

Participants were required to meet a range of inclusion and eligibility to enable them to participate in the study. These are displayed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Inclusion / Eligibility criteria	Exclusion criteria	Rationale
Must currently be a practising EP or Trainee EP, who is HCPC registered.	Assistant EPs or EPs who are not currently working or retired cannot participate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure a discussion could be had about implications on current and future practice • Assistant EPs have not been included as they are not undertaking work at the same level of responsibility and are not governed by the same ethical and professional codes (for example the HCPC standards of proficiency).
Must be currently practising in the UK	EPs practising in different countries are excluded from this study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While there are EPs and school psychologists around the world using social media platforms, opening the study to them could lead to the study becoming too broad. By involving different global political and educational systems it could possibly lead to a very complex data set. This complexity may prevent any meaningful or clear analysis on SNWs use and applicability for practice, as the data would be situated in a range of cultures.
Participants did not have to be using SNWs. Any EPs with an opinion on the topic could chose to participate in the online survey.	<u>N/A</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that all views on the topic can be captured. For example. Someone may have actively decided not to use SNWs professionally, and their views for their lack of use is an important use of data. Also gathering a sample of participants who use and do not use SNWs professionally will allow for this study to illustrate the boundaries and limits of use.
that participants can be working for local authorities or independently	<u>N/A</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To allow for a range of perspectives and experiences across the UK EP population to be captured.

Inclusion, Eligibility and Exclusion criteria for participation.

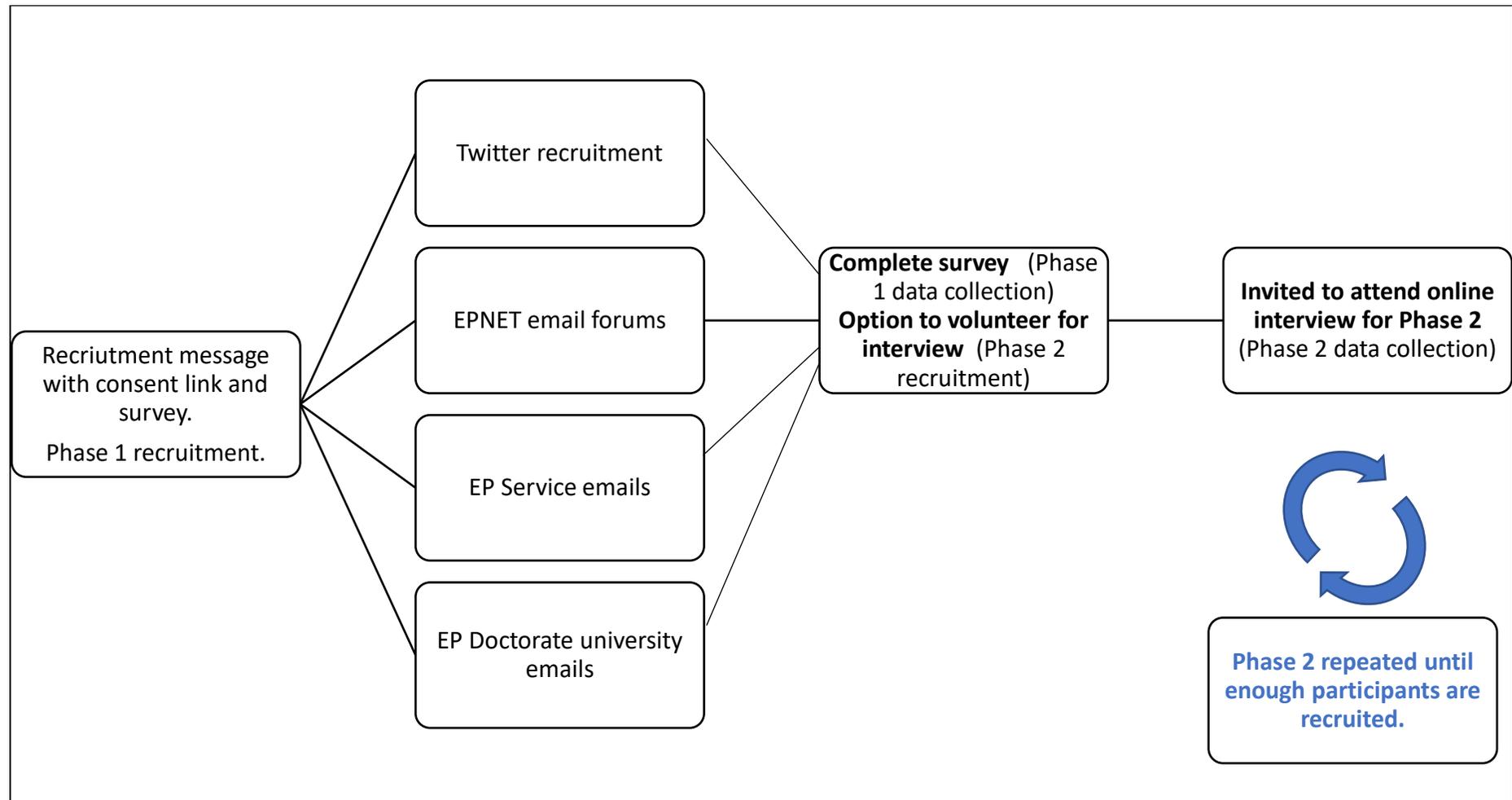
3.5.2 Recruitment Process/ Sampling approach

Participants were identified for the survey through an opportunity and volunteer sampling approach. This is a form of non-probability sampling as this project does not intend to create generalisations which pertain to the entire population. Participants were recruited for the initial survey via online platforms such as Twitter or EP email forums like EPNET. The advertisement posts were also emailed to the EP doctoral training courses and Educational Psychology services through principal EPs and course directors. Appendix K shows an example of the advertisement posts made.

Other EPs and TEPs were asked to share/'retweet' the post, leading to some prominent Twitter accounts sharing the post. One such account is the British Psychological Society's Division of Educational and Child Psychology (with more than 5000 followers). This chain-referral method of sampling is also known as snowball sampling. A similar recruitment approach was utilised by Wasilewski et al. (2019). This study found further recruitment occurred from participants resharing the initial Tweets, creating a Snowball sampling effect. Figure 3.3 graphically represents this study's recruitment process. The sampling process was repeated to ensure as many participants as possible were recruited over 8 weeks.

The recruitment advertisement posts contained a link that took participants to a blog where participants could read more about the inclusion and eligibility criteria, the research aims, and access the information sheet. This blog also had links to the consent form and the online survey. Appendix K includes a screenshot of this blog site.

Figure 3.3:



A representation of the participant recruitment process.

Once participants had completed the survey, they could volunteer to participate in the second part of data collection: the interviews. The interviews were conducted with a subgroup of participants. These were selected randomly after the questionnaire had been online and circulated for six weeks. Each participant was given a numerical code, and 10 codes were selected using a random number generator. 10 participants were initially contacted and invited to participate in an online interview. These participants had a two-week window to respond to a request to book an interview. 7 of these 10 participants responded to the request to book an interview.

3.5.3 Sample size

As the first part of the analysis conducted for RQ1 used descriptive statistics, the aim was to recruit as large of a sample size as possible for the questionnaire. This was because having more participants allowed for more confidence in any patterns seen in the data. Minimum and subsequent target sample sizes were calculated to provide a lower limit to the number of participants recruited. An online sample size calculator was used to calculate the sample size equations:
$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{z^2 * p(1-p)}{e^2} / 1 + \frac{z^2 * p(1-p)}{e^2 * N}$$
 N=population size, z= z-score, e=margin of error, and p=standard deviation. Table 3.2 below shows the potential minimum and target populations based on different confidence intervals and error margins.

An estimate of the total number of current practising U.K. EPs was needed to calculate this population. Around 4442 practising Educational Psychologists registered in 2018 (hcpc-U.K..org, 2018), and in 2021 around 609 funded TEPs in the country (Department for Education, 2020). These figures estimate a rough figure of a total EP

and TEP population at least 5051. This estimated total population size of 5051 was used to calculate the sample sizes.

Table 3:2

Aim:	Sample size	Confidence Interval	Margin of error
Minimum sample size	67	90%	10%
Target 1	95	95%	10%
Target 2	146	95%	8%
Reach target	357	95%	5%

Calculating possible sample sizes

From completing the sample size calculations seen above, it was clear that the minimum sample size for the survey would be 67. Once this was achieved, a range of further targets were created. These higher targets ensure a higher percentage confidence interval or reduce the margin of error.

The aim was for between 6-10 people to be interviewed. The analysis method used for this study was reflexive thematic analysis, which contains no specific formula or guide to calculate the sample size (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Some of Braun & Clarke's publications have suggested potential sample sizes, such as a minimum of 4-5 dense interviews for beginners (Braun & Clarke, 2013) or 6-10 Braun & Clarke's (2013) guidance for data collection for doctoral-level thematic analysis.

3.5.4 Sample Details

112 participants fully participated in the first phase of the study. A total of 126 people completed the consent for the survey and started to participate, but 14 participants, unfortunately, did not complete it. The survey dropout rate was 11%. When the data was filtered, a further 2 people had to be excluded as they were from the Republic of Ireland. Consequently, they did not meet the inclusion criteria of being an Educational Psychologist in the U.K. Therefore, the total number of survey responses was 110.

This meant that the minimal sample of 62 people was met along with the first target of 95, shown in Table 3.2

7 participants were involved in the second phase and participated in the online interview process. 15 participants initially volunteered for this, and 7 confirmed their availability within the selected time frame. The other 8 people were contacted to arrange interviews, but they did not respond with their availability. Each participant was given a gender-neutral pseudonym to protect their anonymity; their pseudonyms and roles can be found In Table 3.3.

Table 3.3:

Participant	Role
1. Pseudonym: Avery	TEP
2. Pseudonym: Bailey	EP- Private practice
3. Pseudonym: Carter	EP- Local authority
4. Pseudonym: Devon	EP- Local authority
5. Pseudonym: Ellis	TEP
6. Pseudonym: Flynn	EP- Local authority
7. Pseudonym: Garnet	TEP

Table 3.3: Names and information about phase 2 participants.

3.6 Quantitative Data Analysis Approach

The numerical data from the online survey were analysed using descriptive statistics. Tables were created (see chapter 4) to enable the researcher to make comparisons of the amounts, frequency and variations presented in the data. These comparisons are presented within the findings alongside various graphical and visual representations. These representations are in the form of bar charts and pie graphs alongside statistical tables and have been created to illustrate and support written descriptions of the data.

3.7 Qualitative Data Analysis Approach

3.7.1. Reflexive Thematic Analysis

Many versions of Thematic Analysis (TA) have evolved as ways of analysing qualitative data (Willig & Rogers, 2017). The study solely uses the latest TA approach developed by Braun & Clarke, (2021b). This new approach has several changes from previous studies; a crucial addition is the adjective Reflexive. This approach places importance on the researcher's subjectivity, situatedness, awareness and questions (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Thus, as well as detailing the six step process taken to analyse data, some of the author's critical reflections will also be highlighted in this section below to demonstrate the reflexive process. This RTA process was conducted firstly on the survey data, and then separately on the interview data.

Reflexive TA (RTA) was selected as the qualitative methodology for the following reasons: Firstly, that RTA is easily accessible (Byrne, 2021). This is because RTA provides a rigorous, detailed, conclusive, and systematic approach to coding and theme development. This clear system also allows for transparently describing and communicating the processes involved.

Secondly, the method was selected as it allows for flexibility (Braun & Clarke, 2021a) for fluidity and recursively (Ho et al., 2017). Other qualitative methods require coding frames and assessing Cohen's kappa values to ensure the coding is "accurate" and could be replicated between researchers (Byrne, 2021). However, RTA encourages the researcher to interact with the data thoughtfully to enable analysis. With this flexibility and fluidity, RTA allows the researcher to investigate and consider their own subjectivities, biases, and how preconceived beliefs may impact the research (Ho et al., 2017). This strength of RTA was necessary for this study as the researcher had

previously used SNWs for professional purposes and continued to engage with SNWs during the time in which this research was conducted. This engagement with SNWs may have impacted the researcher's relationship with the data. Consequently, a methodology that recognised this and provided frameworks for awareness and transparency was important.

Also, the flexibility of coding described above also translates to RTAs allowance of both inductive and deductive coding in analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021b). As two different research questions required two different approaches to the dataset (one descriptive and one exploratory), a more deductive approach was appropriate for RQ1 than RQ2. RTA provides a way for both approaches to coding to coexist.

Finally, Reflexive TA was selected as it fits the researcher's ontological and epistemological stance. Critical realist ontology acknowledges that there is complexity inherent in the social world. The researcher will have their own situated perspectives that will impact the "reality" they uncover in their analysis. In RTA, the research determines the outcome of the work (Campbell et al., 2021). Reflexive TA recognises that no two researchers will intersect and examine the data differently.

3.7.2 Preparing for Data Analysis

Braun & Clarke, (2021b) highlight the importance of researchers having reflexivity around their specific topic. At the start of the process, the researcher wrote a reflexive statement as suggested for this methodology. This reflexive statement supported the researcher to consider the relationship to the research and be aware of their own perspectives and influences. Figure 3.5 below includes the reflexive statement.

Figure 3.5:

Researcher Reflection: Situating myself in relation to this research topic.

I have a complex relationship with this research topic, as I can see benefits but also the negatives of professional use of online social networks.

This research topic is one that I have been personally curious about as it has had an impact on my journey and experiences as a trainee. Whilst I am not someone who posts on social networking websites for professional purposes and would describe my use as infrequent, I have a range of peers who do use these sites. I have heard my peers describe it informally as a 'lifeline' whilst training during the Covid-19 pandemic. It offered them another support network when their EP Service office was closed, and they had no way to meet or integrated into a new team. These online networks became another way to have professional discussions or ask questions. I have also been impressed with some of the resources or knowledge my peers have and have then found that it has come from social networking websites.

I infrequently use these networks to find resources myself as I am uncertain whether I have found the "best" EPs to follow.

I have two main reasons for not interacting and posting publicly on these social networking websites. Firstly, A lack of confidence, whether it is a psychological awareness of how I am a "baby" EP, or whether it is an imposter syndrome experience or learned stereotype threat related to gender (power of female voices). Either way, I do not feel confident enough to have an online voice that I believe others want to hear from. Secondly, I wonder about the professional appropriateness of online posting. I feel unsure how to navigate this territory, and what is "allowed" and "safe".

A typed version of a reflexive statement from research journal, pre data collection.

3.7.3 Familiarisation

The familiarisation process began with the transcription process. Orthographic transcription was used as recommended by authors Braun & Clarke (2021b). The transcription process was guided by Notation System for Orthographic Transcription (revised from Clarke & Braun, (2013) and guidance from a presentation from Braun & Clarke on transcribing audio (Braun, & Clarke, n.d.). These resources provided guidance that the Orthographic transcription process is active and involves a range of decisions, which means that some changes are made to the data, as not all partial words are included (as they would for verbatim transcription).

Based on the guidance above, the following decisions were made regarding transcriptions:

- The transcriptions would include a complete and clear record of all utterances without corrected grammar, slang or spoken abbreviations.
- Paralinguistic features (laughing/crying/hesitation) were excluded.
- Punctuation was not added to the initial transcription. Punctuation was added carefully in a separate transcription session, as if it is misplaced, it can alter meaning.
- When the audio quality was unclear, the transcripts would indicate with italics that this is a "best guess" of what was spoken.
- Some data was also removed to protect anonymity, such as location. When this occurred, square parenthesis was used along with a definition of the deleted material, e.g. [university name].

After transcription, each interview was read more than once. At this stage, the qualitative questionnaire data was also read through twice. On the third reading, all

data was printed, and brief pencil notes were made regarding some potential codes that may be seen. The two datasets were then analysed separately.

Using Braun & Clarke's (2021b) familiarisation questions, initial critical engagement and reflective notes were made for each interview. This can be seen in Appendix L. The reasons for using familiarisation questions are explained in section 4.7 below, where quality is discussed further.

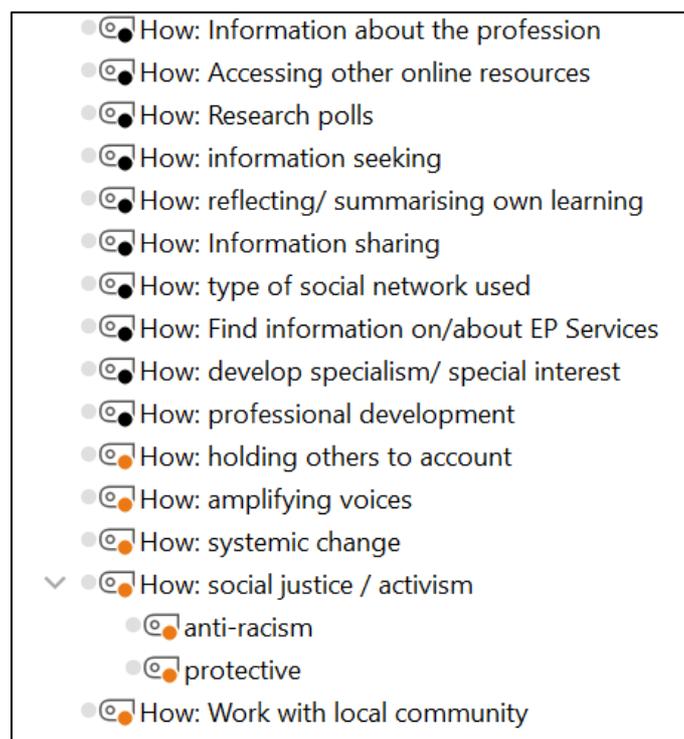
3.7.4 Coding process

Once the data was transcribed, it was transferred to data analysis software MAXQDA. Each interview was coded systematically, firstly for RQ1 and then RQ2. The discussions were explored closely, and segments of texts with meaning related to the research questions were given a code label.

The coding process involved separate exploration of both RQ because they both required a slightly different coding approach. Braun & Clarke, (2021b) highlight how Reflexive TA can take place on a spectrum of inductive (research-led) to deductive (theory-led), and a spectrum from semantic (face-value meaning of content) to latent (underlying patterns and assumptions). The coding for this project adopted deductive and inductive approaches and utilised semantic and latent analysis. This was in consideration of the 2 main RQs where RQ1 sought to identify specific information. This coding was informed by the researcher's knowledge and understanding of pre-existing themes (e.g., in the systemic literature review, learning, communication within the same profession, and communicating with others were key themes). Whereas RQ2 had a more exploratory focus due to no previous information being held in mind by the researcher.

These approaches were taken because RQ1 concerns "how" EPs use SNWs, and only descriptive surface levels codes are needed. Also, due to the research findings from the literature review, the researcher had some theoretical understanding of how professionals use such websites. Consequently, this previous theoretical understanding meant that the researchers' codes were slightly more deductive. Figure 3.6 below shows the initial round of data analysis. The black codes in the figure are deductive codes for RQ1, which were influenced by the prior theory. The orange codes in the figure were developed inductively for RQ1 by engaging with the meaning of the text.

Figure 3.6:



Initial codes for RQ1 following the first coding round of all data.

As RQ2 is concerned with exploring participants' perspectives, this data was coded inductively. Coding for RQ2 used the data as the starting point to try and capture only the meaning in this dataset and focuses only on representing the participants' articulated experiences. Coding for RQ2 involved mainly semantic codes for the first

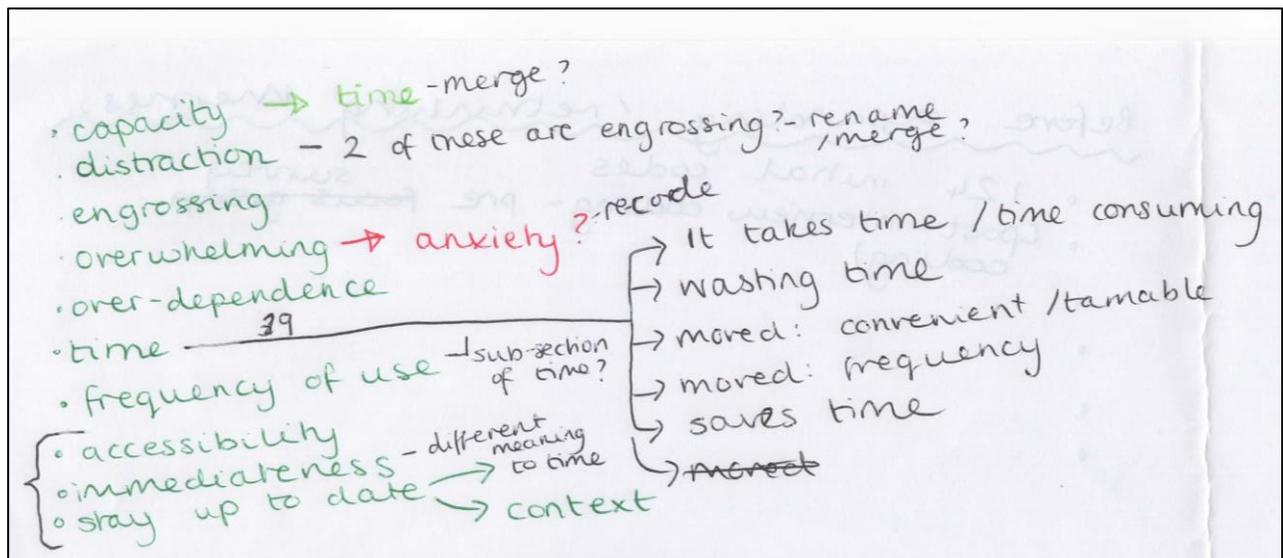
two rounds of coding, but more latent meanings were explored in the third round of coding.

3.7.5 Evolving codes

Codes were reviewed and altered. The coding process continued and evolved through the second and third coding rounds. Some codes were too specific and tight, and others were too broad or loose. An example of part of an interview transcript after first coding is in Appendix M. The same interview transcript after the final coding can be found in Appendix N to demonstrate how codes changed over time. The entire transcript is not included to ensure participant confidentiality, as all information on their online activity and accounts may render them identifiable.

There was a set process to alter codes that were too broad. MAXQDA provided a code system window with a list of all current codes and information about the number of responses next to each code. When one code label had more than 30 segments attributed to it, the code was explored to see whether it was too broad. Handwritten notes were made to think through changes to the coding system before any were made to the MAXQDA transcriptions. One example of this process is with the code label “time”, as depicted in Figure 3.7 below. Time had 39 data segments attributed to it, and many of the data segments were very different. All codes considered similar or related to time were collated (see the green handwriting). The figure also shows thoughts and considerations about changing codes (see the black handwriting). These considerations were made by revisiting data excerpts coded under “time”. New codes were generated to be more specific and suitable. The code “Time” finally became “time-consuming, wasting time, saving time, and frequency of use”.

Figure 3.7:



Example of thoughts process around evolving codes

Figure 3.8 also illustrated how some codes were merged as they were otherwise too narrow. For example, the code overwhelming only had 2 coding excerpts attached to it. Consequently, it was re-coded to anxiety. Other codes were also altered as other labels were more appropriate. For example, the code “distraction” had 13 excerpts attached, but 2 of these codes fit more accurately with the code “engrossing”. Another example of codes being made more specific during this process includes “accessibility” recoded as “frequency of time” or “convenient”.

Once new ideas for more specific codes were made, the third coding round involved looking at individual coding segments and deciding whether the code selected was appropriate. This process was conducted using MAXQDA software ‘smart coding tool’ as shown in Figure 3.8. This process involved considering whether there was frequent overlap in certain codes, meaning they were not specific enough or needed to be combined.

A decision was made to stop coding when the researcher felt they had reached the stage of re-tweaking codes and labels. To test whether the coding process felt complete, the researcher imagined losing the data and just having codes available.

This is an exercise suggested by (Terry et al., 2017). At this stage, the researcher felt that consistency and thoroughness had been met, as the codes summarised the diversity of the meaning within the dataset.

Figure 3.8:

Document	Coded Segments	Codes	Comments
Interview 7- Garnet, Pos. 80	I tried to think about if you know, potentially, well I don't I don't know how this could happen, but it might happen. You know, if someone went to tribunals as an EP or if someone kind of was looking at, looking you up and thinking about that, I wonder if it would, Because I personally don't know what other people's perspectives are I wonder if it would work in your favour or not, you know, having that personal one. And what if your opinion doesn't match something that you've written in a report or I wonder how it could be twisted almost. So that's something that I think might potentially be kind of something that would be a negative in the future,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> professional standards public Opinion different perspectives 	
Interview 7- Garnet, Pos. 92	. Yeah. But yeah, I think that that, I think that would be something that you know potentially in the future are all kind of even like private EP services I think would be a really good thing for them to use if local authorities are bound by those boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> private EPS wider organisational policy ethics 	
Interview 6- Flynn, Pos. 42	The only negative I could see is if maybe more was shared that then should be or, you know, maybe someone breach confidentiality or something like that but having said that I have not experienced that.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ethics 	X
Interview 6- Flynn, Pos. 66	well I'm sure we must have some kind of, I don't even know what that would be called Media Department, I don't know. I mean, part of IT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wider organisational policy 	
Interview 5- Ellis, Pos. 59	And it seems much more abstracted and academic, in a way. And I think maybe that's part of the problem as well is that we talk about consultation in quite abstract terms and it's harder to you know, to have to describe it in and out as Yeah, online in a way. And also I suppose there's also privacy, you know, ethics as well around, maybe, I don't know I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not theoretical / academic ethics 	
Interview 5- Ellis, Pos. 107	And we're doing it online, and then woohoo there's a whole platform online that we can also get stuck in. So there's this there are very few boundaries between it, it's all kind of one big, you know. It's also really, I think I've also probably accelerated some of my learning and have probably learned more and faster through more reading more access to it. Had I been you know I haven't had to commute,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> saves time being a trainee expanding previous learning accessible (+) Covid/Lockdown Pandemic 	
Interview 5- Ellis, Pos.	Maybe some of mv cohort who are talking about their journey but also talking about Ed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> public 	

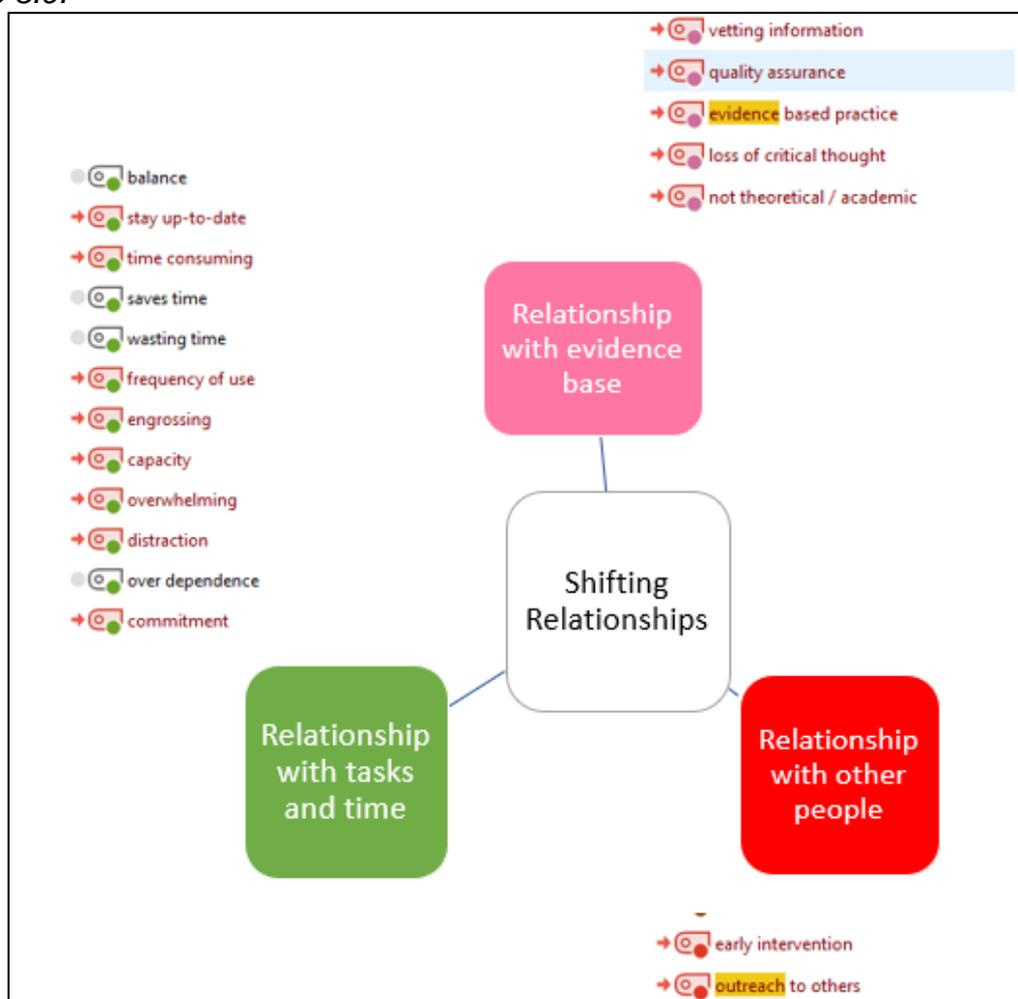
Example of the MAXQDA software used to compare codes.

3.7.6 Generating Initial Themes

Once questionnaire data were coded at least three times, the codes were organised into themes by clustering codes based on common meanings. Braun & Clarke (2021b) emphasise the importance of themes capturing shared meanings around central organising concepts. To develop the initial theme, the researcher grouped similar themes and colour coded them together on MAXQDA. This allowed for initial patterns of meaning across the dataset to occur. During this process, not all codes were used

as they lacked relevance or did not align with themes. The different coloured groups were moved to a document, and the researcher began to see whether there were any broad ideas that codes could be clustered around. Some of the initial themes created are included in figure 3.9 below. This mapping was an initial provisional exploration of how codes might relate and form themes. This process was then repeated for the interview data.

Figure 3.9:



An example of initial themes and subthemes.

3.7.7 Reviewing & developing Themes

Themes were revisited to ensure that they were developing in the right direction. Some of these initial themes had weaknesses and they needed to be redeveloped. At this point,

the process to altering themes moved to paper. Codes were grouped with post-it notes holding the named theme. A record of the process was kept using mind maps on A4 paper. These were collated into a reflective journal file.

Some initial themes were deemed inappropriate; the boundaries were unclear, there was not enough meaningful data, or the data was too diverse. One initial theme (shown in 3.9 above) was formed around meaning that appeared to discuss how SNWs were disrupting, shifting, or transforming different aspects of practice. This theme had many names but is depicted above as 'shifting relationships'. This is one example of themes that had to be scrapped as it was too diverse and wide-ranging; Almost all the codes in the dataset could have been connected to this theme. Other themes were scrapped as they appeared to be "topic summaries", something that (Braun & Clarke, 2021b) suggest should not occur. Rather than describing participants meaning in the data.

3.7.8 Refining, defining & naming themes.

The analysis process was complete when the researcher felt they could write a definition of each theme's central organising concept. These definitions are displayed in Chapter 4, Table 4.14. Final theme names were created considering Braun & Clarke (2021b) advice to avoid one-worded theme names. Once this process was complete for the survey data, it was repeated for the interview data.

3.8 Ensuring the quality of the research.

3.8.1 Quantitative Data

Validity

The validity of a measure is the extent to which it adequately measures the phenomenon or theoretical concept (Sapsford, 2006). The survey was designed to

measure the EP use of SNWs. Scholars traditionally refer to three aspects of validity: content, criterion, and construct validity (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2010). These are discussed in turn below:

- Content validity is the extent to which a test measures and represents the ranges of all aspects of the subject matter being investigated. In this study, content validity was improved by piloting the survey with Trainee EPs and asking for feedback regarding whether anything additional should be needed. The feedback included the suggestion that "other" boxes allowed participants to express use beyond what was depicted in the questions.
- Criterion validity is how an instrument corresponds to other external measures of the theoretical concept (Field, 2013). Due to the lack of literature on EPs' use of SNWs, there were no specific measures or surveys exploring this area. However, in this study, the criterion validity of some of the research questions is strengthened by adapting survey items that have been previously used in similar studies. For example, the matrix question has been inspired by other studies (Appendix I).
- Construct validity is how a measure can measure that phenomenon or theoretical concept. For this study, construct validity is the extent to which SNW "use" is measured. It was important to understand what SNW "use" entails to ensure construct validity. Supervision discussions and conversations with peers was helpful in gaining feedback that "use" was quantified and measured fully in the survey. Some items were removed from the initial survey due to low construct validity. For example, EPs were not asked about the number of minutes or hours they spend engaging in SNWs for professional use, as it was felt too challenging for EPs to give an accurate and unbiased answer to this

question. Several factors can threaten construct validity, such as bias and researcher effects, as participants may not respond truthfully. In this study, the survey is anonymous, reducing some threats to gaining an accurate measure of SNW use.

Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which a study is consistent and stable in its measurement (Langdrige & Hagger-Johnson, 2013). Several ways to ensure or check for reliability do not apply to this research study. For example, interrater reliability, where judgements in measurement made by different researchers are compared to see whether they are similar.

Surveys are seen to have reliability as they are presented in a consistent format for all participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). To ensure a consistent format was possible, the survey was checked to ensure there were no usability problems. An initial pilot survey was completed via google forms. Then a second pilot survey was designed to check that the Qualtrics interface worked appropriately (for example, delivering the right questions in the same order).

As reliability is concerned with consistency over time, some of the questions used within the survey were constructed through questions used in previous studies by other authors. For example, the matrix question has been inspired by other studies (Appendix I). One advantage of adapting or using pre-existing questions is that they will have been extensively tested at the time of first use and, therefore, should have some reliability. However, Neuman (2006) explained that there are three main types of reliability to consider when using previous questions. Considering these reliability principles led to the researcher mainly designing their own questions, apart from the

matrix question in Appendix I. This is because many questions used in previous research would not have a representative or equivalent reliability when given to EPs and TEPs. The summarised exploration of Neuman's (2006) three forms of reliability is presented below:

The first aspect considered was stability reliability, a concern regarding whether a measure or question can yield the same response at different occasions. Consequently, the researcher avoided topical questions that would have focused on specific 'hot topics' when looking at previously used question items. E.g., Question items that specifically discussed a function of social networking platforms that no longer exists or is no longer popular.

Secondly, representative reliability was also considered. Representative reliability concerns whether a question would yield the same response when asked to different subgroups of a population. The questions from previous research had low representative validity, as they were from other parts of the world and from other professions. Consequently, not all aspects of their questions were appropriate, as they were not representative of the profession. The questions could not be "recycled"; consequently, the phrasing of the questions needed to be adapted. Without adaptation, there would have been effects of potential low reliability on the data ultimately obtained from them. Furthermore, it was more appropriate to create new questions for most of the survey design, as the population differs from other studies where other professions have been used.

Finally, the Equivalence reliability of the question items was also considered. Equivalence reliability concerns whether a measure or question yields consistent responses across indicators of the same concept. The survey items had to measure

the same concepts to ensure equivalence reliability. For example, the question items needed to provide a realistic possibility for EP or TEP use. Several statements were discounted as they would not have had equivalence reliability to EPs and TEPs. E.g., "I use SNWs to purchase pedagogical items". Moreover, it was more appropriate to create new questions for most of the survey design, as the concepts being measured were not equivalent.

3.8.2 Qualitative Data

Guidance has been provided on how to ensure the validity of qualitative research. This study presents the qualitative data from the open-response survey and the interview questions. (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1986) suggest that researchers must ensure the information they collect is trustworthy. They indicate that research must have credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

This research project aimed to achieve 'trustworthiness' across the above constructs in several ways, as detailed below in each expanded sub-section:

Credibility

Credibility is a form of trustworthiness that focuses on how a study's findings are believable, appropriate, and linked with reality. Credibility asks the researcher to link the study's findings with reality so that there is truth to the findings. Guba & Lincoln (1994) propose that one way to ascertain credibility is to use Triangulation. Triangulation is where multiple methods, data sources or theories are combined to provide a more detailed and thorough understanding of what is being studied. This study included methods and data triangulation (Stahl & King, 2020) both research questions were analysed using qualitative and quantitative data from surveys and interviews. Having collected data from two separate methodologies enabled the

researcher to see whether there were similarities and consistency and to establish patterns within the data.

Another way in which credibility was achieved in this study is through 'member checks', another principle proposed by Guba & Lincoln (1985; 1994). Member checks were achieved in this study by allowing the researcher's interpretations of the participant's comments to be checked during the semi-structured interviews. In this study, when the meaning was ambiguous or if the researcher was aware that they were making connections and inferences or sensed a tone to the data, the researcher paused to ask whether these ideas and reactions were appropriate and correct. This allowed the participant to clarify intentions and correct errors or elaborate to ensure sufficient detail was present for an accurate interpretation.

Transferability

Transferability is the extent to which a study's findings have usefulness, relevance, and applicability to other people and contexts. Transferability is often synonymous with generalisability (the idea that a research study's findings could be applied to the population at large). Transferability is a specific type of qualitative generalisability that Braun & Clarke (2021b) state can potentially apply to all Reflexive TA forms. Braun & Clarke (2021b) describe how transferability can be found within a study when all details about the study's setting, participants, and circumstances are described fully within the methodology. When such detail is provided, it allows the reader to understand the study's context. Within this study, the participant's demographic data provides some detail into the circumstances. The experience levels (in years), ages, job roles and sectors of the participant cohorts for both data sets are provided for readers to consider whether the results potentially apply to their known contexts and settings. For the

interviews, this is provided within the methodology. For the Survey, this detail is provided within the findings.

Guba & Lincoln (1994) suggest that to ensure transferability, researchers must provide a base that makes transferability judgements possible for the potential readers. They suggest that this can be done through "thick description", providing cultural and social context surrounding data collection. One way in which further details are outlined in this study is through providing the context within the introduction chapter. This discusses some of the historical and structural factors surrounding the EP and TEP population. This allows this research to acknowledge that participants' ideals and positions have inflected context.

As this study has a small interview sample size, it's data will not resemble views of the entire EP and TEP population, nor was this the intention. However, their thoughts and experiences can still be learnt from, and this ability to provide a space for reflection and learning allows a reader to consider whether the shared perspectives within this work can apply to their own contexts.

Dependability

Dependability is the extent to which the research process is logical, traceable, and clearly documented (Tobin & Begley, 2004). This documentation allows readers to examine the methodology and judge how trustworthy the findings generated by the research study are. A study with good dependability should present its data collection and analysis processes clearly and in a way that enables others to judge the processes as consistent and repeatable. This means that others can trust that the research has trustworthy practices. This study provides dependability by detailing all the data

collection design and analysis steps taken so that another researcher could clearly examine and understand as necessary.

Another way of ensuring dependability includes peer scrutiny or peer-debriefing to ask another researcher to read and react to interpretation to confirm that they would have made similar judgements. In this study, the codes and theming process were discussed with a research supervisor to check for logic regarding the decisions made. However, as the qualitative analysis method employed in this study is reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021b), this method acknowledges that each researcher would make some decisions based upon their own contexts and experiences. Thus, while the research supervisor did agree with the decisions made, it is the case that another researcher could arrive at different codes due to their own individual contexts and understanding of language. Consequently, this study does not claim or aim for another researcher to arrive at the exact same coding. Due to the methodology and philosophy used, reflexivity (described below) offers an additional form of validity for this research project.

A further way this study's researcher facilitated dependability was to keep a reflexive research diary. When analysing data, this diary became a method for the researcher to record the practice of bracketing. This research diary is discussed later in this chapter. This diary is where the researcher noted which part of the research was their own personal thoughts and interpretation, and which were facts embedded in the representation from the participant. This process helped the researcher take part in reflexive auditing and allowed the research to consider where their own values were separate from the participant's.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which any research findings are based on the participant's narrative and words, and not on researcher interpretations that could cause bias. According to Guba & Lincoln (1994), confirmability is established when a study has transferability, dependability, and credibility. As described above, the researcher has endeavoured to achieve all three aspects. Below are some specific examples of how aspects that have already conferred trustworthiness, such as the research diary, also helped ensure confirmability.

One step that was taken in this study to ensure confirmability is neutrality. This is where the researcher has taken steps to remain neutral. For example, when analysing the data, the researcher recognised that they were projecting their feelings of excitement for innovation into the data they were reading. This means that specific passages were being read and coded with a tone of possibility, excitement, and positivity. However, on the second reading it became clear that there was not necessarily a positive or enthusiastic undertone to such passages. In fact, they could also be read as more cautious or ambiguous. Having a research diary and recoding the data allowed the researcher to re-check and recode without instilling their own emotions into the coding process. By documenting such processes and keeping a reflexive diary, the researcher kept notes to ensure the data analysis decision and coding process was clearly derived from the data.

Another way this research has endeavoured to achieve confirmability is by documenting the analysis process and providing images and examples of this process. Through these images, it is hoped that it will be clear how the researcher's interpretations were derived from the data.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is another aspect of this study that supports confirmability. The method of Reflexive TA (Braun & Clarke, 2021b) stresses the importance of the researcher interrogating themselves as they start and progress through analysis. The researcher built and kept an audit trail and a reflexive account of code development during thematic analysis to ensure reflexivity within this study. Furthermore, this code development and process were taken under supervision. This reflexive account also included reflections on the researcher's subjectivity and on the emergent themes. Examples of this diary can be seen in Figure 3.8 and Appendix O.

Furthermore, reflexivity is a mindset that does not only apply to the analysis. Yardley (2000) highlights the importance of reflexivity around every methodological and analytical choice. This method chapter carefully includes examples of the researcher's decisions and the rationale or justification for each choice. Figure 3.5 consists of an example of the researcher's consideration of their own values and preconceptions and how this may have impacted the design and analysis decisions.

3.9 Ethical Considerations.

Ethical approval was obtained from the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust Research Ethics committee (TREC). This was obtained on the 25th May 2021. (Appendix P contains approval and application documents). No further approval was needed from the researcher's placement setting. Several steps were taken to ensure this research strictly followed the British Psychological Society's Code of Human Research Ethics (British Psychological Society, 2021a). As this research is designed to be conducted online, it also adhered to good practice guidelines of the British Psychological Society's

Ethics Guidelines for Internet-mediated research (British Psychological Society, 2021b). How this research upheld ethical values is outlined below.

3.9.1 Risk

There is unlikely to be any associated risk from this research. The only added risk was that if participants were distressed it may have been more challenging to see this when interviewing virtually. However, this was mitigated by giving participants the ability to refuse to answer questions or stop the interview. Also, time was allocated after each interview to debrief participants and provide support if necessary. The participants had an opportunity to reflect on their experiences at the end of the interview. They were also reminded that they could take further reflections to their psychological supervision sessions.

3.9.2 Informed Consent and the Right to Withdraw

Participants received an information sheet about the research aims and process. An example is provided in Appendix Q. This information sheet enabled participants to freely give informed consent. This information sheet also explained participants' ability to withdraw their consent and have all data destroyed until a stated date before analysis (31st October 2021). The consent form for the survey is in Appendix R, and the consent form for the interview is in Appendix S.

3.9.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The survey responses were kept anonymous from the researcher, with participants generating their own identification codes. The form to volunteer for the interview with a name and email address was separate from the questionnaire. Pseudonyms were used throughout notes, transcriptions, analysis and reporting to protect anonymity and

confidentiality. Any other identifying information such as the participant's gender or ethnicity was removed. The study will not include the detail of the content of participants' online posts that could be searched (such as the exact phrasing of online posts or account names). This study does not collect or use information from a 'public' domain. The information sheet informed participants that despite all the above steps to ensure anonymity, they may be able to recognise their own responses in the final report due to the limited number of participants.

Valid consent was obtained from all participants via a designated consent page with a check box. This was located at the start of the online survey. This is recommended good practice from the BPS regarding internet-mediated research. The information sheet also made participants aware responses were confidential. This confidentiality would only be breached if there was a concern that the participant was in danger or could pose a danger to others, as in line with the BPS (2014) Code of Human Research Ethics. All interviews took place in a secure and private setting using headphones to ensure only the researcher could hear the participant's voice. Transcription was also completed using headphones.

3.9.4 Power Balance

The researcher ensured that no pressure was exerted on any participant regarding the research. Participants understood that their participation was entirely voluntary. Participants were given the power to stop the interview or refuse to answer any question. Participants had the option to skip questions on the survey or exit the survey. There were no incentives for participants.

3.9.5 Data Protection

The researcher complied with the (Data Protection Act, 2018) when processing and storing any personal data. The online survey data and personal information was collected by a University of Essex Qualtrics XM account. Qualtrics user servers are protected by high-end firewall systems and regularly perform scans to patch vulnerabilities. Qualtrics has SOC 2 Type II certification, ISO 27001, 27017 and 27018 certifications, alongside 'HITRUST' certification. The data files were also backed up. Data was backed up to the University of Essex secure cloud system 'Box', compliant with all GDPR and security requirements. When being processed, the data has been secured on password-protected devices. All data was stored with a passphrase generated by the participant. This has allowed preventing storing names. Participants were informed that their data was anonymised, stored, and shared.

3.10 Chapter Summary.

This chapter explored the aims and purpose of this research and then explored the research design, alongside the philosophy and justifications of this research methodology. The next chapter will detail the findings of this research.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Chapter Overview.

This chapter aims to document the findings from the data collected in this study. These results will be discussed further in Chapter 5. The findings below are considered in the order the questions were shown to participants.

4.2 Demographic Information

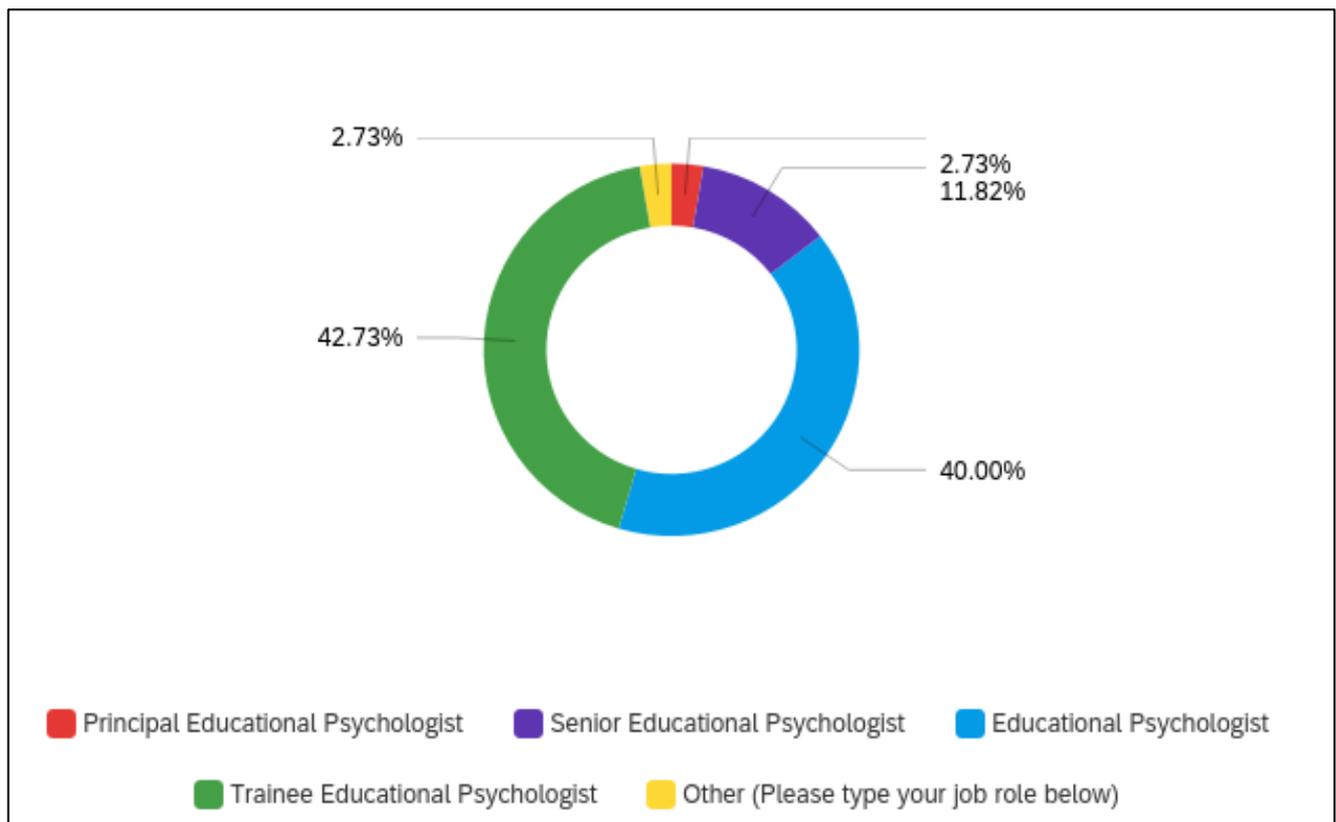
The demographic information section of the survey first asked participants about their current job roles. The results can be seen in Table 4.1 and represented graphically in Figure 4.1. This suggests that the majority of participants were TEPs. However, some professionals selected the 'other' option. The written explanations given allowed them to be re-categorised. One participant was “about to start first EP job in September,” and 2 participants were EPs but working independently or in private practice. This put the final number of EPs at 47 and the percentage of EPs at 42.73%. 47 participants were Trainee EPs, and 63 were qualified EPs (Either EPs, Senior or Principal EPs).

Table 4.1:

	N (number of participants)	Percentage of participants
Principal Educational Psychologist	3	2.73%
Senior Educational Psychologist	13	11.82%
Educational Psychologist	44	40.0%
Trainee Educational Psychologist	47	42.73%
Other (Please type your job role below)	3	2.73%
Total:	110	100%

Job roles of participants

Figure 4.1:

*Job roles of participants*

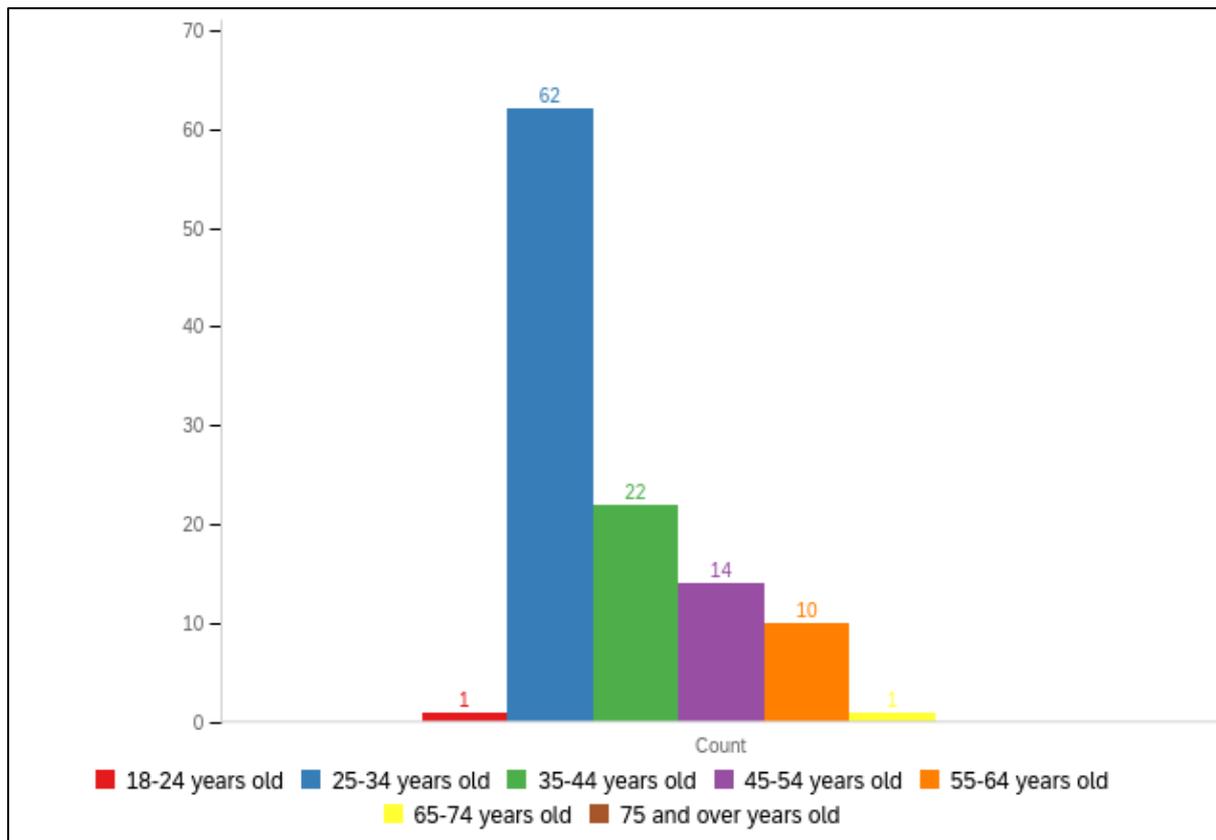
Secondly, the survey asked about the age of the participants. As shown in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2. The findings were that over half of the participants (57.27%) were aged 34 and under. Only one participant was under 24 years old, and only one was over 65.

Table 4.2:

	N (Participants)	Percentage of participants	Percentage cumulative frequency
18-24 years old	1	0.91%	0.91%
25-34 years old	62	56.36%	57.27%
35-44 years old	22	20.00%	77.27%
45-54 years old	14	12.73%	90%
55-64 years old	10	9.09%	99.09%
65-74 years old	1	0.91%	100%

Age of the participants

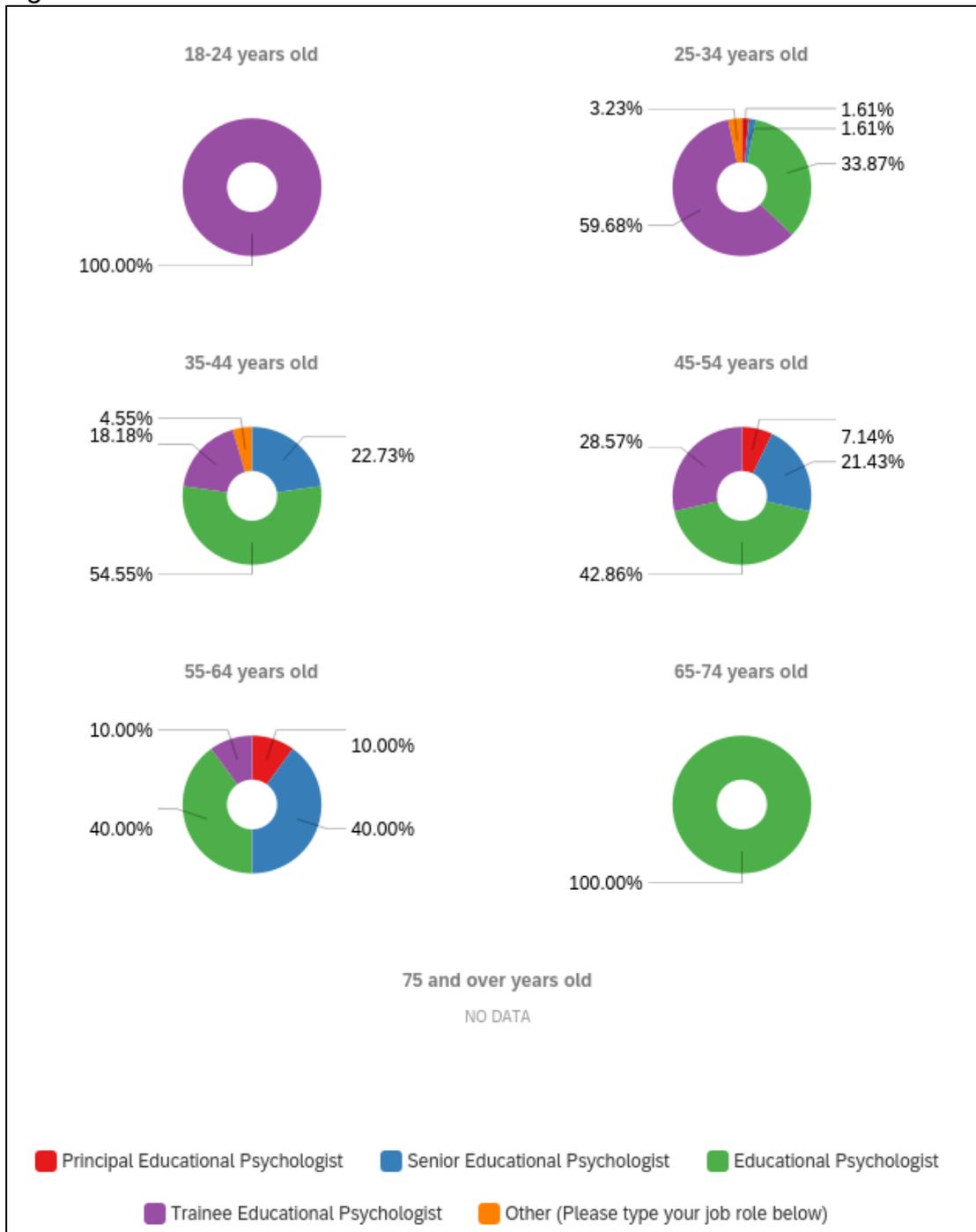
Figure 4.2:



Age of the participants

Figure 4.3 illustrates what job roles are found in each age category of participants. EPs and Trainee EPs were found amongst all age categories apart from 1. Senior EPs were all above the age of 35, and principal EPs were above 45.

Figure 4.3:



Job roles of EPs by age category.

Participants were asked about their geographical location to see whether the survey had reached all areas of the U.K. A significantly large proportion of participants came

from England (92.73%). Therefore, this research predominantly reflects practice in England, as shown in *Table 4.3*.

Table 4.3:

	N	Percentage of participants
England	102	92.7%
Wales	4	3.6%
Scotland	3	2.7%
Northern Ireland	1	0.91%

Geographical Location of the participants

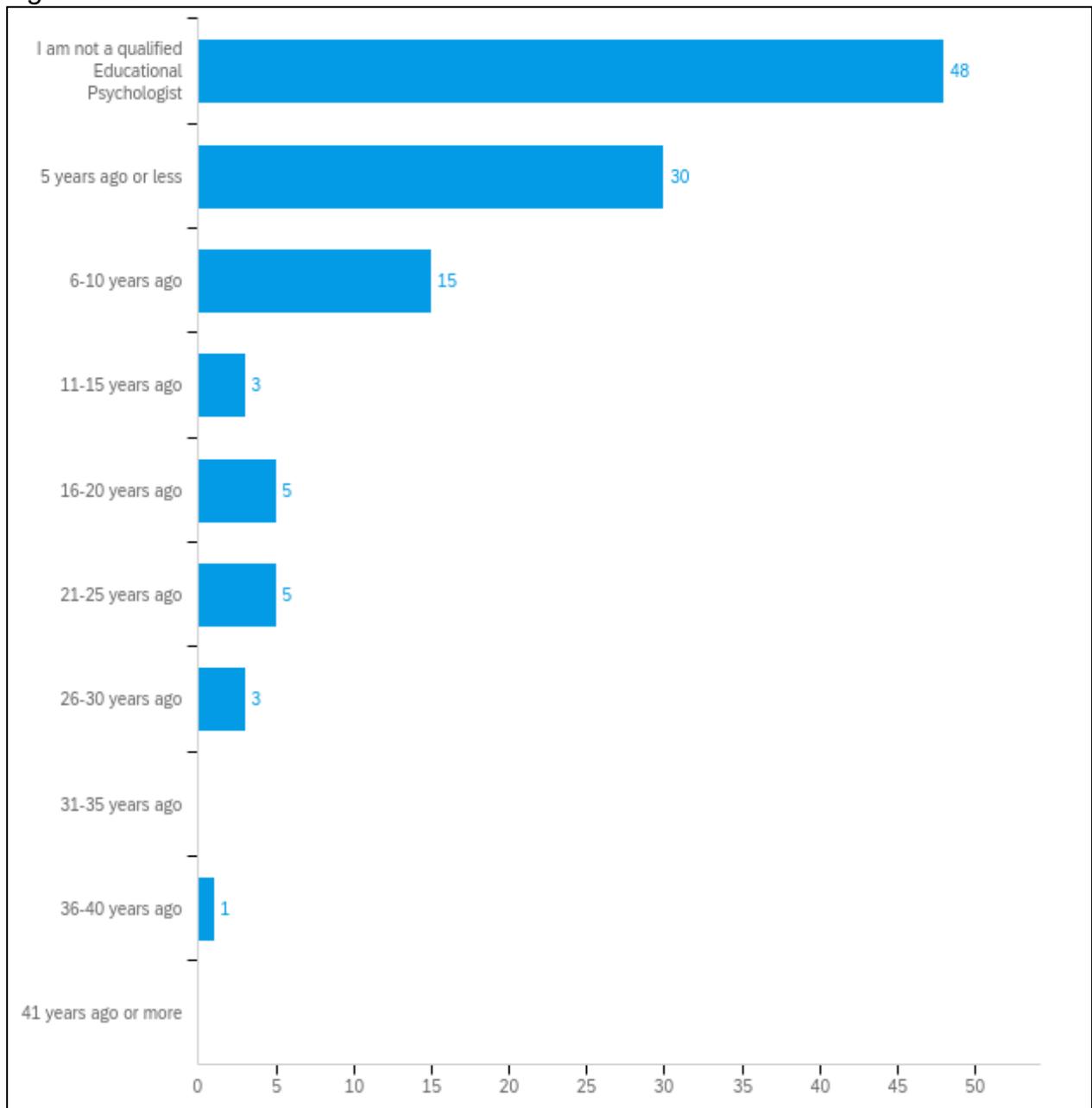
The survey also asked participants about their years of experience as an educational psychologist. Figure 4.5 illustrates how most respondents were newer to the profession. The survey results show that 84.55% of participants had less than 10 years of experience, and 70.91% had less than 5 years of experience, as Table 4.4 illustrates. Most participants were still in training as TEPs (47 participants), and one participant was no longer a TEP but still waiting for registration to officially qualify.

Table 4.4:

Date participants qualified as an EP:	N	Percentage of participants	Percentage Cumulative frequency
I am not an educational psychologist	48	43.64%	43.64%
5 years ago, or less	30	27.27%	70.91%
6-10 years ago,	15	13.64%	84.55%
11-15 years ago,	3	2.73%	87.28%
16-20 years ago,	5	4.55%	91.83%
21-25 years ago,	5	4.55%	96.28%
26-30 years ago,	3	2.73%	99.11%
31-35 years ago,	0	0%	99.11%
36-40 years ago,	1	0.91%	100%
41 years ago, or more	0	0%	

Table showing number of years' experience, calculated by date of qualification as an EP.

Figure 4.4:



The number of years of experience, calculated by date of qualification as an EP.

The survey asked whether the participants had BPS or HCPC registration; this was used to exclude any participants who had said they were a qualified EP but were not HCPC registered. No participants had to be excluded. Some participants had both HCPC and BPS registration, as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5:

Professional registration:	N
Chartered Member of the BPS (CPsychol)	24
HCPC Registered	61
I am a TEP working towards the BPS(CPsychol) and HCPC registrations	48

Professional registrations of the participants.

From the demographic information included above, the following can be ascertained about the population of this research:

- The population are all professionally registered and certified EPs or working towards becoming qualified (TEPs).
- Most of the participants are living and working in England.
- Most of the participants have less than five years of experience as an EP (84.55%).
- More than half of the participants are under 34 (57.27%).

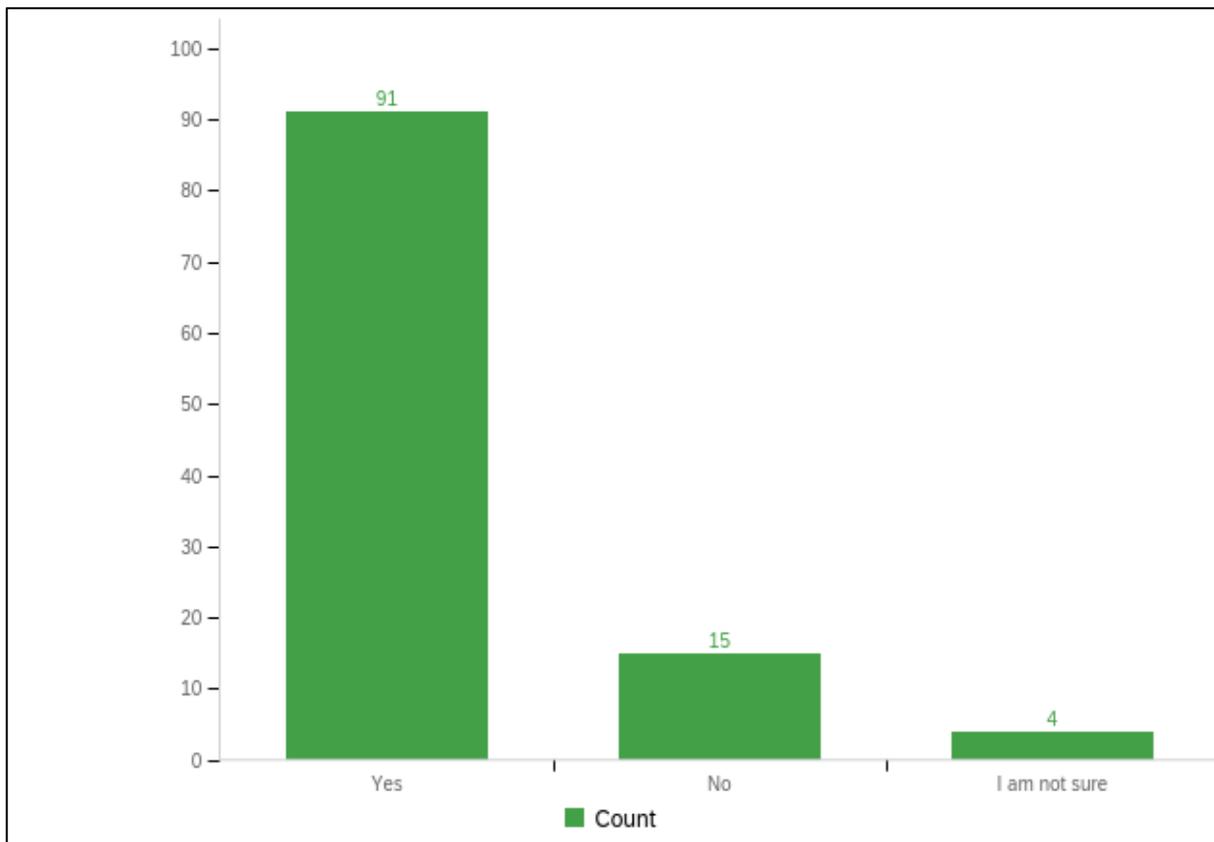
4.3 Research Question 1 (Quantitative Findings).

As well as collecting the demographic information provided above. The survey also collected data for RQ1; "How are Educational Psychologists using social networking websites in a professional capacity?". The survey was designed to collect data that could describe online social network use by EPs. The following sections of this chapter explore platforms used, ways of use, frequency of use, and other online use.

4.3.1 Participants' use of SNWs for professional reasons.

Of the 110 participants who completed the survey, 82.7% of participants use social networks for professional reasons, and 13.64% do not. 3.64% of respondents were unsure if they were using social networks. Figure 4.5 depicts these results in a bar chart.

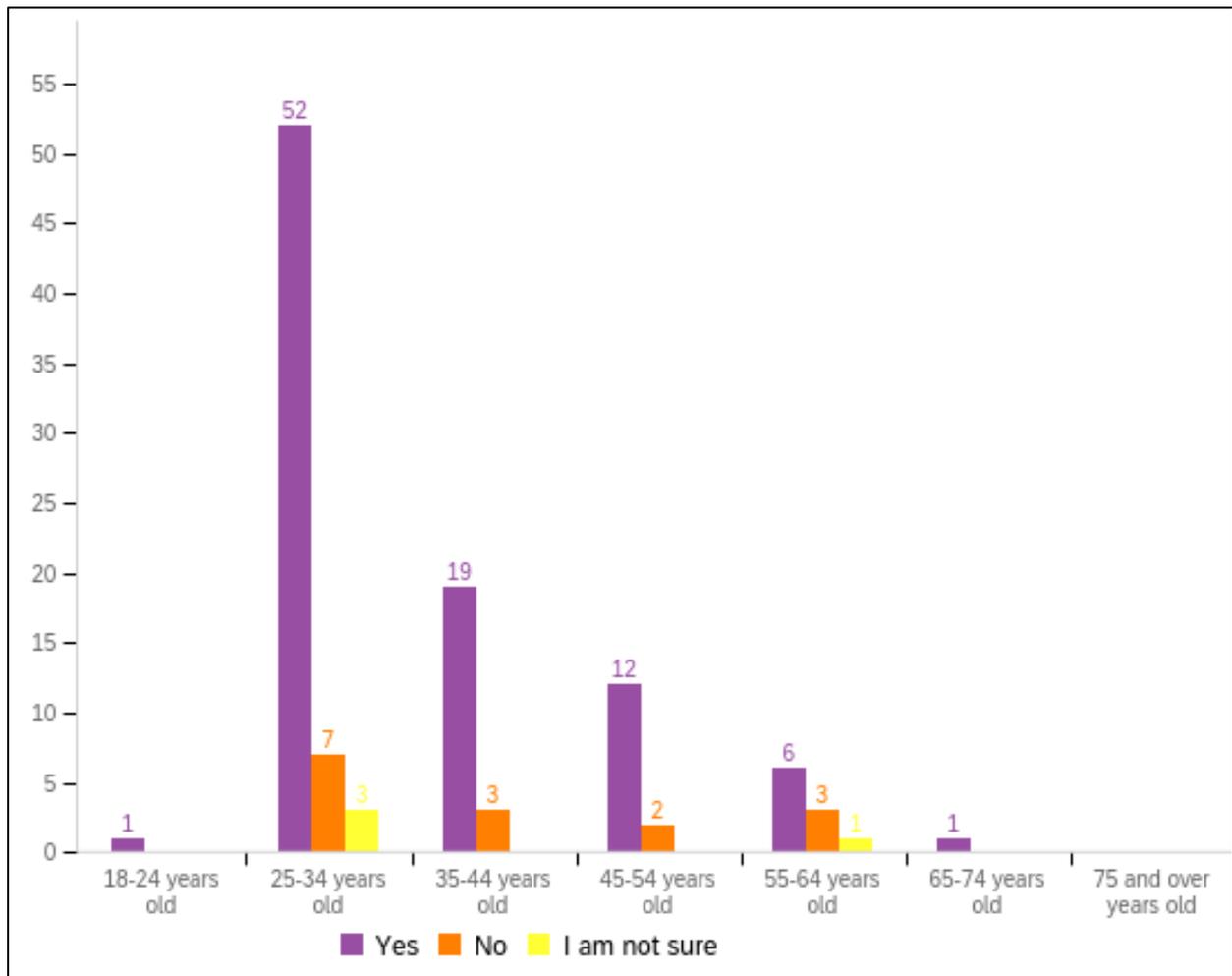
Figure 4.5:



Bar chart of EPs and TEPs professional use of SNWs.

Breakout analysis was performed to see whether SNW use differed across different demographic groups. Figure 4.6 depicts use across age ranges, and Figure 4.7 shows use across experience levels. Figure 4.8 illustrates job role. These bar charts were created to consider whether age or experience was a factor impacting use. However, when separating the data out in this way, users of SNWs can be seen across all age groups and levels of experience and job roles. Also, the number of participants not using social networks can be seen across the age range and experience levels.

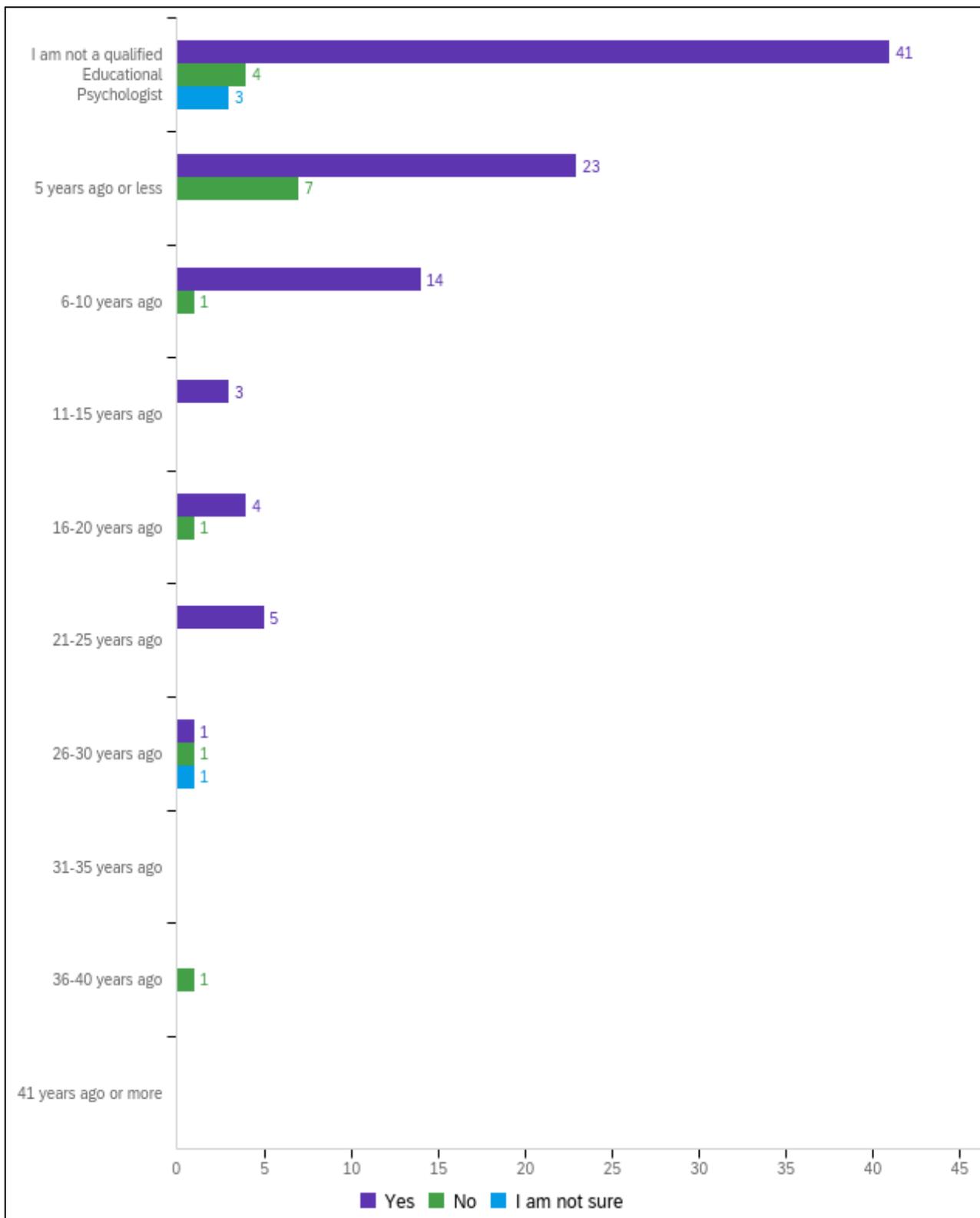
Figure 4.6:



Bar chart of participants' ages and their professional use of SNWs.

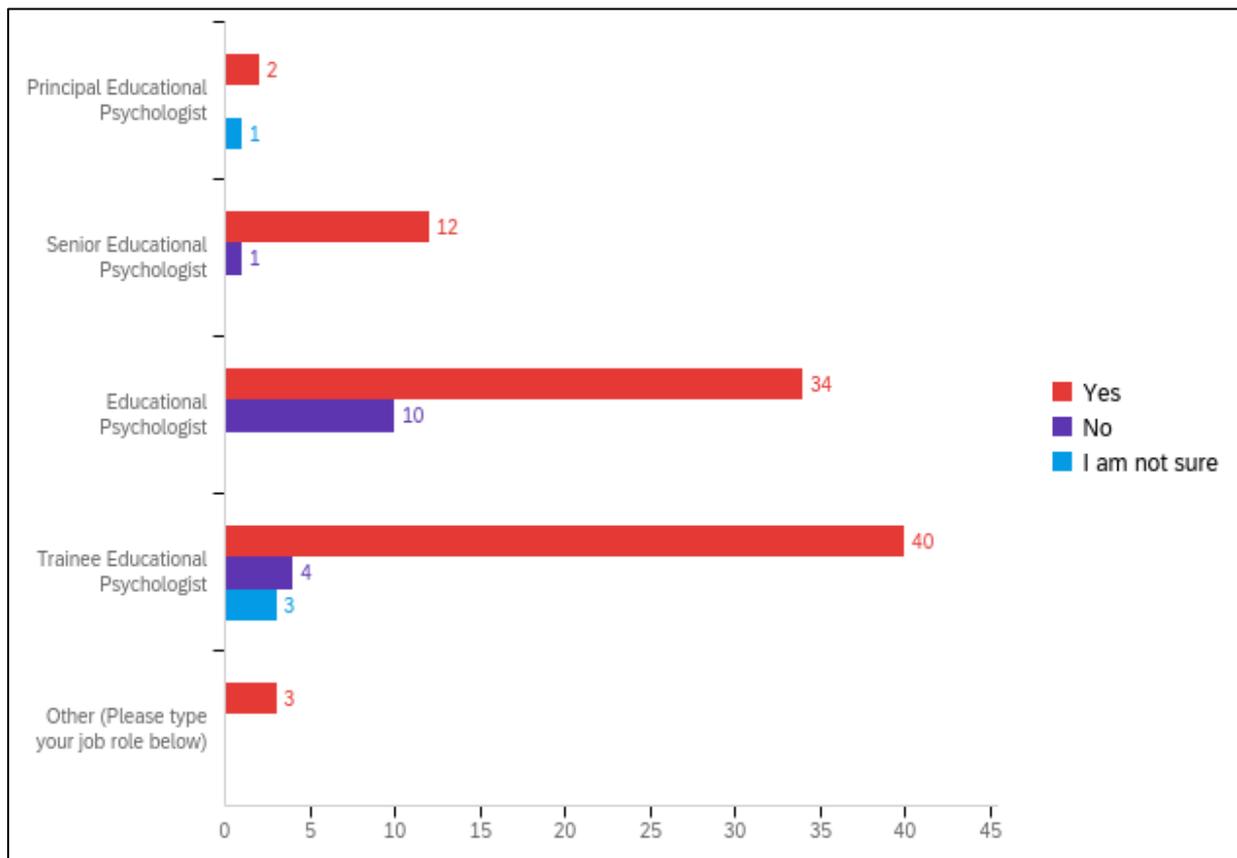
At first glance at Figure 4.6, more participants aged 25-34 are using SNWs. However, the chart needs to be considered proportionally to the data, as most participants (57.27%) are under 34.

Figure 4.7:



Bar chart of participants' years of experience as an EP and their professional use of SNWs

Figure 4.8:



Bar chart of participants' job role and EP and their professional use of SNWs

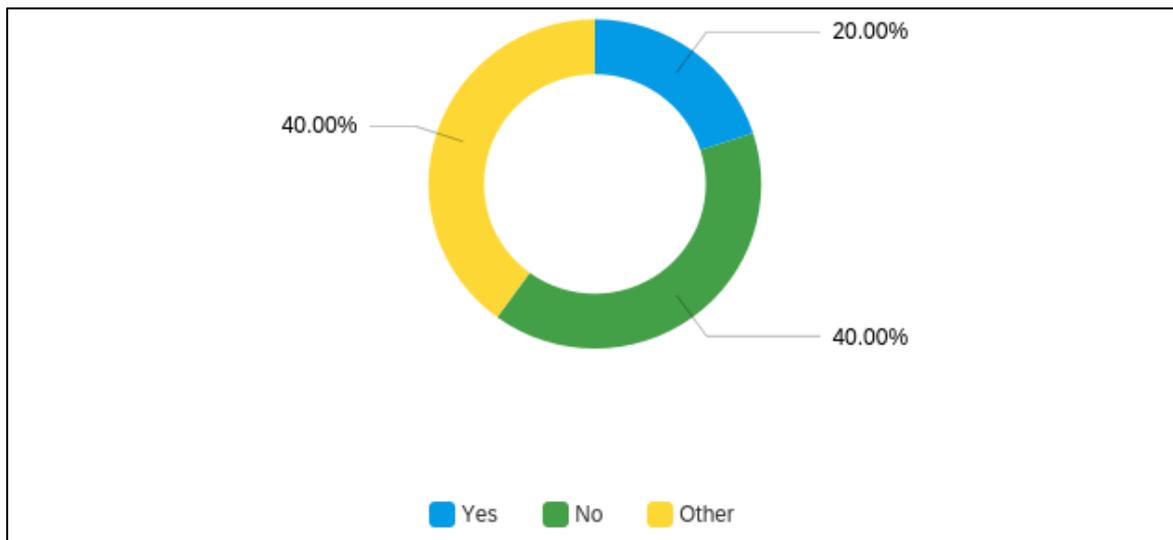
The participants that answered that they did use SNWs, or were uncertain if they used the networks (n=95), are subsequently referred to as Group A. They answered a specific set of questions for the rest of the questionnaire that differed from the Group B participants.

The 15 participants who did not use SNWs for professional reasons (Group B) were asked two further questions about their use. Firstly, they were asked: would you be interested in using SNW for professional reasons? As Figure 4.9 shows, only 3 participants were interested, and 6 chose not. 6 participants chose the "other" box, and some explained their reasoning for doing so:

- "Yes, if the issues could be addressed".

- "I might be if I found how I could tailor it to my interest and the amount of information I was receiving".
- "I don't have a preference; I just do not use it".
- "I may feel like I have to at some point for the sake of my career/ supporting with certain causes".

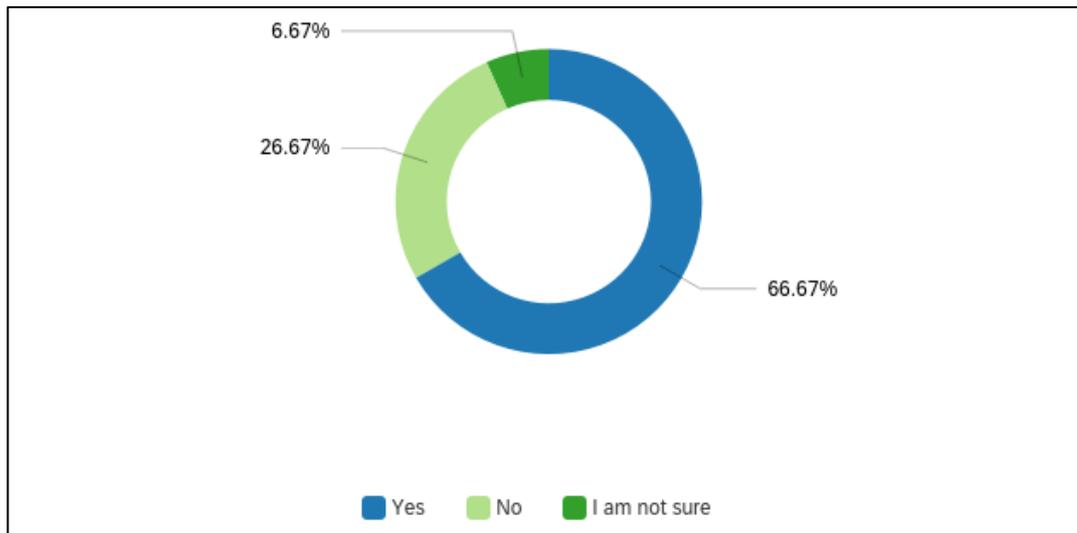
Figure 4.9:



Pie chart of participants (Group B) views on using SNWs for professional reasons.

A second question asked to the Group B participants was whether they used SNWs elsewhere in their life? As Figure 4.10 shows, 10 participants do, four do not, and one participant is unsure whether they use them outside of work. This finding shows that most participants who do not use SNWs have experienced them and have actively chosen not to use them for work.

Figure 4.10:



Pie Chart of participant's (Group B) personal use of SNWs.

The next set of questions was given only to the 91 participants (group A) who used SNWs and the 4 participants who were unsure whether they used SNWs.

4.3.2 Social networking websites/platforms used by participants

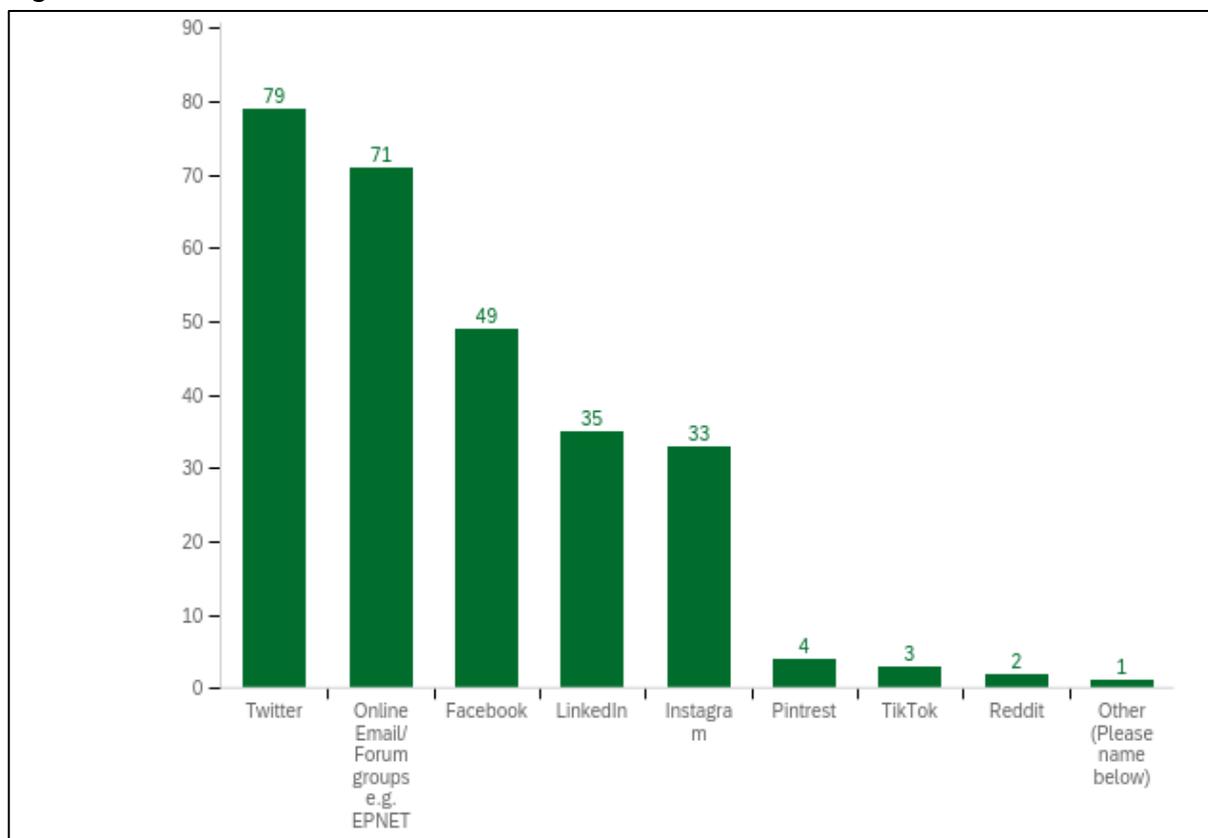
The online survey also asked which social network platforms are used for professional use. Participants could select as many options as possible. Table 4.6 and Figure 4.11 displays the findings. The SNW most used is Twitter (83.16% of participants), followed by online Email forums (74.74% of participants). The results suggest that participants are mainly utilising a few popular SNWs. Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook have between 34-52% of participants using them. A small group of participants (less than 5%) use online social networks that do not appear very popular for professional use; these networks are Reddit, Pinterest & TikTok.

Table 4.6:

Online social network	N	Percentage of 95 participants
Facebook	49	51.58%
Twitter	79	83.16%
Online email/forum groups e.g., EPNET	71	74.74%
Instagram	33	34.74%
LinkedIn	35	36.84%
Reddit	2	2.11%
Pinterest	4	4.21%
TikTok	3	3.16%
Other	1	1.05%

The number and percentage of participants using each SNWs / platform

Figure 4.11



Social Network Websites/ Platforms used by participants (group A).

Breakout analysis was performed on the data to explore SNW platforms used by different job roles. The results from the study can be seen in Table 4.7. These findings demonstrate that the SNWs that are the most popular (e.g., Twitter) are prevalent across all 4 job roles. However, the most popular SNWs platform for Principal EPS, Senior EPs, and EPs are online email forums, such as EPNET. Trainee EPs use Twitter the most.

Table 4.7:

	Principal Educational Psychologist	Senior Educational Psychologist	Educational Psychologist	Trainee Educational Psychologist
Facebook	0	10	18	21
Twitter	1	10	30	37
Online Email/ Forum group	3	11	32	25
Instagram	0	6	8	19
LinkedIn	0	6	11	18
Reddit	0	0	1	1
Pinterest	0	0	2	2
TikTok	0	0	1	2

Use of different SNWs / platforms by job role (Group A).

4.3.3 Frequency of use

The online questionnaire asked participants two questions about the frequency of SNW use for professional reasons. Firstly, they were asked how frequently they were using SNWs. Results are shown in Table 4.8. Half of the participants used SNWs professionally daily or multiple times a day (49.47%); most participants used SNWs daily (36.84%) other participants used them weekly (31.58%). 12.63% of participants used them less than once a month.

Table 4.8:

	Percentage	N
Multiple times a day	12.63%	12
Daily	36.84%	35
Weekly	31.58%	30
Monthly	12.63%	12
Less than once a month	6.32%	6

Frequency of SNW use for professional reasons (Group A)

Breakout analysis was performed on the data to explore the frequency of use by different job roles. Table 4.9 illustrates the findings.

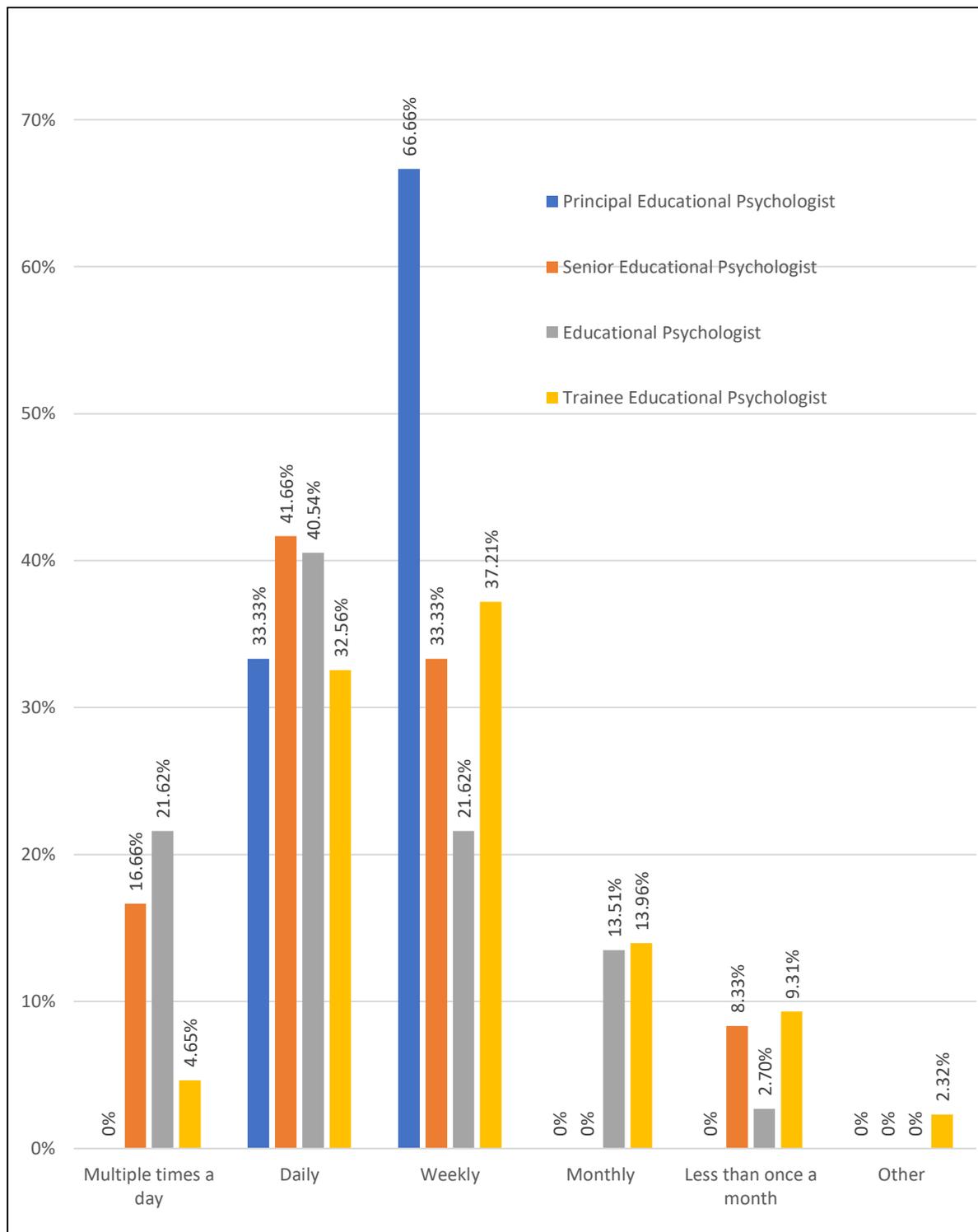
Table 4.9:

	Principal Educational Psychologist	Senior Educational Psychologist	Educational Psychologist	Trainee Educational Psychologist
Multiple times a day	0	2	8	2
Daily	1	5	15	14
Weekly	2	4	8	16
Monthly	1	0	5	6
Less than once a month	0	1	1	4

Frequency of use for professional reasons by job roles (Group A)

This analysis found that EPs have the heaviest professional use of SNWs; 62.16% of EP participants use SNWs daily or multiple times a day. This is illustrated in Figure 4.12. 58.32% of the Senior EPs who use SNWs use them daily or multiple times a day, whereas TEPs only 37.21% use them daily or multiple times a day. There were only 3 Principal EPs who participated in the study, and their use was either daily or weekly.

Figure: 4:12

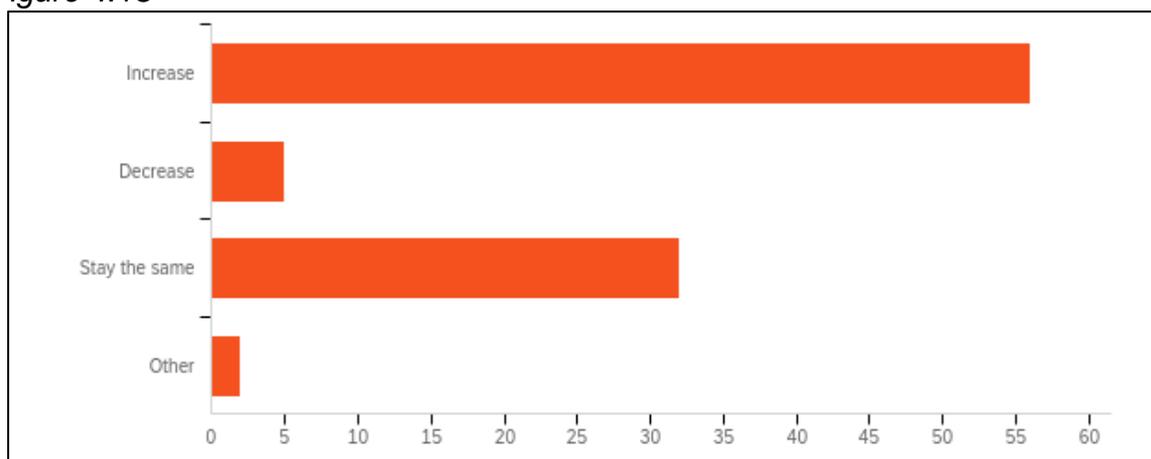


Bar chart of the frequency of SNW use for professional reasons by job role

Participants were also asked whether they thought their use of SNWs for professional reasons would change over 5 years. 58.95 of group A participants thought their use

would increase, 5.36% thought it would decrease, and 33.68% thought it would stay the same. 2.11% answered "other" and gave the following reasons: "I am not sure" and "I really don't know". Figure 4.13 illustrates these findings.

Figure 4.13



Bar chart of participants' (group As) predictions on how their SNW use will change over the next 5 years.

4.3.4 Ways in which participants use SNWs

The online questionnaire also presented EPs with potential statements about their use. Participants were asked to read a statement and judge whether they used SNWs in this way 'Regularly', 'Occasionally' or 'Never'. Table 4.10 contains the full results, and Figure 4.14 provides visualisation for comparison. One participant did not select an option for all these statements and did not respond to three of the statements. The use performed most "regularly" by 66 participants (70.21%) was "To read other educational psychologists' posts". Everyone in the study selected that they used SNWs to read other EPs' posts. The subsequent highest regular use was to "find out about new ways of working" by 55 participants (56.84%). Only 8.24% of participants said that they never used SNWs to find new ways of working. A similar widespread use of SNWs is

"To find out about new publications/ literature of interest", with only 8.42% of participants never using SNWs in this way. 42 participants (44.21%) selected they find new publications and literature 'regularly', and 45 (47.37%), do this 'occasionally'.

The least popular use was "To document as a reflective space to refer back to", with only 7 participants (7.37%) doing this 'regularly' and 19 participants (20%) doing it 'occasionally'. Another unpopular use was "To enhance my reputation as a psychologist, only 12 participants (12.63%) did 'regularly', and 29% of participants did 'occasionally'.

8 participants stated that they used SNWs "for another use" not included in the given statements. Data regarding these other uses of SNWs was captured via the qualitative open questions.

Table 4.10

	Regularly	Occasionally	Never	Total
To find out about new publications/ literature of interest.	N= 42 (44.21%)	45 (47.37%)	8 (8.42%)	95
To draw upon a wider community of expertise when I need help.	27 (28.72%)	43 (45.74%)	24 (25.53%)	94
To read other educational psychologists' posts.	66 (70.21%)	28 (29.97%)	0 (0.00%)	94
To find out about new ways of working.	54 (56.84%)	33 (34.74%)	8 (8.42%)	95
To find other EPs to collaborate and discuss topics with.	17 (17.89%)	46 (48.42%)	32 (33.68%)	95
To gain a sense of professional belonging.	36 (37.89%)	40 (42.11%)	19 (20.00%)	95
To actively interact with other EPs.	23 (24.21%)	44 (46.32%)	28 (29.47%)	95
To discover other EPs working in my area of interest.	32 (33.68%)	38 (40.00%)	25 (26.32%)	95
To share professional knowledge with people who are not psychologists.	19 (20.00%)	35 (36.84%)	41 (43.16%)	95
To share resources with others.	20 (21.05%)	52 (54.74%)	23 (24.21%)	95
To actively interact with other professionals such as clinical psychologists and teachers.	16 (16.84%)	43 (45.26%)	36 (37.86%)	95
To document my practice as a reflective space I can refer back to.	7 (7.37%)	19 (20.00%)	69 (72.63%)	95
To gain confidence in my professional abilities.	21 (22.34%)	32 (34.04%)	41 (42.62%)	94
To enhance my reputation as a psychologist.	12 (12.63%)	29 (30.53%)	54 (56.84%)	95
To promote my research and practice.	19 (20.00%)	34 (35.79%)	42 (44.21%)	95
For another use.	5 (15.63%)	3 (9.38%)	24 (75.00%)	32

Table showing participants (Group As) use of SNWs.

Figure 4.14

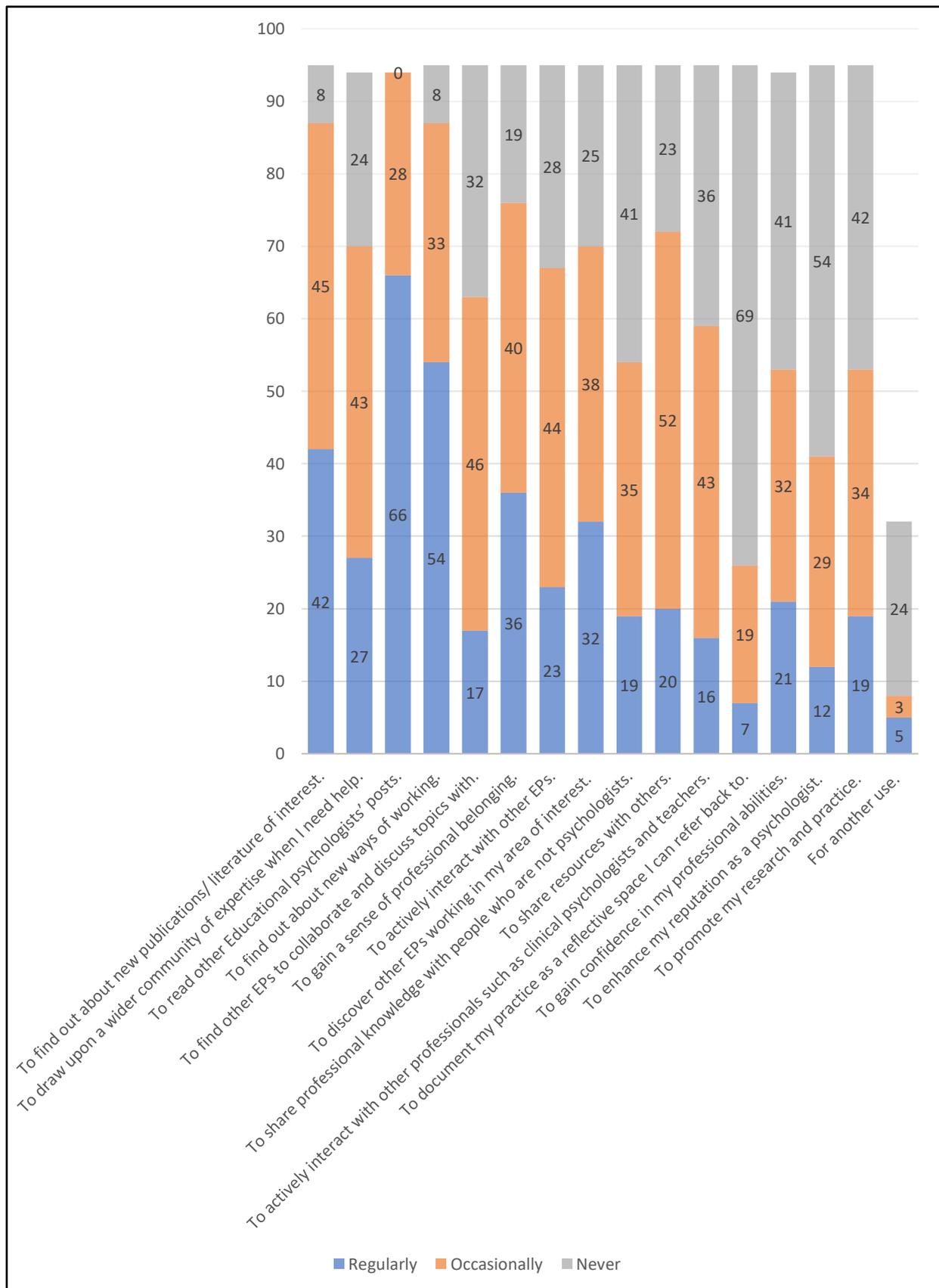
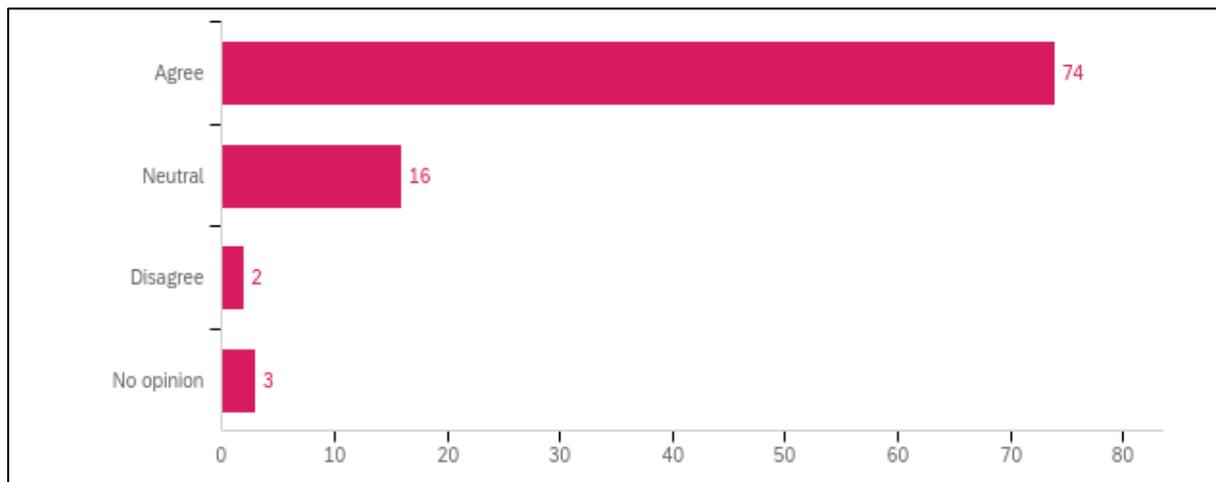


Table showing participants (Group As) use of SNWs.

After participants were asked about their use, they were asked whether they felt this use benefited their professional practice. Most group A (77.89%) participants selected "agree". 16.84% selected neutral. 2.11% did not agree, and 3.16% held no opinion.

Figure 4.15 illustrates these results.

Figure 4.15



Group A's responses to the statement: Do online social networks benefit your professional practice?

Participants were also asked whether they engage with professional educational psychologists/ TEPs online other than through SNWs. Table 4.11 shows how all participants in the study engaged with EPs online. The most common way to do so was by listening to Podcasts followed by accessing online blogs. Participants who answered "other" shared that they access webinars (online seminars with lectures and discussion), WhatsApp (an encrypted messaging website), and direct email.

Table 4.11

	N (Group A)	N (Group B)	Total (participants across the whole study)
YouTube	32	1	33
Podcasts	55	2	57
Online blogs	44	2	46
Other	7	4	11
No, I do not	22	9	31

Participant's use of other platforms/mediums of online engagement with EPs and TEPs

Participants who use SNWs (Group A) were asked who they interact with when using social networks professionally. Most participants interact with other EPs and TEPs (89.46%). The second most common group for participants to interact with was school staff (52.63%), followed by related professionals (51.58%). Table 4.12 shows the full results of who EPs interact with. Figure 4.16 provides a visual representation. EPs who selected to engage with "related professionals" were asked to specify which related professionals they engaged with. The results show the EPs use SNWs to follow and interact with the following professions:

- *Clinical psychologists*
- *Social workers*
- *Virtual school heads*
- *Speech and Language therapists*
- *Professionals with specialisms e.g., therapists who use trauma-informed practice*
- *People who provide training to schools*
- *Therapists*

- *Counsellors*
- *Teachers and Headteachers*
- *SEND Lawyers*
- *Occupational Psychologists*
- *Health Psychologists*
- *Occupational Therapists*

EPs were least likely to interact with parents, and only 14 participants said they did this. 6 participants shared that they interacted with "other" people on SNWs. These participants shared that they interact with:

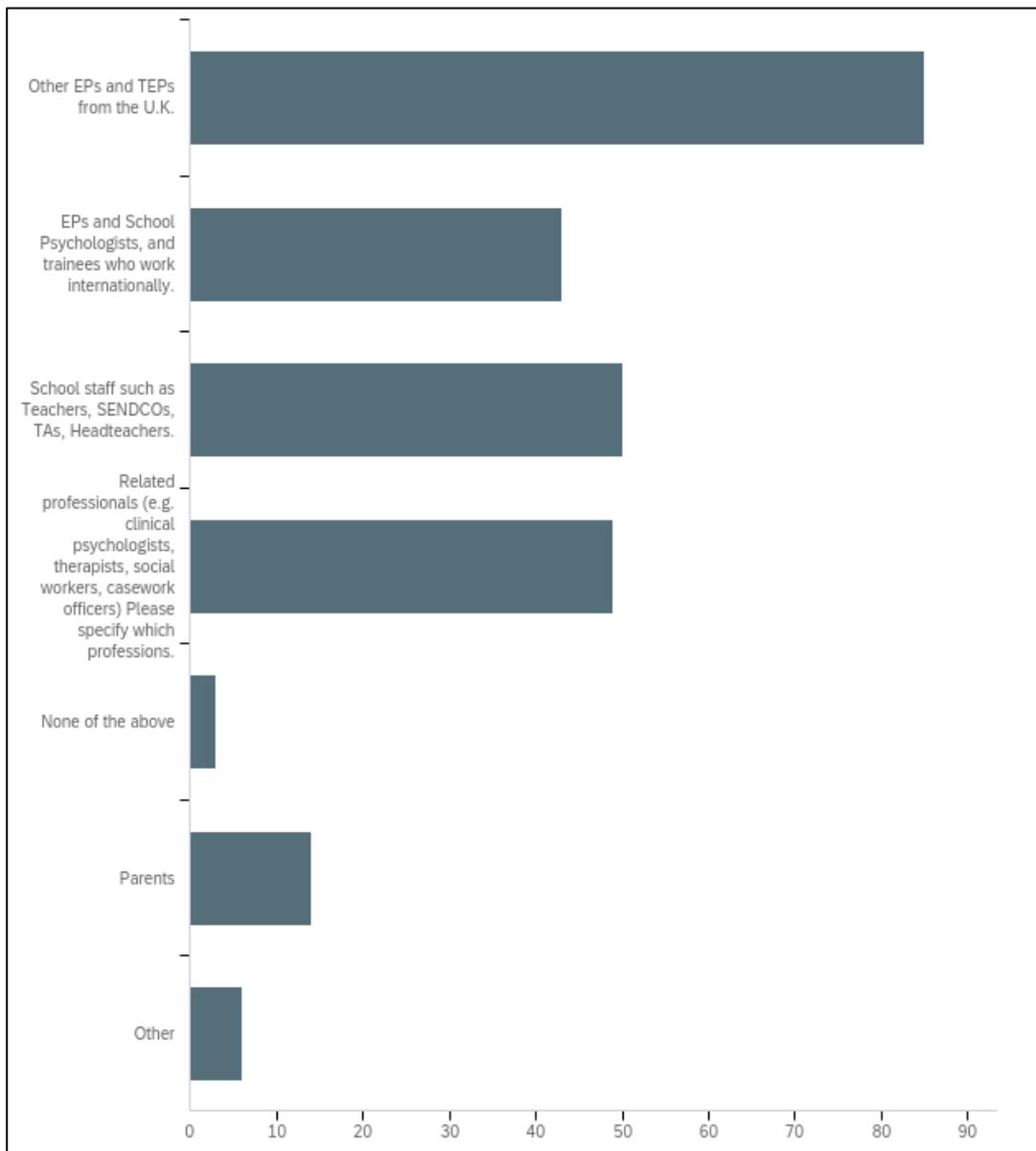
- *Action groups (such as square peg/ no child left behind).*
- *Recruiters*
- *Other trainees in health psychology and clinical psychology courses*
- *Families and groups/charities with similar interests.*

Table 4.12

	N	Percentage of 95 participants
Other EPs and TEPS from the UK.	85	89.47%
EPs, School Psychologists, and trainees who work internationally.	43	45.26%
School staff such as Teachers, SENDCos, TAs, and Headteachers.	50	52.63%
Related professionals (e.g., clinical psychologist, therapist, social workers, casework officers). Please specify which professions.	49	51.58%
None of the above.	3	3.16%
Parents.	14	14.74%
Other	6	6.32%

Table of who participants (group A) engage with online on SNWS.

Figure 4.16



Bar chart showing who participants (Group A) engage with online on SNWs

4.4 Survey Data: Qualitative findings

This section of the findings focuses on the Survey Data. Participants' written responses were collected from the survey data and then coded and themed through the processes described in chapter 3. This Reflexive Thematic Analysis process generated five main themes, as shown in Table 4.13:

Table 4.13

Theme	Subtheme	Central organising concept
EPs as Adventurers exploring new frontiers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing practical tools - Providing changes to mindset - Providing additional context 	<p>SNWs transform EPs and TEPs into explorers and discovers of new ways of working, different experiences and seeking new insights.</p> <p>Boundary: must be perspectives about EPs discovering new ways of working or gaining new insights for their practice.</p>
EP as Messengers and Campaigners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Giving psychology away - Creating narratives about the profession - Promotion and advertisement - Wider social implications 	<p>SNWs are perceived as a place where EPs can take on the role of communicating and messaging to disseminate information to others.</p> <p>Boundary: There must be perspectives about SNWs being used to post messages for others to access.</p>
A place for exchanging discourse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating togetherness - Discussion leading to disputes - Problematic communication 	<p>This theme contains perspectives on how SNWs are a space for the EP profession to dialogue.</p> <p>Boundary: This must contain perspective around EPs and TEPs using SNWS to communicate with one another online.</p>
Manageable Vs Unmanageable resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manageable resource - Unmanageable resource - Capacity to use 	<p>This theme contains contradictory perspectives around SNWs as a resource and whether it is useful, accessible or controllable.</p> <p>Boundary: must be perspectives about the process of using SNWs</p>
A Dangerous, Risky Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethics and professional standards - On show - Emotional risk 	<p>Definition: SNWs are perceived as risky space, which can negatively impact on professional standards and appropriate practice.</p> <p>Boundary: There must be perspectives about SNWs causing risk or harm to professional standards, practice, or the EP.</p>

Themes, subthemes and central organising concepts for the survey data

4.4.1 Theme 1: Adventurers exploring new frontiers.

The theme of EPs as adventurers was evident throughout many participants' responses. This theme was built around the perception that SNWs are a place to seek, discover, and explore new information, knowledge, and resources. The adventure element was a spirit present in many responses, a sentiment potentially connected to participants' approach to using SNWS. Many participants did not appear to approach SNWs with pre-planned ideas of the information they wanted to obtain or specific areas to use the platforms. Instead, they seemed to approach the platforms with an open mind, ready to discover and search through information to find what is relevant. This process of seeking and exploration was seen throughout descriptions of perceived use: to find practical tools, to stay current in their practice, and to gain additional context for practice. This theme has three subthemes, as illustrated in Table 4.14

Table 4.14

Theme	Subtheme	Code
EPs as Adventurers exploring new frontiers.	Providing practical tools	stay up to date finding resources follow EPs innovation in practice inspiration finding practical resources accessing psychological research/ theory professional development developing specialisms accessing other online resources
	Providing changes to mindset	Enhances identity as an EP Reflection on practice Experience of change Different perspectives exposure to different views broadening geography / location new experience
	Providing additional context	Following other professional organisations Following schools Following charities Following SEND parents Find information about EP Services

Theme: adventurers exploring new frontiers, and related subthemes

Subtheme: Providing new practical tools:

This subtheme incorporates the new knowledge and learning EPs, and TEPs described that they get from SNWs, and the act of them using this in practice. Most participants appeared to use online platforms to develop their resources and knowledge. Some responses explicitly mentioned using what they learned for

continued professional development, while for others it was about specific resources that they found:

I also find EPs and other education professionals share lots of helpful pictures that summarise key concepts in accessible terms so I often save these for future use for supporting my own and others' understanding. (Survey-response)

As a form of CPD, albeit in bite sized chunks rather than attending a conference for example. (Survey-response)

Someone is always doing something new or creative, or taking an idea and applying it to practice in a different way. I have found a range of great resources. (Survey-response)

To hear about other people's work and hopefully incorporate their great ideas into my practice (Survey-response)

Many responses focused on how SNWs allowed them to stay current and access what participants perceived as the latest trends and ideas for practice. Some responses shared a perception of EPs and TEPs not accessing these platforms being disadvantaged due to not having access to the latest information:

I find it useful to keep a "hand on the pulse" of EP profession as well as read threads that catch my attention. I occasionally follow links to books or other resources. (Survey-response)

I find these platforms can be helpful for seeing what other EPs in the community are doing and keep up to date with current practice. (Survey-response)

Finding out about latest research and intervention programmes. (Survey-response)

I feel that TEPs/EPs not using social media may miss out on updates/recommendations for practice etc. (Survey-response)

Subtheme: Providing changes to mindset:

This subtheme incorporates the perception that participating in SNWs led to changing one's mindset. Some responses showed that EPs and TEPS were actively seeking

opportunities to change their mindset and gain a shift in perspective. Participants held the perception that by interacting with professional SNW accounts, their processes and beliefs could be altered. Some participants appear to explore other EPs' SNWs posts to purposefully challenge themselves to be reflective and open practitioners:

I am keen to be aware of the thoughts and views of other EPs to help me reflect on my own practice in a proactive way. (Survey-response)

I really enjoy reading others opinions and thoughts on EP practice and reflecting on my practice. For example, consultation and diversity principles. (Survey-response)

It helps me keep my mind and my eyes open: see what is out there and disconfirm possible prejudices or stereotypes. (Survey-response)

I am sometimes curious to explore what other professionals are researching or sharing that might help me to reflect on my practice (Survey-response).

Many responses included examples of participants actively seeking broader perspectives to challenge their current thinking or provide new insights. This appears to help participants to evaluate their own thinking and decisions:

To listen (more often) and participate (less often) in conversations about professional practice of EP's in order to gain a broader perspective on key issues and concerns. (Survey-response)

I also like to follow people I don't necessarily identify with much (e.g. [name]) because i find it helpful to have my thinking challenged and to be able to try to understand different points of view (even when I don't like the content much) (Survey-response).

To connect with psychologists and others who share my interests and can build on my knowledge and offer different and complementary views and ideas. (Survey-response)

Many responses explicitly mentioned the importance of SNWs providing access to other colleagues, as they appeared to want to explore the ideas of EPs from different parts of the country. EPs wanted to seek the thoughts of others in other geographical locations:

they provide the opportunity to engage with EPs who I do not have access to on a day-to-day basis. Because it gives me a richer view of priorities and interests across a range of services. (Survey-response)

I find it helpful to not just be stuck in my service 'bubble' in terms of what others are doing and thinking. (Survey-response)

Subtheme: Providing additional context

Participants did not just seek resources or perceptions of SNWs. Responses showed that they also used them for a more immersive and grounding experience. A range of the responses discussed about how SNWs allowed them to get a “window” into other’s lives. The perspective present in the data is that SNWs provide a space for exploring service users' daily lives. Consequently, providing opportunities for insight to build empathy.

The SEND parent community is very active on Twitter, and I probably follow more SEND parent accounts than I do EPs. They provide insight into daily life, challenges, and their experiences of processes and inclusion in education. I find their takes on the EHCNA process, or their views on teaching assistants etc really useful. I can be grounded by reading their ideas, I can be reminded of what is important, or be challenged or humbled. (Survey-response)

I have learned so much about the stress and burn-out experienced by school staff, before and during the pandemic, and I feel I can really empathise with the increasing demands placed upon them. Similarly, parents and carers share rich experiences of the difficulties their children face at school. There is a huge amount of untapped potential in using social networks to engage with our clients. (Survey-response)

4.4.2 Theme 2: An opportunity for Messengers and Campaigners.

A key undercurrent to many survey responses is that SNWs allow EPs to share their important core messages with others. Due to this, the dataset perceives that SNWs are a key place for EPs to project their voice or present their ideas. This theme has four subthemes, as illustrated in Table 4.15

Table 4.15:

Theme	Subtheme	Code
A platform for messaging and campaigning	Giving psychology away	Share events and resources educating others Connect with other professionals Connect with children and families Communicate with charities Advice giving Share knowledge Share research Early intervention
	Creating narratives about the profession	Recruitment to the profession/ Aspiring EPs Defend and inform about the role Fake representative/ false narrative about the profession
	Promotion and Advertisement	Self-congratulatory Self-promotion Growing followers Twitter famous Performative Virtue signalling Boost egos Advertisement Validation
	Wider societal implications	Work with the local community Systemic change Activism Holding others to account Community psychology

Theme: a platform for messaging and campaigning and related subthemes

Subtheme: Giving psychology away

There was a perception in the dataset that EPs use SNWs to gift their psychological knowledge to others. By sharing their thoughts and views publicly, the respondents felt they could enact change by sharing a psychological approach or thought process:

I think there are some accounts which are excellent for sharing psychological information I think this has helped to normalise some of the struggles people have with anxiety, parenting, etc. [...] This could be something that might help parents in particular who might have children with varying difficulties. Rather than sharing specific experiences, just normalising that everyone is different with different needs and different ways to meet those needs. (Survey-Response)

Participant sharing was not only specifically targeted to known service users. Many responses spoke to a broader sphere, such as reaching politicians or the public on the platform. Suggesting that giving psychological perspectives and information online could influence positive changes:

I think social networks are a doorway to "giving psychology away". We can engage with school staff, parents/carers, young people, politicians and other professionals by sharing advice and resources and creating spaces for solution-focused discussion and multi-disciplinary collaboration. (Survey-Response)

I feel that the public nature of Twitter also allow non-psychologists to become part of the conversation and take something away from the interaction. (Survey-Response)

Subtheme: Creating narratives about the profession.

This subtheme focuses on how participants view SNWs as a space for communicating messages about the profession. There is a mixed discussion about whether the narratives created and shared online are positive or negative. Some responses discuss how the messages shared online can portray helpful information and ideas about the EP role, potentially attracting new recruits for services or training courses:

I see some great EP service accounts [...] I did like the way lots of services used them to provide free online sessions for prospective TEPs about how to access EP training to help accessibility. (Survey-response)

This is also good for recruitment and I can see this being a big part of recruitment for EP posts in future (as this may be the first contact a future EP has with the service they want to work for). (Survey-response)

It could also be used to promote educational psychology when considering careers for young people. (Survey-response)

Many aspiring EPs want to know what it is like in a day of an EP and what we do on a day-to-day basis in order to consider the profession. (Survey-response)

Some participants wanted the platform to spread information about the EP role and what it entails. These participants felt that there was not currently enough messaging on this topic and that it would be beneficial for EPs to share more of a narrative about their work on SNWs:

I think we could go further with promoting what we do, for example to teachers and parents - sometimes there can be misunderstandings about what are role actually involves and we could do some form of 'myth-busting' which I haven't yet seen. (Survey-response)

However, it could be useful for EPs to use social media to explain their role, what they might do with a child when they meet, the other things they do 'behind the scenes' and their work with schools. I think the EP role is still very much a 'mystery' to those not in education! Even those in education don't always know what I do! This could help relieve some of the anxiety of parents whose child may be meeting with an EP. (Survey-response)

I think it would be really great to share more about the role of the EP so that families and children and young people have a better understanding of what the role is. Sometimes when I meet with children they don't have a clue and even after I explain it, I am not confident they quite understand how I fit in to the system! (Survey-response)

Another perception included in this subtheme is that SNWs only provide a narrow view of the profession and the professional role. Social networks only show limited aspects of the work that EPs complete. Many responses to the survey were concerned that the messages being shared online are restrictive. Participants were concerned that this could lead to non-EPs accessing a false perspective and gaining a false narrative.

Some EPs perceive that the narrative being shared online is not an accurate depiction. Unfortunately, it is not clear from the responses exactly what aspects are missing from the views presented online. It is clear that participants feel that the online portrayal of the EP profession is not accurate:

Largely that we are creating a false narrative about the profession.(Survey-response)

I am concerned it is starting to have the social network effect on our community: people just want to post about how great and happy our profession is. This doesn't promote critical thinking nor it's a real experience exchange. I am concerned some people don't follow GDPR standards.(Survey-response)

Largely that we are creating a false narrative about the profession.(Survey-response)

Mainly how some EPs present on these networks and what messages is this giving to others. I don't think EP is a likeable profession and some tweets/posts do not always give the best impression of our profession. I also wonder like any other social media that blurring of boundaries between home and work, particularly if you are tweeting/messaging as an EP. (Survey-response)

Subtheme: Promotion and Advertisement

This subtheme is similar to the previous one, but instead of centring on EPs sharing messages about the profession, the focus of these responses was that EPs are self-promoting. EPs are sharing messages about their own work. Some EPs feel that SNWs are important to enable them to advertise their services or skills. This appears particularly relevant for EPs who are working independently:

I use Facebook to have a social media presence which helps generate private work. I use LinkedIn to connect with other EPs. I enjoy posts of EPNet and Twitter for new info/research/ways of working. (Survey-response)

I do share via my business social network accounts, usually Facebook or Twitter Generate business by raising my profile and reminding or updating people about my service. (Survey-response)

Build potential clients' confidence in receiving services online. (Survey-response)

To raise my profile as a psychologist as I work independently. (Survey-response)

However, some participants expressed that there is often a form of self-advertisement and messaging on SNWs that is not perceived as useful. Many said that they have viewed other EPs' self-promotion and feel this does not create a positive impression. Some people question the motives of EPs that do post a lot. Other participants are concerned that some people are celebrated more or more likely to be given opportunities than others due to their self-advertisement:

I am cautious of EPs that tweet a lot and wonder if this is more about boosting their egos rather than supporting children, families and communities. (Survey-Response)

Perhaps can encourage people to be self-congratulatory or performative. (Survey-Response)

It is effectively self promotion [...] but being outspoken online doesn't make you good at your job. I know many amazing EPs who have no interest in having a online presence. (Survey-Response)

Sometimes it feels that to get on the doctorate these days you have to be a Twitter sensation! (Survey-Response)

Subtheme: Wider societal implications

The final subtheme for this theme focuses on a campaigning aspect of EP messaging. Many responses contained a perspective that SNWs provide an opportunity for platforms where EPs can share messages that purposefully promote systemic change:

Educating the public in order to reduce stigmatisation of mental illness, sharing resources and so much more. (Survey-Response)

To change things for the better eg. for activism, unionising, elevating the voices of others (especially marginalised individuals and communities).(Survey-Response)

To promote inclusion. To challenge inequality. To advocate for positive change in society. (Survey-Response).

Other EPs and TEPs recognised the opportunity that SNWs provide EPs as a platform for campaigning. However, they feel it is not yet possible to use the platforms as they

wish. Many responses described the potential of these spaces and of their plans to enact wider societal impacts and changes, but feel that this is not currently happening:

I would like EPs to use social networks as a platform to discuss topical issues such as the pros and cons of public examinations from the CYP's perspective or other more general subjects as how EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) is managed in local authorities (Survey-Response).

I also found it frustrating at times because sometimes I would see things but want to comment on the wider societal/systemic issues at play, but then thought what's the point? I don't want to spend my time arguing with people on the internet! (Survey-Response).

4.4.3 Theme 3: A place for exchanging discourse

This theme, 'a place for exchanging discourse,' explores the perception that SNWs are a place for interaction within the profession. This differs from the previous theme in that it is not focused on EPs projecting a core message for others to receive. This theme centres on 'exchanging' or dialoguing: a two-way relationship. A key aspect of this theme is that such interactions create a feeling of relationships and building 'togetherness', one of the subthemes. Additionally, this theme explores how SWNs are a space for dialogue and conversations, which can often lead to 'disputes' or 'limited communication' (subthemes). Thus, this theme includes both the positive and negative perceptions of EPs communicating together on SNWs. Table 4.16 illustrates these themes.

Table 4.16:

Theme	Subtheme	Code
A place for exchanging discourse	Creating togetherness	peer support asking for advice asking questions compatible/like-minded Relating to others/ finding similarities developing offline relationships Collaboration prevents reinventing the wheel project work participate in research specialism groups networking for jobs
	Discussion leading to disputes	Discussion forums Debates Opinion Disagreement Honesty and congruence toxic environment punitive confrontation unfiltered/ heated debates Judgmental
	Problematic communication	Limited perspectives Not enough people Dominant voices Limited nuance Tone

Theme: a space for exchanging discourse, and related subthemes

Subtheme: Creating Togetherness

This subtheme is focused on how some responses illustrate that SNWs are a space for EPs to come together. There is a perception that they offer an opportunity to build community. This community opens doors for collaboration and positive support from one another. This subtheme focuses mainly on the positive aspects and benefits of within-profession online interaction:

Building up community, interacting, open dialogue to anyone who wants to contribute and mostly positive comments in some social networks (Survey response).

But since I've joined twitter I now feel like there is a sense of community and it is a great place for networking and seeing what other EPs are doing, sharing resources and generating discussion/reflection. (Survey-response).

Some of the responses detail how they have found opportunities to connect with other EPs on their specific specialisms:

It is helping build my reputation as an educational psychologist and as a practitioner within a specific field of interest. It has enabled me to connect with psychologists and others who share my interests and can build on my knowledge and offer different and complementary views and ideas.(Survey-response)

The name of this subtheme, 'creating togetherness,' was also chosen as many of the responses reflected a sense that the online EP community was a safe space where EPs felt heard and supported by their peers. Many EPs thought that it was a non-judgemental and open space where they could receive constructive feedback and ideas:

It feels a safe space to share and contribute. (Survey response).

It allows me to network and discuss ideas with other TEPs and EPs in a non-judgemental arena. (Survey response).

Supporting and reassuring others. Providing affirmation. Sharing knowledge. (Survey response).

I primarily use twitter, which, while not necessarily known for its supportive nature all the time, is very supportive and encouraging for the EP community. Everyone wants to help and support each other, which is lovely. (Survey response).

Due to the feelings of support from the online EP community, many of the participants explained that they felt able to ask questions and get specific help:

If there is something specific I'm looking for (eg asking for help or to see if anyone else has the solution) (Survey response).

I find NAPEP incredibly supportive of any questions asked, any challenge is presented very professionally. (Survey response).

Subtheme: Discussion leading to disputes

This subtheme focuses on a less positive aspect of online SNW use. This focused on how respondents often perceive the discourse between EPs on SNWs as leading to disputes. These disputes were often not framed as constructive discussions or debates, as seen in the previous subtheme. Instead, this online communication was described by some respondents as 'hostile':

Unfiltered, heated debates about difference of opinion. (Survey response).

There have been a couple of arguments which I felt were not supportive of the profession which put me off and made me reticent to actually post. (Survey response).

This is not conducive to a rational, balanced and opened discussion. (Survey response).

Many of the responses focused on the negativity of online communication, and debates suggest that it might be due to a few specific contributors or interactions that make many other people feel criticised:

A platform mainly for domineering people who are overly critical. (Survey response).

Not feeling comfortable and safe to voice your opinion in fear of being judged when you know members in the group. (Survey response).

Contributors can be really rude to others. Some EPs are very arrogant and critical and this impacts other EPs contributing to debate and discussions. It is not ethical practice. (Survey response).

Subtheme: Problematic communication

This subtheme focuses on perspectives on how interaction and communication are challenging online. This subtheme covers various ways in which communication is limited or problematic. Many responses perceive that SNWs do not create effective places for communication due to a misunderstanding of the tone or message:

Posts can be very open to misinterpret communication and misrepresentation. (Survey-response)

there is little room for nuance on a site where you tweet 260 characters at a time. (Survey-response)

Sometimes disagreements can be magnified and it's not always easy to articulate complex/nuanced topics. (Survey-response)

People who are sometimes accused of being aggressive/rude/disrespectful in their posts might feel they are just trying to put their point across clearly and honestly and can't do so for fear of being accused of these things. (Survey response).

Another perspective of communication being problematic online was detailed in the responses. This perspective was linked to the EPs viewing SNWs as a space where only certain views or opinions are privileged and consequently heard. These respondents felt that there was not enough challenge within the online posts. This perspective includes a concern that the discourse within the EP community may be becoming restricted by dominant voices, as many participants hold very similar views on practice:

Can give skewed views of the world. Potential for very vocal minority on social media being assumed to be representative of whole profession by dint of presence. (Survey response).

When you follow groups, it is a choice that you make and therefore you see more posts of things that you particularly like. Whilst this is interesting, it typically supports (as opposed to challenges) your own view and therefore it can be somewhat limiting. (Survey response).

Twitter can cause 'tunnel vision' where you only follow like minded people, I have to remember to actively seek out alternative points of view at times. (Survey response).

Due to limited or restrictive communication, some participants feel that there is a lost opportunity for SNWs to become an online space for EPs to dialogue effectively:

It is hard to engage with in any productive or meaningful way, which therefore stunts the growth of our profession. When used in the right way, a regulated and universal forum has the potential to be so incredible but we are not embracing that opportunity as a profession. (Survey response).

4.4.4 Theme 4: Manageable Vs Unmanageable resource

This theme captures the dichotomisation of perspectives of two distinct groups of participants: those who perceived SNWs as manageable and those who did not. EPs and TEPs who felt they were manageable discussed the easy success of navigating and accessing resources. A second group found them too challenging to use productively. A further related perception in the data was EPs' feelings of capacity. This was their capacity to fully utilise SNWs and their job role's associated capacity. This themes three subthemes are illustrated in Table 4.17

Table 4.17

Theme	Subtheme	Code
Manageable Vs Unmanageable resource	Manageable resource	Immediateness Convenient Saves time Easily controllable Equality Free offering
	Unmanageable resource	Overwhelming Distraction Over-dependence Not Tech-Savvy/ Limited IT skills Lack of control Change/ fate of the algorithms
	Capacity to use	Work-life balance Demands of the role Not practical

Theme: Manageable Vs Unmanageable resource and related subthemes

Subtheme: Manageable resource

One group of participants perceived SNWs as a productive and accessible resource to support their practice. These participants often compared to other information-giving mediums such as books and journal articles. Participants highlight conciseness and accessibility as essential benefits for busy professionals:

It's so easy to find resources, I often bookmark key things I find into a set of folders that I hold. This is a portable resource I can access wherever I am, much better than carrying lots of books around. (Survey-response)

I don't have time to sit and read journal after journal, but Twitter means I can find information by scrolling and within a quick five-minute break. (Survey-response)

Participants who found SNWs accessible seemed to have control over their SNWs. These participants appear to have created boundaries for themselves. They were able

to select when and how much to involve themselves and had established ways of making SNWs fit in with their lives:

Can take or leave advice/ information - skip over those that are not so relevant(Survey-response)

I can pick it up and put it down as/when time and energy allow, and engage as much or as little as I like.(Survey-response)

It provides a broad range of new information and professional opportunities that enables me to engage in 'light-bite' CPD on the go (which is much appreciated as a busy working Mum). (Survey-response)

The participants who found SNWs manageable appeared to relate this manageability to attaining information immediately. Having 'new' or 'current' information was important to the participants. This group of participants felt that SNWs were a way for them to stay up to date:

I find it useful to keep a "hand on the pulse" of EP profession as well as read threads that catch my attention (Survey-response)

To stay up to date on any news or debates going on currently in the profession (Survey-response)

It's such an easy and constantly up to date way of finding information and thinking more creatively about our practice. Academic research takes so long to be published, but I guess Twitter, albeit not as esteemed, is always new. (Survey-response)

A separate narrative of manageability in the data spoke of the equality of access SNWs have. For example, no financial payment is required for use, allowing resources and knowledge to be shared with open access. EPs and TEPs shared how they were able to access free resources. Participants in the study also noted that the free and open platform also allowed non-psychologists to gain free access to information shared :

Social media provides a cost-free platform for psychologists and non-psychologists alike to access, read, learn and share evidence-based practice. (Survey response).

It allows for a reflective space that does not come with a financial cost attached. (Survey response).

I have been able to download resources for free, or access free webinars. Both of which I have found on SNWs. (Survey response).

The equality of access meaning found in the dataset extended past the discussion of finances. Other participants also discussed how SNWs allowed inclusive conversations across the social GRRRAACCEEESSS (Burnham, 2012). Participants expressed how as SNWs occur in an online sphere, the relationships held with them can transcend some of the stereotypes, prejudices, and systemic inequality currently occurring in other places in society. The narrative suggests that SNWs offer an opportunity to shift the relational power balance. Furthermore, some participants explored how they were using SNWs to find professionals of similar backgrounds, cultures, genders, and heritages to themselves. SNWs enabled them to meet and create groups and forums:

To find EPs from a minority ethnic background that I reach out to for support and guidance (Survey-response)

I have found a group of EPs on SNWs who share my ethnic minority background (Survey-response)

Online there's more equity in relation to race/ethnicity, gender and disability for who is involved in conversations (thinking the "old boys" club/"snowy white peaks" here) (Survey-Response)

Subtheme: Unmanageable resource:

A separate group of participants held an opposite meaning of their experience of SNWs. These participants did not share the view above that SNWs allowed equal access. For some of this group, this perspective was related to feeling like they held inadequate technological skills or devices to enable participation. Perceptions from

this dataset are that ease of access may be generational, and consequently, some people are 'left out':

Time and ability to read articles on a small screen. Sometimes I miss useful posts because they are too long for me to read on a phone screen. (Survey-response)

Another key perspective of SNWs in the data is that they are overwhelming and time-consuming. These EPs and TEPs voice the opposite experience of some participants previously mentioned. They appeared to find SNWs as places where they lacked control and could not find balance:

I also found that it took a long time to trawl through information that did not seem relevant to me. I sometimes feel that my head is over full of information and found it unhelpful to have un-categorised information coming from another source (Survey-response)

I try to avoid using social networking for professional use as I can find it overwhelming (Survey-response)

Several participants felt that the only way to gain a sense of control of the resource is to remove it or avoid it. :

My own mental wellbeing - If I feel that the work/life balance is off then I avoid Twitter. I deleted the app over the Easter holidays as I was feeling overwhelmed and didn't want to see anything about work.(Survey-response)

Adding my professional life to these sites would probably make things worse, as I would never be able to escape work. I don't think that making a professional account would improve things, as I think I would feel pressure to keep up to date with them - this would need to happen outside of my working hours as I definitely don't have time to do this during my working day, and I'm reluctant to do this because work-life balance is so important in such an emotionally demanding job. [...]. I prefer to hear about these ideas through my colleagues, or I go and find them if I need inspiration for something. (Survey-response)

Some participants expressed feelings of a lack of control as they positioned themselves at odds with technological algorithms. These algorithms appeared to

create a sense of uncertainty. Participants also did not like how email forums such as EPNET also have an unpredictable nature:

EPNET is highly frustrating. So much information can be sent at once, and there seems to be no way to control which of it goes to my inbox and which of it goes to my junk email or to control the quality of what it contains. (Survey-response)

Subtheme: Capacity to use

A third narrative around the accessibility of SNWS is that participants viewed them as manageable but only when they had the capacity. EPs and TEPs had ideas about idealised SNW use and what they would like to do on the platforms. However, a repeated perceived barrier in the data was that the EP role is demanding, and consequently, there is not enough time to use SNWs in the creative ways they would wish to. Or for some to engage with it at all:

In my role, creating and curating a professional social media account would take the considerable time that is not available in my work time (and I'm not sure would be permitted) and I'm already working extra hours every day and weekends to do my full-time role. (Survey-Response)

4.4.5 Theme 5: A Dangerous, Risky territory.

This theme centres on a perception of SNWs as a risky or dangerous place, which is present in the survey responses. In all subthemes for this theme, the participants' perceptions hold a tone of concern and detail a range of dangers. Many participants' responses focus on the risk that ethical and professional guidelines may not always transfer across to the online sphere. Other risks and dangers perceived by the EPs and TEPs are emotional risks, risks to professional standards and risks of publicly available material. This theme and subthemes are illustrated in table 4.18:

Table 4.18:

Theme	Subtheme	Code
A Dangerous, Risky territory	Ethics and professional standards	Competence Confidentiality Responsibility Safety Client information Lack of guidance Professionalism HCPC Wider-organisational policy Evidence-based practice Loss of critical thought Confirmation bias Misinformation
	On show	Personal Vs Service account Non-professional content Ownership Public Permanent Record Negative Feedback Complaints or Attacks
	Emotional risk	Comparison Intimidating Danger Vulnerability Frustrating Fear Stress Anxiety

Theme: a risky and dangerous territory, and related subthemes

Subtheme: Ethical and professional standards.

This subtheme is firstly concerned with perspectives on the ethical use of SNWs. Many participants are concerned that the ethical guidelines that apply to offline work may not always transfer across to the online sphere. Many EPs and TEPs discussed a need for more explicit and precise ethical guidelines regarding posting on SNWs. Key concerns include confidentiality:

discussing work online concern me. I have seen EPs and TEPs talking about "anonymous" cases they have worked on yet shared pictures of their work or aspects of their identity (gender, race, key stage) that could mean they could identify themselves if they searched the psychologist and I wonder what the cyp or their families would think about this. I wonder about the purpose that sharing this information serves to the psychologist and whether they have considered the ethics or position of sharing such information online (e.g. the psychologist feels proud of themselves so shares their work or how it made them feel - the impact on the child/yp is that they are then being "used" to serve the psychologist's needs for validation or other emotional needs). (Survey response).

I am not sure how I would like them to be used except that I have a strong position that posts linking directly to our clients (however much they are "anonymised") should not happen unless contracted and consented for (if that can happen, given the power dilemma). I think it is important that the profession considers this and reflects on the power differences in EPs and the clients of educational psychology whom may be spoken of/ written about and their views on how they would like EPs to utilise social media. (Survey response).

Another key concern related to the responsibility that EPs have to be competent and share appropriate information:

I think EPs must be careful that anything shared adheres to our ethical frameworks, i.e., is the resource being shared evidence-based and can it be picked up by anyone that reads it and used appropriately? But I think EPs are generally very good at ensuring they share helpful and appropriate things. (Survey response).

I think TEPs, in particular, have to be really careful to delineate the boundary between personal and professional use of social networking sites- for example, handing out 'professional' advice (unsolicited or otherwise) to parents, carers, teachers or, god forbid, young people would be really problematic.(Survey-response).

Some of the responses mention specific professional guidelines and a concern that EPs on SNWs need to be more careful and consider online to manage danger and risk. Some EPs specifically expressed that they would like more guidance on how to ensure that they are acting with professional guidance frameworks online :

an extra level of 'barrier' needs to be used (by the EP) to account for the HCPC guidelines, risks of gossip/breaking confidentiality. (Survey-response).

I don't post online as it feels too scary to do so! I would like to but I am unclear about what is "allowed" and how what I say could accidentally make me look bad, or ethically cause someone harm. I want to know more about how to safely manage online spaces. (Survey-response).

We didn't have any guidance at uni about it except to be very cautious, and if in doubt not to post, so probably that would be helpful! Survey-response).

Another aspect of SNW use was seen to be ethically dangerous or risky: Interacting with the information they find on SNW platforms. Many EPs were concerned that professional standards could be jeopardised by EPs not vigorously checking the evidence base of the information that they are interacting with online. Perceived concerns related to the sheer volume of such information, the fact it may contain bias, and a concern that what others are posting may not be trustworthy:

The fair/valid representation of information (I would have to do additional research to explore: Is it evidence based? Is this true reflection of people's experiences/view/perspective? What is the underlying theory? What is the other side of the debate? What are the key factors involved or that interlink? Who is publishing this? What might be their biases?) (Survey-response).

None really - I guess potentially it's more practice based evidence and maybe at risk if you are just implementing something because you saw it on Twitter but to be honest most ideas are grounded in theory and is professional opinion/critical thinking is enough to make this ok. (Survey-response).

Subtheme: On Show

Related perspectives in the dataset include concerns about the permanency of online posts. Participants were aware that evidence bases evolve, like language and consequently, making posts on a platform that holds a searchable and public record can be exposed and risky. Furthermore, the data also explored how if an EP does have difficulty and becomes a risk online, there may not be support available:

I have a concern that some people will make statements/tweet about specific views and over time/with more training their views may change but due to the nature of the internet these views will remain online and may impact their career. I have also had discussions previously with colleagues about the over-representation of men on these forums in a profession that is predominately female this seems unbalanced. (Survey-Response)

Primarily the lack of support. If an EP is targeted by someone on social media, as this can occur 24/7, there may not be access to supervisory or peer support for a number of days, which could have a significant impact on the well-being and confidence of the EP/TEP.(Survey-Response)

Many participants were unsure whether other EPs were thinking carefully about the visibility of their online posts. There was also a concern about service users and the potential negative impacts of reading online posts. Some participants had begun to think through this issue but did not appear to have any specific self-given boundaries regarding online posts. Several participants noticed that this connects to ethical issues and policies, as an EPs online post may impact their relationship with the service user could be changed (For example, if a service user accesses an EP's posts and forms an impression):

sometimes I saw things which were just vile. As in, people just sharing their every thought with no apparent consideration for people who might see it.(Survey-response).

There seems to be little concern that EPNET is not limited to EPs and there is an unknown community of witnesses to the email conversations that take place. I would be fascinated to learn more about psychoanalytic defence mechanisms and how they play out online(Survey-response).

Need to think about how schools/parents/young people would respond to what EPs are posting. (Survey-response).

Subtheme: Emotional risk.

This subtheme suggests that SNWs can be emotionally risky places for EPs. This perspective was present in responses detailing how SNWs may impact TEPs and EP's

mental health and emotional wellbeing. Some respondents detailed that they have to carefully instil boundaries and take time away from SNWs to carefully manage the risk and impact:

My mental health: if I am feeling low I use twitter less. My motivation: if I am feeling swamped with work and therefore demotivated, I use twitter less. (Survey-Response)

When I'm stressed out in a work capacity, I avoid social networks in a professional capacity as it adds to feelings of imposter syndrome. (Survey-Response)

The reasons why EPs may need to instil such boundaries can be seen in other aspects of this subtheme. Many respondents noted that online SNWs lead to individuals comparing themselves to other practitioners and professionals:

Feeling inadequate or less accomplished than other EPs or other EP services. (Survey-Response)

While professional social network use can be an excellent avenue for self-care, it can also lead to negative social comparisons. I can read about the amazing work that other EPs are carrying out in other parts of the country and wonder why I am not doing something similar or worry that I wouldn't be capable of doing so. (Survey-Response)

The stress or expectation that one may feel having seen another EP practice in a different way to what they have. This is particularly so for trainees who may be highly influenced having not yet determined the kind of either will be. (Survey-Response)

4.5 Interview Data: Qualitative findings

This section of the findings focuses on the Interview Data. Participants' written responses were collected from interviews and transcribed. Four themes were generated through the Reflexive Thematic Analysis process described in chapter 3. Three themes were generated through this Reflexive Thematic analysis process, as illustrated in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19

Theme	Subtheme	Central organizing concept
Personal development in the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing mental perspectives - Getting unfulfilled needs met - Discovering new resources and knowledge 	<p>Including and going beyond the CPD nature of finding resources, this theme explores perspectives on how SNWs may support EPs and TEPs to develop and change the person in role.</p> <p>Boundary: must be perspectives about the EP changing their practice or changing as a practitioner.</p>
Amplifying public voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach work - Gaining status - An exposing platform 	<p>SNWs are perceived as a vehicle for publicly sharing the EPs collective and individual professional voice.</p> <p>Boundary: must be a perspective about the impact of SN WS being public, open or communal.</p>
An unregulated space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of work - An unregulated narrative - Professional guidance 	<p>SNWs are perceived as an unregulated territory, lacking clear boundaries.</p> <p>Boundary: must be perspectives about social networks lacking clear rules or professional consensus.</p>

Themes, subthemes and central organising concepts for the interview data

4.5.1 Theme 1: Personal development in role.

The theme of personal development was evident throughout participants' responses. There was a sense that participants felt that SNWs were not only a platform to develop their understanding and access to resources and knowledge. It also allowed them to develop themselves in their role and change their mindset. The self-aware nature of EPs also meant that they were conscious of their own unmet needs. Part of their self-development was to use SNWs to ensure their needs were met. This theme highlights how the development experienced by participants was more than a surface-level

expansion of learning. SNWs allowed participants to reflect on themselves in their role as an EP. It also allowed them to change their approach to their work. This theme has three subthemes, as illustrated in Table 4.20

Table 4.20

Theme	Subtheme	Code
Personal Development in role	Changing mental perspectives	Growth/ positive change Expanding experience and learning Exposure to different views Reflection on practice
		Supporting a mindset for work Reflection on practice Excitement and Inspiration Creativity and Innovation Supporting emotional wellbeing
	Getting unfulfilled needs met	Isolation Need for learning / lacking information Lacking experience in the role
	Discovering new and knowledge	Finding practical resources Developing specialism/ Special interest Accessing other online resources Access to psychological research and theory

Theme: personal development in role and related subthemes

Subtheme: Changing mental perspectives:

This subtheme incorporates the notion that participating in SNWs can change one's mindset. Mindset changes occur through a shift in perspective. By interacting with professional SNW accounts, EPs thinking processes and beliefs were altered. Some participants appear to engage with SNWs to purposefully challenge themselves to be reflective practitioners:

So I reflect, like on Twitter where we're actually like able to have conversations with people from all over, like-minded people that are like "no, like, maybe we need to do things differently" and "how do we do that?" "how do we like challenge systems?" and I'm then putting those things into action as well, I don't. [...] there's a lot of people on Twitter, doing different things so it does broaden your view of like how we can practice (Interview- Avery).

Like on Twitter and things like that there's a lot of shared about kind of new ways of working, so for example when kind of those online therapy rooms and Bitmoji rooms came in to kind of play. I kind of found stumbled across them, and they made me think about new ways I can engage young people online. [...] 've learned new things that might not have come across, or I've heard about it before we've learned about it on the course, and I think as well not just kind of from my perspective, it helps me, it helps me learn things but also kind of gives me new ways of thinking. (Interview-Garnet).

The shifting of perspectives described above appears to be connected to SNWs ability to allow users to cross geographical boundaries:

I just love Twitter, [...] just is that difference between a small and narrow view of educational psychology and Twitter just blows it out of the water and you are able to access like every content all in a different psychologist different countries and different ways of work, to ways of viewing the world [...] but even just the way that they perceived like 'life' is different and so it just makes you reflect (Interview-Avery)

I mean, particularly in response to the BLM Movement and kind of hearing sort of for example Welsh psychologists coming and saying, "We really need to have conversations with other people because we don't have access to as much diversity". It just, it just really opened up my mind to a broader sense of EP. The EP world, not just in the UK but then it kind of, then I've kind of actually looked up places like South Africa because [...] they've obviously had apartheid, and their the evolution of Educational Psychology for them and the way that they research and the way that they think about things are slightly different so it's constantly a kind of for me it's about being a Londoner as well and, but can we go to getting that cultural awareness around other parts of the country in the world, that these issues are the same for everyone you know you kids around the world have needs, and there are psychologists, trying to address those needs (Interview-Ellis).

For others, engaging with SNWs gave them a sense of inspiration. Participants expressed this feeling of enthusiasm in different ways. It helped some feel reinvigorated in their sense of purpose for the profession or autonomy to develop into the practitioner they want to be. It appeared to renew in some participants a creative

spirit and a sense that there they were mentally available to overcome limiting thoughts:

Twitter] is a reminder that this is what we were trying to do. This is what we're supposed to do, when we can't do it. It gives me hope and it's kind of inspirational, I guess, or aspirational as well, that you know, going forward in terms of developing my practice that, that the things I want to do are actually part of my role (Interview-Flynn)

And so, to be able to step out and just kind of realise that it's not only there isn't just this way to do things, there's, you know, this is just one moment that I'll be thinking really working and thinking like this but there are really multiple kind of voices. [...]. I find that inspiring it's kind of reminds me of my why, in a way of why I'm doing this. (Interview-Carter)

because before it was kind of like, oh my god this doctorate is so overwhelming, like, how will we find time to do anything and then you look on Twitter and a lot well people are doing lots of stuff, you know, so, then it's possible, it can kind of give you that freedom as well. (Interview-Avery)

Some participants explained that SNWs changed their mindsets by supporting them to be in a productive headspace. This appeared to be related to participants feeling a sense of loss regarding an outlook or attitude needed for their job role. After participating in SNWs, participants' thoughts shifted. A restoration occurred to enable them to be 'good' and 'useful' again:

sometimes I use Twitter to just kind of remind me of "what did you know?" just kind of keep me on track [...] it kind of triggers a sort of, you know, conceptual headspace that gets me back more back on track. (Interview-Ellis)

if I'm feeling oh, gosh, this is such a drought. I feel like kind of underwater with these EHC's or whatever it might be, you know? Yeah, it's kind of nice to go on there. Just say, you know, get a different perspective, see what other people are doing. [...] helps me get back into the right frame of mind.[...] Yeah. It helps me put things back into perspective. (Interview-Flynn)

Subtheme: Getting unfulfilled needs met:

The restoration of mindset depicted above relates to another subtheme that developed; participating in SNWs to get "unfulfilled needs met". Participants could document how SNWs enabled them to overcome what they were missing or feeling a sense of loss around. One aspect of this was to reduce feelings of seclusion and separation from other EPs. Feelings of isolation appeared to be exasperated by the challenges during the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic. However, other participants described the EP role as an individualised role which, in its nature, is "isolating":

You can feel quite isolated as an EP sometimes. So you're in schools and you're doing your thing, and then you're not quite sure whether you know you're doing the right thing and you have the supervision and you talk to colleagues but as I say, I think there was a point about six or eight years ago where Twitter did become almost a community of sharing things. (Interview-Carter)

sounds weird but it has sort of replaced that like casual chitchat that we might have had on the course or office that we haven't had, you know, I mean like when you can just have like brief conversations with people or reach out to people when you need a hand. (Interview-Avery)

Related to this was a need to feel recognised, supported or validated by others online:

I think there's always going to be the inherent "Yeah it feels nice" when you put something out there and it comes back, and it's got like this many likes or whatever. (Interview- Bailey)

And I just do post quite a lot, and my classmates always messaging me after they're like, "Well, you've just summarised everything I've learned in a day". (Interview- Garnet)

Another, more subtle need expressed by some of the participants above is to use SNWs to feel more confident and to confirm their thoughts about the remit of the EP role. Participants describe the vastness of different approaches in the EP profession and practice. This vastness appears to lead EPs to develop unease. Participants were

concerned that there is a 'correct' way to be an EP, act as an EP, or feel like an EP. Thus, for some participants, SNWs allowed for liberation of their perceptions of the role:

Yeah, [...] what it means to be an EP I think because I know in speaking with other newly qualified EPs, who are now like three, four years out, they did not feel like a psychologist [...]. And last year, certainly I didn't feel like a psychologist. I felt like more of an administrative person writing reports. And you know what I mean? [...], you know, what I see from other services [on Twitter] is a reminder that this is what we were trying to do. (Interview-Flynn)

I think [SNWs] broadened in the role of my perception of the role of the EP because there's people on there that aren't doing the typical EP local authority role, which is also like we're a bit sheltered from that, [...] we don't really get taught in training like the flexibility of the application of our skills, [...] because we get paid by the government to do this training so we have to go and be a local authority EP, but we don't really, yeah we don't really get like this broad picture of what people are doing in the field. (Interview-Avery)

A related need in the dataset is that participants need SNWs to verify the extent and quality of their current knowledge. Participants appeared to be comparing and judging themselves against others online, and from this comparison, they identified personal learning needs. Again, this seems to relate to participants' feeling that their knowledge was too limited or inadequate. A related sentiment is expressed in the above post; a feeling that each training course may only offer one experience of the EP role and how this drives insecurity and the need to continue to seek knowledge:

In my training, although superficially we discussed that we never went into depth about like how families work, [...] so that made prompted me to kind of seek out initially, especially on Twitter, you know like systemic family therapy groups, that kind of thing [...] it helped me to learn more about what that was all about, to, I guess. To put it simply, because training or training courses are a little bit different, there's only three years, and there's only so much content, so everyone has gaps. (Interview-Flynn)

The anxiety of like seeing people like doing a lot of stuff all the time. And then like prevents you from thinking about the benefits. Maybe that could be quite

tricky. I think I felt a bit like that at the beginning [...] it might be anxiety provoking or increased like the feeling of like workload or some feelings of like maybe comparison or competitiveness which I don't think are bad things. Well, yeah, they can be, but you know what I mean, like they can also drive good things. They can drive you to learn something new. (Interview-Avery)

Subtheme: Discovering new resources and knowledge

This subtheme centred on how many interview participants used SNWs for professional development reasons. Many participants appeared to be participating in online platforms to develop their "resources and knowledge". Examples included contextual knowledge to support their understanding and specialist area of interest. Other knowledge is used for continued professional development and changing EP practice or finding specific resources:

On Twitter an EP has just launched the DNAV cards. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy cards. Brilliant. And she posted them on there for everyone to access so I now use those resources quite frequently they like strengths cards that where, would you would buy them for like 15-20 quid, you could just download the file.(Interview-Devon)

As well as finding new resources EPs and TEPs appeared to be using SNWs to gain contextual information to support their professional development. To do this, the EPs followed the social network accounts of the schools in which they work or other educational professionals. This use appears to enable them to support their understanding of systemic knowledge of the schools in which they work. Following schools provides information on the context, emotions, and experience of staff generally working in the U.K. education system. use appears to be related to keeping abreast of important contextual information or understanding the different opinions in these spheres:

"Well following my schools has been great, [...] In, so it just helps me to understand, I guess, the school, school ethos, their Policy, just understand what

they're all about. As a school, you know they post their GCSE results and things like that, things that I would normally have to look for. Now it comes to me [...] I felt again it's a way for me to kind of familiarise myself with what is going on before I've been able to meet with them (Interview- Flynn)

I follow [...] head teacher opinion threads which I find really interesting because you know like we really only as EPs we do get to build relationships with schools but it's quite brief. [...] following people, like in the government positions, OFSTED, behaviour people, really is difficult to look at sometimes, but it can be really helpful to do. (Interview-Avery).

4.5.2: Theme 2: Amplifying Public Voice

This theme depicts how participants' perspectives often referred to the public nature of SNWs. The dataset was frequently preoccupied with the impact of a professional voice or narrative being out in an open and public sphere. A subtheme of this theme is 'outreach work'; this subtheme formed from the meanings given by participants who wanted to harness and amplify a public voice for altruistic means such as social justice. The second sub-theme is 'gaining status' and how some EPs and TEPs held perspectives on how being active on SNWs can shift power dynamics and relational and positional standing. A further subtheme is 'an exposing platform', connected to participants' perspectives on the impact of publicly hearing their voices. This theme has 3 subthemes, as illustrated in Table 4.21

Table 4.21

Theme	Subtheme	Code
Amplifying Public Voice	Outreach work	Systemic change Social justice/ activism Educating others Early Intervention Holding others to account Potential candidates for the doctorate
	Gaining status	Growing followers Self-Promotion Impression management Validation Comparison Getting attention
	An exposing platform	Language used Lacking confidence Punitive/ Intimidating environment Permanent record

Theme: Amplifying Public Voice and related subthemes

Subtheme: Outreach work

There was a clear pattern in the dataset of participants who view the public nature of SNWs as something that can be harnessed for good. SNWs provide access to a broader audience who can benefit from psychological understanding. This perspective shows that SNWs can give a platform for access and outreach to service users. The outreach discussed by participants includes providing inclusion/quality first teaching advice to educators. Others share information about emotions, behaviour and positive relationships to help parents. Some also report using SNWs to support school staff and young people in understanding the EP role:

it's it's helping everyone understand what we're all about, what kind of work we do, how we can help them. Which mean in a way it could, it would save it could save, you know, a lot of time but also a lot of confusion and misunderstandings and things like that. (Interview-Flynn)

I'm kind of considering for my own organisation once my following gets a bit bigger, is we kind of do a live Q&A almost like a much more accessible version of like a live telephone conversation and consultation [...] it needs to be anonymous, but it's something along the lines of, you know, my, my child is struggling with this at school, what do I do [...] But I think one of the things that we can do as EPs is just make ourselves a lot more accessible because there's still a number of parents, huge, huge percentage of parents who don't know, our role even exists. And there's huge percentage of parents who have been waiting for God knows how long to try and get an appointment with, with an EP, (Bailey- interview)

Sharing psychological knowledge was not the only 'outreach work' activity discussed by participants. A common perspective among the participants is that SNWs can provide a public platform for social activism and systemic change work. Some EPs are getting involved in public conversations about systemic issues, sharing petitions and interacting with politicians to get their work and voice noticed:

Things I have really noticed have been conversations about social justice and activism and the role of the EP, which is really critical. But probably the one that we're probably doing less of, on a day to day basis and we're the kind of systems level stuff but that's there's a lot of debate around how do we tackle these inequalities [...] Particularly in response to the BLM movement and kind of hearing sort of for example Welsh psychologists coming and saying, We really need to have conversations with other people because we don't have access to as much diversity. It just, it just really opened up my mind to a broader sense of EP. (Interview-Ellis)

And I think recently I've been kind of calling up politicians, a bit as well. Mainly, I mean, mainly the Tory government but also the, the opposition so because I'm disillusioned with politics, but I think because of how influential that is in our space as EPS. Yeah, I think, I think you can, you can use it as a platform for change in a good way that way too. I'm just much more careful about whether or not I'm going to swear when I'm going after a politician. If I'm just calling out a head teacher for saying something that I disagree with. (Interview-Bailey)

we might make actual change through sharing things on Twitter, maybe @ people like the Children's Commissioner DFE to highlight the work that we've done so, we have almost taken a slightly more even political pathway with it[...] when we put out the second report we did use Twitter. We did "@" some the MPs we could find, who I can't remember. [...] (Interview-Carter)

Subtheme: Gaining Status

A subtheme of 'gaining status' highlights how EPs' and TEPs' perspectives often alluded to how the public nature of SNWs can lead to people feeling positioned by others online. Furthermore, some participants spoke of harnessing SNWs to support impression management. Participants disclosed using SNWS to promote their work and businesses. Private EPs were often promoting their work. EPs working in the public sector were more likely to use SNWs for the promotion of specific work projects or collaborative forums:

Yeah I suppose it was about raising awareness of the work that we're doing... and then they now follow us and quite a few more people follow us because it's just linked into that education side of things as well. And it does raise your profile as well that if you hopefully say something that's useful and I'm linking that into Twitter and it's picked up then you'll often find the little flurry of more followers. (Interview-Carter)

One was to offer this reflective space where we meet, of termly on [videoconferencing software], so the invitation went out through EPNET and Twitter. We selected some people, and that groups running but what also has come out of it, is we've been approached by course directors from other training institutions that have asked us to deliver some training on [specialist area] [...] So, I feel my professional career, has moved forward a lot faster in my area than without it (Twitter & EPNET) definitely.[...] So I think so, I think, is advertising and communication and (Interview-Devon)

Within this subtheme arose concerns about EPs building an online status. Especially concerning self-promotion and creating an online image. The participants judged that using SNWs for a sense of reward from the attention or hierarchical positioning was inappropriate. A related sentiment was that self-promoting EPs could get ahead and advance themselves. The tone of the participants' meaning was that self-promotion is problematic. Some participants who disliked it feared it created unequal opportunities and that self-promotion does not make one a responsible 'psychologist'.

Because are people doing it because they just enjoy the connection with others and they want to have dialogue or are they doing it because their voice is loud and they're getting hits and their own dopamine and ego is being rewarded and they profile and status as an EP is being maintained. And if that is a drive, I question that I am not sure how I feel about that. (Interview-Bailey)

Am I going to be needing to be more online? you know visible online in order to be able to do to do well enough? to you know to be successful and to sort of feel like? I'm... yeah I think, I think there's a sort of an, I don't know why, I say negative but there is something negative about it [...]also, are they at an advantage before they are going private?, there doesn't appear to be any kind of moderation of this. I'm not going to do it. It's just not me, It doesn't reflect who I am and what I believe. I do think there is an ethical dilemma around self-promotion if you have a business and a business model to promote that with PR, that's very different to this slick self-promotion. (Interview-Ellis)

Subtheme: An exposing platform

As SNWs amplify public voice, a further subtheme in the dataset is the participants' expressed sentiments about how SNWs can leave participants feeling exposed. This exposure related to participants' expressing feelings of insecurity. Many were hesitant to post or rarely made posts as the public environment felt too exposing. Key concerns were the permanence of posts, visibility of online posts, and fears about incorrect language. Participants' fears regarding language included concerns of being misinterpreted or saying something that could be perceived as "wrong" or "incorrect". As EPs need to be aware of the limits of their professional competency due to ethical practice standards (British Psychological Society, 2018), this concern about posting could be an example of EPs ensuring they work ethically. Another language-related concern in the dataset is how specific terms and expressions hold different power and weight. Language is constantly evolving, and the consequences of misuse can feel dangerous:

it can be misinterpreted what you're posting by other people. And you could get some negative feedback from that (interview-Devon)

You know, you have to really watch how you word things because you know I think there was one time on my personal account where someone called me up, I can't remember what it was. Now, there's something very, very slight on the language that I'd used [...] and someone popped up and said you need to think about how people might read this. Yeah, and I went back straightaway and was like yeah I really appreciate what you said. I'll keep that in mind and watch it and they were like, "oh thank you" but it was one of those things that you could have seen escalating into something. (Interview-Carter)

Related perspectives in the dataset include concerns about the permanency of online posts. Participants were aware that evidence bases can evolve, like language, and consequently, making posts on a platform that holds a searchable and public record can be exposed and risky. Furthermore, the data also explored how if an EP does have difficulty and becomes a risk online, there may not be support available:

I think there is a bit of a fear of saying something wrong or doing something that somebody would take offence to and then your name being attached to that, and for a long time, because I do think it is a very small world, and especially when you're networking online (Interview- Garnet)

So I'm very conscious about like, not doing something that will kind of follow me around everywhere I go [...]to I have to be quite careful for myself as well because whilst yes I want to use it to use my platform to support people as best I can. I also have a responsibility that most other people who I end up engaging with don't, I.E. the HCPC code of conduct and others. [...]if I'm trying to go into a school and be their EP, and I'm taking quite strong positions and positing about certain things. And they're going, "oh you know we saw this or we saw that" yeah, that's a tough space or a tough thing to manage . And so, I've got to in my head, I think I've policed myself a bit too much [...]. But at the same time, there might be someone out there who says, "perhaps you don't police yourself enough". But yeah, I think a lot of the main, the main bulk of everything that I do, is in the public sphere. (Interview-Bailey)

Many participants were unsure whether other EPs were thinking carefully about the visibility of their online posts. There was also a concern about service users and the potential negative impacts of reading online posts. Some participants had begun to

think through this issue but did not appear to have any specific self-given boundaries regarding online posts:

in terms of thinking about potentially further career and things like that when you are qualified and thinking about what your name is tied to and also like for example thinking from families and children's perspectives, like, I don't think that they would ever stumble across it [professional Instagram account], but thinking about, how would they feel reading that and I mean, there's nothing on there that's personal or, you know, it's just about kind of my journey and about how and different resources that I've come across and, but I think. Yeah, I think it's just being mindful, is what I would say.(Garnet-Interview)

think about people who are setting up, for example professional Instagram accounts, maybe even before they are qualified[...] But, Like when you're a therapist, people often can't find out much about you, and I think that quite good. I do wonder about blurred boundaries, and should I perhaps actually be off all platforms? I just think there's such potential for misuse of these platforms and it is only going to get worse. But in terms of our ethics, in terms of our boundaries and confidentiality and also our own self-protection. (Ellis- Interview)

4.5.3: Theme 3: An unregulated space

A key undercurrent to many of the perspectives raised by EPs is that the professional use of SNWs is still a new and evolving space. Due to this, the dataset appears to hold the view that SNW space is unregulated; the boundaries and rules for use have not been formed. No consensus or agreement has been made in the profession. The EP profession in the U.K. has clear boundaries and codes for practice in other areas. Still, the dataset participants seemed concerned that their peers and colleagues were not necessarily transferring these rules to an online space.

This theme has 3 subthemes, as illustrated in Table 4.22

Table 4.22

Theme	Subtheme	Code
An unregulated space	Quality of work	Vetting information Not theoretical/ academic Non-professional context Wider organisational policy No formality Professional standards Impact on evidence-based practice
	Unregulated Narrative	Dominant narratives / Limited perspectives Opinion Confrontation Toxic environment
	Professional guidelines	Responsible Ethical HCPC Confidentiality Responsibility

Theme: An unregulated space and related subthemes

Subtheme: Quality of work

This subtheme, “quality of work” incorporates the notion that the information shared on SNWs may have an unregulated quality. The dataset presents concerns that the evidence base shared online is diluted, biased, and not appropriately assessed before it is shared:

so there's a quality assurance, how do you know that. Who could the face behind the name or what you're accessing or the evidence base, I guess can be negative experience that you kind of get to know familiar names and trust them. (Interview-Devon)

there will be certain people that will post things and you think, I know this will be sound because it's x y or Zed. But then something might pop up, you don't know the person, but you think all that paper or that website or that book looks quite good. But then you might just go well I'll just I'll click on the link or I'll read the paper myself. You know, have a bit because sometimes you can just go, well that looks good I'll just retweet because the byline sounds really good. But I think there is a sense of responsibility that if you'e sharing stuff, and you want it to inform other people like teachers and whatever you, you kind of need to do it in a responsible way. (Interview-Carter)

Subtheme An Unregulated narrative:

A further subtheme in the data is narrative. This involved how participants perceive SNWs as creating an unregulated narrative about the EP profession. Some feel that certain opinions are privileged over others in the online narrative. Others perceive that it is a space that is only providing one perspective:

on Twitter, there are like several voices that are quite loud, and there are people that use it like super frequently like actively, they're like very active participants in like EP, Twitter, and I think that sometimes it can be a little bit like you if you don't feel like that group, then it's like you almost don't not have a voice (Interview- Avery)

That [EP forum] can be quite harsh at times with how they might react to someone having a slightly different opinion to them. (Interview-Carter)

I think one worry of interacting with EPs like this online is that newer EPs and trainees could be overly influenced by a certain perspective or something like that if you're following them and just kind of [...]like social identity theory, [...]like if you're identifying with something and then you just keep following them and you're not open to other ways of thinking or ways of working, I mean I suppose that could be a possibility, you know, a detriment. It could be limiting, or you get overly influenced by one set of ideas (Interview-Flynn)

Some participants feel there is a space for different ideas and debates on SNWs platforms. However, as this space is unregulated, hostility and conflict can occur. Several EPs raised concerns that interactions and communication are not always positive or constructive when debate occurs. Without boundaries and regulated guidelines, SNWs can be perceived as a harsh and uninviting space:

If there are discussions they end up being like, like arguments, but also just really toxic, you know, like, very personal. I think that people take things very personally which is interesting considering everyone is meant to be psychologists or at least. Well, that's another thing it's not necessarily just psychologists either. Yeah and I think there are like a few key players. I think the power dynamics on EPNET are really strange like there seems to be a few people that mainly men, I think as well from what I've noticed that, kind of, yeah

will respond in ways that I don't think are helpful and that can be quite like personal, personal attacks maybe, or at least what I've seen. (Interview-Avery)

There were some posts in relation to racial discrimination, I think there was like a big thread [...], I didn't want to read it but then I was gonna say like I need to read it because, like, these are there kind of opinions are there, you know, if we don't, if we just ignore the fact that people actually think like that then how does that help but then it was also quite difficult to read, It's quite a strange thing because[...]It is a place where I just think in the educational psychology profession, it is quite hard to have like very open like frank conversations and it just goes a bit away from being professional, sometimes. And I imagine that also if you're like that's me reading those posts for example that one around race [...] I felt uncomfortable, [...] I think that online posts could have like a really serious impact on trainees or other EPS as well like quite negative impacts especially if you're thinking, this is our profession, you know like those voices are a part of this profession, they're also working with children, young people of different races, different identities different genders, you know, and, and that's quite worrying, I think. (Interview-Carter)

Sometimes it gets a bit confrontational, and I've always [unclear] that it within our professional practice yes we need to challenge and yes we need to, we, you know we're entitled to our own opinions, but it's almost like where's the border line between it being not professional if that makes sense. (Interview-Garnet)

Subtheme: Professional guidelines

Some of the interviewed participants expressed a perception that they felt there were no clear professional guidelines for SNWs. These participants appeared unclear about how to take standards and apply them online. Several participants seemed to lack clarity about ensuring their posts online were responsible and ethical. These participants appeared to be seeking more conversations or guidance on ethical practice in the online sphere:

but actually I think it's quite a grey line and when you look at, I was trying to look at HCPC and BPS and like on the course and what's allowed and what's not allowed and, and he does, you know social media doesn't come into that because I was like oh "do I put, for example, don't put my picture I don't put my name or do I keep in anonymous?"[...]I think that grey line between what you can and can't share and what you do what you don't do and as in like I personally wouldn't share anything that I've done on placement, obviously you

wouldn't share children's names and things like that but, and I think there is a place for it (Interview-Garnet)

But, Like when you're a therapist, people often can't find out much about you, and I think that's quite good. I do wonder about blurred boundaries, and should I perhaps actually be off all platforms. It's like teachers, should teachers be able to be traced? I just think there's such potential for misuse of these platforms and it is only going to get worse. But in terms of our ethics, in terms of our boundaries and confidentiality and also our own self-protection, I don't think there's been much conversation about how EPs are in the online world, and I don't know if there ever has been or will be. (Interview-Ellis)

4.6 Summary

This chapter presented the dataset by firstly presenting the survey data and then the interview data. The next chapter considers the data outcomes of what has been demonstrated in this chapter. This includes discussing what these findings may mean practically and theoretically and will consider any implications regarding SNW use in the EP profession.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to offer a summary and detailed exploration of the main findings of this research study. Each research question will be presented in turn, critically considering how the findings for these research questions relate to the previous literature. Different theoretical understandings and connections to the findings will be explored. Consideration will be given to the implication of these findings for the EP profession. The strengths and limitations of this research will be discussed, along with several possible focuses for future research. An outline of potential avenues to disseminate the research is also included. The chapter finishes with the conclusion of this project. When EPs are referred to in this chapter, this includes all stages and roles of the EP profession, from trainee to principal EPs.

5.2 RQ1: "How are Educational Psychologists using social networking websites in a professional capacity?"

The objective of this research question was to identify what EPs' current SNW use looks like and describe how SNWs are being used in relation to EP practice.

- Firstly, this study found that EPs use social networking websites regularly concerning their professional practice; 95 of the participants who completed the survey disclosed their use of SNWs, and 62.1% of these participants used them daily or more than once daily.
- Exploring the way in which EPs use SNWs revealed that all 95 participants read other EPs' posts. But only 24.2% post online, illustrating that some EPs actively

share material and their thoughts online. Other EPs assume a more cautious role and act as consumers of the said material.

- The type of SNW use took many forms; in summary, EPs' use included supporting professional practice development, communicating externally to the profession, and supporting personal development within the role.
- An additional key finding from RQ1 is that EPs appear to favour certain SNW platforms over others, and their use is mainly carried out on these platforms. This preference for specific platforms seems connected to communicating with other EPs.

These key findings of RQ1 will be examined in more detail below, integrating qualitative and quantitative data from the survey and interview.

5.2.1 The frequency of SNW use

Most participants (82.7%) of the 110 EPs who completed the survey indicated that they used social networks for professional use, with half (49.47%) using them once a day and more than 10% (12.63%) using them multiple times a day. This trend is in line with findings from other studies into SNW usage, which shows that SNWs are an integral part of life for many globally, with average users spending over 2 hours a day on social media (GWI.com, 2022).

The survey results show that many younger and less experienced EPs use SNWs for professional reasons. This may relate to general trends in the population, whereby younger adults are more likely to be competent and confident internet users. Data from the UK office for national statistics suggest that the older a person is, the more likely they are a non-internet user (Serafino, 2019). However, this finding needs to be considered proportionally to the data, as most participants (57.27%) are under 34.

When SNW use is considered proportionately to experience levels of EPs, the findings are that 62.16% of Qualified Educational Psychologists and Senior Educational Psychologists participants use SNWs daily or multiple times the day. Whereas only 37.2% of Trainee EPs use SNWs as frequently. It is unclear from the findings why the qualified EP participants use SNWs more frequently than TEPs. However, it may relate to this study's finding that professional and personal development are found to be core reasons for SNW use. Trainee EPs may be getting their needs for learning and development met within their university and course commitments.

5.2.3 Manner of use: Posting Vs not posting

100% of participants who use SNWs selected that they use them to read other EP's posts, and 70.21% of participants selected that they do this regularly. Demonstrating that EPs are engaging in the online content being posted and published by their colleagues nationally. However, the number of EPs who posted themselves was much smaller, at 24.2%. This is similar to research from the literature review that found that some teachers would only observe or lurk on internet discussion boards (Lu & Curwood, 2015). Several participants explained their lack of confidence in their abilities to post online. A premise from the data is that EPs find the public nature of some SNWs rendered them '*an exposing platform*' as discussed in the survey theme '*amplifying public voice*'. EPs were worried about using incorrect language or terminology or something being misconstrued.

EPs' lack of confidence is also related to their view of SNWs as a place without clear boundaries and rules, which leaves EPs feeling unsafe or uncertain about use. This perspective was found in the interview subtheme '*unregulated space*', which documents EP's concerns that SNWs are still relatively new and evolving. Therefore,

establishing appropriate boundaries and rules for use is challenging. No EPs in the study discussed their workplaces' policy on SNWs or had a clear and comprehensive understanding of the boundaries of their use, despite most local authorities and workplaces having guidance documents which may provide some reassurance (Gloucestershire County Council, 2019; Salford City Council, 2013).

The hesitancy to post online is also related to concerns about the ethical use of SNWs, a core subtheme of the survey analysis; '*a dangerous, risky territory*'. The EPs who participated did not appear to be aware of the ethical Guidance on SNW use from both the HCPC and BPS (British Psychological Society, 2012b; Health & Care Professions Council, 2017). However, some EPs did mention the general BPS ethical code (British Psychological Society, 2018). The EPs in this study appeared to know the importance of applying ethical boundaries to their work, such as not searching for service users online. However, EPs were worried that their colleagues may not be acting as responsibly. Some EPs said they felt uncomfortable seeing EPs post "anonymous" case notes. EPs expressed fear that these may not remain anonymous and could cause harm to the families involved. Other issues raised included concerns regarding self-protection as a professional. These ethical concerns are included in the literature exploring American School Psychologists' use of SNWs (Bressler et al., 2021; Kaslow et al., 2011; Lannin & Scott, 2013; Wester et al., 2013). Several of these articles claim that US psychologists need more explicit training on SNW use, and this claim is also relevant to UK psychologists.

5.2.4 Type of use: Professional development

EPs are using SNWs to learn and adapt their practice. This study has found that a key reason for using SNWs is to learn from other EPs' experiences and practices. 91.6%

of participants use SNWs to learn about new ways of working, and to learn about recent publications of interest. In both the interviews and survey, the participants described a variety of new knowledge found from SNW's EPs posts, including practical resources, tools, new models, new perspectives, and new research. A key theme from the survey was *'adventurers exploring new frontiers'*. This theme positioned EPs as explorers surfing the SNWs to reveal new discoveries. Examples included EPs explaining how they have worked together to collaboratively find tools to support practice during the COVID-19 pandemic or find free resources to use with children. These findings relate to the research explored in the literature review showing that professionals use SNWs to find relevant information to support their learning (Nochumson, 2019; Pham et al., 2014; Tucker, 2019). EPs are creating their own "portable repositories" of resources (Jordan, 2019) and using SNWs to access a constant flow of new information (Davis, 2015b). Many EPs who had accessed and saved such online resources reflected upon them and incorporated them into their practice, as demonstrated in the interview subtheme *'discovering new resources and knowledge'*.

Furthermore, interacting online and sharing knowledge enabled EPs to appear to work in a way described in other literature as a 'Hive mind': (Elkordy & Zumpano, 2018), a collective, shared and collaborative space. The 'Hive mind' metaphor views people as bees and society as a beehive sharing knowledge (Sloman & Fernbach, 2018). SNWs provide a space for EPs to form a collective resource, which means they are no longer working in isolation but can store their knowledge externally to themselves. They work together to create a combined and shared mind resource and utilise each other's expertise and resources.

EPs actively share resources and knowledge to support the 'hive mind'. 75.8% of participants using SNWs contributed to SNWs by sharing their resources or re-sharing helpful information they found. 55.79% shared that they use SNWs to promote their research and practice. The qualitative findings from the survey theme '*A place for exchanging discourse*' also suggest that many EPs share their own resources to be helpful to other EPs or gain feedback. Sharing resources and research online allows for more open access to papers and does not keep them behind paywalls. Many EPs explained how this collaboration allowed them to network to create specialist interest groups. There has been a movement worldwide to allow for open science, which includes efforts to make science more transparent, rigorous, accessible and reproducible (Standen, 2019). By sharing research online openly with one another, EPs are beginning to contribute to this movement of distributing psychological knowledge and theory informally rather than through traditional publishing systems.

However, while EPs are sharing research by others, or sharing links to their publications, only 24.2% of participants stated that they actively or regularly post their own posts. This could be concerning that there might not be enough EPs currently contributing to the "Hive mind".

As discussed above, a 'Hive mind' is created for collaboration and problem-solving. However, many EPs also detailed how their SNW use exposed them to different perspectives and opinions and helped them reflect on, and evolve, their practice. This finding stems from subthemes in the survey data: '*changes to mindset in role*', and the interview data: '*changing mental perspectives*'. Thus, SNWs appear to simultaneously create spaces for shared ideas and problem-solving whilst also allowing for criticality in the profession by exposing EPs to different ideas. This finding implies that SNWs

can be a valid reflective space for EPs, and more EPs may wish to begin to share their voice.

The qualitative responses from these subthemes suggest that EPs found that SNWs were a place where they could change their mindsets. One way they could do this was by being exposed to different perspectives. SNWs allow for access to global perspectives. This provides opportunities to reflect on the status quo of the British education system. Also, exposure to different theoretical ideas encourages the EPs to reflect on approaches used in UK EP practice. EPs shared that they gained perspectives about other ways of working.

Differing perspectives are important for professional groups as they help stop the profession's thought processes from becoming too restrictive and lead to Groupthink issues (Janis, 2008; Turner & Pratkanis, 1997): where group members adopt a similar opinion to the rest of a group. This can lead to unquestioned beliefs and self-censorship. Other similar cognitive thought errors can appear when groups restrict themselves to one specific mindset or perspective. An example is confirmation bias (Klayman, 1995): people will cling to their favoured hypothesis and only value new information that confirms this belief. Fox (2011) explores how these cognitive frameworks do not prevent EPs from using new perspectives. Still, listening and accommodating other views can be hard when EPs are emotionally attached to certain perspectives. However, it appears the EPs are using SNWs to enable them to have enough emotional detachment to reflect on their established beliefs. Therefore, taking the EPs ideas that SNW use is useful for practice development, this research implies that it is crucial to have a range of active EPs contributing and involved in SNW discussions. Thus, having more EPs contributing to online narratives is important to

ensure various perspectives are heard. This ensures that those online are not being exposed to one limited way of approaching psychology.

5.2.5 Type of use: Communicating externally to the profession

This research has found that EPs do not only connect with one another online. 56.84% of responding EPs use SNWs to share professional knowledge with people who are not psychologists, and 20% do this regularly. EPs are also following other related professionals; 62.1% selected that they use SNWs to actively interact with other professionals such as clinical psychologists and teachers. 52.63% interacted with school staff, such as teachers and headteachers, and 51.58% interacted with other professionals. This cross-profession interaction was also present in the qualitative data in the survey theme '*EPs as messengers and campaigners*'.

This finding of cross-profession interaction is different from the papers within this study's literature review, which mainly explored how professional groups communicated within their own profession. However, as the research in Chapter 1 briefly explored, Health Care professionals also use SNWs to communicate across professions. One study highlighted how they come together to interact under one Twitter hashtag to create a collaborative cross-disciplinary discussion (Gilbert, 2016). Similarities between EPs and Health Care workers may explain why these groups communicate multi-professionally with SNWs. Comparably to healthcare professionals, educational psychologists often work in multi-agency teams (Gaskell & Leadbetter, 2009; Woolfson et al., 2003). This suggests that as EPs work multi-professionally offline, the online space also extends further opportunities to learn and collaborate with people with different but related professional knowledge and skillsets. Also, before using SNWs and technology developments, multi-professional working

was difficult and expensive due to the limitations of getting professionals together physically in one room. This study suggests that SNWs have allowed EPs to achieve multi-professional networks much more efficiently.

As well as communicating with other professionals. EPs use SNWs to gather information about SEND parents and their school systems. In the interview subtheme of *'changing mental perspectives'* and the survey subtheme *'changing mindsets'*, participants often spoke of how SNWs provided them access to information regarding the experiences of being a parent or a teacher. Consequently, EPs may need a space to reflect on the impact of reading and interacting with posts.

Most respondents (56.84%) do not interact with service users online. Only 14.7% of participants indicated that they interact with parents, and a few responded that they work with families via SNWs. The qualitative data suggest that this interaction with parents and families generally entails EPs posting generic psychological information and resources as a form of outreach. This was a key finding of the survey subtheme *'providing additional context'*. When EPs and TEPs discussed following or interacting with parents and families, they often spoke of following specific parent accounts. These are SNW accounts that blog or tweet publicly and specifically about their experiences of having a child with SEND in the British School System. Many of these parents remain anonymous and post under an alias.

In this study, EPs did not provide details regarding their interactions with service users on SNWs. There were no disclosures of EPs following specific parents or young people who were their direct service users. This finding is different from the research in the literature review, which explored how many American Psychologists were searching for private accounts to learn about their clients (Pham et al., 2014; Segool et al., 2016;

Tunick et al., 2011; Van Allen & Roberts, 2011). This may suggest that U.K. EPs are thinking ethically regarding their online practice. Alternatively, this may be due to differences in the nature of work, with the American Psychologists having longer therapeutic relationships with their clients. Whereas U.K. EPs may only be involved with service users for more short-term or individual pieces of work.

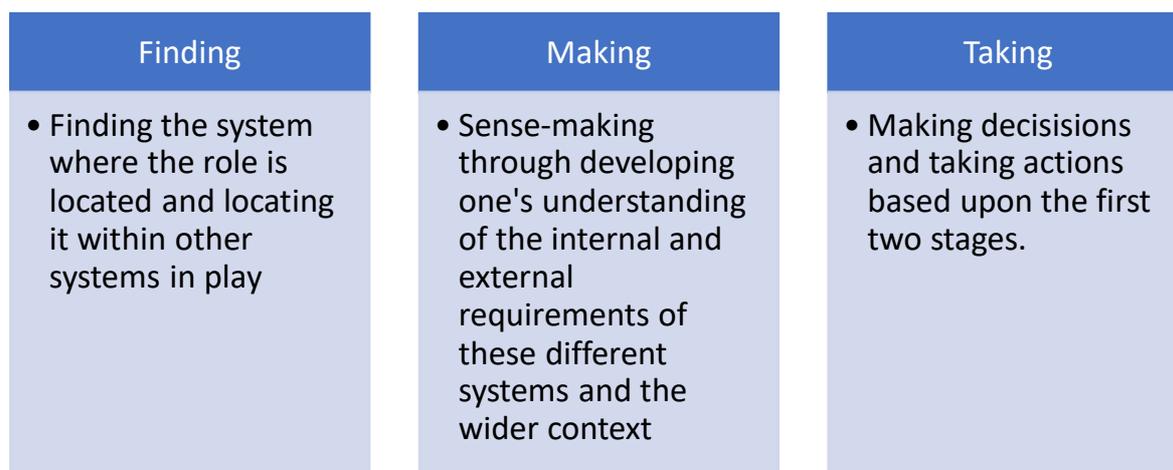
However, the EPs in this study disclosed following SNW accounts of schools they worked with. They often chose to follow public-facing accounts to learn more about their schools. They also followed public accounts with posts from anonymous teachers. This was another key finding of the survey subtheme '*providing additional context*'. Following these accounts appeared to help EPs understand the perspectives of school staff and allow for empathy for the difficulties they face and the demands placed upon them. Both strands of qualitative data included EPs explaining how they used SNWs to gather contextual information about school systems, which helped them reflect on their relationships and approaches when working with staff. SNWs were a way they could access school staff's up-to-date reactions to news articles or policies.

Access to public anonymous parent accounts and specific school SNW accounts provides EPs with a window into these individuals' emotional experiences and thoughts. The survey's RTA subtheme, '*changes to mindset in role*', overlapped with findings around context, as it appears that such knowledge leads to changes in "mindset". EPs described how mindset changes occur due to the additional contextual information from such online posts. Suppose these posts truly lead EPs to reflect and potentially alter their relationships with schools and families. In that case, an implication is that EPs should responsibly monitor such mindset changes and possibly bring this to supervision.

5.2.6 Type of use: personal development in role.

SNW use appears to be able to develop the person in 'role'. This was a core RTA theme of the interview data; '*personal development in the role*'. EPs explained how their perspectives and understandings of their role and the system were altered through SNW use. A systems-psychodynamic theory has explored that when taking up a profession or job, each person has to discover their own definition of themselves in 'role', and this 'person in role' can evolve and change over time (Roberts, 2019). Reed & Bazalgette (2006) developed Organisation Role Analysis (ORA) to explore how people develop their personal idea of their 'role' through three stages, finding, making, and taking. Figure 5.2 illustrates this theory.

Figure 5.2:



Reed and Bazalgette's (2006) ORA model.

Other research has noted how the EP role is diverse (Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Boyle & Lauchlan, 2009) and can differ depending on the contexts and systems where EPs are placed. EPs can use various theoretical perspectives, frameworks for practice and models for working (Kelly, 2016). As Reed & Bazalgette's, (2006) theory suggests, understanding the system is essential for understanding one's role. Many EPs

explained how they felt they only had a little understanding of the EP role from their limited training experience. EPs in this study explored how they use SNWs to see how other psychologists around the UK and the globe are working. This appeared to be helping EPs with the "finding" and "making" aspects of understanding their role, in relation to the above theory. The EPs in this study explain how SNWs offer them a window into how the EP role can differ. This allows for uncovering different ways of working, giving them a greater understanding of the system. SNWs enabled many of the EPs involved to explore the role and then progress onto the final stage of ORA; helping them to uncover the type of EP they wanted to be.

The '*personal development in role*' survey theme was supported by two subthemes explaining how SNWs appear to support EP development. The first subthemes are '*changing mental perspectives*', discussed in detail above. The second subtheme from this section is '*getting unfulfilled needs met*'. EP's qualitative explorations also describe how several needs from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow & Lewis, 1987) are met using SNWs. As already described above, EPs have identified that SNWs provide them with a place where they can feel professional belonging and have found they can find a supportive and positive community online. This need is the third level of need (Figure 5.3). Several EPs explored how SNWs provided them with a social connection to fight their feelings of isolation. This social connection appeared especially needed due to contextual factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, with many EPs not working in person alongside colleagues in offices.

Some participants explored how they liked receiving supportive feedback from others on their SNW posts, which helped them feel good about their work. This may relate to EPs needing to fulfil Maslow's 4th stage of needs: esteem. Esteem can be both for

oneself or for the respect that comes from others. A range of EPs discussed how they appreciated getting positive feedback and support from others on their work, contrasting this with what they experienced as a "thankless" role in person.

Figure 5.3:



The need for esteem can also be seen in EPs' descriptions of their own awareness and lack of confidence in their abilities to "know enough" about the vast role of being an educational psychologist and all it can entail. This awareness of the vastness of knowledge and not feeling confident has been described in the learning stages model (Burch, 1970; mmm.edu.com, 2021) as "conscious incompetence", having an awareness of all of the skills required but not yet being proficient enough to use all of the skills without effort. Being in the "conscious incompetence" stage can feel uncomfortable for people. As both Fox, (2011) and Kruger & Dunning (1999) explore in their theoretical position, it is possible to feel less confident the more that is known about a topic. Awareness of one's limitations in knowledge is a sign of competence but it can feel uncomfortable. Many EPs in this study appear to be using SNWs to

ensure they know what is happening in the psychology profession and stay "up-to-date". This way, seeking knowledge about the profession appears to support EPs in understanding the limits of their competency, which may support their esteem.

Several prerequisites are needed to reach the top of Maslow's hierarchy (self-actualisation). This need is based on individuals' realistic acceptance of themselves based upon a realistic and accurate perception of the world around them, knowing who they are in that world. Again, EPs in this study described how SNWs provide a window to a broader perspective of the EP role, enabling EPs to have a realistic and clearer understanding of the EP profession. Making sense of themselves and their professional development 'in role' (Reed & Bazalgette, 2006) may enable them to work towards meeting their self-actualisation needs.

The needs that EPs are meeting online appear to offer contextual cues into how the workforce is experiencing the profession. EPs seem to feel isolated, suggesting that they need support or appreciation. EPs also seek more information, perspectives, and experience to make them feel confident and secure in themselves. The RTA findings suggest that SNWs support EPs' well-being and personal development in their role.

5.2.7 Preferred Platform of SNW use

Of the 91 participants who use SNWs, the most used SNW was Twitter (83.16%). This is an interesting finding as data suggests Twitter is not the preferred platform of choice amongst the general public; only 4%-8% of 2166 respondents across all age groups in the UK selected Twitter as the platform they used the most (Statista.com, 2020).

EPs also had other preferred platforms, such as EPNET (74.74%). Whereas other sites such as Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook had 34-35% of participants using them. This finding illustrates that EPs are congregated on specific platforms, which

links to the finding that EP's primary use of SNWs is to connect with one another. 89.46% of participants said they connect with other EPs and TEPs on SNWs.

This gravitation towards certain Social Networking websites appears to be different from other professionals in the current literature base, 7 papers on teachers' SNW use focused on Facebook, and 6 focused solely on Twitter. This suggests that other professions may have a range of separate and more diverse online communities, whereas EPs mainly have two or three groups.

One possible reason for EPs congregating on one specific platform may be due to the age of participants. Data from Statistica.com suggests that a person's age can impact their preferred SNW platform, with different age groups using different tools. For example, they found that the older a person is, the more likely they are to use Facebook the most often; 71% of 45–54-year-olds and 79% of 55-64-year-olds use Facebook the most. Whereas only 43% of 25-34-year-olds select Facebook as their most used SNWs. However, the data from this study on EPs did not find any patterns suggesting that platform preference was related to age or experience level.

The reason EPs congregate on a few platforms may be revealed in the qualitative data, is the above finding and suggestions that they are using SNWs to create a 'Hive mind'. This is the finding that EPs will gravitate towards SNWs where other EPs are present, which seems to lead to their distinct preference of which SNW they use. EPs may need to assemble more on one platform as they are a small profession, and therefore to get the most from the online community, they need to use platforms where other EPs are also present, even if it is not their preferred SNW.

5.3 RQ2: What are Educational Psychologists' perspectives on using social networking websites for professional purposes?"

The objective of this research question was to explore EPs' perspectives on SNWs concerning their role and practice.

- Firstly, this research found that EPs disagree on how manageable and accessible SNWs are.
- Some EPs view SNWs as a helpful space where their public voice can be amplified, which offers a range of future possibilities for SNWs.
- It also found that some EPs view SNWs as dangerous or risky places, and these EPs wish for the profession to be more considerate about their use.

These key findings of RQ2 will be examined in more detail below, integrating qualitative and quantitative data from the survey and interview.

5.3.1 Perspectives on SNWs being manageable/accessible

Some EPs find SNWs manageable and useful, while others find them uncontrollable, restrictive, and difficult. One explanation of why such polarised views are present among the participants could be explored through a systems-psychodynamic theory of 'Organisation in Mind' (OIM) (Hutton et al., 1997). OIM is how an individual perceives an organisation's communications and relations, and how they perceive they are structured and connected internally. This can also be understood as an internal 'schema' of an organisation. The OIM develops through people testing hypotheses and reflecting on their experiences. Thus, everyone can have a different interpretation of the OIM. Therefore, while the SNW system and organisation are the same, each person will develop their relationship and schema based on their experiences. For

some EPs, this schema is positive, and for others, it is negative. When professionals hold different OIM, it can be challenging to bring about positive change due to varying understandings of the system. Upskilling EPs' technological skills and knowledge of SNW may enable a more consistent OIM across professionals.

This finding may be related to the current UK EP context, which has "worsening working conditions" due to a shortage of EPs and more significant burdens on local authority staff (Lyonette et al., 2019). Many EPs have a large workload with limited capacity as seen in survey subtheme '*capacity to use*'; consequently, they need the tools they use to be accessible and to find information efficiently. EPs already competent in technology and with systems for SNWs may feel more confident accessing information and storing it effectively.

There was no research in the literature review regarding professionals finding SNW use unmanageable. However, other research does explore how SNW use can add stress to the workforce. Bucher et al. (2013) found that both technostress and overload occur when professionals use SNWs for work purposes. In the same study, they also found that being computer literate encompasses knowing how to retrieve and process information appropriately and having skills to cope with overload and uncertainty. This research suggests that skills in filtering SNWs' content are needed to ensure they can be used successfully. This finding implies that some EPs may need general training on the IT skills required to successfully use SNWs. This is discussed in more detail in the implications section below.

5.3.2 Perspectives on SNWs being a useful platform for public voice

A core perspective of the data was found in the interview theme '*Amplifying public voice*' and the survey theme '*EPs as Messengers and Campaigners*'. From this

perspective, EPs perceive SNWs as a place where professional voices can be shared, often to spread certain messages. The voices shared can create a collective narrative about the profession. Different subthemes highlight how different aspects of having a public voice are viewed positively by EPs, and some are viewed negatively.

Many EPs explored how SNWs are a public way to share information about the psychology profession and psychological knowledge with others. The EPs in the study perceive SNWs as a platform which allows access to service users, or teachers and families, that could benefit from the knowledge that the EP profession holds. Interestingly, all participants who perceive SNWs as having this potential were not yet using the platforms in this way. This may relate to the issues of ethics, security and confidence mentioned above. EPs have not yet discovered a way to utilise these platforms whereby they feel safe doing so.

Several participants had creative ideas about how SNWs could become a way for them to support quality first teaching or to support teacher well-being. There is some evidence in this study's literature review that suggests that SNWs can be successfully used to provide outreach support to others (Henthorn & Cammack, 2017; Rutherford, 2010a). It could be that this is a potential development in SNW use that EPs should focus on in the future.

Other EPs explored how SNWs could be a vehicle for sharing psychology with families that could support early intervention work. Early intervention work, such as helping families with skills to support play (Lifter et al., 2011) or supporting parenting and socio-economic function (Ayoub et al., 2014), is crucial for child developmental outcomes. Many early intervention pathways have been closed since a lack of government funding. Some EPs in this study reminisced about their ability to hold or provide early

intervention, which declined since the closure of Sure Start centres (Butler & Editor, 2018). EPs in this study expressed that the internet and SNW platforms may be a place to provide such services remotely. However, only a few participants mentioned their services were beginning to share advice for parents and families on SNWs. Also, often, the advice that was being shared was only generic and can be found elsewhere, such as information on the local offer.

A further issue with professionals offering early intervention online is that research has found that there need to be quality relationships between the practitioner and parent (Brotherson et al., 2010). Consequently, it may not be possible to support all aspects of early intervention work online. On SNWs, relational connections are changed by a lack of body language or communication, as messaging is often only provided by images and text (Cooper & Neal, 2015). Therefore, if EPs want to use SNWs to outreach and communicate with parents and families, more research into how to do this safely and effectively is needed. Alternatively, a hybrid model with additional SNW support for in-person intervention could be a valuable way to efficiently provide services.

EPs' SNW outreach did not only involve early intervention. Some EPs shared how they commented on government policy and lobbying for political change via SNWs. As EPs are aware of the systemic issues impacting children and young people and their outcomes, they are often passionate about enacting change in social and psychological welfare areas. Thus, some EPs are keenly interested in community psychology (MacKay, 2006). However, it is unknown whether these EPs knew that many local authorities' social media and social network policies can ask staff to be apolitical online (Gloucestershire County Council, 2019). This finding implies that EP

training courses and employers may need to consider offering additional training on understanding and compliance with such policies.

SNW outreach is not only for individual EPs; some participants in this study discussed their role in managing their EP service's SNW. Currently, there is a general encouragement from the government for EP services to shift towards EPs providing services and information via digital channels. Research has shown that many families are unaware of their 'Local Offer' and how to access SEND service support (Brown, 2016). EP services' clear website communication is vital to support this information access (O'Hare & West, 2022). Many EPs in the study recognised that service SNW accounts could also be another potential way to clearly communicate information about SEND and the EP service.

A further subtheme within the survey theme *'EPs as Messengers and Campaigners'* is *'Promotion and advertisement'*. This subtheme relates to how SNWs can be seen as a practical tool for impression management and self-promotion, especially useful for psychologists in private settings or independent practitioners. Previous research has found that other professions use SNWs to self-promote (Jordan, 2019; Van Allen & Roberts, 2011; Veletsianos, 2012). SNWs can be used as an advertising tool. However, several participants raised concerns about psychologists' ethical and moral ramifications of promoting their practice online. The United States and Canada have guidance on how psychologists should maintain professional integrity when advertising their services. They avoid claiming they have unique abilities and are instructed to not appeal to a client's fear or anxiety (Shead & Dobson, 2014). It is currently unclear whether British EPs are thinking carefully about the messages they send when promoting their own practice. This finding suggests that EPs may want to

consider how they advertise and promote themselves online and how these fit the profession's ethical guidelines.

A further reason for careful consideration is that some families and teachers might be accessing EP support, advice, and services online inequitably, as seen in the interview RTA subtheme '*quality of work*'. This research highlights that there are clear pros and cons to outreach, as seen in the interview subtheme '*outreach work*'. Outreach might make psychological services more accessible to some, but EPs need to be mindful that not all service users have access to or the desire to use online support. EPs need to consider also offering outreach in different forms to ensure that all can participate in a way that meets their needs. This suggests that SNWs should be one of several outreach opportunities available. Also, it is unclear from this research whether the EPs involved in outreach online have considered the potentially ethically risky ramifications of sharing psychological knowledge online, such as whether generic psychological advice is suitable for every situation. As mentioned previously, EPs may need clearer guidance or boundaries about how to provide outreach to service users.

5.3.3 Perspectives on SNWs being a dangerous or risky place

Concerns that SNWs may be a dangerous or risky place arose in the RTA survey data under the theme '*A Dangerous, Risky Territory*'. It is also present in the RTA interview theme '*an unregulated space*' and interview subtheme '*an exposing platform*'. One key risky or dangerous area discussed throughout the chapter is ethical practice and how EPs were concerned that their peers may not always use SNWs while considering the ethical ramifications. Other perspectives around risk focused on dangerous narratives and responsible use of resources, as discussed below.

Dangerous narratives

A risk that participants discussed in the qualitative data was that material posted on SNWs may impact the impressions and narratives voiced about the profession. The impact of only 24.2% of participants in this study actively posting or only part of the profession contributing online has already been discussed concerning the 'Hive mind'. A restricted number of participating professionals could also be linked to another subtheme in the data. The interview RTA data suggests that several EPs were concerned that an '*unregulated narrative*' is being created on SNWs. These EPs were concerned that as only part of the profession posts online, the messages displayed about the profession may be limited. This relates to the same theoretical effect of SNWs having an echo chamber effect (Cinelli et al., 2021). Also, debates on platforms such as EPNET are often viewed as hostile, with certain narratives taking up a dominant voice. EPs in this study wanted to avoid this conflict, and consequently, when negative situations arise, they do not feel confident or want to share their opinions. But without their voice, this appears to reinforce a creation of a biased perspective. Research has shown that when a two-sided neutral argument can take place online, it can lead to weaker reinforcement of beliefs and allow mindsets to be less entrenched (Karlsen et al., 2017).

The survey data subtheme "on show" highlighted further risks around SNW platforms being public and accessible for anyone to read.

Dangerous resources and materials

The survey data shows that 74% of participants agree with the statement, "Online social networks benefit my professional practice". However, many participants expressed concerns about the risks and dangers of accessing resources on SNWs,

especially regarding EPs using SNWs to adapt their practice based on what they have found online. It is unclear from this research how EPs assess the information they find online and how critical they are before adding it to their practice.

The interview theme '*unregulated space*' also refers to EPs' perceptions of SNWs impacting the quality of the EP knowledge base. When applying psychological theory, models, and interventions, Psychologists must ensure competent and ethical practice. One way to ensure competency is to use evidence-based practice (EBP) (British Psychological Society, 2012a). EPs must use the evidence base of what works (Fox, 2003). When trainee psychologists are working to show they have the required skills to become qualified, they must demonstrate that they can use EBP via the competencies (British Psychological Society, 2019) and proficiencies (Health & Care Professions Council, 2015) outlined in table 5.1. EBP is central to EP work.

However, in this study, EPs raised concerns that knowledge shared by EPs online might not be appropriately assessed before it is shared, resulting in a dilution of the evidence base. These perspectives were found in the survey subtheme '*quality of work*'. Other EPs were concerned that data could become biased, leading to skewed or limited EBP being promoted online. This issue was not present in this study's literature review, with no similar reported concerns about their biased professional knowledge base. However, this concern might exist elsewhere in the wider literature.

Table 5.1:

BPS 6.3	Demonstrate the ability to identify and plan suitable evidence-based interventions, drawing on relevant assessment information and formulation.
BPS 6.8	Draw on evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes for children and young adults by promoting collaboration and partnership between parents, school, and community agencies.
HCPC 12.1	be able to engage in evidence-based and evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures
HCPC 14.1	be able to apply psychology across a variety of different contexts using a range of evidence-based and theoretical models, frameworks, and psychological paradigms
HCPC 14.56	be able to work with key partners to support the design, implementation, conduct, evaluation, and dissemination of research activities and to support evidence-based research
HCPC 14.63	be able to integrate and implement therapeutic approaches based on a range of evidence-based psychological interventions

BPS competencies (British Psychological Society, 2019) and HCPC standards of proficiency (Health & Care Professions Council, 2015).

The finding that EPs are concerned about the evidence base is at odds with research by Burnham (2013). This study involved interviewing seven EPs. All were ambivalent about using peer-reviewed research in their practice. In Burnham's (2013) research, the EPs viewed their practice's utility or social value as more important than congruity with the evidence base. Some EPs in the study expressed that they are concerned that EPs on SNWs are more focused on trying new resources they find rather than the evidence base surrounding them.

Existing psychology theory supports some of the concerns outlined; It is possible that EBP online could become one-sided due to an echo chamber effect (Cinelli et al.,2021) or one-sided due to "my side" biases (Fox,2011). This would ultimately mean that only certain psychological theories are being privileged online. Thus, cognitive biases can still exist despite EPs highlighting how SNWs expose them to different perspectives online. EPs may hold onto their "hot" theoretical beliefs (Evans, Barstonn & Pollard, 1983), and consequently, the research and knowledge promoted on Twitter and EPNET may be centred on certain perspectives.

Also, there is an ongoing debate around the validity of tools and how EPs should measure the impact of different resources (Burnham, 2013; Fox, 2003, 2011). Even if research has assessed a tool's effectiveness, it does not mean it is not successful and useful in practice. Consequently, there is no agreement about what evidence-based or informed practice is. Fox (2011) suggests that EPs should strengthen their own evidence base through practice-based evidence and be aware of their psychological reactions when confronted with evidence that does not fit their chosen theoretical frameworks. However, whether EPs monitor themselves and reflect in this way when sharing and using online resources is unclear.

As SNWs allow collaboration and reflection, they could become a tool to help support the development of this additional evidence base shared through practitioner-based research. However, it is unclear from this research whether EPs are ensuring they are using material they find online critically.

5.4. Implications

From the above discussion, there are seven key implications for EPs, their employers and the professional bodies that provide them with guidance. These are discussed below:

1. Professional bodies and employers to provide and promote additional guidance.

This study's findings imply that EPs need additional support and guidance to feel capable of confidently and safely using SNWs. This extra support may include training or opportunities to discuss existing professional and ethical Guidance on SNW use (discussed in section 5.4.2). This implication has stemmed from the above discussion regarding how "unregulated" the online world felt to EPs. This feeling of insecurity is despite the EPs in this study using SNWs frequently.

EPs also appear to need additional support and guidance to feel capable of confidently addressing any problematic narratives about the profession. EPs appear to want to ensure the profession is presented accurately and adequately online. However, they are not confident due to some of the ethical issues and the public nature of the SNW platforms. Additional guidance on appropriate and inappropriate online communication may help EPs achieve a responsible, assertive, and ethical voice. Also, such communication may encourage more EPs to be involved and post online, enriching the perceived current limited narrative by adding more perspectives and richness to the dialogue.

2. Professional bodies to consider whether SNWs can be a legitimate form of CPD.

The second implication of this data is that the professional bodies supporting EPs may want to recognise SNWs as a legitimate form of CPD. Despite multi-professional collaboration and the "Hive-mind" described above, no EPs described a formal recording of their SNW use as professional development. Only those who had used SNWs to access special interest groups were beginning to recognise that SNWs could be recorded as such. EPs must participate in and keep a record of regular Continuous Professional Development to remain registered with the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) (HCPC-U.K..org, 2020). Members can be called upon to produce an audit of their CPD. However, EPs are using SNWs frequently. The HCPC's Guidance notes that "Updating your knowledge through the internet or TV" is classified as a relevant CPD activity. Therefore, EPs could maybe find ways to record how they are using SNWs in ways that fulfil CPD requirements, such as reflective practice. The BPS recommends a "structured and self-managed approach to further learning through actively engaging in CPD" (BPS, 2021). EPs use SNWs in ways they could evidence as structured professional development but appear to have not yet developed a system to record it as such. EPs may wish to develop this to legitimately record their time spent developing in this way.

3. Employers should consider whether it is appropriate to recognise SNWs as a valid work-time activity.

This implication is based upon the EPs in this study explaining how SNWs have supported them to develop their practice, and gain support for their well-being and personal development, However, several EPs disclosed that they have to use personal devices to access SNWs. Participants spoke of accessing SNWs during work breaks, and personal time, despite being for profession-related activities. Consequently, EPs'

employers may need to consider whether SNWs can be recognised officially as having importance in supporting the workplace.

Also, as explored in the discussion above, EPs' behaviour and reasons for using SNWs may be a direct reflection or commentary on the current issues in the profession. SNWs may offer insight into areas where change is needed offline. For example, whether feelings of professional belonging and confidence need to be improved in EP services, whether EPs need more time and opportunities to dialogue and network around practice, and whether EPs need feedback from others to improve their confidence in their skills offline. If ethical issues and professional safety mean employers prefer or advise EPs not to use SNWs, EPs services should consider and plan how to meet these employee needs offline.

4. EPs should monitor and reflect on their own online activity.

A key implication of this research is that EPs may want to reflect on and monitor their own online activity. EPs should seek guidance and their workplace's policies on SNWs and ensure they fully understand what is contained within these documents. EPs should consider how they advertise and promote themselves online and how these fit with the profession's ethical guidelines. Another implication of the findings is that EPs need to plan and carefully consider any direct advice they have offered on SNWs. As the Participants in this study raised issues regarding inequity, ethics, access, and suitability of advice, EPs need to reflect carefully on whether their online sharing may perpetuate inequalities.

However, this does not mean that EPs should not participate online. When EPs feel knowledgeable about online positing within safe boundaries of practice, they should actively contribute. As although this research has shown that SNWs are risky, it has

also highlighted the importance of a range of active EPs contributing and being involved in SNW discussions. EPs need to find ways to increase their confidence so that they can safely and ethically contribute to online narratives. This is important to ensure various perspectives are heard. This ensures that those online are not exposed to one limited way of approaching psychology.

5. EPs should consider bringing their SNW experiences to supervision.

A further implication is that EPs should consider bringing their SNW experiences to supervision. EPs may need specific reflection space to support them in exploring how they are responding and aligning themselves to the perspectives they interact with online. As SNWs can lead to mindset change, EPs should responsibly monitor such alterations. EPs may need to be able to bring this to psychological supervision to reflect on how the content they have interacted with may influence their practice. The implication is that EPs may need SNWs officially recognised as having a place and importance in personal development by employers and EP services. Or for SNWs to become an acceptable item to discuss in supervision. EPs need to create a space to responsibly reflect on how SNWs may be interacting with their personal development as a psychologist.

6. EPs and EP services should carefully consider developing their online use of SNWs, especially to enable outreach to others.

This study highlighted that SNWs offer outreach work opportunities for services and individual EPs. EPs and their services may want to explore how SNWs can provide an appropriate online platform for giving information regarding local services.

However, it appears that some families and teachers might be accessing EP support, advice, and services online inequitably. This research highlights that there are clear

pros and cons to outreach work. Outreach might make psychological services more accessible to some, but EPs need to be mindful that not all service users have access to or the desire to use online support. Therefore, EPs need to consider offering outreach in different forms to ensure that all can participate in a way that meets their needs. This suggests that SNWs could be one of several outreach opportunities available, that EPs should consider when thinking about how to work at a community or systemic level.

Also, it is unclear from this research whether the EPs already involved in outreach online have considered the potentially ethically risky ramifications of sharing psychological knowledge online, such as whether generic psychological advice is suitable for every situation. As mentioned previously, EPs may need additional guidance from professional bodies or more explicit boundaries about providing outreach to service users.

7. There is a training need to help support EPs to develop appropriate SNW use.

Several EPs in this study have discussed how they view SNWs as a valid space and wish they felt more confident to begin sharing their voice. This study has found that EPs lack the confidence or skills to fully use SNWS. Therefore, this study implies that training should exist to support EPs in developing these skills. There are two potential training needs for Educational Psychologists using SNWs.

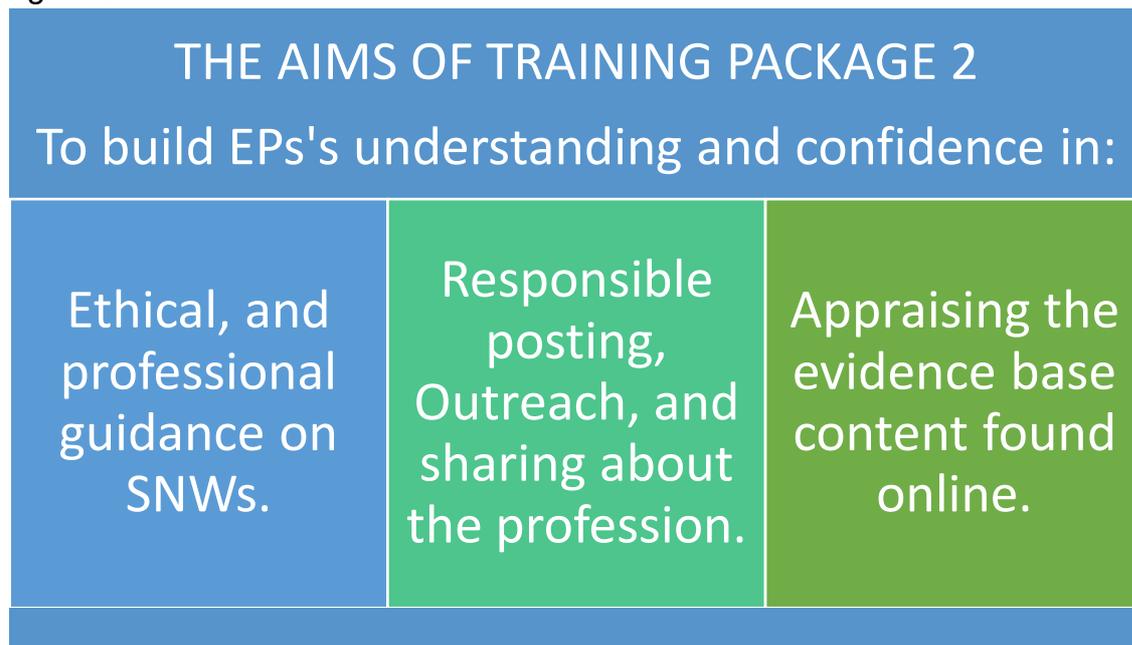
The first training need is that some EPs may need general training on the IT skills needed to successfully use SNWs. This is due to participants in the study having differing perspectives on the accessibility and manageability of SNWs. Some EPs may need general training on the IT skills required to successfully use SNWs, such as how sites work. This training will mainly be focused on building confidence in finding EP-

specific material. This training will hope to achieve an improvement in EP's general confidence levels regarding the following areas:

- Understanding which SNW platforms are being used by EPs.
- Knowing how to access different SNW platforms.
- Knowing how to navigate and search for EP-specific material on SNW platforms.
- How to connect/follow/contact other EPs and related professionals.
- How to interact with content (share or comment on other's findings)
- How to curate a newsfeed/ save resources for future reference to build a personal repository.

The second training need has a more advanced focus on EPs' responsible and ethical use of SNWS. This training need stems from the need to support EPs to be able to use SNWs effectively and safely. The training hopes to develop EPs confidence in a range of areas. These are displayed in Figure 5.4 below:

Figure 5.4:



The aims of the second proposed training package.

Initially this training will review the core findings of this study to provide context regarding how EPs are currently using SNWs.

Then, this training will need to look at current professional body guidance and explore its meaning. This is needed as many EPs in this study were unaware of the guidance or worried that their peers were acting unethically online. This training will ensure EPs are aware of the ethical codes and guidelines for using SNWs. Participatory training elements should ask EPs to reflect on their current use of SNWs, and how this relates to current BPS and HCPC guidance. Depending on the audience, this training aspect may also need to include explorations of employer policies into SNWs. This part of the training will hope to achieve an improvement in EP's confidence levels in how to behave ethically and safely on SNWs as the EPs will now know more about the guidance. Also EPs may now have a clear, tangible way they can adjust their behaviour online when needed.

A further aim of this training is to support EPs in considering how EPs can share confidently about the profession. As discussed above, there are potential outreach possibilities available for EPs on SNWs. This part of the training will intend to bring together the EPs interested in posting online to enable them to share how they effectively and efficiently use SNWs. The hope would be that EPs will have a space within this part of the training to reflect on their SNW use and consider how they can effectively develop it, also allowing them to inspire the other attendees. The hope will be that such a space will enable more EPs to feel confident about contributing to the discussion to ensure that 'Groupthink' does not

A final aspect of this training aims to support EPs' need to feel confident in their ability to appraise and judge the resources they find on SNWs. This specific aspect is needed as the EPs in this study expressed concerns about the impact of unregulated EBP on SNWs. It is unclear in this research how EPs assess the information they find online and how critical they are before they add it to their practice. Therefore, A further implication of this research is that EPs need to feel confident in their ability to appraise and judge the resources they find on SNWs. Mainly, the participants expressed concerns about sharing resources on SNWs. If EPs use SNWs to learn from and adapt their practice based on what they read online. It is unclear from this research how EPs assess the information they find online and how critical they are before adding it to their practice. This part of the training would encourage EPs to discuss how they make these decisions and then revisit some core theories around how they should appraise the material and key critical questions they could ask themselves.

5.5 Strengths and limitations of this study

This study's strengths include that it was the first of its kind to explore this area, and this research's methodological approach allowed for both a descriptive understanding of EP use alongside more detailed perspectives.

There are some strengths to the study's methodological design. The data collection methods are detailed, and decisions are justified and appropriate. How the data was elicited and collected is also described in detail.

Furthermore, aspects of the questionnaire were designed based on previous research. Also, the questionnaire was anonymous to remove any researcher bias, where participants may not be open with their responses to comply with the social expectations or views of the researcher. Additionally, the mixed methods nature of the research allowed for a combination of data, which provided both breadth and depth, rich, thoughtful, and reflective responses to be gathered from participants.

Also, the research has been conducted reflexively, with the researcher critically examining their own role throughout the process.

There are several limitations to this study. Firstly, due to the sampling and participant recruitment system, only mainly English EPs were recruited, so any results need to be taken with consideration that the perspectives included may not be representative of Welsh or Scottish or Northern Irish EPs. Also, many of the participants were TEPs or newly qualified EPs. The research had not set out to explore a homogenous group, and having more EPs from different geographical locations or with more experience may have altered the findings and perspectives. However, this research did not claim or set out to be generalisable or represent all EP's voices and perspectives on this topic.

A further weakness could occur as the sample could be potentially subjected to self-selection bias. Most research participants who engaged with this study were likely to have significant interest or passion or strong views in this area, despite recruitment messages to encourage the inclusion of participants who do not use SNWs.

The data collection for this study took place during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which led to several different workforce changes and pressures, possibly impacting or influencing the participant's responses. Therefore, some of the answers may be skewed, for example, the emphasis on social belonging.

5.6 Potential prospects for future research

Many EPs are using SNWs and have said they want to continue to use SNWs in the future. As highlighted throughout this discussion, it is important to try to define what safe and effective SNW use looks like to provide EPs with confidence that they are using SNWs appropriately. Research is one way of providing more understanding that can drive such guidance. Five future research projects that may help with this aim are:

- 1. Research into EP anxiety and hesitancy online.** A study would explore the issues of lacking confidence and hesitancy online in more detail. Possibly exploring some case study examples of how EPs who post ensure they do so safely and responsibly. The aim would be to support the production of guidance for safe and ethical posts online.
- 2. Research into how EPs are making decisions about the evidence base and practice.** A study into how EPs generally make decisions about evidence-based practice, practised-based evidence, and navigating such decisions concerning online resources. Their decisions around online resources shared on SNWs will be included in this discussion. The study could explore whether

strategies for discerning whether content found on SNWs is worthy of use. The aim would be to produce guidance to support EPs when they find material online.

- 3. Research into SEND Parents on SNWs.** Several EPs mentioned that the SEND parent community exists on SNWs such as Twitter. This group is often presenting a narrative about U.K. SEND services and EPs. To be able to outreach successfully to such groups and work collaboratively with them, more needs to be understood about the content of their post and what they are likely to seek support about online. This research will aim to establish whether EPs can provide effective support for this group online.
- 4. Research into school staff on SNWs.** The purpose of this study is like the above, but instead exploring the content of British teachers' and school staff posts on SNWs in relation to SEND. To be able to outreach successfully to such groups and work collaboratively with them, more needs to be understood about the content of their post, and what they are likely to seek support about online. Knowing more about this could guide EPs on what types of outreach online would be most effective.
- 5. How EPs can use the guidance provided to them.** Once the above studies have established further Guidance for EPs, research into the effectiveness or utility of this guidance would also be needed.

5.7 Dissemination of findings

It will be beneficial for the EP profession to have access to the key messages and implications of this research, which are discussed above.

This research will first be shared through this written thesis and VIVA process. It will be shared with participants once the final approved version of the thesis is available. The thesis will also be accessible via the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust's Thesis Repository website.

This research will also be shared locally with EP population groups where this researcher is currently working and studying. A presentation will be delivered to the researcher's placement local authority EP team. This presentation will be on a service CPD day and potentially include an additional workshop to explore feedback, answer questions, discuss the creation of training guidance, and explore the EP service Twitter account. A second presentation will be delivered to share the results with other TEPs, including peers and other cohorts, and staff at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust. The research will be shared with university repository websites and holdings.

Once feedback has been sought on the initial sharing of information, the researcher will consider ways to disseminate it to the wider EP profession. This may include writing this research up as a journal article and submitting it to relevant journals such as 'Educational Psychology in Practice' a U.K. peer-reviewed journal for the profession. Also, the researcher will endeavour to publish a small summary on a blog to enable other EPs to utilise the information. Finally, a webinar may be produced in collaboration with an EPS service that hosts CPD webinars online. This webinar will be stored on the platform YouTube and can be circulated to the profession at a national level via Twitter, EPNET and NAPEP.

The hope is with feedback from this dissemination process, the researcher can design training to introduce SNWs to EPs who are interested in using them, and to include in this training all of the ethical, moral, and local authority policies.

5.8 Conclusion

This thesis set out to define and explore EPs' use of social networking websites for professional purposes. The research findings revealed that educational psychologists use social networking websites to support their work and practice. One positive is that EPs are using SNWs to develop within their roles and develop their mindsets. Also, another use is to create a "Hive-mind" with the collective sharing of knowledge and resources. This sharing of knowledge is impacting the ways in which EPs interact with the knowledge base. A benefit of having more EPs actively involved in SNWs is that it allows the hive mind to grow and ensures that new, fresh perspectives are being added to the online conversation.

EP's perspectives of SNWs include their further potential for use, such as a platform to share psychological knowledge with other groups, such as school staff or service users. The research also outlined a range of concerns regarding SNWs, including the narratives being created about the profession and whether EPs can use SNWs responsibly and ethically.

In conclusion, many EPs perceive SNWs to be useful tools for development and outreach opportunities. Still, there is a lack of confidence within the profession to fully engage due to many valid concerns. The hope is that with more information and guidance, EPs can make more of an informed choice about how to safely navigate SNWs.

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7. Appendices

Appendix A: Papers excluded from literature review

The table below includes examples of papers excluded during the hand search portion of the systematic literature search, and reasons why they were excluded.

Author	Title	Search	Reason for exclusion
Pham (2014)	Navigating social networking and social media in school psychology: ethical and professional considerations in training programs	1	An opinion article, not an empirical paper.
Diamond & Whalen (2018)	Ethics and Social Media: Professional Considerations for the School Psychologist	1	An opinion article, not an empirical paper.
Kolmes (2012)	Social Media in the Future of Professional Psychology	2	An opinion article, not an empirical paper.
Geia, Pearson & Sweet (2017)	Narratives of Twitter as a Platform for Professional Development, Innovation and Advocacy	2	None of the narrative account examples included are from psychologists, despite psychologists being included. One is a PHD student and non-indigenous journalist, one is a nurse, and one is a education consultant and digital strategist. Therefore, the professionals do not fit the parameters. Also the methodology is not described, and consequently it does not fit with a traditional notion of a

			empirical paper. (Could be argued as legitimate method as it is taking an narrative/indigenous methodology)
Sosa, Carrazoni, Goncalves & Billig Mello-Carpes (2020)	Use of Facebook groups as a strategy for continuum involvement of students with physiology after finishing a physiology course. Advances in Physiology Education.	2	The focus on this study is whether the students remain in the group. The participants are 84 students. Therefore, the study it is not exploring the staff actions to retain them or interact with them online. Consequently, the focus on the study is not what the educational professionals are doing on SNWs. Participants remain in the group for access to research and publications, but it is unclear if this was coming from the academic staff or the other students. None of the paper provided information about the education staff/academic staff's behaviour on SNWs.

Appendix B: Summary of included research papers

Author	Title	Participants / Profession	Methodology for data collection	Methodology for analysis	Online platform
Davis (2015)	Teacher's perceptions of Twitter for professional development	Teachers N=19	Interviews and extracting Tweets	Content thematic coding	Twitter
Evans (2014)	South African psychologists' use of the Internet in their practice.	Psychologists N=92	Online survey	Quantitative- descriptive statistics. Qualitative- thematic analysis	Multiple SNWs (Facebook Online forums)
Goodyear et al (2014)	Tweet me, message me, like me: using social media to facilitate pedagogical change within an emerging community of practice.	Teachers N=5	Extracting posts from the group interaction (28 Facebook messages, 99 Twitter conversations, 125 re-tweets, 10 likes and 12 comments on the page).	Content thematic coding.	Multiple SNWs (Facebook and Twitter)
Greenhalgh et al (2020)	Identifying multiple learning spaces within a single teacher-focused Twitter hashtag.	Teachers N=9462	Extracting Tweets containing specific hashtags. 84,004 Tweets	Quantitative- descriptive statistics, hierarchical linear, or mixed effects statistical models.	Twitter
Harris & Kurpius (2014)	Social Networking and Professional Ethics: Client Searches, Informed Consent and Disclosure	Counselling, Clinical and School Psychologist graduate	Online survey	Quantitative- Descriptive statistics and Hierarchical Multiple Regression.	Multiple SNWs

Appendix B: Summary of included research papers

		students and interns N= 315			
Henthorn & Cammack (2017)	Blogging and Tweeting in the classroom: exploring how effective use of new media can help teaching and learning in Primary Schools.	Teachers 3 primary schools.	Observation and Interviews	Thematic analysis	Twitter
Jordan (2019)	From finding a Niche to circumventing institutional constraints. Exemplifying the links between academics' online networking, institutional roles and identity-trajectory.	HE Lecturers/ Academics N=18	Interviews	Thematic analysis	Multiple SNWs (Twitter, ResearchGate and Academia.edu)
Jordan (2020)	Imagined audiences, acceptable identity fragments and merging the person and the professional: how academic online identity is expressed through different social media platforms.	HE Lecturers/ Academics N=198	Online survey	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics, network analysis	Multiple SNWs (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
Kelly & Antonio (2016)	Teacher peer support in social network sites.	Teachers	Extracts from Facebook groups. (4 groups)	Content thematic coding	Facebook, Facebook groups
Lu & Curwood (2015)	Update your status: exploring pre-service	Teachers N=8	Online observations of online postings, interviews.	Qualitative: Thematic analysis	Facebook, Closed

Appendix B: Summary of included research papers

	teacher identities in an online discussion group.				Facebook group
Lundin et al (2020)	Teachers' identity work in a professional Facebook group.	Teachers N=79	Extracts from Facebook groups.	Quantitative: Content analysis and interaction analysis.	Facebook, (Open Facebook group)
Macià & García (2018)	Professional development of teachers acting as bridges in online social networks.	Teachers N=7	Semi-structured interviews, teacher's publications on personal and school blogs and websites, data obtained from their Twitter profiles and Tweets.	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics. Qualitative: Thematic analysis.	Twitter
Nochumson (2020)	Elementary schoolteachers' use Twitter: exploring the implications of learning through online social media.	Teachers N=19	Online survey and semi-structured interviews.	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics, Chi-square, cross-tabulations. Qualitative: Thematic analysis	Twitter
Pham et al. (2014)	Social Networking in Social Psychology Training Programs: A Survey of Faculty and Graduate Students.	School Psychologists N=110 Faculty, N=112, Graduate school psychology students.	Online survey	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics, Group differences between faculty and graduate students determined using ANOVA procedures.	Multiple SNWs (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

Ranieri et al. (2012)	Why (and how) do teachers engage in social networks? An exploratory study of professional use of Facebook and its implications for lifelong learning.	Teachers	Online survey	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics, chi-square, Mann Whitney	Facebook (Open and closed groups)
Rutherford (2010a)	Using Online social media to Support Preservice Student Engagement.	HE Lecturers/ Academics N=269	Online survey	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation	Multiple SNWs (Facebook, Twitter)
Rutherford (2010b)	Facebook as a source of Informal Professional Teacher Professional Development	Teachers 1,867 discussion posts.	Excerpts from a Facebook group.	Quantitative: Content Analysis.	Facebook
Segool et al. (2016)	Social Networking Practices in School Psychology: Have Moral Panic Concerns Been Overstated?	School Psychologists (Trainees and HE staff) N=920	Online survey	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics, Chi-Square, One-way analysis of variance	Multiple SNWs (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
Torphey & Drake (2019)	Educators Meet the Fifth Estate: The Role of social media in Teacher Training	Teachers N=73	Interviews	Thematic analysis	Facebook
Torphey (et al. 2020)	Teachers turning into Teachers: teacherpreneurial Behaviours in social media/	Teachers N=197	Excerpts from Pinterest	Content Analysis	Pinterest

Appendix B: Summary of included research papers

Tour (2017)	Teachers' self-initiated professional learning through Personal Learning Networks.	Teachers N=5	Case study-participant-generated photography, interviews, online observation.	Thematic analysis.	Multiple SNWs (Twitter, Facebook, Blogs)
Trust et al (2016)	"Together we are better" Professional learning networks for teachers.	Teachers / Educators N=732	Online survey	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics. Qualitative: Thematic analysis	Multiple SNWs (Twitter, Facebook, Blogs)
Tucker (2019)	Educational Professional's Decision Making for Professional Growth. Using a Case of Twitter Adoption.	Teachers/ Educators N=10	Interviews, focus groups, and excerpts from Twitter.	Qualitative: Constant comparative method.	Twitter
Tunick et al. (2011)	A snapshot of Child Psychologists' Social Media Activity: Professional and Ethical Practice Implications and Recommendations.	Child Psychologists N=246	Online survey	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics. Correlation and Chi-square analysis.	Multiple SNWs (Twitter, Facebook, Blogs)
Van Allen & Roberts (2011)	Critical Incidents in the Marriage of Psychology and Technology: A Discussion of Potential Ethical Issues in Practice, Education and Policy.	Psychologists N=28	Online survey	Qualitative: Sub-grouped into themes/categories.	Twitter and Twitter
Veletsianos (2012)	High education scholars' participation and practices on Twitter.	HE Lecturers/ Academics N=45	Tweet Excerpts	Qualitative data: constant comparative method.	Twitter

Appendix C: Summary of findings from the literature review

<u>Authors</u>	<u>Profession</u>	<u>Social network</u>	<u>Purpose of use</u>	<u>Areas/ Themes</u>
Torpey & Drake (2019)	Teachers	Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - find resources, - connect with other teachers (socially) and collaborate with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - Professional collaboration - Social wellbeing and belonging
Rutherford (2010b)	Teachers	Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers learn from one another. (Professional development) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changing practice/ continued professional development
Ranieri et al. (2012)	Teachers	Facebook (Open and closed groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positive social relationships. - Collaborative practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changing practice/ continued professional development (through social capital). - professional collaboration - debates and discussion - social wellbeing and belonging
Lundin et al (2020)	Teachers	Facebook, (Open Facebook group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share teaching materials and resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relevant professional information - professional collaboration (questions and answers) -
Lu & Curwood (2015)	Teachers	Facebook, Closed Facebook group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social: to use humour, advice, empathy, remain silent, lurking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professional collaboration - social wellbeing and belonging

Kelly & Antonio (2016)	Teachers	Facebook, Facebook groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pragmatic, practical advice and relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - professional collaboration (pragmatic advice) - social wellbeing and belonging
Rutherford (2010a)	HE Lecturers/ Academics	Multiple SNWs (Facebook, Twitter)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communicate with students and others. Support social wellbeing of workforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engaging service users - social wellbeing and belonging
Harris & Kurpius (2014)	School Psychologists	Multiple SNWs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethical implications - Search for client information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information about service users
Goodyear et al (2014)	Teachers	Multiple SNWs (Facebook and Twitter)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing practice/ professional development - Professional collaboration
Segool et al. (2016)	School Psychologists (Trainees and HE staff)	Multiple SNWs (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - search for client information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information about service users
Evans (2014)	Psychologists	Multiple SNWs (Facebook Online forums)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal CPD support - Finding information - Sharing practice/ advertising practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - Changing practice/ professional development - Impression management/advertising
Jordan (2020)	HE Lecturers/ Academics	Multiple SNWs (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different platforms have different uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - debates and discussion - Social wellbeing and belonging

Pham et al. (2014)	School Psychologists	Multiple SNWs (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - find relevant professional news. - Search and find information. - Professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - information about service users - changing practice/ continued professional development
Tunick et al. (2011)	Child Psychologists	Multiple SNWs (Twitter, Facebook, Blogs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to information, e.g., details of clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information about service users
Trust et al (2016)	Teachers / Educators	Multiple SNWs (Twitter, Facebook, Blogs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a personal learning network to find and collate information. - Collaborate with other teachers. - Interact with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - changing practice/ continued professional development - Professional collaboration (creating accountability)
Tour (2017)	Teachers	Multiple SNWs (Twitter, Facebook, Blogs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in collaborative discussions across the world with other teachers. • Share resources with others. • Find information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant professional information (sharing or acquiring). • changing practice/ continued professional development • professional collaboration (across geographical borders) • social wellbeing and belonging
Jordan (2019)	HE Lecturers/ Academics	Multiple SNWs (Twitter,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relevant professional information

		ResearchGate and Academia.edu)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portable repositories of relevant knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changing practice/ continued professional development - impression management/ advertising - debates and discussion (extending academic space) - social wellbeing and belonging (circumventing institutional constraints)
Torphey (et al. 2020)	Teachers	Pinterest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sell professional materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information (selling resources) - impression management/ advertising -
Greenhalgh et al (2020)	Teachers	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chat and discuss together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - Social wellbeing and belonging
Tucker (2019)	Teachers/ Educators	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discover new resources and content. - Develop professional learning networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - changing practice/ continued professional development
Henthorn & Cammack (2017)	Teachers	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage parents and teacher discussions and create network sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changing practice/ continued professional development - engaging service users
Nochumson (2020)	Teachers	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather ideas. - Professional development. - Learn from other's experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - changing practice/ continued professional development
Veletsianos (2012)	HE Lecturers/ Academics	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impression management, self-promotion, finding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant professional information (sharing or acquiring).

Appendix C: Summary of findings from literature review

			resources and debating about social issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • debates and discussion • impression management/ advertising
Davis (2015)	Teachers	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instant access to ideas and information - Professional development - Learning centred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - Changing practice/ professional development - Debates and discussion - Professional collaboration
Macià & García (2018)	Teachers	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - some participants collaborate online with other teachers. Others search for resources and do not contribute. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant professional information - social wellbeing and belonging
Van Allen & Roberts (2011)	Psychologists	Twitter and Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present public and professional identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impression management/ advertising - Information about service users

Appendix D: Critical Appraisal Examples, Surveys

Critical Appraisal of a Survey Tool CEBM (2014)			
Paper 1: Harris & Robinson Kurpius (2014)			
Appraisal Questions	Yes	Can't tell	No
1. Did the study address a clearly focused question/ issue?	X		
2. Is the research method (study design) appropriate for answering the research question?	X		
3. Is the method of selection of the subjects clearly described?	X		
4. Could the way the sample was obtained introduce (selection) bias?			X
5. Was the sample of subjects representative with regard to the population to which the findings will be referred?		X	
6. Was the sample size based on pre-study considerations of statistical power?	X		
7. Was a satisfactory response rate achieved?	X		
8. Are all the measurements (questionnaires) likely to be valid and reliable?	X		
9. Was the statistical significance assessed?	X		
10. Are confidence intervals given for the main results?	X		
11. Could there be confounding factors that haven't been accounted for?			X
12. Can the results be applied to your organisation?		X	

Critical Appraisal of a Survey Tool CEBM (2014)			
Paper 1: Jordan (2020)			
Appraisal Questions	Yes	Can't tell	No
1. Did the study address a clearly focused question/ issue?	X		
2. Is the research method (study design) appropriate for answering the research question?	X		
3. Is the method of selection of the subjects clearly described?	X		
4. Could the way the sample was obtained introduce (selection) bias?			X
5. Was the sample of subjects representative with regard to the population to which the findings will be referred?		X	
6. Was the sample size based on pre-study considerations of statistical power?		X	
7. Was a satisfactory response rate achieved?	X		
8. Are all the measurements (questionnaires) likely to be valid and reliable?	X		
9. Was the statistical significance assessed?			X
10. Are confidence intervals given for the main results?			X
11. Could there be confounding factors that haven't been accounted for?			X
12. Can the results be applied to your organisation?		X	

Critical Appraisal of a Survey Tool CEBM (2014)			
Paper 1: Rutherford (2010a)			
Appraisal Questions	Yes	Can't tell	No
1. Did the study address a clearly focused question/ issue?	X		
2. Is the research method (study design) appropriate for answering the research question?	X		
3. Is the method of selection of the subjects clearly described?	X		
4. Could the way the sample was obtained introduce (selection)bias?			X
5. Was the sample of subjects representative with regard to the population to which the findings will be referred?		X	
6. Was the sample size based on pre-study considerations of statistical power?		X	
7. Was a satisfactory response rate achieved?	X		
8. Are all the measurements (questionnaires) likely to be valid and reliable?	X		
9. Was the statistical significance assessed?			X
10. Are confidence intervals given for the main results?			X
11. Could there be confounding factors that haven't been accounted for?			X
12. Can the results be applied to your organisation?		X	

Reference:

Critical Appraisal of a Survey Tool CEBM (2014) www.cebm.ox.ac.U.K.

Appendix E Critical Appraisal Examples, Mixed Methods

Review Area	Critical Review
(1) STUDY EVALUATIVE OVERVIEW	
Bibliographic Details	Nochumson (2020)
Purpose	To find how elementary school teachers' use Twitter professionally.
Key Findings	Teachers described what they learned from Twitter and how they applied their new learning to their teaching.
Evaluative Summary	Twitter may hold value as a legitimate platform for continuous teacher learning, Information adopted from Twitter must be critically evaluated for evidence-based practices as opposed to responding to the latest fads.
(2) STUDY AND CONTEXT (SETTING, SAMPLE AND OUTCOME MEASURES)	
The Study	The study is a two-phase mixed methods approach. First phase included a 45- closed ended and open-ended items, and two 5-point Likert rating scales. The second phase included semi-structured interviews with a purposeful sample of survey respondents. There was no intervention or comparison.
Context: (1) Setting	The study was carried out online but focused on elementary school teachers and had an international reach. The rationale for this setting was that this was the specific population of interest. No detail is given about the time scale/period.
Context II: Sample	The source population is elementary school teachers. Inclusion and exclusion criteria are not mentioned apart from use of Twitter. The sample for interview seems to have been selected through convenience methods as they had already completed the online survey. The sample size is sufficient for the study aims and to warrant some conclusions drawn. The key characteristics of the sample includes geography, years of teaching experience and level of qualification. 107 people participated in the survey.
Context III: Outcome Measurement	N/A – this study did not have outcome criteria.
(3) ETHICS	
Ethics	A thorough detailed account of ethical consideration is included in the article
(4) GROUP COMPARABILITY	
Comparable Groups	N/A
(5) QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	
Data Collection Methods	The data collection methods are described in detail and are appropriate (including the order of the phases and why decisions have been made). How the data was

	elicited and collected is described in detail, as is the development of the survey and how it was piloted.
Data Analysis	<p>The data was analysed using comparison methods. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations were used for the survey. Chi-square analysis was used to test significance. The interviews and open response survey were coded using thematic analysis. There is evidence provided of the themes and codes developed. The data is triangulated and compared to try and establish some validity.</p> <p>The findings are interpreted within the context of other studies and theory.</p>
Researcher's Potential Bias	The research had roles as interview and data collector/analysis. The researcher acknowledges that their own bias may have influenced the gathering and presentation of qualitative data. The researcher also outlines their own position and assumptions.
(6) POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS	
Implications	<p>The studies findings are generalisable as it covered a large enough population and a global population, so included perspectives from a range of different physical and cultural locations.</p> <p>The study details a range of implications for practice and future directions for research, such as how Titter support networks may help teacher retention . For example, exploring the nature of moderated Twitter chats or an exploration into global differences.</p>
(7) OTHER COMMENTS	
Other Comments	N/A

(1) STUDY EVALUATIVE OVERVIEW	
Bibliographic Details	Yolanda Lu & Jen Scott Curwood (2015)
Purpose	The aim was to answer the following research questions: What pre-service teacher identities emerge from the Facebook posts and practices within the online discussion group? How do pre-service teachers conceptualise and exhibit their identities within this group?
Key Findings	One category of identities emerged from a commitment to the social expectations and values of the group, whilst another emerged out of a personal resistance towards the social norms of group participation and involvement .
Evaluative Summary	This study may be useful for teacher educators deliberating the use of online spaces to support pre-service teacher identity development
(2) STUDY AND CONTEXT (SETTING, SAMPLE AND OUTCOME MEASURES)	
The Study	This study draws on data from a closed group on Facebook. Content analysis of posts of 61 participants, and interviews with 8 participants.
Context: (1) Setting	One Australian university on a specific cohort of students on a Bachelor of Education degree. These students were members of a Facebook group had been used for pre-service teachers to discuss and share their degree-related interests and concerns. All members are at one Australian university. All were in their first and second blocks of placement professional experience/ internship.
Context II: Sample	61 members of the group's online posts. 8 focal participants (3 males and 5 females). All focal participants expressed a deep commitment to the professional practice of teaching and a willingness to be critical and reflective of their own practice
Context III: Outcome Measurement	(1) audio-recordings of semi-structured interviews with focal participants and (2) online postings of all participants during their first and second blocks of professional experience. This yielded approximately 6 hours of transcribed interviews with individual focal participants and 1685 online posts from research participants
(3) ETHICS	
Ethics	The study complied with standardised human ethics practices, and formal approval was obtained from the University's ethics committee. Informed consent was

	sought from all research participants, and our approach to data collection and analysis ensured that the confidentiality and anonymity of participants was protected.
(4) GROUP COMPARABILITY	
Comparable Groups	N.A
(5) QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	
Data Collection Methods	(1) audio-recordings of semi-structured interviews with focal participants and (2) online postings of all participants during their first and second blocks of professional experience. This yielded approximately 6 hours of transcribed interviews with individual focal participants and 1685 online posts from research participants
Data Analysis	Thematic analysis (based on guides by Neuman (2011) and Saldana (2011)). We also conducted a quantitative analysis of the qualitative data to draw conclusions about pre-service teacher identities within the space.
Researcher's Potential Bias	The researcher does not acknowledge that their own bias may have influenced the gathering and presentation of qualitative data. The researcher does not outline their own position and assumptions
(6) POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS	
Implications	participants did and were willing to exhibit and conceptualise identities of identification towards their peers within the online group by being reliant, helpful, supportive, and sociable towards each other. whilst most group members upheld the values of netiquette within the online space, there were instances and circumstances in which members could not relate to one another and thus did not conform to the conventional functions of the space. From this research, it is worthwhile considering whether or not online discussion groups such as this one are a truly safe and positive space for pre-service identity development and, furthermore, whether or not teacher educators should colonise these spaces – and if so, how.
(7) OTHER COMMENTS	
Other Comments	

Reference:

i Long AF, Godfrey M, Randall T, Brettle AJ and Grant MJ (2002) Developing Evidence Based Social Care Policy and Practice. Part 3: Feasibility of Undertaking Systematic Reviews in Social Care. Leeds: Nuffield Institute for Health. ii This tool was developed while the lead author was at the Health Care Practice R&D Unit (HCPDRU) at the University of Salford. It has since been slightly modified.

Review Area	Critical Review
(8) STUDY EVALUATIVE OVERVIEW	
Bibliographic Details	Macia & Garcia (2018)
Purpose	To explore how teachers in online social networks can act as 'bridges' and to see whether this use results in better outcomes in their professional practice.
Key Findings	The key finding is that teachers acting as bridges use participatory methodologies combined with technology in their classroom and are active users of several social networking sites. It is not clear whether it results in 'better' professional practice, but the teachers are more motivated to improve professionally.
Evaluative Summary	The study also found that there are main patterns of interaction for the bridging teachers, one targeted at information sharing and the other focused on social relations.
(9) STUDY AND CONTEXT (SETTING, SAMPLE AND OUTCOME MEASURES)	
The Study	This study is a mixed methods study. There were 3 phases to the study, semi-structured interviews, teacher's publications on blogs and their own websites, and data obtained from their Twitter activity.
Context: (1) Setting	The study takes place online, but all the teachers who have been recruited are Spanish. The rationale for this is that the researchers are specifically interested in teachers in Spain.
Context II: Sample	All teachers were Spanish K-12 teachers who were recruited through a purposeful sampling technique. The inclusion criteria (such as participating in at least 4 communities of practice) and sampling procedure is explained. The sample is appropriate for the study. Key characteristics of the sample are included (such as grade level, years of experience etc). 7 participants were included in the interviews which is a small sample size but did provide enough data for sufficient analysis and the conclusions drawn. As the study looks specifically at 'bridging teachers' which are teacher that use a variety of different SNW websites and share content between them
Context III: Outcome Measurement	N/A no outcome criteria is used in this study
(10) ETHICS	
Ethics	There is no mention of ethical committee approval, but the research takes place in accordance with a university, so this may be assumed. There is no

	mention of informed consent, confidentiality or how other ethical issues were addressed in the study.
(11) GROUP COMPARABILITY	
Comparable Groups	N/A there were no comparable groups in the study.
(12) QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	
Data Collection Methods	There were 3 phases to the study, semi-structured interviews, teacher's publications on blogs and their own websites, and data obtained from their Twitter activity. The study provides specific details into how the data was collected such as the three research questions that formed the basis of the interviews. The process of the data collection is adequately described.
Data Analysis	The process of data analysis is described in detail, with two researchers coding the information and inter-rater reliability being checked. Clear examples of the themes and codes are given. A previous author's codes are also used to triangulate and provide some reliability to the findings. Quantitative data is presented using descriptive statistics which include averages and standard deviations and provide insight into quantity of social network use. The evidence provided is enough to support the analysis. The findings are interpreted in the context of other studies and theory.
Researcher's Potential Bias	The research had roles as interview and data collector/analysis. The researcher has a second coder to try to reduce any potential bias.
(13) POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS	
Implications	The setting of the study is not necessarily as generalisable as it is looking specifically at 'bridging teachers' which are teacher that use a variety of different SNW websites and share content between them. Any implications made in the study are only relevant to this specific population group which are a small cohort of general teachers
(14) OTHER COMMENTS	
Other Comments	N/A

Appendix F: Critical Appraisal Examples, qualitative



Tucker, L. (2019). Educational Professionals' Decision Making for Professional Growth using a Case of Twitter Adoption. *TechTrends*, 63(2), 133–148. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-018-0346-x>

Paper for appraisal and reference:

Section A: Are the results valid?

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- what was the goal of the research
 - why it was thought important
 - its relevance

Comments: The paper aimed to examine educational professionals' perspectives on their decision processes to use Twitter for a 'personal learning network'. This is an important aim as educational professionals are always needing to continually professionally develop, and it is unclear whether Twitter is a useful tool for this. This research is also exploring whether the educational professionals adopt it or reject it as a tool. It is also interested in how use is influencing professional practice.

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants
 - Is qualitative research the right methodology for addressing the research goal

Comments: The research is exploring professionals perspectives (their thoughts and beliefs around the topic). It is also interested in exploring their decision making process. The researcher used a constant comparative methods of analysis when coding the research.

Is it worth continuing?

3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)

Comments: The study involved introducing the participants to Twitter as a PLN using a workshop. They collected data using pre-intervention interviews, pre and post-workshop focus groups, and looking at the Twitter content the participants shared. The author has justified the method by discussing how they decided which methods to use. They justify each decision made in the research design, e.g. why the qualitative data was collected in four separate ways (through interviews, focus groups and Twitter activity).

4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected
- If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study
 - If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)

Comments: The author explains why they have used purposeful sampling. They acknowledge limitations of this approach but justify that they used a specific cohort of participants as they knew that this population is diverse in terms of a range of grade levels and professionals. Their final sample included 2 speech and language pathologists, five special education teachers, a long term substitute teacher, a teacher and a behaviour specialist teacher.

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If the setting for the data collection was justified
- If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)
- If the researcher has justified the methods chosen
 - If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)
 - If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why
 - If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)
 - If the researcher has discussed saturation of data

Comments: The setting for the data collection is justified. It is clear how the four forms of data is collected and the forms of data collected is clear. The researcher has justified the methods of data collection and discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each method. Appendices show the interview and focus group protocols, showing in detail how they were conducted.

6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments: The researcher considers their role in a number of ways. This included considerations around question tone and open questioning. The researcher's analysis was included in a table to document the researcher's decisions around the data. There are some aspects this which could have been improved, for example the researcher exploring the fact that they were the external support for the participants in the intervention.

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
- If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
- If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments: There are sufficient details about how the research was explained to participants and how issues such as informed consent and confidentiality have been met. Approval has been sought from an ethics committee.

8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
- If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
- Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
- If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
 - To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
- Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments: The data analysis process is described in detail and examples of the coding process and coding decisions are displayed in a table. This table shows the description, categories and emergence of themes. There is also a table which shows how the data is triangulated. The one participant who contradicts the rest is discussed alongside the core themes.

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider whether

- If the findings are explicit
- If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments
- If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
- If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments: There are five main findings, all of which are clearly stated.

Section C: Will the results help locally?

10. How valuable is the research?

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature)
- If they identify new areas where research is necessary
- If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other ways the research may be used

Comments: The research is valuable as it revealed how these educational professionals used Twitter as a new learning tool. This was not research that had been conducted before, and it specifically explored how new users can be supported to use it. The researcher did discuss how this could be transferred to other populations using Twitter or different SNW tools.

Veletsianos, G. (2012). Higher education scholars' participation and practices on Twitter. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 28(4), 336–349. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365->

Paper for appraisal and reference: Veletsianos (2011)

Section A: Are the results valid?

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- what was the goal of the research
 - why it was thought important
 - its relevance

Comments: The aim of the article is to fill a gap in literature by investigating practices into 'networked spaces' (specifically focusing on Twitter). This is thought as important as it participation in such networks has 'received scant empirical research'.

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants
 - Is qualitative research the right methodology for addressing the research goal

Comments: The aim is to understand 'naturalistic practices' so a qualitative content analysis is one clear way to do this.

Is it worth continuing?

3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)

Comments: The methods the researcher uses are justified in detail.

4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected
- If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study
- If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)

Comments: The recruitment strategy is described in detail, such as the participant inclusion criteria. The sampling method is also described in detail, as are decisions around recruitment such as why one individual was removed from the sample (they had not contributed in 6 months).

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If the setting for the data collection was justified
- If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)
- If the researcher has justified the methods chosen
 - If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)
 - If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why
 - If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)
 - If the researcher has discussed saturation of data

Comments: The collection of data is described in detail. The sources are listed alongside details of how some parts of the data were translated into English. The research explains that data saturation was reached. They also explain processes and decisions around repeating key moments of this data collection.

6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
 - How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments: The researcher does examine their own role. Steps taken to limit own bias include having multiple researchers code and analyse data independently. Ensuring that there is inter-rater reliability between coders.

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
 - If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
 - If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments: The author does not state what ethical approval has been sought. No issues around confidentiality have been discussed in the article.

8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
 - If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
 - Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
 - If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
 - To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
 - Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments: There is a 'rigor' section of the article where the author discusses multiple researchers, inter-rater coding, how themes were derived, how thick descriptions were developed. Discussion meetings between researchers and author to reduce bias and check themes.

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider whether
- If the findings are explicit
 - If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments
 - If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
 - If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments: Seven key themes are found in relation to online practice. The main finding is that it is a complex and multifaceted human activity. The author thoroughly discusses the finding in relation to other studies to triangulate/ confirm findings. They also acknowledge some of the limitations to their findings. Such as, the question of causality around these practices: Is Twitter fostering more social opportunities and community-orientated approaches to education and academic participation? Or do the individuals who espouse these kinds of beliefs use Twitter?

Section C: Will the results help locally?

10. How valuable is the research?

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature
- If they identify new areas where research is necessary
- If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other ways the research may be used

Comments: The article raises many important discussion points for future consideration. The research is valuable.

Tour, E. (2017). Teachers' self-initiated professional learning through Personal Learning Networks. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 26(2), 179–192.

Paper for appraisal and reference: Tour (2017)

Section A: Are the results valid?

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- what was the goal of the research
 - why it was thought important
 - its relevance

Comments: This paper aimed to examine how three teachers engage in self-initiated professional learning, which included using online social networks. There is contemporary criticism around formal professional learning models and self-initiated forms of professional learning, especially online forms.

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- if the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants
 - Is qualitative research the right methodology for addressing the research goal

Comments: Thematic analysis was used to explore qualitative online posts and to code open-ended interviews. It was appropriate as it was working to establish participants' beliefs and reasoning behind using self-initiated professional learning spaces.

Is it worth continuing?

3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)

Comments: The author has not justified the research design by discussing how they decided which method to use. They explain use through stating how they wanted to include a 'close examination of what participants did and thought'.

4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected
- If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study
- If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)

Comments: The researcher has explained that participants were selected through a more extensive study (but their recruitment to that study was not explained). They were selected as they were the participants who had disclosed that they were involved in self-initiated professional learning using online spaces. There was no discussion around recruitment. There is detailed information about participant characteristics such as age, curriculum subject taught and years of teaching experience.

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If the setting for the data collection was justified
- If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)
- If the researcher has justified the methods chosen
 - If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)
 - If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why
 - If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)
 - If the researcher has discussed saturation of data

Comments: There is justification of the data collection, such as how a case-study method allows for a more in-depth approach. The data collection time scales and procedures are described. Choices made in this process are made explicit and justified. The forms of the data are clear (e.g. interviews and observation of written messages on SNWs).

6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments: The interpretation the researcher had done on the data analysis of the online messages was cross-checked with the participants. They could agree or disagree with the researcher at this point. This will have reduced potential bias in the data interpretation. This suggests that the researcher has critically examined their own role. Unfortunately, this is not actually stated in the article.

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

HINT: Consider

- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
- If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
- If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments: The author does not explain whether approval has been sought from an ethical committee. The author works for an Australian University so it may be assumed that there has been ethical approval sought. There have been ethical considerations made around issues such as anonymity and confidentiality.

8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider
- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
 - If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
 - Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
 - If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
 - To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
 - Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments: There is sufficient data presented to support the findings and it is in depth. The description of the theoretical framework is not described in depth. The analysis was performed by one researcher. There is no detail about how themes have been derived from the data. There is no discussion about contradictory data or discrepant results.

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can't Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- HINT: Consider whether
- If the findings are explicit
 - If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments
 - If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
 - If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments: There is a clear statement of findings: That use of the digital sites provided opportunities for self-initiated professional learning. There is not a discussion for and against the researcher's arguments. Triangulation has taken place through combining data from online posts and interviews. The results are compared with those from other studies. The explanations for the results are plausible and coherent.

Section C: Will the results help locally?

10. How valuable is the research?

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature)
- If they identify new areas where research is necessary
- If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other ways the research may be used

Comments: The research discusses a new area where research is necessary.

Appendix G: Initial Pilot Questionnaire

09/01/2021

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

Thank you for reading the information sheet and giving your consent to participate.

This survey consists of 4 short sections. It is estimated to take around 10 minutes to complete.

***Required**

Demographic Information

1. What is your current work title?

Please select one

Mark only one oval.

- Principle Educational Psychologist
- Senior Educational Psychologist
- Educational Psychologist
- Trainee Educational Psychologist
- Assistant Educational Psychologist

2. What is your age?

Mark only one oval.

- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old
- 65 and over years old

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1L6JmtrUDKTBYPmK1hUe4G2TL6k52BF-P00D83SFD8/edit>

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09/01/2021

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

3. What country do you work in?

Mark only one oval.

- England
- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland
- Other: _____

4. How many years since qualification as an Educational Psychologist? *

Mark only one oval.

- 5 years or less.
- 5- 10 years
- 11- 15 years
- 16 - 20 years
- 21 - 25 years
- 26- 30 years
- 31 -35 years
- 36 - 40 years
- 41 years or more
- I am not a qualified Educational Psychologist

5. Which of the following applies to you?

Tick all that apply.

- Chartered member of the BPS (CPsychol)
- HCPC Registered
- None of the above

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1L6JmtrUDKTBYPmK1hUe4G2TL6k52BF-P00D83SFD8/edit>

2/9

09/01/2021

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

Professional Social Networking Use

Some Educational Psychologists use social networks to aid their professional practice. This includes visiting sites such as Facebook and Twitter and online email forums. Social networking 'use' does not necessarily mean active participation and contribution. Visiting platforms to read and observe is still defined as use. This section asks about how you may use social networking to support your Educational Psychologist practice and role.

6. Do you use social networking to support your Educational Psychologist practice?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
No Skip to question 18
Other:

You shared that you are using Social Networking Websites to support your practice

This section will ask you seven brief questions about your social networking use. There is one more section following this.

7. What social networking platforms have you used for work purposes?

Tick all that apply.

- Facebook
Twitter
Online email groups/ forums
Instagram
LinkedIn
Reddit
Pinterest

Other:

8. Which Social Networking site do you visit the most for professional use?

09/01/2021

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

9. In what ways do you use online social networks to support your practice? Select as many options that are relevant to your use. *

Tick all that apply.

- To find out about new publications of interest
To draw upon a wider community of expertise when I need help
To read other Educational Psychologist's posts
To find out about new ways of working
To find other EPs to collaborate and discuss topics with
To gain a sense of professional belonging.
To actively interact with other EPs
To discover other EPs working in my area of interest
To share professional knowledge with people who are not psychologists
To share resources with others
To actively interact with other professionals such as clinical psychologists and teachers
To document my practice as a reflective space I can refer back to
To gain confidence in my professional abilities
To enhance my reputation as a psychologist
To promote my research and professional practice

Other:

10. Do you find Social Networking websites benefit your professional practice?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
No

09/01/2021

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

11. What is your main reason for using social networking websites for professional purposes? *

Four horizontal lines for text input.

12. Do you engage with professional Educational Psychologists online in another way? *

Tick all that apply.

- No, I do not.
- YouTube
- Online blogs
- Podcasts

Other: _____

13. Why do you use social networking sites to support your practice? *

Four horizontal lines for text input.

Frequency of use

This section will ask you three brief questions about your frequency of social networking use.

09/01/2021

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

14. How frequently do you use social networking websites for professional purposes? *

Mark only one oval.

- Multiple times a day
- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less than monthly
- Other: _____

15. Which social networking website do you use the MOST frequently for professional use?

16. What social networking platforms do you used the MOST frequently work purposes? *

Tick all that apply.

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Online email groups/ forums
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Reddit
- Pintrest

Other: _____

09/01/2021

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

17. In the next 5 years, do you think your use of social networking websites will increase or decrease? *

Mark only one oval.

- Increase
- Decrease
- Other: _____

You shared that you not currently using social networking sites to support your practice.

This section will ask you four brief questions about your perceptions of online professional social networking. This is the final section.

18. Why do you not use social networking sites to support your EP Practice? *

19. Would you be interested in using online social networking sites to support your practice?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

09/01/2021

Pilot Survey on Educational Psychologists' use of Social Networks

20. Do you engage with professional Educational Psychologists online in another way?

Mark only one oval.

- No, I do not.
- YouTube
- Online blogs
- Podcasts
- Other: _____

21. Do you use social networks websites in other, non-professional aspects of your life?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

Skip to section 8 (Thank you for participating in this study)

Thank you for participating in this study

Your participation is appreciated.

The second phase of this study is interested in exploring your professional use of social networks in more detail. It will also consider your perceptions of the potential future benefits of their use.

If you are interested in participating in the second stage please click the link below and to leave a contact email.

If you are interested in finding out ways in which online Social Networking is being used by other Educational Psychologists visit the blog site -insert site name- where updates about this research project will be posted.

Thank you for participating in this study

If you are interested in finding out ways in which online Social Networking is being used by other Educational Psychologists visit the blog site -insert site name- where updates about this research project will be posted.

Appendix H: Final questionnaire

Thesis Survey

CONSENT FORM

This questionnaire explores Educational Psychologists' professional use of online social networking. Thank you for your interest. Please make sure you have read the information sheet carefully. It can be found at researchEPsocialnetworks.blogspot.com

Below is the consent form for this project. Please read carefully and click the grey statement below to if you consent to participating.

Thesis Survey

CONSENT FORM

Please create a participant ID. This is so you can withdraw your data at a later stage if you wish. Please keep a copy of your participant ID.

You are asked to create a unique participant ID code please include a colour, an animal, and a dessert or favourite food. For e.g., lilacpuppycherryPie.

Data can be requested to be withdraw up to the 31st October 2021.

End of Block: Introduction

Start of Block: Demographic Information

Q1 What is your current job role?

- Principal Educational Psychologist (1)
- Senior Educational Psychologist (2)
- Educational Psychologist (3)
- Trainee Educational Psychologist (4)
- Other (Please type your job role below) (5)

Q2 What is your age?

- 18-24 years old (1)
 - 25-34 years old (2)
 - 35-44 years old (3)
 - 45-54 years old (4)
 - 55-64 years old (5)
 - 65-74 years old (6)
 - 75 and over years old (7)
-

Q3 What country do you work in?

- England (1)
 - Wales (2)
 - Scotland (3)
 - Northern Ireland (4)
 - Other (Please type the country below) (5)
-

Q4 When did you qualify as an Educational Psychologist?

- I am not a qualified Educational Psychologist (1)
 - 5 years ago or less (2)
 - 6-10 years ago (3)
 - 11-15 years ago (4)
 - 16-20 years ago (5)
 - 21-25 years ago (6)
 - 26-30 years ago (7)
 - 31-35 years ago (8)
 - 36-40 years ago (9)
 - 41 years ago or more (10)
-

Q5 Which of the following applies to you?

- Chartered member of the BPS(CPsychol) (1)
- HCPC Registered (2)
- I am a TEP and I am working towards the BPS(CPsychol) and HCPC registrations. (5)
- None of the above (4)

End of Block: Demographic Information

Start of Block: Professional Social Networking Use

Defining terms Some Educational Psychologists (EPs) and Trainee Educational Psychologists (TEPs) may use online social networks to aid their professional practice.

This may include visiting websites or apps such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest, or using online email forums. Examples of email forums include (EPNET and NAPEP).

Social networking 'use' does not necessarily mean active participation and contribution. Visiting platforms to read and observe posts is still defined as use.

This section asks about how you may use social networking to support your Educational Psychologist practice and role.

Q7 Do you use social networking to support your Educational Psychologist practice?

Yes (1)

No (2)

I am not sure (3)

Skip To Section A: If Q7 = 1

Skip To Section B: If Q7 = 2

Skip To Section A: If Q7 = 3

This section will ask you 6 brief questions about your social networking use. There are 2 more short sections following this one.

SECTION A

Q1 What social networking platforms have you used for work purposes? Select as many that are relevant to your use.

- Facebook (1)
 - Twitter (2)
 - Online Email/ Forum groups e.g. EPNET (3)
 - Instagram (4)
 - LinkedIn (5)
 - Reddit (6)
 - Pintrest (7)
 - TikTok (8)
 - Other (Please name below) (9)
-
- None of the above (10)

Q2 In what ways do you use online social networks to support your practice? (Matrix table next page)

	Regularly (4)	Occasionally (5)	Never (6)
To find out about new publications / literature of interest (1)			
To draw upon a wider community of expertise when I need help (2)			
To read other Educational Psychologist's posts (3)			
To find out about new ways of working (4)			
To find other EPs to collaborate and discuss topics with (5)			
To gain a sense of professional belonging (6)			
To actively interact with other EPs (7)			
To discover other EPs working in my area of interest (8)			
To share professional knowledge with people who are not psychologists (9)			
To share resources with others (10)			
To actively interact with other professionals such as clinical psychologists and teachers (11)			

To document my practice as a reflective space I can refer back to (12)

To gain confidence in my professional abilities (13)

To enhance my reputation as an psychologist (14)

To promote my research and professional practice (15)

Other (Please add the way in which you use online social networks) (16)

Q3 Social Networking websites benefit my professional practice.

- Agree (1)
Neutral (2)
Disagree (3)
No opinion (4)
-

Q4 What is your main reason for using social networking websites for professional purposes?

Q5 Have you engaged with professional Educational Psychologists online in another way?

- YouTube (1)
- Podcasts (2)
- Online blogs (3)
- Other (Please explain how you engage with EPs online) (4)
-
- No, I do not (5)

Q6 Who do you interact with when using social networks professionally?

- Other EPs and TEPs from the U.K. (1)
- EPs and School Psychologists, and trainees who work internationally. (2)
- School staff such as Teachers, SENDCOs, TAs, Headteachers. (3)
- Related professionals (e.g. clinical psychologists, therapists, social workers, casework officers) Please specify which professions. (4)
-
- Parents (6)
- None of the above (5)
- Other (7) _____

Page Break

Frequency This section will ask you 4 brief questions about your frequency of social networking use.

Q1 How frequently do you use social networking for professional purposes?

- Multiple times a day (1)
- Daily (2)
- Weekly (3)
- Monthly (4)
- Less than once a month (5)
- Other (6) _____
- I do not use them (7)

Q2 Which social networking platforms do you use the MOST frequently? Select as many that are relevant.

- Facebook (1)
- Twitter (2)
- Online Email/ Forum groups e.g. EPNET (3)
- Instagram (4)
- LinkedIn (5)
- Reddit (6)
- Pintrest (7)
- TikTok (8)
- Other (Please name below) (9)
-
- None of the above (10)

Q3 What influences or impacts your professional use of social networks?

Q4 In the next 5 years, do you think your professional use of social networking websites will increase or decrease?

Increase (1)

Decrease (2)

Stay the same (3)

Other (4) _____

Skip To: Reflection section If Q4 , 1 Is Displayed

You shared that you're not currently using social networking sites to support your practice.

This section will ask you six brief questions about your perceptions of online professional social networking. This is the final section.

Q1 Why do you NOT use social networking sites to support your EP Practice?

Q2 Would you be interested in using online social networking sites to support your practice?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Other (3) _____

Q3 Do you engage with professional Educational Psychologists / TEPs online in another way?

No, I do not (1)

YouTube (2)

Online blogs (3)

Podcasts (4)

Other (5) _____

Q4 Do you use social networks websites in other, non-professional aspects of your life?

Yes (1)

No (2)

I am not sure (3)

Q5 What influences or impacts your professional use of social networks?

Q6 Do you think TEPs/EPs could use social networks differently in the future? How would you like them to be used?

Q7 Do you have any concerns about TEPs'/EPs' use of professional social networks? If so, what are these?

Thank you for participating in this study

If you are interested in finding out ways in which online Social Networking is being used by other Educational Psychologist's visit the blog site where updates about this research project will be posted. It can be found at researchEPsocialnetworks.blogspot.com

Skip To: End of Survey If Is Displayed

Reflection section This is the final section of the questionnaire.

Below are 5 longer reflection questions. Please include as much detail and explanation as you can.

Appendix H: Final Questionnaire

Q1 Why do you use social networking sites to support your EP practice?

Q2 What do you think are the positives/ benefits of professional social network use for Educational Psychologists?

Q3 What do you think are the negatives/ issues of professional social network use for Educational Psychologists?

Q4 Do you have any concerns about TEPs'/EPs' use of professional social networks? If so, what are these?

Q5 Do you think EPs could use social networks differently in the future? How would you like them to be used?

End of Block: Professional Social Networking Use

Appendix I: Questionnaire Development Matrix Table
Explanation after the tables.

Proposed Item	Original Item	Rationale and basis
I use Social Networking to find out about new publications of interest.	I use social networking to find out about new publications of interest.	Information and learning (Menendez et al., 2012; Nochumson, 2020; Ranieri et al., 2012; Van Noorden, 2014)
I use Social Networking to find out about new ways of working.		
Social Networking allows me to draw upon a wider community of EP expertise when I need help.	Social networking sites allow me to draw upon a wider community of expertise when I need help	
Social Networking allows me to draw upon a wider community of other professions' expertise when I need help.		
Being able to ask questions of the online community is important.	Being able to ask questions of the online community is important	
I use Social Networking to read other EPs posts.	Reading others' posts.	
I use Social Networking to gain inspiring ideas for practice or research.	To gain inspiring ideas.	
I use Social Networking to access professional publications/ blogs/ videos.	I use Social Networking to access professional publications/ blogs/ videos.	
	Aware of the latest research	
I use Social Networking to keep me informed and aware of the latest research.		
I use Social Networking as a form of continuous professional development.		
		Social aspects (Jeng et al., 2015; Nochumson, 2020; Ranieri et al., 2012)
Social Networking is a useful way to support working in collaboration with other EPs.	Social networking sites are a useful way to support working in collaboration with other researchers.	
I use Social Networking to discover other EPs working in my areas of interest.	I use social networking sites to discover peers working in my field of research.	

I actively interact with other EPs via Social Networking.	I actively interact with other academics via social networking sites.	
I use Social Networking to discover new ways of applying psychology.	I use social networking sites to discover individuals outside my field of research	
I use Social Networking to share resources with other EPs.	Sharing resources	
Finding other EPs to collaborate with.	Attracting collaborators	
I use Social Networking professionally to gain a sense of belonging.	I use Social Networking professionally to gain a sense of belonging.	
I use Social Networking to share psychological knowledge with people who are not psychologists.		Outreach (Jeng et al., 2012)
I use Social Networking to share resources with other professionals in related fields (e.g., teachers).		
I use Social Networking to share psychological knowledge with people who are not psychologists	I actively interact with other academics via social networking sites.	
I actively interact with other professions via social networking sites. (e.g. clinical psychologists, teachers).		
My online professional and personal identities are separated	My online academic and personal identities are separated	Professional/ Personal use (Ranieri et al., 2012; Veletsianos & Kimmons, 2013)
I use my Social Networking account as a reflective practice journal	I use my profile as a research journal	
I use Social Networking to search and read my former posts.	Searching and reading former posts.	
I use Social Networking to promote my research and practice using online networks.	I feel I should probably do more to promote my research using online networks	

Appendix I: Questionnaire development (Matrix Table Question)

<p>I use Social Networking to gain confidence in my professional abilities.</p> <p>I use Social Networking to enhance my reputation as a psychologist.</p>	<p>To gain confidence in my teaching abilities</p> <p>To enhance your reputation as an educator</p>	
--	---	--

Papers used to develop these questions: (Social network use in teachers, academics and scientists)
Themes are from the literature review in the protocol. Wording changed again in the proposed survey.

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Appendix J: Final interview Script

- Have you had an opportunity to look at the consent form and information sheet I have sent you? Do you have any questions at this stage about this interview, the storage the data management etc?
- 14 semi-structured interview- 4 main areas I am asking about with some prompt questions, but we do have some freedom to explore these areas in more detail.

Research Question 1:

1. Can you tell me a little bit about how you are using social networking websites in a professional capacity? (Prompt for more details to gain examples).
2. In what ways do you most frequently use social networking websites to support your work? Do you have any examples?

Research Question 2:

1. Do you feel that social networking websites are implementing your professional practice? Can you give an example? If not why not?
2. What ways do you think they are influencing your professional practice?
3. Do you think these influences on your practice are positive negative or both?
Ask for examples.
4. Has there been a clear benefit to your practice? If so, what is the benefit? How are you finding it useful?

5. You think that any negatives to using social networks. If so, what is the consequences of using social networks on your practice?
6. How do you interact with the information you find on social networking websites?
7. What are your reasons for using social networking websites as an EP? Why do you use these websites?
8. Why do you think you began to use social networking websites?
9. Do you think you'll continue to use social networking websites in the future? If so, what are the reasons for this?
10. Do you consider there to be further potential uses of social networking websites to support your professional practice and role?
11. Do you think there are any potential issues with future use of social networking websites?
12. Do think that social networking websites will have any opportunity potential use the APs are not currently accessing? What will be needed to facilitate these potential uses or potential opportunities?

Appendix K: Participant Recruitment materials

1. Advertisement text that was on emails/ online social network posts:

I am a Year 2 Trainee Educational Psychologist from the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust. I am looking to recruit participants to complete a short survey and potentially an interview on the topic of professional use of online social networking.

Who can be involved?

I am looking for willing participants who are educational psychologists and trainee psychologists currently working in the U.K.

- Are you an Educational Psychologist or Trainee Educational psychologist who is using online social networks to support your professional practice? Or do you have an opinion on the use of online social networks for professional work?
- This study aims to explore how educational psychologists are using online social networking platforms (Twitter, email forums, Professional Facebook groups, YouTube, etc.).
- It is also interested in capturing EPs' views and perspectives regarding positives and negatives of current use.
- A further aim to consider future potential use and innovation. Hopefully through capturing some creative ways in which practice and service users can benefit from this use.

What next?

- To participate please follow the link to read the information sheet , give consent and complete the survey: *Qualtrics survey link* You can also volunteer for a follow up interview.
- More information can be found at the information blog: *research blog link with link to the website*

Who to contact?

If you have any concerns or questions about your involvement in this research, please do not hesitate to contact me, Elizabeth Smalley, researcher: esmalley@tavi-port.nhs.U.K.

If you have any queries or complaints regarding the conduct of the research in which you are being asked to participate, please contact the Principal Investigator, Rachael Green rgreen@tavi-port.nhs.U.K. OR Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance (academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.U.K.)

Many thanks for your interest in this project.

2. Advertisement poster (which was shared online and attached to emails)

Educational Psychologists' professional use of online social networking.

- Are you an Educational Psychologist or Trainee Educational psychologist who is using **online social networks** to support your **professional practice**? Do you have an opinion on the use of online social networks for professional work?
- This study aims to explore how educational psychologists are using online social networking platforms (Twitter, email forums, Professional Facebook groups, YouTube, etc.).
- It is also interested in capturing **EPs' views** and **perspectives** regarding positives and negatives of current use.
- A further aim to consider future potential use and innovation. Hopefully through capturing some creative ways in which practice and service users can benefit from this use.
- To participate please complete this survey: [*Qualtrics survey link*](#)
You can also volunteer for a follow up interview
- More information can be found at the information blog: [*research blog link with link to the website*](#)



NHS
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NHS Foundation Trust



I have received ethical approval from TREC.
Many thanks for your interest in this project,
Elizabeth Smalley: esmalley@tavi-port.nhs.uk

3. Recruitment advertisement post on Twitter.

Hello EP Twitter community. You've been a great help to me as a TEP. You've inspired me so much you've inspired my thesis. Please consider participating in my survey and retweet researchsocialnetworks.blogspot.com #twitterereps #adayinthelifeofanEP #adayinthelifeofaTEP #adayinthelifeofa_TEP

Educational Psychologists' professional use of online social networking.

- Are you an Educational Psychologist or Trainee Educational psychologist who is using **online social networks** to support your **professional practice**? Do you have an opinion on the use of online social networks for professional work?
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NHS
The Tavistock and Portman
NHS Foundation Trust

15:49 · 10/08/2021 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

 View Tweet activity

25 Retweets **7** Quote Tweets **33** Likes

4. The research blog site for online requirement and information

← → ↻ <https://researchepsocialnetworks.blogspot.com>

Researching professional use of online social networking in the EP profession.

Sidebar ▾ | Home

Introduction

Information Sheet: Rese...

Welcome to this research blog

You may have found yourself here after responding to a recruitment advertisement post. Thank you for your interest.



I am Trainee Educational Psychologist from the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust. I am looking to recruit participants to complete a short survey on the topic of professional use of online social networking. I am also looking to interview some EPs and Trainee EPs on this topic.

If you are ready to participate **you must read the information sheet BELOW** before completing the questionnaire.

[INFORMATION SHEET](#)

[QUESTIONNAIRE](#)

[Who can be involved?](#)

I am looking for willing participants who are educational psychologists and trainee psychologists working in the UK.

Dynamic Views theme. Powered by [Blogger](#).

Appendix L: Data Analysis: Initial Critical Engagement and Reflection

Example Familiarisation process. Questions taken from Braun & Clarke (2021b)

Participant 1: AVERY

- a. How does the person make sense of what they are discussing?

They experience Twitter as a place where they can collaborate with others, and they like to also share their opinions on Twitter.

They experience EPNET as “toxic” and feels that while debate is important the debates that occur on there are not “real” debates.

This participant really appears to like positive feedback from social media and feels very reaffirmed when they get positive experiences and this seems to have a positive impact on their posts. When something is shared, liked, and commented on they receive a boost in confidence.

The participant also explained that social networking websites can also be an anxiety provoking place, whereby they are feeling overwhelmed and the stress of seeing others’ success and the role of comparison.

Social networks broadened the participants experiences, allowed them to access a window into parts of the role that were not attached to local authority EP. This made this participant consider not being a LA EP.

- b. Why might they be making sense of things in this way?

They have received positive interactions and feedback from their Twitter use. They also reflect on their age and generation, as they are a TEP and view themselves as “young”, they feel that they’ve grown up with social media so maybe they’re more comfortable with use.

- c. How “common-sense” or socially normative is this depiction or story?

Hard to say at this stage as they are the first person I have interviewed.

- d. How would I feel in that situations? Is it similar or different from how the person feels and why might that be?

I agree regarding discussions on EPNET and not feeling able to participate in them. I have not reflected on generational differences.

The confidence narrative is also linked to this participant being a TEP. “Especially as a trainee” and that resonated with me. I however, do not feel confident enough to post frequently to social networks.

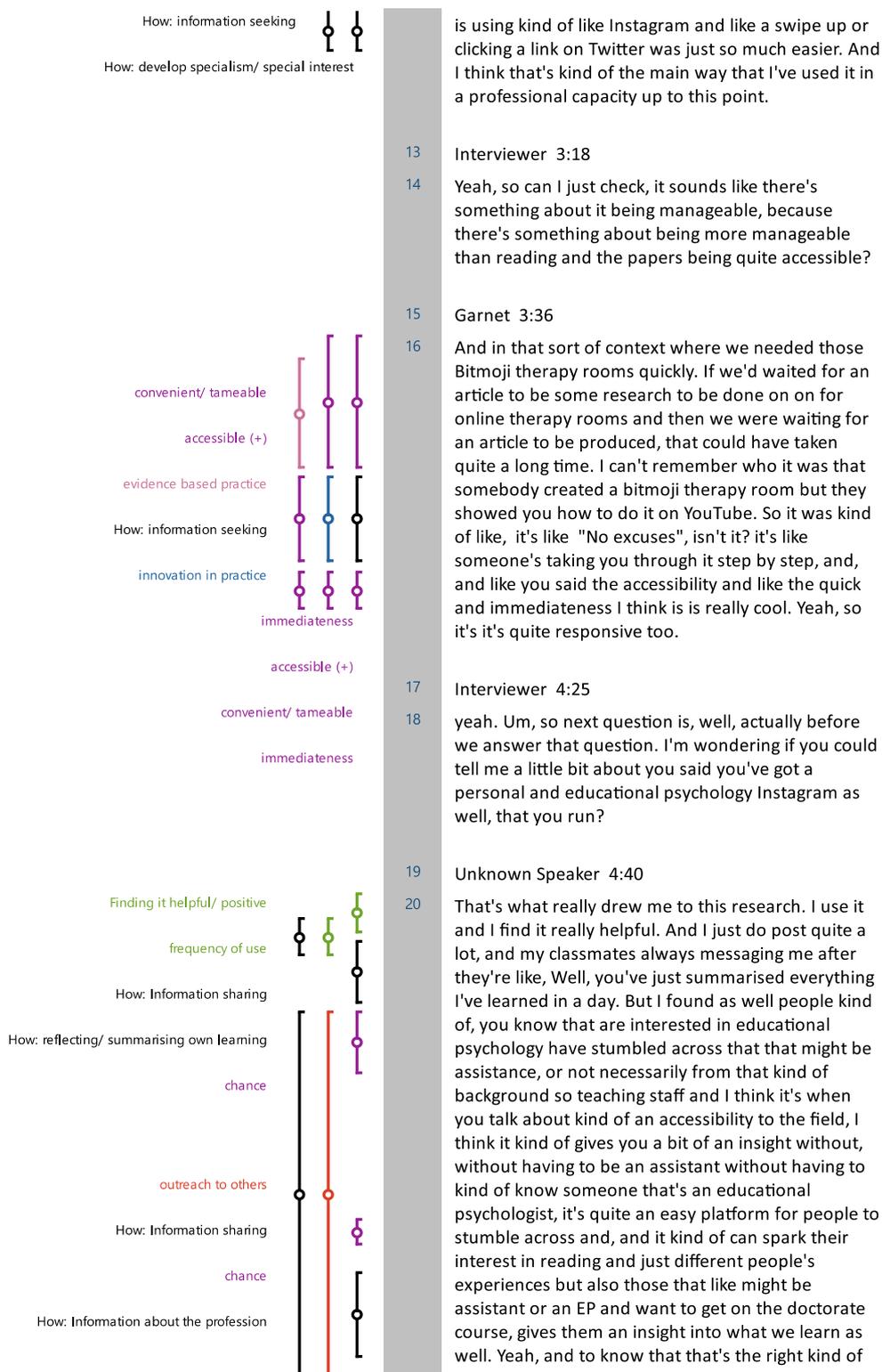
- e. What kind of world is revealed through their account?

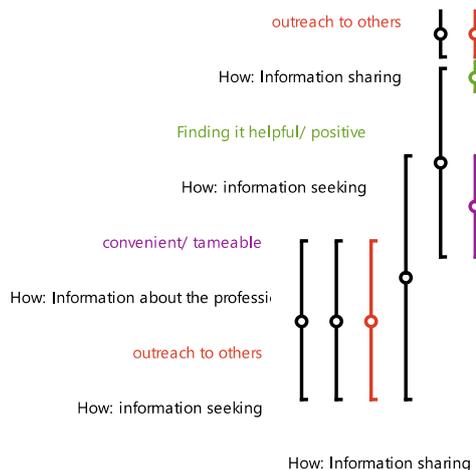
One where EPs act differently on different social networks. One where there are many positives to SNWS such as creating progress in a world where the profession has not progressed. A world where comparison exists, and it is anxiety provoking. One where drawing boundaries is difficult. One where people judge others. One where certain narratives are privileged or have more power.

Appendix M: Example of transcript after initial coding

Interview Transcript 1st coding:

	1 Interviewer 0:34
	2 Okay, so are you happy to start? So the first question that I have for you is just, is, if you could tell me a little bit about how you are using social networking websites in a professional capacity?
	3 Garnet 0:58
<p>How: type of social network used</p> <p>connections / networking</p> <p>connect with EPs</p> <p>How: Find information on/about EP Services</p> <p>How: type of social network used</p> <p>Covid/Lockdown Pandemic</p> <p>How: professional development</p> <p>How: develop specialism/ special interest</p>	4 Yeah, so I've kind of got, I've got LinkedIn, which I suppose is kind of like social networking and I use the I use EPNET, I use Instagram and I use Twitter, and in a kind of professional capacity, I'd say, networking, especially with kind of people that are already educational psychologists looking at kind of what trainings out there and what specific services are doing YouTube like watching videos like over lockdown there's a lot of kind of like CPD videos you could watch. And so I've really been using social media to kind of network and upskill myself as well, and develop kind of areas of interest, I'd say.
	5 Interviewer 1:38
	6 So, a big range of platforms that you're using, and a range of different ways in which you're using it as well so you've, you've kind of said a couple of those areas already as well for reflection?
<p>How: type of social network used</p> <p>ownership/ personal</p> <p>How: reflecting/ summarising own learning</p>	7 Garnet 1:53
	8 I think I have got my own educational psychology Instagram page so I do, I use it for kind of like reflecting on my learning as well.
	9 Interviewer 2:00
	10 So reflection as well as kind of CPD and upskilling yourself and connecting with other psychologists? So it'll be interesting to talk a little bit about that. And I suppose my next question then would be, in what ways do you most frequently use social networking to support your work? So, specifically in the role of an educational psychologist (or trainee EP),
<p>How: Information sharing</p> <p>innovation in practice</p> <p>innovation in practice</p> <p>chance</p> <p>How: information seeking</p> <p>convenient/ tameable</p>	11 Garnet 2:24
	12 I think, like on Twitter and things like that there's a lot of shared about kind of new ways of working, so for example when kind of those online therapy rooms and Bitmoji rooms came in to kind of play. I kind of found stumbled across that through, instagram and through Twitter. So I think it kind of shows, it kind of gives you new information but actually maybe in a more manageable way than reading, loads of different papers, it's quite accessible. So I'd say that I've, I've used that for different publications, and, like, just different kinds of interesting articles that people have shared I think that sparked my interest





career that they want to pursue, and kind of what they can achieve and what they learn about I think it is a really amazing thing and I think I started it because I wanted something like that when I, when I was kind of in that position, and didn't necessarily think that there was that much. Well, not from what I was Googling, you know because Instagram, there's lots of different names and everything's different, but I think yeah that's what that's what I found. And I was very lucky to have an assistant position but I thought I wouldn't know any of this. Had I not been an assistant and I wouldn't know where to begin, and I wouldn't know who to talk to and I don't know where to start.

21 Interviewer 6:16

22 So it makes a big difference? Kind of finding that information out if you're thinking about trying to be anything about the course?

23 Garnet 6:27

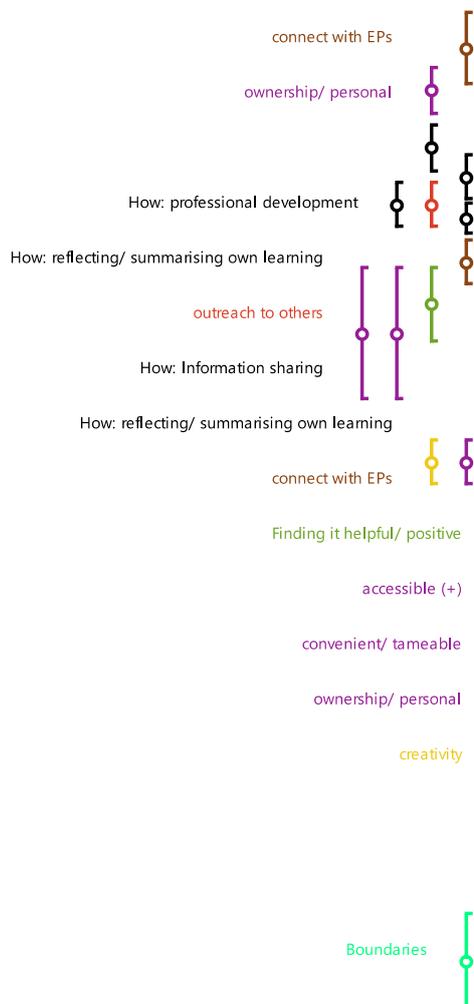
24 Yeah, yeah, networking with people that are EPs, you know, there's actually quite a lot of accounts that have popped up. So I started mine when I was a first year TE[so there's quite a lot of accounts that have since popped up and also kind of for my CPD as well it kind of reinforces what I've learned, reflecting on what I've learned, but also like helping other people through the process I think really kind of embeds it. And there's a lot of qualified EPS that started accounts as well. They're really really good to kind of look at, and again, I genuinely do think it's great that it is kind of like short snippets of accessible information rather than read this massive book that people don't have time to look through. And so yeah, I think that that's kind of what drew me to using that kind of platform and and wanting to create something great. So,

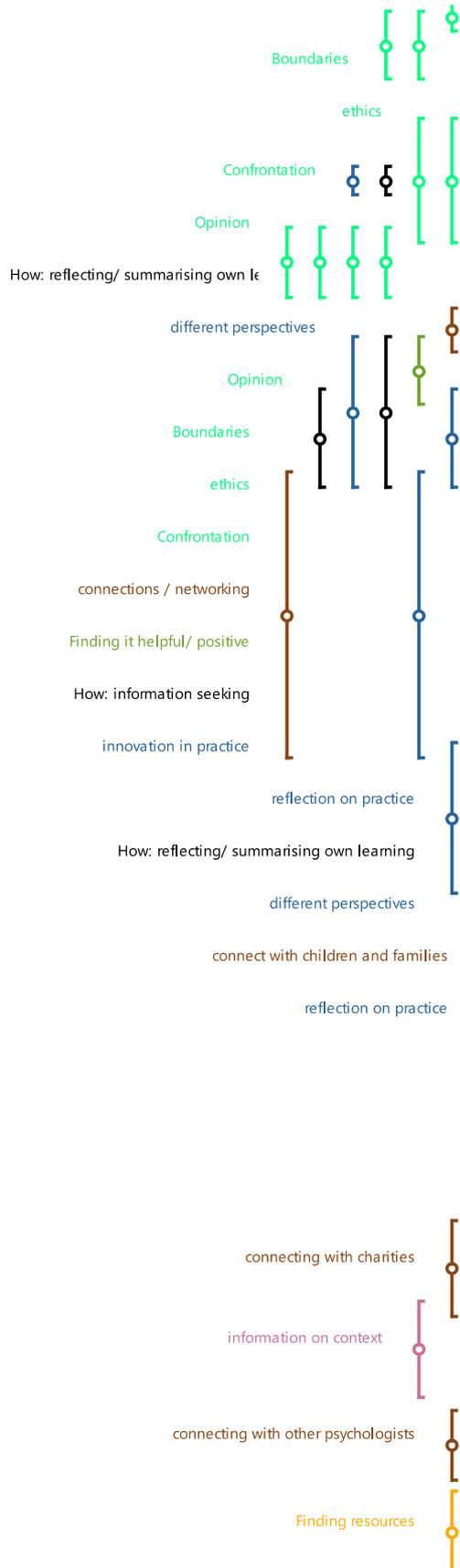
25 Interviewer 7:13

26 it's interesting, that you said wanting to create something as well because you're using it as a way to be quite creative and reflective on what what you're doing. And my next question was one that I think you've already answered, which is, Do you feel that social networks are influencing your professional practice? I have you have already started to talk about this but we could clarify that a bit.

27 Unknown Speaker 7:41

28 I think it does, it does completely impact my professional practice but also there's kind of that. I think that grey line between what you can and can't share and what you do what you don't do and as in





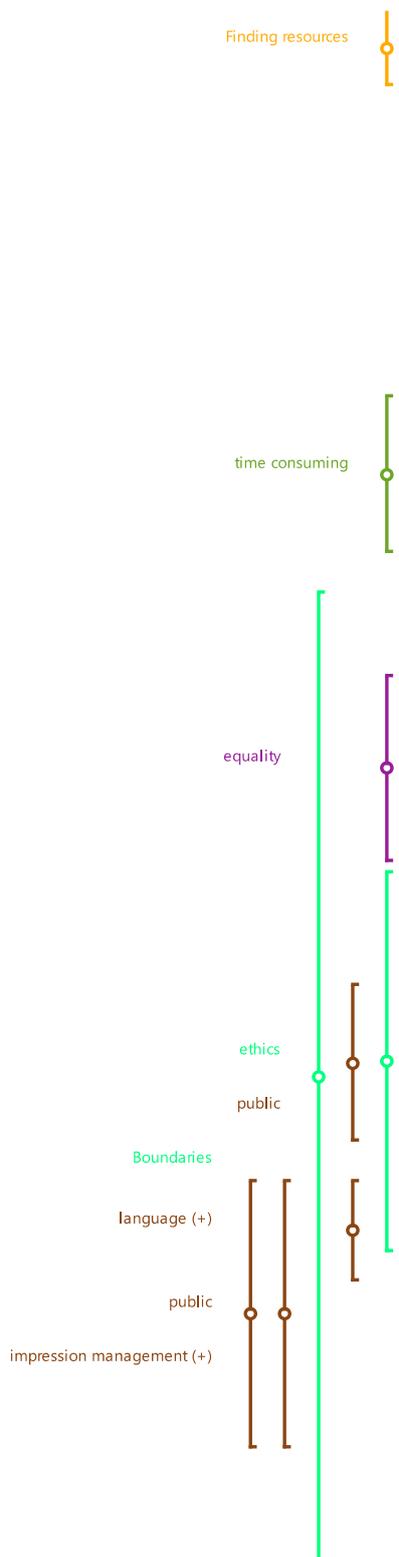
like I personally wouldn't share anything that I've done on placement, obviously you wouldn't share children's names and things like that but, and I think there is a place for it, but things like for example, EPNET when people. Sometimes it gets a bit confrontational, and I've always that it within our professional practice yes we need to challenge and yes we need to, we, you know we're entitled to our own opinions, but it's almost like where's the border line between it being not professional if that makes sense. But yeah, so I think it's really impacted my professional practice well, and I've networked with people I've learned new things that might not have come across, or I've heard about it before we've learned about it on the course, and I think as well not just kind of from my perspective, it helps me, it helps me learn things but also kind of gives me new ways of thinking. When you're working with families and children and young people as well, like for example, there's a few posts about you know going back to the first day of school, and just thinking about how the children might be feeling and it was really good because actually you think all they are aimed parents and carers, but actually for us just to hold in mind and kind of makes you check yourself and think, Oh well, actually I'll think about. I'll think about you know I need to get hold in my hand how nervous the few weeks are going to be. And I kind of reflected that that's how I was as a TEP in second year going into a new service, I was thinking, the children, young people are feeling exactly the same. And actually, with COVID as well it's a massive changes and having that tracking process.

29 Interviewer 9:19

30 So it's, it's, you're not only from what you're saying interacting with educational psychology resources your, your, your reach is kind of going beyond, beyond that, so you just mentioned sort of parents and children and kind of looking at resources for them. I don't if you want to expand on that a bit?

31 Garnet 9:35

32 Yeah, just, I think, just anything that really links to psychology or things I follow. So for example, like, I don't know that maybe like Anna Freud Centre things like the black curriculum. I think it keeps you up to date with kind of contextual things that will impact our world not just kind of, the is educational psychology things, things that are coming out and actually resources as well. Lots of people make resources and not just educational psychologists, clinical psychologists that are the, you know, with the overlap of like for example, things like stress bucket it like someone made a really good diagram of that you



could download for free so I you know I use that in my practice and things like that, I think. Yeah, it's just amazing.

33 Interviewer 10:20

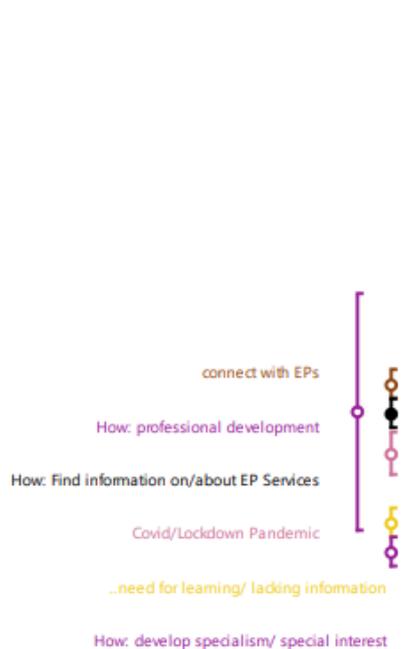
34 I can see you are finding it effective for you ? So my next question was already kind of answered again so I'm gonna go to the next one, which is do you think there are any influences on your practice which might be positive or negative?

35 Garnet 10:43

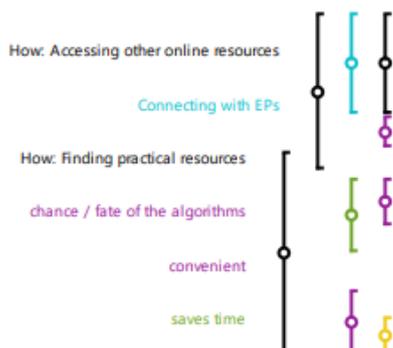
36 The only thing that I think it would be is because I have because I do have that account. I think it takes a lot of time to keep that running, and it's almost like juggling the pressures of being on the course and having that as well and I kind of last year, it did take a bit of a backseat. And I think it's just about kind of managing my workload, I suppose, in terms of, kind of, yeah, negatives, that's all. Yeah, and then maybe potentially that grey line of what are we allowed to do, what are we not allowed to do and what's giving too much in what was not because obviously like I want it to be really accessible but you can't, I don't, I don't want to Favourite someone, or I don't want to if people message me I don't want to hand everything on the plate because people work really hard to get there and yeah I just think it's just fine like a bit of a line, but actually I think it's quite a grey line and when you look at, I was trying to look at HCPC and BPS and like on the course and what's allowed and what's not allowed and, and he does, you know social media doesn't come into that because I was like oh do I put, for example, don't put my picture I don't put my name or do I keep in anonymous , you know, things like that and not really, it's a bit of a grey area I think, but things like that and Twitter from what I've seen everybody just uses the name and the picture and, you know, the psychology world I think is really small, so I think like for example, I think there is a bit of a fear of saying something wrong or doing something that somebody would take offence to and then your name being attached to that, because I do think it is a very small world, and especially when you're networking online. It's very easy to just type in your name and for something to come up and if you've done one thing wrong or if somebody doesn't like I think in psychology of people quite picky about certain words. And I think if you use the wrong word, or she doesn't know what she's on about are sort of more might take it the wrong way. So I think there is a bit of that, It's like that little bit of added maybe stress. But on the whole I found it, I found it really positive.

Appendix N: Data Analysis: Transcript After Final Coding

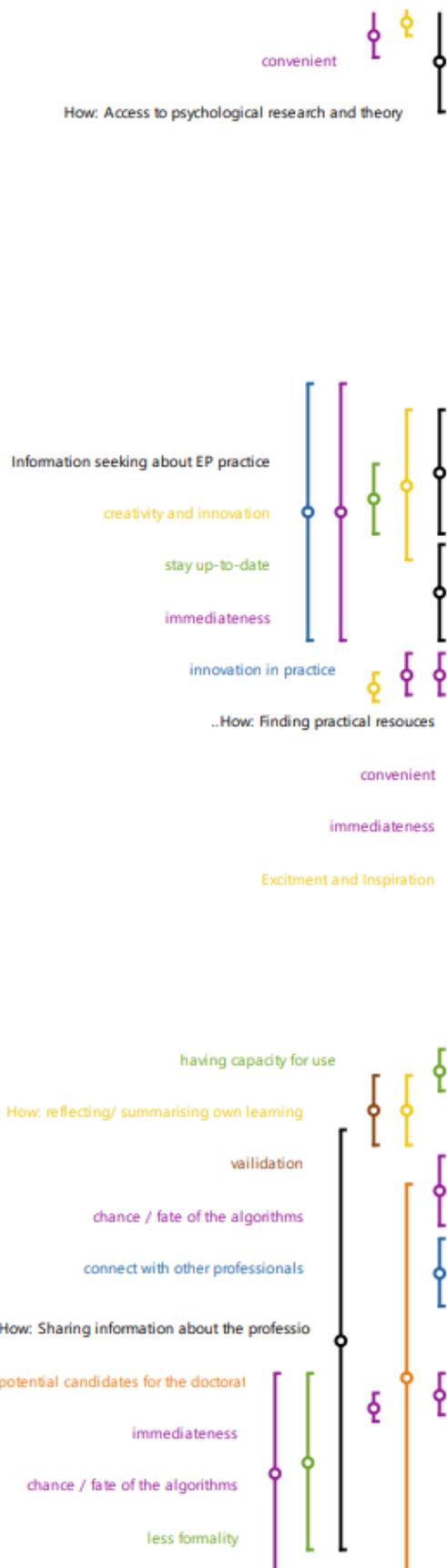
Interview Transcript: Final Coding



How: reflecting/ summarising own learning



- 1 Interviewer 0:34
- 2 Okay, so are you happy to start? So the first question that I have for you is just, is, if you could tell me a little bit about how you are using social networking websites in a professional capacity?
- 3 Garnet 0:58
- 4 Yeah, so I've kind of got, I've got LinkedIn, which I suppose is kind of like social networking and I use the I use EPNET, I use Instagram and I use Twitter, and in a kind of professional capacity, I'd say, networking, especially with kind of people that are already educational psychologists looking at kind of what trainings out there and what specific services are doing YouTube like watching videos like over lockdown there's a lot of kind of like CPD videos you could watch. And so I've really been using social media to kind of network and upskill myself as well, and develop kind of areas of interest, I'd say.
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- 6 So, a big range of platforms that you're using, and a range of different ways in which you're using it as well so you've, you've kind of said a couple of those areas already as well for reflection?
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- 8 I think I have got my own educational psychology Instagram page so I do, I use it for kind of like reflecting on my learning as well.
- 9 Interviewer 2:00
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- 11 Garnet 2:24
- 12 I think, like on Twitter and things like that there's a lot of shared about kind of new ways of working, so for example when kind of those online therapy rooms and Bitmoji rooms came in to kind of play. I kind of found stumbled across that through, instagram and through Twitter. So I think it kind of shows, it kind of gives you new information but actually maybe in a more manageable way than reading, loads of different papers, it's quite accessible. So I'd say that I've, I've used that for different publications, and, like, just different kinds of interesting articles that people have shared I think that sparked my interest



is using kind of like Instagram and like a swipe up or clicking a link on Twitter was just so much easier. And I think that's kind of the main way that I've used it in a professional capacity up to this point.

13 Interviewer 3:18

14 Yeah, so can I just check, it sounds like there's something about it being manageable, because there's something about being more manageable than reading and the papers being quite accessible?

15 Garnet 3:36

16 And in that sort of context where we needed those Bitmoji therapy rooms quickly. If we'd waited for an article to be some research to be done on on for online therapy rooms and then we were waiting for an article to be produced, that could have taken quite a long time. I can't remember who it was that somebody created a bitmoji therapy room but they showed you how to do it on YouTube. So it was kind of like, it's like "No excuses", isn't it? it's like someone's taking you through it step by step, and, and like you said the accessibility and like the quick and immediateness I think is is really cool. Yeah, so it's it's quite responsive too.

17 Interviewer 4:25

18 yeah. Um, so next question is, well, actually before we answer that question. I'm wondering if you could tell me a little bit about you said you've got a personal and educational psychology Instagram as well, that you run?

19 Unknown Speaker 4:40

20 That's what really drew me to this research. I use it and I find it really helpful. And I just do post quite a lot, and my classmates always messaging me after they're like, Well, you've just summarised everything I've learned in a day. But I found as well people kind of, you know that are interested in educational psychology have stumbled across that that might be assistants, or not necessarily from that kind of background so teaching staff and I think it's when you talk about kind of an accessibility to the field, I think it kind of gives you a bit of an insight without, without having to be an assistant without having to kind of know someone that's an educational psychologist, it's quite an easy platform for people to stumble across and, and it kind of can spark their interest in reading and just different people's experiences but also those that like might be assistant or an EP and want to get on the doctorate course, gives them an insight into what we learn as well. Yeah, and to know that that's the right kind of



career that they want to pursue, and kind of what they can achieve and what they learn about I think it is a really amazing thing and I think I started it because I wanted something like that when I, when I was kind of in that position, and didn't necessarily think that there was that much. Well, not from what I was Googling, you know because Instagram, there's lots of different names and everything's different, but I think yeah that's what that's what I found. And I was very lucky to have an assistant position but I thought I wouldn't know any of this. Had I not been an assistant and I wouldn't know where to begin, and I wouldn't know who to talk to and I don't know where to start.

21 Interviewer 6:16

22 So it makes a big difference? Kind of finding that information out if you're thinking about trying to be anything about the course?

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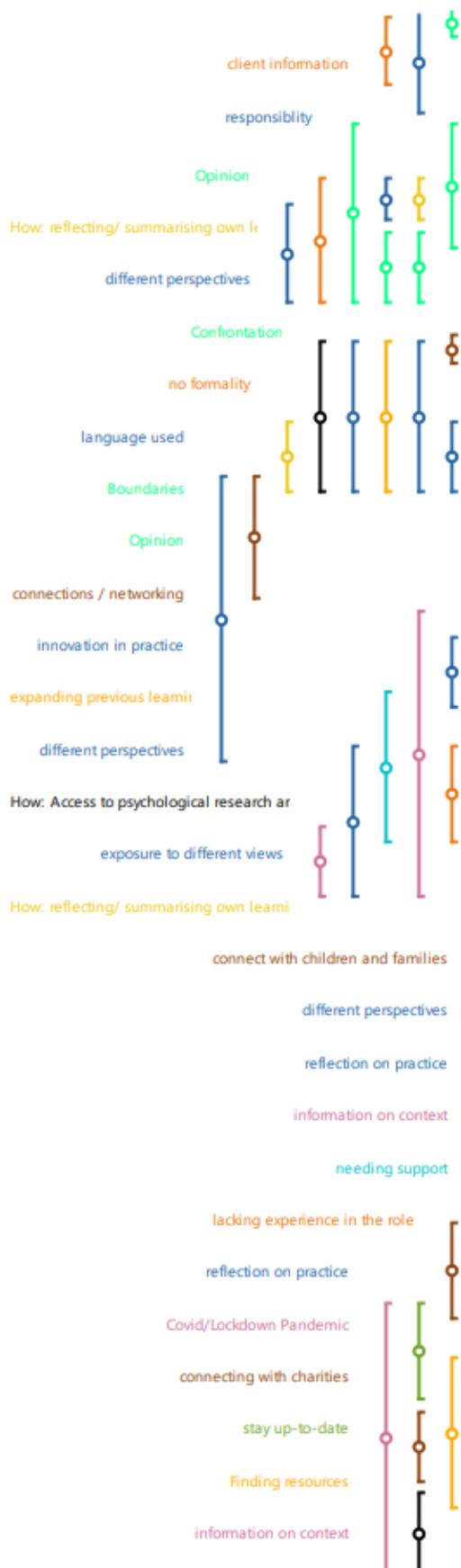


25 Interviewer 7:13

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27 Unknown Speaker 7:41

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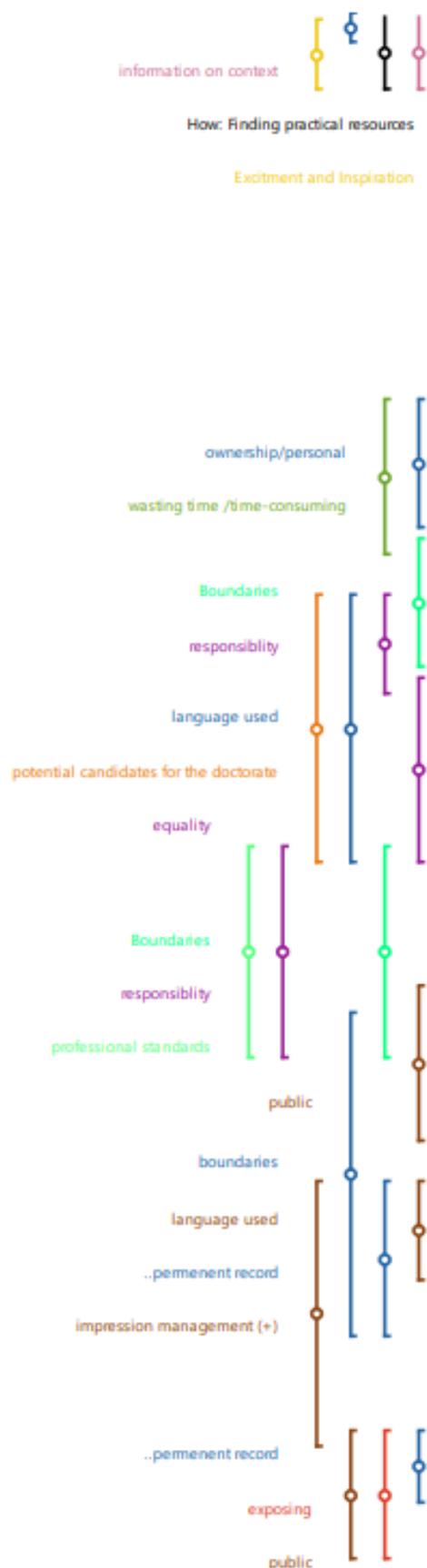
like I personally wouldn't share anything that I've done on placement, obviously you wouldn't share children's names and things like that but, and I think there is a place for it, but things like for example, EPNET when people. Sometimes it gets a bit confrontational, and I've always [unclear] that it within our professional practice yes we need to challenge and yes we need to, we, you know we're entitled to our own opinions, but it's almost like where's the border line between it being not professional if that makes sense. But yeah, so I think it's really impacted my professional practice well, and I've networked with people I've learned new things that might not have come across, or I've heard about it before we've learned about it on the course, and I think as well not just kind of from my perspective, it helps me, it helps me learn things but also kind of gives me new ways of thinking. When you're working with families and children and young people as well, like for example, there's a few posts about you know going back to the first day of school, and just thinking about how the children might be feeling and it was really good because actually you think all they are aimed at parents and carers, but actually for us just to hold in mind and kind of makes you check yourself and think, Oh well, actually I'll think about. I'll think about you know I need to get hold in my hand how nervous the few weeks are going to be. And I kind of reflected that that's how I was as a TEP in second year going into a new service, I was thinking, the children, young people are feeling exactly the same. And actually, with COVID as well it's a massive changes and having that tracking process.

29 Interviewer 9:19

30 So it's, it's, you're not only from what you're saying interacting with educational psychology resources your, your, your reach is kind of going beyond, beyond that, so you just mentioned sort of parents and children and kind of looking at resources for them. I don't if you want to expand on that a bit?

31 Garnet 9:35

32 Yeah, just, I think, just anything that really links to psychology or things I follow. So for example, like, I don't know that maybe like Anna Freud Centre things like the black curriculum. I think it keeps you up to date with kind of contextual things that will impact our world not just kind of, the is educational psychology things, things that are coming out and actually resources as well. Lots of people make resources and not just educational psychologists, clinical psychologists that are the, you know, with the overlap of like for example, things like stress bucket it like someone made a really good diagram of that you



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34
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could download for free so I you know I use that in my practice and things like that, I think. Yeah, it's just amazing.

Interviewer 10:20

I can see you are finding it effective for you ? So my next question was already kind of answered again so I'm gonna go to the next one, which is do you think there are any influences on your practice which might be positive or negative?

Garnet 10:43

The only thing that I think it would be is because I have because I do have that account. I think it takes a lot of time to keep that running, and it's almost like juggling the pressures of being on the course and having that as well and I kind of last year, it did take a bit of a backseat. And I think it's just about kind of managing my workload, I suppose, in terms of, kind of, yeah, negatives, that's all. Yeah, and then maybe potentially that grey line of what are we allowed to do, what are we not allowed to do and what's giving too much in what was not because obviously like I want it to be really accessible but you can't, I don't, I don't want to Favourite someone, or I don't want to if people message me I don't want to hand everything on the plate because people work really hard to get there and yeah I just think it's just fine like a bit of a line, but actually I think it's quite a grey line and when you look at, I was trying to look at HCPC and BPS and like on the course and what's allowed and what's not allowed and, and he does, you know social media doesn't come into that because I was like oh do I put, for example, don't put my picture I don't put my name or do I keep in anonymous , you know, things like that and not really, it's a bit of a grey area I think, but things like that and Twitter from what I've seen everybody just uses the name and the picture and, you know, the psychology world I think is really small, so I think like for example, I think there is a bit of a fear of saying something wrong or doing something that somebody would take offence to and then your name being attached to that, because I do think it is a very small world, and especially when you're networking online. It's very easy to just type in your name and for something to come up and if you've done one thing wrong or if somebody doesn't like I think in psychology of people quite picky about certain words. And I think if you use the wrong word, or she doesn't know what she's on about are sort of more might take it the wrong way. So I think there is a bit of that, It's like that little bit of added maybe stress. But on the whole I found it, I found it really positive.

Appendix O: Data Analysis: More Excerpts from Reflexive Diary

1) Survey reflection example:

Already had 46 responses to the questionnaire, which feels extremely exciting. I will now consider resharing the advert, as I want to keep this momentum up. I want to start exploring the data but keep reminding myself to wait and be patient. I'm aware I have a lot of TEP responses so far, but know there is still time for more varied responses to appear and present themselves.

2) Initial reflection on data:

Participants appear to be mentioning control of platforms a lot in excerpts/initial glances/review of data. Maybe this is an early theme? Some seem to find they can control SNWs and gain power of them, to use as they wish. Whereas others seem to find them unwieldy and unpredictable? They find it challenging for their posts to "zoom" off and be accessible by anyone. For some they feel in control, others out of control which renders them powerless. Unsure why there's this distinction/difference!

3) Interview reflection example:

Had second interview at 9:30 this morning. Feeling a little taken back by participants confidence and assertiveness. They are obviously very confident and ~~express~~ secure in their beliefs regarding education and the profession. They also were very confident in feeling able to express these online. It was not this alone that has made me pause to consider this, it was the positionality in our interview, which added a further complicated layer... e.g. Several times in the interview the participant mentioned their own experience and understandings, but contrasted this with my own "newness" as a EP. Again, this stirred up in me a feeling where I felt somewhat inadequate and positioned as a lesser interesting or insightful person. I am sure this was not the intention of the participant, and I can rationalise this now. However this reflection of how someone else's ability to successfully speak out and harness their voice, is something which I found threatening. Maybe as I'm still hindering my voice, and confidence in my ability to share my views, or possibly because feeling positioned reminded me of how I like more collaborative approaches to knowledge sharing? Thus is SNWs just a place where only those who feel confident and expressive can share their views. Are SNWs only for EPs who perscribe to an expert only model

4) Initial coding reflection.

There's a lot of data to do justice too. I know Braun & Clarke emphasise how it's my interpretation and what I've done with this research. As long as I can be reflexive and justify decisions. But it still feels like a great deal of pressure, that I could get it wrong, or maybe there's a really salient and important narrative that I won't be able to capture, or miss out on. I suppose all I can do for now is keep pausing, reflecting, and recoding. I know I shouldn't be worried about themes right now, but my mind does keep reaching forward to consider what memes, what stories, what narratives, what theories, what meaning will come of this?

5) Initial theme development.

Initial Meme development.

I've hit a wall with theme development. I am wondering whether it's because I'm doing it online and on screen. It feels clunky and a bit unreal. Another "detachment" from "real life" throughout this pandemic. I'm going to push forward with writing up my literature review amendments and take a break until I have next supervision session. Will send these initial themes across to R. But will also consider starting afresh. Maybe I need to get my codes printed out and move to paper. I'm also considering printing transcripts and re-reading them in paper too. Maybe this will help with feelings of connectivity.

6) End of theme development reflection:

Today's been a lot of fun.
 I've spent time building tables etc, but it's
 good to see my finalised themes displayed 😊
 I am still unsure about meme names,
 but truly feel they do capture the key
 meaning of the data. will also need to discuss
 them in the next supervision.
 Now to select extracts for this chapter: - will
 be challenging as so much of this data is fascinating.

7) Chapter planning discussion reflection

Finding the planning of the discussion challenging as
 I feel there is a vast range of avenues and theoretical
 lenses that I could go down/ include/ use. I am
 trying to focus on what has the most implications for
 the profession. BUT, I do have other thoughts and ideas I
 want to explore further. Eg. Not yet managed to
 fully consider relationships between EPs on online
 networks and how it may be benefiting those who
 have access - maybe some sociological theory like social
 capital theory is relevant?

I'm also having to step back and be ~~be~~ reflexive
 about what I am prioritising and bringing forward
 as a researcher. Am I bringing forward these
 discussion points because I'm interested? I keep
 pausing to stop and make sure that it's the
 participant's narrative that is the key focus.

Appendix P: Ethics Form and Approval Documents

Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW OF STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

This application should be submitted alongside copies of any supporting documentation which will be handed to participants, including a participant information sheet, consent form, self-completion survey or questionnaire.

Where a form is submitted and sections are incomplete, the form will not be considered by TREC and will be returned to the applicant for completion.

For further guidance please contact Paru Jeram (academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.U.K.)

FOR ALL APPLICANTS

If you already have ethical approval from another body (including HRA/IRAS) please submit the application form and outcome letters. You need only complete sections of the TREC form which are NOT covered in your existing approval

Is your project considered as 'research' according to the HRA tool? http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.U.K./research/index.html	NO
Will your project involve participants who are under 18 or who are classed as vulnerable? (see section 7)	No
Will your project include data collection outside of the U.K.?	No

SECTION A: PROJECT DETAILS

Project title	Educational Psychologists' professional use of online social networking websites: A mixed methods study into EPs' use and perspectives.		
Proposed start date	April 2021	Anticipated project end date	June 2022
Principle Investigator (normally your Research Supervisor): <u>Rachael Green</u>			
Please note: TREC approval will only be given for the length of the project as stated above up to a maximum of 6 years. Projects exceeding these timeframes will need additional ethical approval			
Has NHS or other approval been sought for this research including through submission via Research Application System (IRAS) or to the	YES (NRES approval) <input type="checkbox"/> YES (HRA approval) <input type="checkbox"/>		

Health Research Authority (HRA)?	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If you already have ethical approval from another body (including HRA/IRAS) please submit the application form and outcome letters.	

SECTION B: APPLICANT DETAILS

Name of Researcher	Elizabeth Kate Maybury Smalley
Programme of Study and Target Award	PTDOTP001: Child, community and educational psychology. (M4)
Email address	ESmalley@Tavi-Port.nhs.U.K.
Contact telephone number	

SECTION C: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

<p>Will any of the researchers or their institutions receive any other benefits or incentives for taking part in this research over and above their normal salary package or the costs of undertaking the research?</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If YES, please detail below:</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Is there any further possibility for conflict of interest? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Are you proposing to conduct this work in a location where you work or have a placement?</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

<p>If YES, please detail below outline how you will avoid issues arising around colleagues being involved in this project:</p>

<p>Is your project being commissioned by and/or carried out on behalf of a body external to the Trust? (for example; commissioned by a local authority, school, care home, other NHS Trust or other organisation).</p> <p><small>*Please note that 'external' is defined as an organisation which is external to the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust (Trust)</small></p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If YES, please add details here:</p> <p>N/A</p>	
<p>Will you be required to get further ethical approval after receiving TREC approval?</p> <p>If YES, please supply details of the ethical approval bodies below AND include any letters of approval from the ethical approval bodies (letters received after receiving TREC approval should be submitted to complete your record):</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>N/A</p>	
<p>If your project is being undertaken with one or more clinical services or organisations external to the Trust, please provide details of these:</p>	
<p>N/A</p>	
<p>If you still need to agree these arrangements or if you can only approach organisations after you have ethical approval, please identify the types of organisations (eg. schools or clinical services) you wish to approach:</p>	
<p>N/A</p>	
<p>Do you have approval from the organisations detailed above? (this includes R&D approval where relevant)</p> <p>Please attach approval letters to this application. Any approval letters received after TREC approval has been granted MUST be submitted to be appended to your record</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

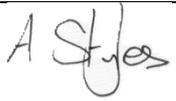
SECTION D: SIGNATURES AND DECLARATIONS

APPLICANT DECLARATION	
I confirm that:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and up to date. • I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research. • I acknowledge my obligations and commitment to upholding ethical principles and to keep my supervisor updated with the progress of my research • I am aware that for cases of proven misconduct, it may result in formal disciplinary proceedings and/or the cancellation of the proposed research. • I understand that if my project design, methodology or method of data collection changes I must seek an amendment to my ethical approvals as failure to do so, may result in a report of academic and/or research misconduct. 	
Applicant (print name)	Elizabeth Kate Maybury Smalley
Signed	EK Maybury Smalley
Date	30.04.21

FOR RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENT APPLICANTS ONLY

Name of Supervisor/Principal Investigator	Dr Rachael Green
--	------------------

Supervisor –	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the student have the necessary skills to carry out the research? YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Is the participant information sheet, consent form and any other documentation appropriate? YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Are the procedures for recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent suitable and sufficient? YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> ▪ Where required, does the researcher have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance? YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> 	
Signed	
Date	30/04/21

COURSE LEAD/RESEARCH LEAD	
Does the proposed research as detailed herein have your support to proceed? YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Signed	
Date	07.05.21

SECTION E: DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

- 1. Provide a brief description of the proposed research, including the requirements of participants. This must be in lay terms and free from technical or discipline specific terminology or jargon. If such terms are required, please ensure they are adequately explained (Do not exceed 500 words)**

Social Networking Websites (NWS) are a tool that Educational Psychologists (EPs) are using professionally. Their professional use includes a range of platforms such as closed professional Facebook groups, Twitter, Email forums and YouTube. As there is no current research into how they are using them. This study hopes to begin filling this gap in the literature. This project's purpose is firstly to describe how EPs' are using SNWs professionally. The second aim is exploratory and focused on EPs' perspectives and subjective experiences of professional use of SNWs. Furthermore, there is no record of how SNWs are impacting on practice, changing work with service users, or the reasons for EPs' use. SNWs could impacting on EPs' practice positively or negatively, and this study aims to be the first of its kind to explore whether this is the case. This study hopes to address the following 4 research questions (RQs):

Aim 1:

1. How are Educational Psychologists using social networking websites in a professional capacity, and what are the patterns of their use?

Aim 2:

2. What are Educational Psychologists' perspectives on how social networking websites are influencing their professional practice?
3. What are Educational Psychologists' perspectives on why they are using social networking websites for professional reasons?
4. What do EPs consider to be the further potential ways of using social networking websites?

Participants will be invited to be involved in an online survey/questionnaire, followed by a smaller group of participants attending semi-structured interviews online. The questionnaire captures some demographic data such as current job title and age. If participants volunteer to participate in the interview a separate secure form will record personal sensitive information such as their email address. The interviews will last no longer than one hour. The interviews will mainly use open-ended questions, allowing participants to focus and share aspects that they feel are important.

This study will recruit Educational Psychologists and Trainee Educational Psychologists who are currently working in the U.K. This can be any EPs who are interested in the topic, not just those who are currently using SNWs. Recruitment will be by SNW platforms using the groups and Twitter handles EPs are populating. Emails will also be sent to the EP email forums, and the Principal EPs' email group.

The online survey will be anonymous with participants having a code they create to withdraw their data at a later date. A recording of the interview will be taken and scored securely using pseudonyms. The interview recordings will be made into transcripts that will also be secured securely in compliance with the U.K. Data Protection Act (2018). Analysis of the interview transcripts will include thematic analysis of the key themes. The survey will be analysed using descriptive statistics for quantitative aspects. If demographic factors allow for large sample, non-parametric quantitative analysis (such as the Mann-Whitney U) could potentially be used to demonstrate differences between groups.

(478 words).

- 2. Provide a statement on the aims and significance of the proposed research, including potential impact to knowledge and understanding in the field (where appropriate, indicate the associated hypothesis which will be tested). This should be a clear justification of the proposed research, why it should proceed and a statement on any anticipated benefits to the community. (Do not exceed 700 words)**

Significance

Social networking websites (SNWs) provide Educational Psychologists (EPs) with an opportunity to collaborate, reflect, and share knowledge. Examples of SNWs in use by (EPs) include Twitter and Facebook. SNWs provide an informal learning environment which is continuously accessible (McPherson et al., 2015). Users can revisit and build on data posted due to the digital trace, enabling professionals to interact with, and develop, an online knowledge base (Irum & Pandey, 2019). SNWs provide EPs with opportunities for ongoing dialogue with colleagues outside their service, who have different specialisms and approaches to practice. This phenomenon may be expanding EPs' professional knowledge.

Alternatively, the OECD (2019) suggests SNWs may limit users experiences of different viewpoints. This restriction is due to algorithms tailoring content. Consequently, EPs might create an online discourse that privileges specific theories of practice. Social network use may be transforming how EPs interact with the profession's knowledge and evidence base; it could be simultaneously expanding or limiting knowledge. EPs as a profession should be using evidence-based practice or be evidenced- led when applying psychology. They should be using their skills to explore the credibility of information in all circumstances. However, the dominant discourses and narrative presented online could lead to an unconscious bias and may alter how EPs interact with the evidence base. Furthermore, this may have implications for how EPs then apply or use their knowledge with service users.

There is no literature base documenting how EPs use SNWs professionally, nor literature into whether EPs feel SNWs are altering their practice.

Aims

In light of this context, the first aim of this project is to document the patterns of EP's professional SNW use. This aim is descriptive in nature. This part of the study will focus on reporting how EPs are currently using their professional SNWs accounts. This aim will summarise factual information such as frequency and type of use. The hope is that the findings will document a range of ways that EPs are using SNWs as a professional tool.

The second aim of the study is exploratory. This aim is to record EPs' perspectives on how SNWs are influencing their role and practice. The hope is that researching EPs' views will provide an understanding of their views of using SNWs and how it may be impacting on service users. This exploration will also consider EP's reasons for using SNWs. Understanding EPs reasons for using SNWs may provide commentary on other interrelated aspects of the EP role.

This second aim will also include EP's perspectives on both the positive and negative impacts of professional SNWs use, and how this use can be developed in future. Understanding such perspectives may inform guidance or policies around adherence to professional codes of conduct when using SNWs. Exploring EPs' perspectives on further potential use is important as EPs need to respond to technological advances, and to continue to develop effective ways of supporting service users. Considering potential new ways of using online social networking, may enhance and improve outcomes for service users.

Benefits

There are several anticipated benefits of this research project. A more thorough understanding of EP's Twitter use may lead to several positive outcomes. This research may provide guidance that supports more EPs to begin using SNWs. Or to begin formalising their SNW use and recording their new knowledge as continuous professional development. Connecting more EP's together and encouraging such communication may lead to an acceleration in ideas shared nationally. The impact of this will be practice and provision for service users to evolve and improve.

Considering other EPs' perspectives on SNWs may help users to be considerate and careful about their online interactions. They may be more mindful about the profession's online representation of the evidence base. As technology continues to develop, EP's SNWs use may alter again. Having an understanding of its current use may enable EPs to respond to changes.

EP's use of social networks has a potential to impact service users too. By exploring potential uses of SNWs this project hopes to discover ways for psychological ideas to be communicated to non-EPs. Furthermore, this research may inspire others to

reflect and develop their use to create a positive change in their online communication.

(697 words)

3. Provide an outline of the methodology for the proposed research, including proposed method of data collection, tasks assigned to participants of the research and the proposed method and duration of data analysis. If the proposed research makes use of pre-established and generally accepted techniques, please make this clear. (Do not exceed 500 words)

Methodology:

This study uses a mixed method approach with a sequential design (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). The sequential design will include one distinct data collection phase (an online survey) followed by another (semi-structured interviews). In this design the data is collected and analysed separately and merged during the interpretation. Both phases of this study will be weighted equally, as both data collection phases have different aspects of the research questions to address.

Survey/Questionnaire design

The online survey has been designed to be relatively short, as longer questionnaires have a lower response rate (Rolstad et al., 2011). The main aim of the online survey is to collect information on RQ1. The attachments include a proposed survey, and a pilot will be conducted to trial this survey.

Most questions have been designed using principles outlined in Regmi et al. (2016), such as clarity, and signposting to ensure a user-friendly layout. Some questions on the survey required specific research to inform their development. For example, Question 9 was developed through adapting scales from similar existing studies. Items were collected from studies used in an initial scoping literature review and other studies into professional use of SNWs. Many of these items have already been used with larger sample populations and consequently will have some validity.

Online interview

Follow-up semi structured questions will be asked to collaborate information on RQ1 and provide detailed information in RQ 2, 3 & 4. The purpose of the interview is to gain a detailed description of clear examples of practice, alongside an insight into participant's feeling about SNWs. Semi-structured interviews were selected to allow for an informal and less constrained discussion (W. C. Adams, 2015) whilst still holding a clear frame to ensure all relevant material is gathered. Semi-structured interviews should allow participants enough flexibility to express their views. A pilot study will be conducted. Most questions are opened-ended or closed with an open-ended prompt question.

Quantitative analysis.

The demographic section of the survey will generate some categorical data. The online survey will also generate dichotomous data (yes/no). This will be analysed

using descriptive statistics such as percentages and means. This will provide a description of general overall use.

If demographic factors allow for large sample, non-parametric quantitative analysis (such as the Mann-Whitney U) could potentially be used to demonstrate differences between groups. This could add an extra level of analysis to RQ1 which is to explore patterns of use, as it may show patterns of use dependent on specific job roles, or years' experience. This would provide a richer description of use. The aim is that satisfactory descriptive analysis can be provided for RQ1 with solely descriptive statistics, but there may be opportunity for more detailed statistical tests if required.

Qualitative data analysis.

The qualitative data will be analysed using thematic analysis. This includes data from open-ended survey questions and data transcribed from interviews. This will be analysed using Braun & Clarke's (2006) process. There are no previously existing codes available, so analysis will use inductive coding.

(498 words)

SECTION F: PARTICIPANT DETAILS

- 4. Provide an explanation detailing how you will identify, approach and recruit the participants for the proposed research, including clarification on sample size and location. Please provide justification for the exclusion/inclusion criteria for this study (i.e. who will be allowed to / not allowed to participate) and explain briefly, in lay terms, why these criteria are in place. (Do not exceed 500 words)**

The sample will be EPs and Trainee EPs. Participants should be currently practicing as a psychologist and also be using online social networking platforms for work purposes, or have an interest or opinion about doing so. The pilot sample will include 3-4 Trainee EPs recruited through convenience sampling.

Participants' recruitment to the initial survey is via online platforms such as Twitter, EPNET, EP Facebook groups, and through emails to EPS services. The author will send out the information sheet and links to the online survey. EPs who view the information have a choice whether to respond. The sampling process aims to locate and access as many EPs and trainee EPs who have experience or opinions about using SNWs for professional reasons. It is not possible to know the full extent of this sample. The study will use an opportunity and volunteer response sampling approach. A similar recruitment approach was utilised by Wasilewski et al., (2019). This study found further recruitment occurred from participants resharing the initial Tweets, creating a Snowball sampling effect. The minimum response for the survey would be 30.

The aim is for between 6-10 people to be interviewed, this number is based upon Braun & Clarke's (2013) guidance for data collection for thematic analysis. Once participants have completed the online survey, they can volunteer for the second stage of the research process. The interviews will be with a subgroup of participants. These will be selected randomly after the questionnaire has been online and circulated for six weeks. At this point each participant will be given a numerical code, selected using a random number generator. The 10 participants will be contacted and invited to participate in an online interview. This sampling process can be repeated in part, to ensure there are enough participants. Those not selected for online interview will be emailed to thank them for volunteering to ensure no 'open loop' of communication uncertainty will be left.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

- **Participants must be a currently practising EP or Trainee EP.** This means that assistant EPs or EPs who are not currently working or retired cannot participate. Assistant EPs have not been included as they are not undertaking work at the same level of responsibility.
- **Participants must be practising in the U.K..** EPs who are not currently practising in the U.K. have not been included. While there are EPs around the world using social media platforms, opening the study to them will make the study too broad. It could possibly prevent any meaningful or clear analysis on SNWs use and applicability for practice.
- **Participants may or may not be using SNWS currently.** Any EPs with an opinion on the topic will be included in the online survey. This may be because someone has actively decided not to use SNWs professionally, but their views and lack of use is important data. This will illustrate the boundaries and limits of use. There will be separate questions for these EPs.
- **Participants can be working for local authorities or independently.** Participants must be registered with the HCPC.

5. **Please state the location(s) of the proposed research including the location of any interviews. Please provide a Risk Assessment if required. Consideration should be given to lone working, visiting private residences, conducting research outside working hours or any other non-standard arrangements.**

If any data collection is to be done online, please identify the platforms to be used.

The questionnaire will be in Qualtrics (Please note the draft survey/questionnaire is presented in the attachments as a google form, this platform will not be used in the pilot or in the research project, it has just been used for illustrative purposes to support this application).

The online interview will use password protected 'Zoom' platform. Headphones will be worn by the interviewer to ensure the participant's confidentiality when conducting the interview. The interviews will be recording using Zoom's 'recording function'. If participants are not keen on having a video recording, they will be given the opportunity to turn off their camera so that only their voice records. The interviewer will ensure that they are alone and in a quiet, distraction-free environment. Interviews may take place outside working hours if that's when the participants select due to their workloads.

Both Qualtrics and Zoom have been selected due to their security settings and policies. Pseudonyms will be used when storing data. All data will be stored on a password protected and encrypted drive. Survey and interview data will be stored for 5 years following the study. The audio recordings and transcripts will be stored securely on a password protected laptop. The audio/video recordings of the interviews will be deleted once the transcription process is complete. This is in compliance with the U.K. Data Protection Act (2018) and the Tavistock and Portman Data Protection Policy.

6. **Will the participants be from any of the following groups?(Tick as appropriate)**

- Students or Staff of the Trust or Partner delivering your programme.
- Adults (over the age of 18 years with mental capacity to give consent to participate in the research).
- Children or legal minors (anyone under the age of 16 years)¹
- Adults who are unconscious, severely ill or have a terminal illness.
- Adults who may lose mental capacity to consent during the course of the research.
- Adults in emergency situations.
- Adults² with mental illness - particularly those detained under the Mental Health Act (1983 & 2007).
- Participants who may lack capacity to consent to participate in the research under the research requirements of the Mental Capacity Act (2005).
- Prisoners, where ethical approval may be required from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).
- Young Offenders, where ethical approval may be required from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).
- Healthy volunteers (in high risk intervention studies).
- Participants who may be considered to have a pre-existing and potentially dependent³ relationship with the investigator (e.g. those in care homes, students, colleagues, service-users, patients).
- Other vulnerable groups (see Question 6).
- Adults who are in custody, custodial care, or for whom a court has assumed responsibility.
- Participants who are members of the Armed Forces.

¹If the proposed research involves children or adults who meet the Police Act (1997) definition of vulnerability³, any researchers who will have contact with participants must have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

² 'Adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, or a reduction in physical or mental capacity, and living in a care home or home for people with learning difficulties or receiving care in their own home, or receiving hospital or social care services.' (Police Act, 1997)

³ Proposed research involving participants with whom the investigator or researcher(s) shares a dependent or unequal relationships (e.g. teacher/student, clinical therapist/service-user) may compromise the ability to give informed consent which is free from any form of pressure (real or implied) arising from this relationship. TREC recommends that, wherever practicable, investigators choose participants with whom they have no dependent relationship. Following due scrutiny, if the investigator is confident that the research involving participants in dependent relationships is vital and defensible, TREC will require additional information setting out the case and detailing how risks inherent in the dependent relationship will be managed. TREC will also need to be reassured that refusal to participate will not result in any discrimination or penalty.

7. Will the study involve participants who are vulnerable? YES NO

For the purposes of research, 'vulnerable' participants may be adults whose ability to protect their own interests are impaired or reduced in comparison to that of the broader population. Vulnerability may arise from:

- the participant's personal characteristics (e.g. mental or physical impairment)
- their social environment, context and/or disadvantage (e.g. socio-economic mobility, educational attainment, resources, substance dependence, displacement or homelessness).
- where prospective participants are at high risk of consenting under duress, or as a result of manipulation or coercion, they must also be considered as vulnerable
- children are automatically presumed to be vulnerable.

7.1. If YES, what special arrangements are in place to protect vulnerable participants' interests?

N/A

If **YES**, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check **within the last three years** is required.

Please provide details of the "clear disclosure":

Date of disclosure: N/A
Type of disclosure: N/A
Organisation that requested disclosure: N/A
DBS certificate number: N/A

(NOTE: information concerning activities which require DBS checks can be found via <https://www.gov.U.K./government/publications/dbs-check-eligible-positions-guidance>). Please **do not** include a copy of your DBS certificate with your application

8. Do you propose to make any form of payment or incentive available to participants of the research?

YES NO

If **YES**, please provide details taking into account that any payment or incentive should be representative of reasonable remuneration for participation and may not be of a value that could be coercive or exerting undue influence on potential participants' decision to take part in the research. Wherever possible, remuneration in a monetary form should be avoided and substituted with vouchers, coupons or equivalent. Any payment made to research participants may have benefit or HMRC implications and participants should be alerted to this in the participant information sheet as they may wish to choose to decline payment.

N/A

9. What special arrangements are in place for eliciting informed consent from participants who may not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information provided in English; where participants have special communication needs; where participants have limited literacy; or where children are involved in the research? (Do not exceed 200 words)

The participants of this study are all practicing Educational Psychologists or Trainee Educational psychologists or in the U.K.. Their competency in English will be proficient enough to understand the written information provided. All will be educated to at least undergraduate degree level, with a post-graduate qualification or studying for a post-graduate qualification.

(52 words)

SECTION F: RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

10. Does the proposed research involve any of the following? (Tick as appropriate)

- use of a questionnaire, self-completion survey or data-collection instrument (attach copy)
- use of emails or the internet as a means of data collection
- use of written or computerised tests
- interviews (attach interview questions)
- diaries (attach diary record form)
- participant observation
- participant observation (in a non-public place) without their knowledge / covert research
- audio-recording interviewees or events
- video-recording interviewees or events
- access to personal and/or sensitive data (i.e. student, patient, client or service-user data) without the participant's informed consent for use of these data for research purposes
- administration of any questions, tasks, investigations, procedures or stimuli which may be experienced by participants as physically or mentally painful, stressful or unpleasant during or after the research process
- performance of any acts which might diminish the self-esteem of participants or cause them to experience discomfiture, regret or any other adverse emotional or psychological reaction
- Themes around extremism or radicalisation
- investigation of participants involved in illegal or illicit activities (e.g. use of illegal drugs)
- procedures that involve the deception of participants
- administration of any substance or agent
- use of non-treatment of placebo control conditions
- participation in a clinical trial
- research undertaken at an off-campus location (risk assessment attached)
- research overseas (please ensure Section G is complete)

11. Does the proposed research involve any specific or anticipated risks (e.g. physical, psychological, social, legal or economic) to participants that are greater than those encountered in everyday life?

YES NO

If **YES**, please describe below including details of precautionary measures.

This box has been ticked as although it is extremely unlikely that any risks occur, there is a very small chance of risk, as with any research which asks for participants to share their opinions and experience. It cannot be guaranteed that participants

will not feel discomfort or distress. Questions 12 and 14 explore the procedures I would take to support a participant in distress or an unexpected scenario.

A further precautionary measure will exist if a participant in the interview stage has decided they want to keep their camera off due to the recording, I will have to rely on auditory information only to pick up on their discomfort or distress. As a precautionary measure I will remind participants that they can skip questions or ask to take a break at any stage.

12. Where the procedures involve potential hazards and/or discomfort or distress for participants, please state what previous experience the investigator or researcher(s) have had in conducting this type of research.

It is unlikely that this research will cause any distress or discomfort for participant's, however if this does arise, I have a range of professional roles and experiences of supporting others empathically and appropriately. I am currently studying for a Doctorate in Child, Community and Educational Psychology which involves a range of placements and practical opportunities to consult with school staff, children and young people ages 0-25 and their families. This role involves building rapport, creating a safe and containing space, being an active listener and being open. Psychologists have an ethical and moral code to apply to their practice. At times the people I have worked with have been distressed and I have the transferable skills and experiences to facilitate a safe interview. For example, I will ensure I do not prompt on upsetting or sensitive topics. I have conducted a range of interviews and focus groups as part of my previous role as a Level 4, 5 and 6 Lecturer at University Centre Peterborough, and during my MPhil in Psychology and Education, which was a research orientated masters from the University of Cambridge. I am also skilled in safeguarding procedures and know of a range of services of support and procedures to direct an adult for self-referral, or emergency referral if necessary.

Additionally, as a trainee EP I have regular supervision in relation to my work as an EP and I am accessing regular research supervision. My research supervisor, Rachael Green, has extensive experience in supervising research projects.

13. Provide an explanation of any potential benefits to participants. Please ensure this is framed within the overall contribution of the proposed research to knowledge or practice. (Do not exceed 400 words)

NOTE: Where the proposed research involves students, they should be assured that accepting the offer to participate or choosing to decline will have no impact on their assessments or learning experience. Similarly, it should be made clear to participants who are patients, service-users and/or receiving any form of treatment or medication that they are not invited to participate in the belief that participation in the research will result in some relief or improvement in their condition.

There are community benefits at both the micro and macros levels.

Micro- The main benefit to participants is them being given an activity that encourages them to reflect on their SNW use in relation to their professional practice. This might not be something they have stopped to reflect on or spent time considering before. The participants who attend interview will have my undivided attention for the interview and I plan to create a containing and reflective space for them.

Macro- At a wider community level, I hope the research will encourage new developments and interest in SNWs, and that EPs may expand their use. The project might inspire new innovation of how EPs could use such platforms. EPs' professional knowledge and practice with service users may be altering due to changes in SNWs. It is useful to provide a project that might explore what is occurring with the SNWs and the positives and negatives in this change. It could be that some aspects of dominant discourses are being privileged in the online conversation, and this research may highlight some important reflection points for the profession. The focus of RQ4 is on the future, and this question could provide some ideas and innovations that could inform EPs online projects or service policies around SNWs.

(212 words)

14. Provide an outline of any measures you have in place in the event of adverse or unexpected outcomes and the potential impact this may have on participants involved in the proposed research. (Do not exceed 300 words)

Participants have the right to withdraw from any part of the study during their participation.

On each page of the online questionnaire there will be an option to allow the respondent to withdraw from the survey. Participants will also have the option to skip certain questions, so they can avoid answering something that might cause them psychological harm. If something unexpected happens the questionnaire form will contain contact details for myself. I would follow similar procedures outlined in question 12 regarding distress if a participant does contact me.

Some respondents may be concerned that their answers on an online survey could be traced back to them via their e-mail address, their IP address, or other information. I will reassure respondents on the information sheet, that I will not attempt to capture information that they do not voluntarily provide. I will not be collecting participant's emails on the same form as the answers. I will ask the participants to create their own code name based on 3 factors (a colour, an animal and a dessert/pudding,). E.g., *yellowslotchcheesecake*. So that they can use the code to withdraw their information up to a certain specified date.

If a participant becomes distressed during the interview, they will be given the option to end the interview, and I will also make a decision around whether to proceed or not at this point. I would ensure the participant is given the opportunity to talk if they choose too (off the interview record). I would then signpost to any further support agencies for self-referral/ charities they can talk too. I would also offer them the opportunity for a follow up telephone call or email the next day.

I would encourage them to talk to a trusted friend, family member or colleague about their feeling.

(297 words)

15. Provide an outline of your debriefing, support and feedback protocol for participants involved in the proposed research. This should include, for example, where participants may feel the need to discuss thoughts or feelings brought about following their participation in the research. This may involve referral to an external support or counseling service, where participation in the research has caused specific issues for participants.

At the end of the questionnaire there will be a reminder of this information and my email address. The hope is to have the questionnaire linked to a blog with this information on so participants have a place to return to review the information sheet if they need to.

At the end of the interview, I would invite the participants to reflect on the process and for any questions that they have. I will also repeat the information around confidentiality, and anonymity. The participants will take the information sheet about the research home with them, along with some further sources of support and my email address.

As mentioned above regarding anyone feeling distressed, the participants will have an opportunity to talk to me to reflect on their experiences at the end of the interview, and all participants will be reminded that they can take further reflections to their psychological supervision sessions (All practicing psychologists must have regular supervision).

A summary of the main findings will be provided to participants via the blog after a certain date, this means that the survey respondents who did not provide an email address can still access a summary.

16. Please provide the names and nature of any external support or counselling organisations that will be suggested to participants if participation in the research has potential to raise specific issues for participants.

- Association of Educational Psychologists.
- Reminded that they can take issues around practice to their professional personal and group supervision.
- Giveusashout.org
- Samaritans.org

17. Where medical aftercare may be necessary, this should include details of the treatment available to participants. Debriefing may involve the disclosure of further information on the aims of the research, the participant's performance and/or the results of the research. (Do not exceed 500 words)

N/A

FOR RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN OUTSIDE THE U.K.

18. Does the proposed research involve travel outside of the U.K.?

YES NO

If YES, please confirm:

I have consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for guidance/travel advice? <http://www.fco.gov.U.K./en/travel-and-living-abroad/>

I have completed a RISK Assessment covering all aspects of the project including consideration of the location of the data collection and risks to participants.

All overseas project data collection will need approval from the Deputy Director of Education and Training or their nominee. Normally this will be done based on the information provided in this form. All projects approved through the TREC process will be indemnified by the Trust against claims made by third parties.

If you have any queries regarding research outside the U.K., please contact academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.U.K.:

Students are required to arrange their own travel and medical insurance to cover project work outside of the U.K.. Please indicate what insurance cover you have or will have in place.

N/A

19. Please evidence how compliance with all local research ethics and research governance requirements have been assessed for the country(ies) in which the research is taking place. Please also clarify how the requirements will be met:

N/A

SECTION G: PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND WITHDRAWAL

20. Have you attached a copy of your participant information sheet (this should be in *plain English*)? Where the research involves non-English speaking participants, please include translated materials.

YES NO

If NO, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below:

N/A

<p>21. Have you attached a copy of your participant consent form (this should be in <i>plain English</i>)? Where the research involves non-English speaking participants, please include translated materials.</p> <p>YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If NO, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below:</p>
N/A
<p>22. The following is a <u>participant information sheet</u> checklist covering the various points that should be included in this document.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clear identification of the Trust as the sponsor for the research, the project title, the Researcher and Principal Investigator (your Research Supervisor) and other researchers along with relevant contact details.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Details of what involvement in the proposed research will require (e.g., participation in interviews, completion of questionnaire, audio/video-recording of events), estimated time commitment and any risks involved.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A statement confirming that the research has received formal approval from TREC or other ethics body.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the sample size is small, advice to participants that this may have implications for confidentiality / anonymity.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A clear statement that where participants are in a dependent relationship with any of the researchers that participation in the research will have no impact on assessment / treatment / service-use or support.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assurance that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw consent at any time, and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice as to arrangements to be made to protect confidentiality of data, including that confidentiality of information provided is subject to legal limitations.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A statement that the data generated in the course of the research will be retained in accordance with the Trusts 's Data Protection and handling Policies: https://tavistockandportman.nhs.U.K./about-us/governance/policies-and-procedures/</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice that if participants have any concerns about the conduct of the investigator, researcher(s) or any other aspect of this research project, they should contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance (academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.U.K.)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confirmation on any limitations in confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm to self and/or others may occur.</p>

23. The following is a consent form checklist covering the various points that should be included in this document.

- Trust letterhead or logo.
- Title of the project (with research degree projects this need not necessarily be the title of the thesis) and names of investigators.
- Confirmation that the research project is part of a degree
- Confirmation that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw at any time, or to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
- Confirmation of particular requirements of participants, including for example whether interviews are to be audio-/video-recorded, whether anonymised quotes will be used in publications advice of legal limitations to data confidentiality.
- If the sample size is small, confirmation that this may have implications for anonymity any other relevant information.
- The proposed method of publication or dissemination of the research findings.
- Details of any external contractors or partner institutions involved in the research.
- Details of any funding bodies or research councils supporting the research.
- Confirmation on any limitations in confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm to self and/or others may occur.

SECTION H: CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

24. Below is a checklist covering key points relating to the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Please indicate where relevant to the proposed research.

- Participants will be completely anonymised and their identity will not be known by the investigator or researcher(s) (i.e. the participants are part of an anonymous randomised sample and return responses with no form of personal identification)?
- The responses are anonymised or are an anonymised sample (i.e. a permanent process of coding has been carried out whereby direct and indirect identifiers have been removed from data and replaced by a code, with no record retained of how the code relates to the identifiers).
- The samples and data are de-identified (i.e. direct and indirect identifiers have been removed and replaced by a code. The investigator or researchers are able to link the code to the original identifiers and isolate the participant to whom the sample or data relates).
- Participants have the option of being identified in a publication that will arise from the research.
- Participants will be pseudo-anonymised in a publication that will arise from the research. (i.e. the researcher will endeavour to remove or alter details that would identify the participant.)
- The proposed research will make use of personal sensitive data.
- Participants consent to be identified in the study and subsequent dissemination of research findings and/or publication.

25. Participants must be made aware that the confidentiality of the information they provide is subject to legal limitations in data confidentiality (i.e. the data may be subject to a subpoena, a freedom of information request or mandated reporting by some professions). This only applies to named or de-identified data. If your participants are named or de-identified, please confirm that you will specifically state these limitations.

YES NO

If **NO**, please indicate why this is the case below:

NOTE: WHERE THE PROPOSED RESEARCH INVOLVES A SMALL SAMPLE OR FOCUS GROUP, PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE ADVISED THAT THERE WILL BE DISTINCT LIMITATIONS IN THE LEVEL OF ANONYMITY THEY CAN BE AFFORDED.

SECTION I: DATA ACCESS, SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT

26. Will the Researcher/Principal Investigator be responsible for the security of all data collected in connection with the proposed research? YES NO

If **NO**, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below:

N/A

27. In line with the 5th principle of the Data Protection Act (1998), which states that personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes for which it was collected; please state how long data will be retained for.

1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 10> years

NOTE: In line with Research Councils U.K. (RCU.K.) guidance, doctoral project data should normally be stored for 10 years and Masters level data for up to 2 years

28. Below is a checklist which relates to the management, storage and secure destruction of data for the purposes of the proposed research. Please indicate where relevant to your proposed arrangements.

Research data, codes and all identifying information to be kept in separate locked filing cabinets.

Research data will only be stored in the University of Essex OneDrive system and no other cloud storage location.

Access to computer files to be available to research team by password only.

Access to computer files to be available to individuals outside the research team by password only (See 23.1).

Research data will be encrypted and transferred electronically within the U.K..

Research data will be encrypted and transferred electronically outside of the U.K..

NOTE: Transfer of research data via third party commercial file sharing services, such as Google Docs and YouSendIt are not necessarily secure or permanent. These systems may also be located overseas and not covered by U.K. law. If the system is located outside the European Economic Area (EEA) or territories deemed to have sufficient standards of data protection, transfer may also breach the Data Protection Act (1998).

Essex students also have access the 'Box' service for file transfer:
<https://www.essex.ac.U.K./student/it-services/box>

Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers.

Collection and storage of personal sensitive data (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political or religious beliefs or physical or mental health or condition).

Use of personal data in the form of audio or video recordings.

Primary data gathered on encrypted mobile devices (i.e. laptops).

NOTE: This should be transferred to secure University of Essex OneDrive at the first opportunity.

All electronic data will undergo secure disposal.

NOTE: For hard drives and magnetic storage devices (HDD or SSD), deleting files does not permanently erase the data on most systems, but only deletes the reference to the file. Files can be restored when deleted in this way. Research files must be overwritten to ensure they are completely irretrievable. Software is available for the secure erasing of files from hard drives which meet recognised standards to securely scramble sensitive data. Examples of this software are BC Wipe, Wipe File, DeleteOnClick and Eraser for Windows platforms. Mac users can use the standard 'secure empty trash' option; an alternative is Permanent eraser software.

All hardcopy data will undergo secure disposal.

NOTE: For shredding research data stored in hardcopy (i.e. paper), adopting DIN 3 ensures files are cut into 2mm strips or confetti like cross-cut particles of 4x40mm. The U.K. government requires a minimum standard of DIN 4 for its material, which ensures cross cut particles of at least 2x15mm.

29. Please provide details of individuals outside the research team who will be given password protected access to encrypted data for the proposed research.

None. The data will only be accessible to myself as principal researcher.

30. Please provide details on the regions and territories where research data will be electronically transferred that are external to the U.K.:

No

SECTION J: PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

30. How will the results of the research be reported and disseminated? (Select all that apply)

- Peer reviewed journal
- Non-peer reviewed journal
- Peer reviewed books
- Publication in media, social media or website (including Podcasts and online videos)
- Conference presentation
- Internal report
- Promotional report and materials
- Reports compiled for or on behalf of external organisations
- Dissertation/Thesis
- Other publication
- Written feedback to research participants
- Presentation to participants or relevant community groups
- Other (Please specify below)

SECTION K: OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES

31. Are there any other ethical issues that have not been addressed which you would wish to bring to the attention of Tavistock Research Ethics Committee (TREC)?

As this research is being conducted online the research has been designed in reference to the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Ethics Guidelines for Internet-mediated research (British Psychological Society, 2017). This proposed research will follow the guidelines contained within this document.

SECTION L: CHECKLIST FOR ATTACHED DOCUMENTS

<p>32. Please check that the following documents are attached to your application.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Letters of approval from any external ethical approval bodies (where relevant)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recruitment advertisement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participant information sheets (including easy-read where relevant)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent forms (including easy-read where relevant)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assent form for children (where relevant)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Letters of approval from locations for data collection</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Questionnaire</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Schedule or topic guide</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Risk Assessment (where applicable)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Overseas travel approval (where applicable)</p>
<p>34. Where it is not possible to attach the above materials, please provide an explanation below.</p>
<p>N/A</p>

References for TREC form.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

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Irum, A., & Pandey, A. (2019). Social media – Changing the face of knowledge management. *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*, 34(1), 5–7. <https://doi.org/10.1108/DLO-02-2019-0051>

Ivankova, N. V., Creswell, J. W., & Stick, S. L. (2006). Using Mixed-Methods Sequential Explanatory Design: From Theory to Practice. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05282260>

McPherson, M., Budge, K., & Lemon, N. (2015). New practices in doing academic development: Twitter as an informal learning space. *International Journal for*

Appendix P: Ethics form and Approval Documents

Academic Development, 20(2), 126–136.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2015.1029485>

OECD. (2019). An Introduction to Online Platforms and Their Role in the Digital Transformation. <https://doi.org/10.1787/53e5f593-en>

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2010). *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506335193>

Wasilewski, M. B., Stinson, J. N., Webster, F., & Cameron, J. I. (2019). Using Twitter to recruit participants for health research: An example from a caregiving study. *Health Informatics Journal*, 25(4), 1485–1497.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1460458218775158>

Appendix Q: Participants information sheets

Participant Information Sheet



Information Sheet:

Title of the study: Educational Psychologists' professional use of online social networking: A mixed methods study into EPs' use and perspectives.

Please read this information sheet carefully. If you have any questions, contact details can be found at the end of this page. A record of this information sheet will be kept on a research blog hosted at ...www.(website to be added at later stage)

Who is leading the research?

My name is Elizabeth Smalley (esmalley@tavi-port.nhs.U.K.), I am the researcher of this project. I am currently studying the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust. This research is part of a project being conducted as part of this course. The Principal Investigator of this project is Rachael Green (rgreen@tavi-port.nhs.U.K.).

As the organiser of this research, I must provide you with information which explains the project to you, to enable you to decide whether you want to take part. If you have any questions arising from this information or explanation, please contact me before you decide whether or not to participate. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way.

What is the purpose of the study?

This research project aims to document how Educational Psychologists are using social networking websites to support their work and professional practice. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have been rising in use by a range of professions, but currently there is no research into how Educational Psychologists are using them. This research also wants to explore Educational Psychologist's perspectives of using online social networks to support practice. This is to record EP's perspectives around how social networks are influencing their role, and the positives and negatives of such use. The research also hopes to explore potential ways that the social networks can be used in the future. The research would like to capture EP's creative ideas about how such technology may be used to enhance and improve outcomes for service users.

Have ethics been considered?

Ethical approval has been sought from the Tavistock Research Ethics Committee.

Who can participate?

I am looking to find practising U.K. Educational Psychologists and Trainee Educational Psychologists.

What is required of participants?**Online survey**

If you provide consent to take part, you will be asked to participate in a short online survey. At the start of the survey, you will see a number of consent statements. Please read these carefully and if you are happy to consent, please check each box. All of the survey questions are optional, and you can skip them.

At the beginning of the survey there are some initial questions to gather some background information about you before the questions about professional use of social networking.

You will need to complete the survey in one sitting; it is not possible to save your responses to finish the survey at a later time. It is anticipated that the survey will take around 10-15 minutes to complete. Some of the questions are quick multiple choice, and others are qualitative and ask for a more detailed or reflective response. It is important that you know after you have submitted the completed survey the only way you can withdraw your information is with the code you have generated, so please keep a record of this code safe.

At the end of the survey, you will be given an option to volunteer to participate in an online interview. To volunteer for this part of the process you will be asked to complete a separate form with your email address. This form is separate to the answers you have provided on the survey. This separation will keep your survey answers anonymous.

Interview

If you volunteer to be an interview participant, you will be contacted to arrange a suitable date. The interview is expected to last 45-60 minutes. These will be conducted online in a password protected online meeting. During the interview I will ask a range of questions about your use of social networking sites to support your work, practice, and use of applied psychology. The questions will be open ended and there are no 'right or wrong' responses.

How will data be stored?

All data will be stored on a password protected and encrypted drive. Survey and interview data will be stored for 5 years following the study. The audio recordings and transcripts will be stored securely on a password protected laptop. The audio/video recordings of the interviews will be deleted once the transcription process is complete. This is in compliance with the U.K. Data Protection Act (2018) and the Tavistock and Portman Data Protection Policy

Are there benefits to taking part?

As professional online social networking is a relatively new development, there has been no research to collate the experiences or perspectives of those using it. The research hopes to fill this gap and inform future guidance around social networking use and inspire potential future use. There may also be personal benefits for yourself taking part as a reflective exercise about how you have experienced using these websites, and how they have enhanced your practice.

Are there risks to taking part?

The risks to taking part are minimal. You will be able to choose how much information you share about your social networking use.

What happens after the survey/interview?

Both parts of data collected from the interview and surveys will be analysed. This analysis will be typed up as part of a thesis. The thesis will be read and marked by examiners at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust. It will also be published within the thesis repository. A summary of the project will also be circulated and placed on the research blog (*link to be included a later date*). If you are participating in the interview you have the option to receive a copy of the thesis, or a summary, once the project is completed.

Key findings may be disseminated at national and international conferences and published in peer reviewed journals.

Can I change my mind?

Participation is voluntary. You are freely able to withdraw your participation in this study, at any stage leading up to the analysis. There is no obligation to provide a reason for withdrawing. Any data collected before your withdrawal will be deleted as long as you can provide your unique participant code. At the start of the survey, you are asked to create a unique participant code which included a colour, an animal, and a dessert. For e.g., *lilacpuppycherry pie*. You need to remember this code for future reference. This will enable your survey data to be withdrawn without leaving a name on the survey data. Both survey and interview Data cannot be withdrawn after the 31st October 2021.

What about confidentiality?

The survey data does not ask for participants names so the responses will be anonymous. You will be able to create a unique participant code at the start. As the organiser of this research, I must provide you with information which explains the project to you, to enable you to decide whether you want to take part. If you have any questions arising from this information or explanation, please contact me before you decide whether or not to participate. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way.

Interview data will be recorded with use of a pseudonym on all data including notes, transcriptions and any written papers. Your name will not be recorded anywhere. Your identity will be protected in the written thesis and in subsequent publications.

Appendix Q: Participant Information Sheet

Are there times when my data cannot be kept confidential?

There are legal limitations to confidentiality. If a disclosure is made that suggest imminent harm to yourself or others, that information cannot be kept confidential. As the interview sample size is small it may be possible to recognise yourself in some of the publish excerpts of the interview documents. All identifiable information (such as gender or age) will not be included.

Further information and contact details

If you have any concerns or questions about your involvement in this research, please do not hesitate to contact me, Elizabeth Smalley, researcher: esmalley@tavi-port.nhs.U.K or the Principal Investigator rgreen@tavi-port.nhs.U.K.

If you have any queries or complaints regarding the conduct of the research in which you are being asked to participate, please contact: Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance (academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.U.K)

Appendix R: Consent Form Survey

Online Survey: Consent form.

Start of Block: Introduction

This questionnaire explores Educational Psychologists' professional use of online social networking. Thank you for your interest. Please make sure you have read the information sheet carefully. It can be found at researchEPsocialnetworks.blogspot.com

Below is the consent form for this project. Please read carefully and click the grey statement below to if you consent to participating.

Q0 Online Survey: Consent form.

I confirm I have read and understood the Information Sheet for the above study. I have had an opportunity to consider the information and what will be expected of me. I have also had the opportunity to ask questions which have been answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby confirm that I understand why I have been invited to participate, as detailed on the information sheet.

I would like to participate in the study. I understand that by completing and submitting the online survey I have consented to the study. I understand that according to the data protection legislation, 'public task' will be the lawful basis for processing and 'research purposes' will be the lawful basis for processing special category data.

I understand that I am free to withdraw any unprocessed data until the 31st October 2021.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that by going to page 2 of the online survey I have given consent to participate

Use of the information is for this project only and I understand that any personal information (e.g. email addresses) will remain confidential and that all efforts have been made to ensure I cannot be identified. I understand that data gathered in this study will be stored anonymously and securely. It will not be possible to identify me in any publications.

I understand that all data will not be made available to any commercial organisations but is solely the responsibility of the researcher undertaking this project.

I understand that the data may be subject to review by responsible individuals from the university for monitoring and audit purposes.

I consent to the processing of my personal information (age, years of experience, job role) for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such data will be handled in accordance

Appendix R: Consent form: Questionnaire

with all applicable data protection legislation.

I understand that my data is confidential but limitations in confidentiality can occur if a disclosure of imminent harm to self and/or others may occur.

I understand the potential risks of participating and the support that will be able to me should I become distressed during or after completing the online survey.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, and by going to the next page of this questionnaire I have given consent to participate.

I understand that the information I have submitted will be presented within a Doctoral thesis and may be published. I understand that if I wish to receive a copy of the research or a summary, I can access the research blog or contact the researcher.

I understand that if the sample size is small, this may have implications for the anonymity of some of the information I provide, and I may recognise my contribution in the published analysis.

I am aware that my personal data provided for this project will be deleted following project completion and that analysis will be kept for 10 years.

I am aware of who I should contact if I have any concerns or if I wish to lodge a complaint.

I volunteer to take part in this study.

Click the grey statement below if you agree to consent:

I have read the information sheet, consent form, and agree to participate in this study. (16)

Appendix S: Consent Form: Interview

<p>Educational Psychologists' professional use of online social networking: A mixed methods study into EPs' use and perspectives. A doctoral research project.</p> <p>Interview consent form. (Researcher: Elizabeth Smalley esmalley@tavi-port.nhs.uk)</p>	 <p>The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust</p>
<p><u>Participant's name/ signature:</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I can confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study. I have had an opportunity to consider the information and what will be expected of me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and they have been answered to my satisfaction.</i> • <i>I would like to volunteer to participate in the study.</i> • <i>I understand that this means that a video recording or voice recording will be taken of the interview. I consent to recordings being taken and stored on a secure password protected and encrypted drive. Data will be kept in accordance with the UK data protection act (2018).</i> • <i>I understand that I am free to withdraw any unprocessed data up until the 2nd of August 2022.</i> • <i>Use of the information is for this project only and I understand that any personal information e.g. (email addresses) will remain confidential and that all efforts will be made to ensure I cannot be identified e.g., use of pseudonyms. I understand that my data gathered in this study will be stored anonymously and securely.</i> • <i>I understand that as the interview sample is small and the sample size may have implications for anonymity for some information I provide, and I may recognise my contribution in the personal analysis.</i> • <i>I understand that the data may be subject to review by responsible individuals from the University for monitoring and audit purposes.</i> • <i>I consent to the processing of my personal data (age, years of experience, job role) for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with all applicable data protection legislation.</i> • <i>I understand that my data is confidential, but limitations in confidentiality occur if a disclosure of imminent harm to self/others may occur.</i> • <i>I understand the potential risks of participating and the support that will be available to meet should I become distressed during or after the interview.</i> • <i>I understand that the data will not be made available to any commercial organisations but it solely the responsibility of the researchers undertaking this project.</i> 	

- *I understand that the information I share in the interview will be presented within a Doctoral thesis and may be published. I understand that if I wish to receive a copy of the research, I can access the research blog or contact the researcher.*
- *I hereby confirm that I understand why I have been invited to participate as detailed in the information sheet.*
- *I am aware of who I should contact if I have any concerns or wish to lodge a complaint.*
- *I understand that if the sample size is small, this may have implications for anonymity of some information I provide and that I may recognise my contribution in the published analysis.*
- *I am aware that my personal data provided in this project will be deleted following project completion and that analysis will be kept for 10 years.*

I agree with all the above statements and volunteer to take part in the interview.

