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**THE PLACE OF PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE WISDOM IN
SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE TEACHING IN HONG KONG**

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The Place of Pedagogical Practice Wisdom in Social Work

Practice Teaching in Hong Kong

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of Doctor of Philosophy

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

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Abstract

Rapid changes in the external environment of education in Hong Kong, such as recent cuts in government funding and the increasing complexity of human and social problems in general, demand new ways of learning and teaching in social work, and particularly in the field practicum. The dominant method in teaching instrumental problem-solving involves the application of rigorous and scientifically tested and derived methods – that is, *technical rationality*. This epistemological approach is, however, a misplaced model when dealing with human interactions in the context of social work practice.

Practice wisdom is practical moral knowledge. In the living of one's life, practice, experience, moral deliberation, and reasoning also come along, and these become important aptitudes of the practitioner. Currently, the discussion of practice wisdom in social work education is limited, confined solely to conceptual analysis. Here, a four-dimensional framework for the epistemological understanding of practice wisdom is developed, based upon a range of scholars' views of practice wisdom. These four dimensions are *Moral Reasoning* – *Cognitive Knowledge*, *Agential* – *Objective*, *Interactive* – *Isolated*, and *Fluid* – *Static*. This research explores how practice teachers exercise pedagogical practice wisdom, specifically, the four features of practice wisdom namely the

interplay of *Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge*, *Agential Nature* of knowledge, *Interactive Process* of knowledge generation and *Fluid Status* of knowledge, in practice teaching for pedagogy development. Practice teaching here is equivalent to fieldwork supervision.

The theoretical framework employed here utilizes Stenberg's (2010) didactical triangle to capture the data and analyze the relations that develop among the different features of practice wisdom. The key findings, which relate to the substantive contents of the four features and its dynamic operation among individual practice teachers, are discussed. It is discovered that practice teachers put relative emphasis on various features of practice wisdom in teaching, which has shaped their teaching in a way unique to them. Thus, it is desirable to adopt a kaleidoscopic view in understanding the use of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching. Practice wisdom is most likely to occur when a practice teacher maintains a balance of the four features in teaching. Practice teachers refer to their personal practical knowledge in their teaching, and this knowledge comes along largely with experience. They exercise nondeliberative reflection in their use of the four features in teaching. The mere exercise of these four features does not necessarily bring about good results in student learning. It depends on the ways these features are exercised.

The differing emphasis on various features of practice wisdom might characterize particular sorts of students. For professional development, it is desirable that practice teachers are equally competent in their use of the four features in teaching. Differential use of the different features of practice wisdom in view of students' unique needs is suggested. Training of practice teachers in cultivation of self-awareness and reflective practice is recommended in view of their nondeliberative reflective teaching.

The four features in this study probably are truly representative of practice wisdom, but this does not mean that practice wisdom is "out there" or objective. We may be able to see the features that comprise what we refer to as practice wisdom, but not the fixed reality of practice wisdom. Other features may be out of our awareness. Further investigation of these issues will be in the hands of other researchers. Hopefully, this study has made contributions to the advancement of pedagogy in social work practice teaching, albeit with limitations.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis is comprised of five chapters. Chapter 1 begins with a review of the development of social work and social work education in Hong Kong from World War II to the 21st century. Then the focus of attention shifts to social work supervision and practice teaching in the context of social work education. Challenges to the “technical rationality” and “positivist design” of social work curriculum are made in view of the nature of practical Moral Reasoning of social work practice in particular. Four features of practice wisdom are identified based upon the conceptual analysis of recent discussions of practice wisdom in Chapter 2. This provides an alternative epistemological understanding of professional education and practice, which turns away from Aristotle’s “techne.” The multifarious concept of practice wisdom is deemed more desirable for accommodating the nature of social work practice. Details of the research focus, methodology, and methods are spelt out in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, the empirical findings of this study are discussed. The results are summarized and their implications are outlined in Chapter 5.

Review of Social Work Profession Development and Education in Hong Kong

Here two issues are queried for capturing the overall picture of the development of social work and education, and in particular, practice training in Hong Kong: the positivist design of the social work curriculum and the prescribed knowledge-based assessment of practice teaching. Social work practice connotes indeterminacy, contextual, and participative knowing. It is a moral reasoning practice. Technical rationality is likely an inappropriate model in social work practice, which is intimately concerned with human interactions and moral affairs.

Social Work Profession Development in Hong Kong

A thorough understanding of the development of social work education in Hong Kong cannot be divorced from an account of the social work profession, which in itself should be viewed in the context of social welfare development (Chow, 2008; Chui, 2005; Zhao, 2008). To provide context, an historical review of the development of social work profession is presented below.

From World War II to the 1950s, charitable and relief work was mainly provided to help the poor due to poor economic conditions after the war and an influx of refugees from mainland China (Chow, 2008; Ruan, 1999, 2000). The

service providers were mainly the traditional and indigenous groups, such as the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, Po Leung Kuk, and the foreign religious missions. Workers of the charitable and relief organizations largely receive little formal education. Although formal social work training, in the form of a certificate or a post-graduate diploma course, started at the University of Hong Kong in 1951, only a handful of students are enrolled in the programme each year. Professional qualified social workers in the international relief organizations help teach these “untrained” workers in proper methods (Chow, 2008). Social work was mainly understood as charity and relief work at that time (Chow, 2008; Ruan, 2000). Social work was little recognized as a profession.

During this period, there were no specific requirements for the service delivery mode, professional qualifications of staffing, or theoretical knowledge of social work practice. Service users mainly played a passive role in receiving material relief (Ruan, 1999). The public regards the trained and untrained workers as kind-hearted good doers who want to work for the poor and the needy (Chow, 2008). Hence, it is worthwhile to note that the public expects workers to work for the welfare of the needy, irrespective of their background and training. The basic tenet of caring of the workers is upheld by the public as revealed from their conceptions of them.

The beginning stages of professional development occurred after the postwar period. The influx of new arrivals and capital from mainland China in the 1960s developed Hong Kong into a major manufacturing center. The gap between the poor and the rich was larger than before. The first white paper on social welfare confined the government's welfare responsibility to helping the poor and the needy; however, no provision was made for professional training to improve the quality or recruitment of social workers (Chow, 2008). This implies that social work had not yet been considered by the government as a profession, and little emphasis was put on social work training during this period. Through the later part of the 1960s, there is an increasing demand on qualified social workers from both the government and nongovernmental organization following the rapid economic development and increasing societal needs.

The first batch of 4-year social work degrees was awarded by the Chinese University in 1965 (Zhao, 2008). The University of Hong Kong introduced a 3-year degree program in social work training in 1967. Zhao (2008) notes that the graduates from these two universities received greater recognition of their professional qualifications from the government and better benefits than the graduates of other training institutes: They were more likely to be employed and to work in government departments. These two universities tended to fit the

government's expectation and needs in term of its programme design at that time.

Zhao (2008) however has not substantiated his query further. In sum, more formal training courses were offered during the 1960s, indicating the beginning phase of development of the social work profession.

Ruan (2000) critiques social work profession as the control agent during the 1960s. The riots in 1966 and 1967 aroused the government's attention to the destructive power of the young people. The Summer Youth Programme Committee was set up in 1968 to promote summer youth programmes with the view of channeling the youths' energy in more constructive ways, and of reducing the juvenile crime rate. Service agencies set up children and youth centers, that is, services supported by the government for social control purposes, with the goal of getting more government fund. Social work is regarded as a tool to maintain society stability.

The period of the 1970s-1980s was crucial for the development of the social work profession. The 1970s was the golden era of social welfare services (Chow, 2008; Chui, 2005; Ruan, 2000). In 1972, the government required social welfare officer positions to be restricted to those who possessed a degree in social work. The former governor, Murray MacLehose is known for promoting a more active government role in providing social welfare services and improving the

welfare of the people. The pro-welfare orientation of the government and the prosperous economy led to the expansion of the various social welfare services throughout the 1970s which in turn hastened the pace of professionalization of the social workers. Chui (2005, p. 16) understands professionalization in terms of three trends: the organizational development and unionization of professional groups (e.g., the establishment of the Social Workers' Association in 1949), the evolution of a statutory registration system for social work practitioners (e.g., the enactment of the registration ordinance for social workers in 1996), and, finally, the evolution of professional training.

As noted by Zhao (2008), a two-level system of social work resulted following the establishment of the Institute of Social Work Training, which began offering social work training at the certificate level in 1973. The upper level refers to those practitioners with a degree or master-level social work training with due emphasis on practical skills, and systemic knowledge of social sciences and related theories. The lower level refers to those practitioners with diploma-level training focused on task-based skills. The former group is expected to undertake professional duties, while the latter group undertakes supportive work. The introduction of this ranking system in the social work profession implies different roles for the respective social work training institutes.

In 1981, social welfare positions in both the government and the NGOs were renamed as social work, and new applicants had to possess training in social work (Chow, 2008). This requirement of professional qualification represents a milestone in the development of the social work profession. Up to the 1970s, casework was the dominant social work practice in Hong Kong. Those who were not practicing casework, that is, those doing community development or group work, were often regarded as less professional.

The demand for professional workers has increased following the rapid development of social welfare. Coupled with the government's rapid expansion of tertiary education in the 1980s, this, in turn, resulted in the proliferation of various social work education programmes (Chui, 2005). Training with an emphasis on diverse social work skills for dealing with different target groups in diverse service settings has been provided (i.e., a generic approach), along with more well-rounded training in both macro and micro skills. At the sub-degree level, the focus is on practical training, whereas at the degree level, the students need to develop a stronger understanding of social sciences (Yeung et al., 1995). Generic training and specialized training for undergraduates and postgraduates, respectively, are commonly adapted by the training institutes in Hong Kong.

Kwong (1996) comments that social work education has been heavily reliant upon adaptation from the west. For instance, in the 1970s, most social work educators with overseas social work training just transferred the practice theories such as behaviour modification, task-centred approaches, and client-centred approaches to Hong Kong without modification or consideration of their desirability in the local context. Consequently, Kwong calls for attention to the development of indigenous social work practice. Social work educators and/or practitioners, however, are still at the initial stage of exploration (Ruan, 1999, 2000). Ruan further comments that professionalization at that time was considered to be the transfer of western theories to Hong Kong, but lacked any critique of their meta-theories. Kwong (1996) and Ruan (1999, 2000) indeed have exposed the significance of the context-sensitive nature of social work practice, which may include the socio-culture, life experiences, unique individual problems, interpersonal relationships, and so forth, of the client. In any case, the gradual expansion of social services has speeded up the development of social work education.

Social work professional status was constructed in the 1990s to the 21st century. Social welfare developments laid down in the 1991 white paper were not fully implemented before mid-1997, despite the great emphasis given by the

last governor, due to the return of sovereignty from the colonial government to the mainland. This led to a sharp drop in the demand for social workers (Chow, 2008). Coupled with budget cut in welfare expenditures, the morale of the social work profession is rather low. As regarded by Zhao (2008), pragmatism is dominant in social work education, and much attention has been put on practice and skills training, as evidenced by the large proportion of practice-related content in the curriculum.

From the early 1990s, more advanced and specialized training programmes such as mental health, family therapy, social service administration, and so forth were offered. They are often provided at the master's degree level (Chow, 2008; Zhao, 2008). Specialization of social work training and the doctorate in social work further advanced the pace of professionalization of social work. In the most recent two decades, similar to the situations in the United States and the European countries, social work practice in Hong Kong is therapeutic and clinically oriented. This can be best exemplified from the "enthusiastic support" of social workers to the increase of family and/or individual therapy approaches in recent years. The social work profession places its focus on remedial and therapeutic aspects of care. The registration system for social workers was implemented in 1997. Ruan (2000) regards this as a possible

way for the social work profession to build up its professional image, and to seek recognition of the society, especially under the unstable social context of the late 1990s. However, Chow (2008) argues that the registration system is indicative of the professional recognition that social workers have gained.

Under the influence of managerialism, the commonality of moral concern of social work is devalued. Tsui and Cheung (2004) note the powerful dominance of market capitalism on managerialism all over the world including human services. Cost effectiveness and efficiency are dominant in the person-focused social welfare sector. Management knowledge is the dominant model through which service quality and performance can be improved using managerial skills. Market value is the ultimate demand for decision making (p. 439). The commonalities of care and concern between human relationships in social work practice are shifted to cash and contracts, and become less valued.

Yuen (2010) challenges the positivist conception of social work and advocates social work as moral practice. He critiques that the Western academic tradition has isolated moral practice from theory construction. Mainstream social work research follows the positivist view of social science which deduces human understanding to matters of technicality. The moral commonality of social work is given less attention because personal moral practice or value

involvement is less recognized as wisdom. Other than this, the nature of social work knowledge, and the worker and client relationship are distorted following the upsurge of professionalization of social work. Social workers are regarded as more knowledgeable than clients. The language and techniques used are quantifiable and generalized. The dominant influence of positivist paradigm and managerialism has devalued the moral concerns of social work.

Social Work Supervision

Having reviewed the historical development of the social work profession and education, it is obvious that its development is closely linked to the larger context, in particular to political and economic issues. The next section focuses social work supervision—an integral part of the social work profession. The development of social work supervision also has a co-relationship with its social context, and has a long history. For example, Tsui (1997) makes an historical review of the development of social work supervision. He points out the dominant administrative function at the start of social work supervision early in the 1870s, and that the functions of educational and emotional support followed. The theoretical base of social work supervision was developed in 1936 after the establishment of student supervision as an integral part of social work education. The educational

function of supervision was now emphasized. Since the late 1980s, during the age of accountability, the administrative function of supervision emerged again for enhancing quality improvement and productivity. Tsui's work illustrates the correlation between social work supervision and its changing context.

Three widely recognized functions of supervision—administrative, educational, and supportive—and their complementary relationship are addressed by Kadushin and Harkness (2002). Administrative supervision mainly provides an environment which is conducive to work. The ultimate objective of educational supervision is to enhance the work related capabilities of supervisees and their professional growth. Supportive supervision nurtures a sense of good feeling about his or her job in the supervisee. Supervision is regarded as an indirect practice as the supervisor is in indirect contact with clients through the social worker who renders direct service. The interactional process of supervision is noted as supervision is implemented in the context of a relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee.

In Hong Kong, the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) issued the “Guidelines for Social Work Supervision” in 2007. Supervision is

regarded as one of the core elements for ensuring high standards of practice and facilitating professional development of frontline workers for the welfare of clients (Social Workers Registration Board [SWRB], 2013). The administrative and educational functions are given more emphasis.

The literature on social work supervision refers mainly to agency staff supervision. An integral part of social work development and education is practice teaching or fieldwork supervision, which embraces similar characteristics as agency staff supervision such as its administrative, educational, and supportive functions. Practice teachers rely on social work students' narrated report for getting indirect contact with clients. The process of teaching and learning is conducted in the context of a supervisory relationship. We now turn our focus to the core curriculum feature of social work education all over the world—the field practicum.

Social Work Field Practicum Training in Hong Kong

The pivotal role of field practicum. The field practicum is the learning environment in which social work students realize their goals of integrating theory with the realities of practice, and where they experience and absorb the contradictions and conflicts of social work practice (Davys & Beddoe, 2000). Integration of theories and practice is one of the major objectives in teaching

(Bogo & Vayda, 2000; Tsang, 2013). Qualified professional social workers are expected to have such an essential ability (Tsang, 2013). It involves an intensive one-on-one, teacher-apprentice, relationship between teacher and student. The field practicum is an indispensable ingredient in Hong Kong's social work programmes at all levels (Choy, Leung, Tam, & Chu, 1998; Chui, 2005; Kwok et al., 1997; SWRB, 2012; Zhao, 2008). This means that social work students must satisfy the requirements as stipulated in the field practicum, that is, at least getting a passing grade, otherwise they cannot be awarded qualification, even they are good at all other subjects. It is the site of practice where students learn to transfer classroom learning to real-life experience.

Social work education comprises the indispensable part of the practicum, internship, or fieldwork, as revealed in the curriculum of social work degree programmes all over the world, and stipulated in the official pronouncements of international professional social work organizations, like the International Association of Schools of Social Work Education and the International Federation of Social Workers (Chui et al., 2003). This may explain why the SWRB sets a field practicum as one of the core curriculum features. Students normally take two placements which can either be in the form of a "block" or a "concurrent" one. In Hong Kong, social work students attend 5-day per week for the summer

block placement and 2 or 3 days for concurrent placement. The student is assigned to a specific agency, and serves as a student social worker. In order to meet international standards, social work students have to undertake a total of 700 hours of direct fieldwork placement (at the sub-degree level), 800 hours of direct fieldwork placement (at the degree level), plus 100 hours of preplacement preparation activities (SWRB, 2012).

Disquiet about the teaching competence of practice teachers. Students undertaking a practicum have to be supervised one-on-one by qualified and experienced social work practitioners, on a weekly basis. Practice teachers should possess a social work qualification recognized by the SWRB. Specifically, practice teachers must be registered social workers with a degree in social work, and possess at least five years of post-degree teaching experience in social work posts. For the master degree social work programmes, practice teachers should also possess a post-graduate degree in social work or a related discipline (SWRB, 2012). This degree of intensive supervision is to ensure that the social work students can perform their work appropriately, since they need to work with real cases handled by the placement agency. Practice teaching is distinct from classroom teaching and learning, in that practice teachers have to instruct students

on how to tackle immediate, real-life situations, not the decontextualized cases demonstrated in the laboratory or classroom.

The majority of Hong Kong social work students are supervised by college-based practice teachers. This is somewhat different from western counterparts like Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The college-based practice teacher serves as the liaison person, educator, and quality controller, as well as the assessor for the social work practicum student (Chui, 2005). With the government's expansion of higher education, and the difficulties in recruiting trained social workers in the 1980s, there has been a large intake of students (Chow, 2008; Chui, 2005; Zhao, 2008). Due to the increasingly insufficient supply of university practice teachers, universities have started to institute an "agency purchase system," in which front-line social workers stationed at the placement agency are employed by the university to supervise students. Under the agency purchase system, the agency-based teacher's position within an agency is that of a provider, supervisor, and administrator (Chui, 2005, pp. 19-20). However, the administrative supervisor of a placement student is not now approved to assume the role and responsibilities of a practice teacher (SWRB, 2012). The SWRB has not documented their reason for withholding this approval. Maybe the administrative supervisors of

placement units cannot offer adequate supervision time in view of their excessive workloads, which typify the current welfare sector.

Whether college-based or agency-based, practice teachers must satisfy the requirements stipulated by the SWRB. Although the field practicum is an indispensable ingredient in the curriculum of social work degree programs all over the world, there is no formal requirement for Hong Kong practice teachers to take formal training in practice teaching. There is only one in-service training course offered by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University for intending social work practice teachers with bachelor's degree and two years' experience.

However, enrolment for the course is entirely voluntary (Chui, 2005, p. 20) and the course has been suspended for years. This possibly indicates the neglected role of the field practicum or professional training of practice teachers in the eyes of the senior management. It is hard to explain why teachers at pre-tertiary levels are required to undergo teacher's training, whereas university teachers are not required to do so. Maybe the policy makers or senior management assume that people having received postgraduate training must also have teaching competence.

However, as Chui (2005) argues, "It is questionable whether university teachers in general, and social work field practicum teachers in particular, are

having the necessary and ‘appropriate’ level of teaching competence in carrying out their teaching, supervisory and assessment duties.” (p. 26). I have been participating in social work education, largely through practice teaching, for more than ten years. In my experience, practice teachers are not necessarily competent enough in helping students understand uncertain practice scenarios, make reflective judgments from moment to moment, and take prompt decisions. Fulfilling the qualifications as set by the SWRB does not mean that a practice teacher knows how to inspire students to learn, assess student learning needs, or exercise compatible pedagogy.

Epistemological issues of field practicum assessment. Having examined field practicum training in Hong Kong and the competency of practice teachers, there is a need to take a critical look at the epistemological issues involved in fieldwork assessment. First of all is the prescribed knowledge-based assessment.

In addition to following the standard professional qualifications set by the SWRB, the training institutions largely use a prescribed knowledge-based assessment in order to guarantee common standards for learning and teaching in field practicum. Chui (2005) has conducted a comprehensive exploratory study into issues of assessment in social work field education in Hong Kong. As of now, there are six institutes providing social work training at the degree

programme level. It was revealed that a common practice is for practice teachers to conduct “process” or “normative” assessment throughout the placement.

Apart from weekly supervision and assessment, practice teachers normally use an evaluation form provided by the teaching department for both mid-term and final evaluation of students’ professional development and performance.

The forms comprise of a series of performance indicators and behavioural indicators, which are primarily competence-based criteria in assessing students’ acquisition of knowledge, demonstration of practical skills, internalization of professional values and attitudes, and development of personal qualities. It is essentially a criterion-based type of assessment (Chui, 2005, p. 21). Field teaching and learning are geared to the externally determined assessment criteria. Although the study has only covered five of six training institutes providing social work training at the degree programme level, these findings are also applicable to the sixth, Hong Kong Shue Yan University (formerly known as Hong Kong Shue Yan College), where I have been teaching for more than 10 years.

The second epistemological issue is whether objective or scientific knowledge is the only knowledge in practice teaching and learning. Practice teachers perform their assessment of students with primary reference to the assessment criteria stipulated in the evaluation form. This indeed has denied

knowledge other than externally-determined knowledge, such as understanding the complexity of human relationships. This has reinforced student interest in those areas covered by the assessment criteria, such as theoretical knowledge, practice skills, and value domain, with reduced attention to knowledge in other domains. Practice teachers or social work educators indirectly have contributed to the prevalence of restricting professional assessment to externally determined or prescribed knowledge. Knowledge other than formal knowledge is given less attention or even neglected. Additionally, the student is considered a learner who learns from the expert knower – the practice teacher. This underlies the technical-rational mode of knowledge in fieldwork education. As Chui (2005) says, “Knowledge is generated rather than unilaterally transferred, or is actively constructed by the learner, instead of merely imparted by the educator.” (p. 16). Details of the more recent discussions about epistemological issues in social work education and professional practice are thoroughly examined in the next section.

Critique of the Design of Social Work Education

Social work practice is usually seen as the effective application of a systematic body of tested knowledge, modeled after the natural and applied sciences. Social work courses often start with some so-called “basic theories” such as psychology, sociology, and the philosophy of welfare. Then various

methods and models of direct social work practice and social work administration are taught as the “theories of practice.” Finally, a fieldwork placement or practicum is arranged for students to practice in a welfare agency where they work with service users under the supervision and guidance of practice teachers (Tsang, 1999). The development of this kind of curriculum design is based on the assumption that there is a body of objective knowledge to be found by scientific methods of study that can be applied in a deductive way in our practice for the effective solution of various forms of social problems, including human and social behavior. It indeed is a positivist design of social work curriculum. Good practice must be rooted in theories arising from positivist scientific processes, instrumental reason, and associated technocratic practice. The competent social worker is understood as the person who can process information logically, and solve problems analytically.

We can also widen our understanding of the underlying epistemological assumption on social work education by examining the guidance of the statutory body – the Social Workers Registration Board established under the Social Worker Registration Ordinance in Hong Kong. The mandated social work education curriculum proposed by the SWRB must include social work core subjects (e.g., social work theories and practice, values and ethics, social welfare

systems and social policies, human development, and social environment), non-social work core subjects (e.g., social sciences, liberal arts knowledge, legal knowledge, communication skills, research, and social enquires) and the core feature of the field practicum. It implies that social work educators are expected to teach students to use knowledge obtained from various disciplines in practice, and to connect propositional knowledge and practice. The statutory body has confined the scope of knowledge to be included in social work curriculum for training the next generation and current social workers.

Dissatisfaction with technical-rational approaches to professional practice and education was long ago expressed by John Dewey (as cited in Taylor & White, 2006) and Schön (1983, 1987). The technical-rational perspective defines professional activity as instrumental problem solving via rigorous, scientifically tested and derived methods (Gowdy, 1994, p. 363). The positivist empirical view of knowledge is thought of as the only legitimate form of knowledge, while experience is subordinated to a lower position. Prior work experiences may be taken into account for college admission, but do not constitute grounds for credit exemption. This view does not consider working experience or allow competence to be assessed on the job (Yeung et al., 1995). Tsang (2007) criticizes the inappropriateness of the technical-rational model to the

contingent and messy “indeterminate zone” in the social work practice of practitioners, which involves feelings, values, and judgments in interpersonal interactions. Human problem solving is not a purely deductive procedure; the applied science model does not apply.

Preference for formal theory and theoretical knowledge. What do social work educators and students think about the technical-rational model of social work curriculum design? Research findings show that social work students in Hong Kong give a great emphasis to the educator role of the practice teacher. There is an expectation that a great deal of input will be given to link up theories with real life situations. The function of teaching practical skills is perceived by students as very important. It seems that social work students in Hong Kong tend to be more dependent on the field instructor or practice teacher than their counterparts in North America (Choy et al., 1998), and to treasure skill acquisition. Findings further reveal local social work students’ undue concern with knowledge and skills application within the circumscribed knowledge framework of their placement. This illuminates the dominant influence of scientism and competence-based practice in social work in which learning outcomes and instrumental and technical reasoning are highly emphasized (Lam, Wong, & Leung, 2007, p.101). There is also a consensus among social work

educators that more attention must be devoted to the processes and outcomes of practice teaching, particularly those related to helping students integrate theory with practice (Knight, 2001). It is not unusual to find an assessment item related to integration of theories and practice in the fieldwork evaluation forms of the local training institutes. Theory or theoretical knowledge guided by practice is given preference. It is likely that both the practice teachers and students put more emphasis on applying theories and skills in handling human problems. Critical issues may arise with such orientation.

As learnt from my experiences in practice teaching, students tend to focus on skills and theoretical knowledge rather than the people. They may turn away from understanding humanity to seeking knowledge and expertise for tackling specific problems. They usually believe that some expert knowledge and skills can be learnt and acquired for tackling the immediate problems. However, theories must be abstract and general in nature for the purpose of generalizing to various practice situations. Carr (1987) argues “practice is never guided by theory alone, because ‘theory’ is always a set of general beliefs, while ‘practice’ always involves taking action in a particular situation” (p.165). According to Kwong (1996), formal theories are “experience-distant” since they are decontextualized knowledge. They will not be immediately applicable in

practice situations where social work students and/or practitioners have to grapple with a complex array of contextual elements as they deliberate on what to do in the immediate moment.

Teaching and learning of both universals and particulars are needed. As Tsang suggests (2000), it is vital to acknowledge the dialectic in social work, which is the idea that the generation of contradictions is necessary for producing new knowledge or change. For example, social workers and students may need to attend to the unique life experiences of individuals, in addition to acquiring formal theories. A placement student finds that a deprived elderly declines her suggestion of seeking tangible services from NGOs, whereas she thinks her suggestion is good for life improvement. The student knows well the limitations of current financial assistance schemes offered by the government, and the general structural causes of poverty in elderly living alone. The old woman, however, does not want to deepen the sense of reliance on others, as she has already received comprehensive social security assistance from the government. Dignity in terms of self-reliance has been given the central place in the living of the old woman's life. It is necessary that the placement student learns the personal meaning given by the elderly to financial assistance, in addition to knowledge about the structural problems of poverty.

Conclusion

Technical rationality is embedded in our social work education curriculum and field practicum. Positivist empirical knowledge and theoretical knowledge are valued and regarded as the sole form of knowledge. The deductive application mode of knowledge is misplaced in the caring profession of social work, which heavily involves feelings, values, and judgments in interpersonal interactions. Social work educators and students (or social workers) should not overly rely on technical expertise at the expense of authentic understanding of human beings (Prior, 2005). Otherwise, the social work profession will shift from being people-oriented to technically oriented, while caring cannot be reduced to the technical level. Social work is not a technical practice (Kwong, 2004). Should there be a role for social work educators to induce changes in the technical preferences of social work education? It is paramount to understand the nature of social work practice before moving to the exploration of an alternative pedagogy in practice teaching.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Nature of Social Work Practice in the Literature

In the previous chapter, we have examined the development of the social work profession and the technical-rational model of social work education in Hong Kong. If we want to induce a change in the pedagogy of social work, it is important to investigate the nature of social work practice.

Indeterminacy in Social Work Practice

As early as 1987, Schön used the analogy of the swampy lowland for illustrating the messy nature of practice in which the applied science approach cannot adequately explain human behaviour. For Schön, the indeterminate zone of practice is characterized by uncertainty, uniqueness, instability, and value conflict. Technical rationality cannot account for practical competence in diverse situations. The majority of practice is characterized by the indeterminate zones. Situations that are not in the books are commonly faced by practitioners, where it is not feasible or desirable to apply formal theories or techniques. Instead, the uncertain, complex, and contingent nature of social work practice, which deals with human relationships, social issues, and psychosocial issues have been noted (Taylor & White, 2006; Tsang, 2013). There will be some instances in which the certainty or accuracy of knowing is clear or required. For example,

information about the frequency, severity, and duration of corporal punishment of a child is required for considering a child abuse case. However, there will be many other uncertain situations where a number of different actions could plausibly be followed. Social workers should recognize the fact that they operate in uncertain terrain. As denoted by Kwong (2004), indeterminacy exists in social work practice because the subject is ill-defined. Agreement with Taylor and White's (2006) view that social work is about what may be plausible and desirable, instead of the "correct" way.

Social work is concerned with personal meaning (Goldstein, 1999) and human encounters (Tsang, 2013). Upon entering our clients' lives and worlds, we quickly discover that we are dealing with uniquely personal and often opaque personal constructs and stories, and lives that may be in some ways alien to us (Goldstein, 1990). For instance, a former placement student, who grew up with abundant parental love, notes that she did not know how to respond or act when a 14-year old girl (who lived in a residential home) was rejected by her natural parents. The student worker cannot make sense of the predicament the teenager faced at such an early stage of life because of the remarkable differences in their upbringing and life experience. Goldstein (1990) notes the unique, particular, complex, and inconsistent nature of human experience. The theory-oriented, as

opposed to person-centered or humanistic-oriented social work practice, possibly leads to emotionally distant and mechanical ways of handling human issues.

Furthermore, a practical situation is characterized by particular events, times, and individuals. It may be similar to a previous experience in some aspects, yet differ in others (Klein & Bloom, 1995, p. 801). Because of the unique, particular, and uncertain nature of practice scenarios, a social worker is always required to make reflective judgments based upon the availability of resources, the understanding of the problem, the urgency of the situation, the client's will, and agency policy. Social work practice is thus judgment-based (Polkinghorne, 2004) and context-dependent, rather than a technical-rational practice. Social workers are required to encounter the human experience, which is unique, particular, complex, and inconsistent (Goldstein, 1990). Social work theories provide a useful tool for understanding, and as such provide a frame of reference to gain insight and expand alternatives for the practitioner who is often stuck, and locked into in practice situations with no easy answer for problem framing and solving. The social worker acts as an active agent in choosing or linking up theories and practice with an ideological thread. There is no absolute rule for the social worker to follow. The value orientations, ideologies, and

worldviews of social workers predispose their choice of certain theories with consistent ideologies (Tsang, 1999).

Participative and Contextual Nature

Social work practice is context-sensitive (Kwong, 2004), in that social workers are interacting in the immediate moment with less predictable or knowable clients. As argued by Kwong (2004), social workers have to know and act in this context for the client's benefit, relying on moment-to-moment deliberations. Social workers cannot practice in a fixed or routine way, despite the consistent nature of the practice situation, because of the changeable, specific, and unpredictable nature of the context, that is, the clients. Instead, they should have an ongoing dialogue with the context to enrich their knowledge for making sense of the context and choosing the desirable action at that moment.

Tsang (2013) draws attention to "appreciative inquiry," "alterity," and "otherness" which alerts social workers and social work educators that they are only partial knowers, and should be empathetic in understanding their service users and students. He calls for "synthesis together with analysis" to bring in the service users' views to be combined with the knowledge and experiences of the social worker in formulating a more holistic and participative professional assessment. This is consistent with Goldstein's (1990) view that the humanities

do not profess to offer answers; rather, they encourage the kind of disciplined questioning and reflections that are fundamental to what effective practice might be. Social workers are suggested to participate in the context, in order to gain a better understanding of a situation before making decision and/or taking action. Participation in the context here does not mean knowing or acting in context solely, but having co-participation with clients for widening one's perspective or deepening understanding.

It is also important to acknowledge the limited capacity of human beings in sorting out the complex problems of this world. As all human beings are imperfect; we have to realize that others are better than we in some aspects. It is imperative to have a sense of humility in knowing one's inadequacy and give due recognition to others' talents and abilities, as well as to ask someone's help when we need it (Snow, 1995). These considerations suggest a built-in self-criticism of a person who acknowledges his or her own limitations and constantly seeks new understanding.

In social work practice, there is little that we can be sure of, other than our (and our clients') best judgment (Kwong, 2004). Social work students can learn from their clients' rich life experiences, consistence, and persistence in facing difficulties, suffering, and so forth. Similarly, social work educators can learn

from their students' creativity, energetic characters, courage in taking on adventures, and so forth. Goldstein (1990) argues that social workers can synthesize knowledge from a variety of sources, including life experiences, for understanding clients' circumstances. This provides a wider perspective of knowledge, which can be generated in a way that is opposed to the technical-rational view of scientific inquiry as the only pathway to true knowledge.

Learning, then, is neither an acquisition of positivist empirical knowledge, nor something that happens within an individual's mind. Rather, learning is a process that takes place in the participation of a framework, that is, social co-participation. Learning is mediated by the differences of perspective among the co-participants in the interactive process – collaborative production. The learner should strive not to gain a discrete body of abstract knowledge, but to acquire the skills to perform by actually engaging the process and participating in the context. Meaning, understanding and learning are all defined relative to actions in context (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The Interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge

As argued above, there doubtlessly is no absolute rule to guide one's handling of a particular practice situation, due to the indeterminate, participative, and contextual nature of social work practice. Uncertainty results from the

unique, complex, and individual human experience, as well as the incomplete knowledge of human beings. Despite the uncertainty and indeterminacy in social work practice, social work education tends to put more emphasis on formal theories and skills that are assumed as sufficient for rendering competent practice and tackling the uncertain terrain of practice. There is a heavy emphasis on expert knowledge and skills for professional intervention in the courses offered by social work training institutes, social service agencies, and social work professional parties. Taylor and White (2006) comment that social work education programmes likely teach students to reach conditions of certainty, and to acquire a stock of knowledge and skills that they will apply to practice in a deductive and top-down fashion. Educating for certainty implies the technical-rational mode of knowledge use.

In competency based education and training it is the how-to-do element that is assessed; there is an assumption that if a student who knows to complete and answer questions about a task is competent. Whan (1986) points out that social work is not just a matter of applying skills and techniques to achieve certain ends. Social work practice is a form of practical and moral engagement and not primarily a matter of technocratic practice. Social workers, however, need technical knowledge or skills to handle day-to-day practice. Social workers

indeed need to help a variety of clients solve broad ranges of problems and face the challenges in their life journeys.

As Chow (2008) says, in order to do the job well, a social worker has to be trained and versed in the needs of the people (p. 33). Indeed, I want to argue that scientific knowledge is not the only valid knowledge, and that the technological model is misplaced in social work field where human encounters, feelings, values, and interactions are at stake (Tsang, 1998a, 2006). Schön (1983) strongly criticizes the influence of technical rationality in professional education and practice. However, an overwhelming attention to the pursuit of some formal theories and techniques in social work education and practice field is still prevalent.

The basic tenets of caring, emotions, and values in social work and other human service professions cannot be neglected while formal knowledge and skills are given priority. If social work indeed deals with the complexity of human conditions, the capability to recognize and work with dialectics is relevant and pertinent to the education of social workers (Tsang, 2006). The interplay between dialectics and polarities of moral reasoning and cognitive knowledge is of vital importance for preparing social workers in both the knowledge base and in moral consideration for the good of clients.

Social work practice embraces not only technical know-how but also ethical know-how (Zhu, 2000). For instance, the social worker may draw upon knowledge of developmental psychology and cognitive behavioural therapy in assessing the situation, planning the treatment, and carrying out concrete intervention actions when working with a young psychotropic substance abuser to improve his or her poor self-image. The social worker makes use of practice theory in helping clients identify how far their core beliefs (e.g., I am useless and incompetent) have affected their own immediate beliefs (e.g., If I cannot get success, then I am so bad), automatic thoughts (e.g., It is too difficult for me to get away from using substances), behaviors (e.g., do nothing) and emotions (e.g., very upset). The social worker is expected to have moral responsibility to help the substance abuser to build on his or her life in a meaningful way by using theoretical knowledge and skills. The helping process thus is suggested to contain the moral dimension.

Social work cannot claim itself as a profession if social workers just carry a kind-heart and take actions without the back up of theoretical knowledge. Rather, they are only good people who are not doing professional practice or making professional judgment. Generalized knowledge in the form of theories and principles is useful to inform practice. On the other hand, social workers are

technocrats only if they take action step-by-step, following formal theories without passionate involvement or moral responsibility towards the clients' well-being. For Zhao (2008), competence should include social work values, ethics, personal attributes, and work skills (p. 20).

As illustrated in the aforesaid example, the social worker does not necessarily offer help to the substance young abuser unless she or he has moral concern and responsibility for the well-being of the client. Because of the worker's moral commitment, he or she then gives due deliberation on the possible course of action for the intended outcome—a good life of the substance abuser. The social worker should involve both moral reasoning and cognitive knowledge in working for the client's good life, and make use of formal theory or theoretical knowledge and practice skills with moral commitment to promote the young abuser's greatest interest. Social workers are recommended to question carefully how they use theory, to what purpose and to what effect, for making humane judgments (Taylor & White, 2006). It will be good for social workers to give due deliberation to the well-being of the client, and have a sense of responsibility for the consequence of their actions. Social work practice hence involves practical moral reasoning (Zhu, 2000) and requires a kind of practical moral engagement (Chu & Tsui, 2008).

Conclusion

Social work practice requires the involvement of values, moral commitment, formal knowledge, and skills for the client's good life. Social workers are suggested to make moral judgments on the most desirable ways of tackling, at a particular moment, specific human problems, which are unique, complex, uncertain, and contextualized. Drawing on the earlier discussions about the dominance of positivism in the current social work curriculum and practicum education, there is a mismatch between the technical-rational oriented social work education and the practical-moral and judgment-based social work practice. In the next section, I explore the alternative epistemological comprehension in the context of social work education – practice wisdom, which may better accommodate the nature of social work practice within its conceptual boundary.

Alternative Epistemology in the Context of Social Work: Practice

Wisdom

Drawing upon discussions in the previous sections, social work education and practice have been affected by technical rationality. Is there something more fundamental about social work education that is missed in current climate, which promotes technical craft in understanding human conduct? The

limitations of the dominant paradigm of technical rationality in making sense of human interactions in human service professions have drawn much discussion. There is an upsurge of an alternative epistemology—practice wisdom—that turns away from technical rationality. Indeed an alternative perspective of practice wisdom was provided by Aristotle’s idea of *phronesis* more than two thousand years ago. Since the 1950s, some scholars have initiated another stream of discussion which connotes a wider perspective of epistemology in professional education and practice, in which the parallel concepts of tacit knowledge, reflection and situated learning are identified. Practice wisdom may better accommodate the commonalities of the discussion of an alternative comprehension of epistemology in the context of social work. This study thus puts the focus on a discussion of practice wisdom in social work practice teaching which is about morality and not primarily a matter of technical practice.

Practice wisdom is at the center of a hot debate in epistemology that has led to much academic discussion (Chu & Tsui, 2008; DeRoos, 1990; Dybicz, 2004; Goldstein, 1990; Klein & Bloom, 1995; O’Sullivan, 2005; Roca, 2007; Scott, 1990; Sheppard, 1995; Thompson & West, 2013; Tsang, 2008). It has occupied growing attention in various human service professions such as health, education and social work in the past decade (Tsang, 2008). Practice wisdom is

multifarious in nature and can accommodate the nature of social work practice as stipulated in the preceding section within its conceptual boundary. Additionally, it draws focal attention to the involvement of the virtuous character of the subject. In the following section, we are going to examine the academic discussion of practice wisdom and its parallel concepts for expanding our horizon of understanding. A four-dimension framework for the epistemological understanding of practice wisdom and its four features are developed, based upon the current discussion of practice wisdom.

Conceptual Analysis of Current Discussions of Practice Wisdom

There is a cluster of parallel concepts such as practice wisdom, tacit knowledge, and intuition in the literature on human service professions. Chu and Tsui (2008) say “Practice wisdom is often used interchangeably with practice knowledge and practical wisdom.” (p. 49). Tacit knowledge is used interchangeably with practice wisdom in the work of DeRoos (1990), Gowdy (1994) and Scott (1990). Concepts like “reflection” and “situated learning,” which appear in different contexts, connote the commonalities of practice wisdom to a certain extent. To broaden our horizon and deepen our understanding of practice wisdom, we may borrow insights from parallel concepts, including Michael Polanyi’s tacit knowledge (Dua, 2004), Schön’s (1983, 1987) reflection,

and the work of Anderson, Reader and Simon (1996), Lave and Wenger (1991) and Kwong (2004) on situated learning. The concept of practice wisdom is employed in this study in the context of social work. A conceptual analysis of practice wisdom as informed by various scholars is made. The commonalities of practice wisdom are drawn up, based upon the synthesis of the extensive conceptual analysis.

Understanding the Parallel Concepts of Practice Wisdom

Tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge addresses the embodied and experience-grounded personal knowledge of a subject. Knowing always has aspects that are tacit, in particular, practical knowledge (Arnal & Burwood, 2003, p. 384). The subject refers to his or her personal knowledge, which is intuitive and embodied, and makes judgment or takes action with less awareness at the immediate moment to the specific context. It helps to accommodate the nature of context-dependent and immediacy of social work practice as stipulated earlier in this chapter. Dua's (2004) analysis of Michael Polanyi's thought of tacit knowledge is employed for knowing its implicit commonalities, which connote some commonalities of practice wisdom. In Aristotle's thought, ethics relates to tacit knowledge in that both begin from a definition of good, and then attempt to take action. In using tacit knowledge judgment is introduced before deciding on

action in face of the nonroutine (Cox, Hill, & Pyakuryal, 2008, p. 152). The social work profession is an action-oriented helping and caring profession, in which the practitioner draws upon understanding and knowledge experimentally. Tacit knowing appears for the first time in the discussion of epistemology in Polanyi's writings, namely *Science, Faith and Society* in 1964 (Cox et al., 2008). Tacit knowing is the process of immersing oneself in the particulars of subsidiary awareness by means of embodied activity, until these particulars come together as a meaningful whole of an integrative act (Dua, 2004). It is similar to Arnal and Burwood's (2003) claim that once we have acquired new knowledge, we put it into practice without thinking about it, and it becomes second nature. This is what Polanyi calls "dwelling in the knowledge" (p. 385). It is intuitive and embodied in nature.

Tacit knowledge has been acknowledged in Eraut's (1994) work as well. Three types of knowledge are delineated – propositional knowledge, procedural knowledge, and tacit (which he calls personal) knowledge. Eraut suggests that personal, or tacit, knowledge is derived or generated by the agent from the accumulation of experience. It implies that human beings are capable of shaping their knowing and generating new knowledge according to their own judgments via action. Gowdy (1994) holds a similar view, in which tacit knowledge is

acquired largely from experience, and/or occurs in the act of doing. The knower learns and unlearns through experience and knowledge in motion, experiencing an automatic nonconscious process that draws upon an experimentally established cognitive structure (Cox et al., 2008, pp. 152-153). The knower does not even have awareness of it. This tacit dimension of personal knowledge involves understanding the subject matter with passionate participation in one's own personal experience and the existing framework of knowledge. One interprets and reinterprets this understanding within a personal framework, and is stimulated to expand the understanding and reformulate it whenever it arises (Tsang, 1998a). People are active learners who are able to generate new and personal knowledge through continued practice, or reflective judgment in action. As suggested by Lewis (2008), besides learning from action and reflection, tacit knowledge can be learnt through apprenticeship. For instance, the student observes the work of the teacher, and the teacher's spirit as well, and then develops a feel of the teacher's skill. Obviously, this kind of knowledge cannot be articulated in propositional language. Rather, the agent needs to make sense of the specific practice scenario: that is, what is involved in ones thinking, feelings, judgment, and so forth that provides personal meaning. One cannot just simply observe and mechanically copy what the teacher does. Tacit knowledge, is a kind of personal

knowledge which is experience-derived, context-relevant, embodied, and implicit, while not susceptible to expression or readily available for introspection.

Explicit or publishable technical knowledge is usually given preference over practical knowledge that cannot be articulated in propositional language.

Kwok et al. (1997) point out that social work is not just a technical-rational activity (p. 39). Social work involves both understanding and deliberative action in context, requiring a practitioner to reflect as much as to act. Tacit knowing is a matter of appraisal or discernment (Lewis, 2008, p. 124). It helps explain the intuitive understanding, experience and context based personal knowledge of social work practice. It is desirable for social work educators to acknowledge the place of tacit knowledge, the unarticulated form of knowledge that helps social workers make sense of the complexity of human beings and uncertain practice situations, as illustrated in the previous discussion of the nature of social work practice. Tacit knowledge embraces the agential nature of knowledge, including personal knowledge, embodied knowledge, experience, and element contextual knowledge. Its epistemological assumption is similar to practice wisdom in reference to its features and commonalities, which will be discussed at length in the later part of this chapter.

Reflection. Donald Schön's (1983, 1987) notion of reflection advocates a conception of knowledge different from positivist empirical knowledge. It is concerned with the acquisition of new learning via constant reflection and action. Reflection here is not confined to pragmatic or technical purposes, such as acquisition of knowledge or improvement of practice skills. Rather, reflection also involves the moral dimension of the subject, who may be immersed in a kind of human encounter and revise his or her understanding of self via self-dialogue and/or external dialogue within the context. This implies that subjects are able to acquire new understanding through the process of critical reflection, and obtain personal meaning in a way that is unique to them. Fook and Gardner (2007) regard critical reflection as both a process and theory for unearthing individually held social assumptions in order to make changes in the social world. It involves a deeper look at the premises on which thinking, actions and emotions are based (p. 14). In Fook and Askeland's (2007) work, critical reflection incorporates an understanding of personal experiences in context with the ultimate goal of becoming more empowered for professional growth and social change. Thus, understanding or knowing is not static or objective, but fluid and agential.

Reflection is compatible with giving more insights to social work educators and practitioners. Schön (1983) challenges the applied science model for

understanding human professions, and has led much academic discussion in the social work profession. The inadequacy of the applied science model for understanding the caring profession of social work has thus been exposed. As pointed out by Tsang (1998b, 2008), Schön's work, including *The Reflective Practitioner* in 1983, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* in 1987, and *Reflective Inquiry in Social Work Practice* in 1993, has gained much attention in the past two decades, challenging technical rationality in professional education and practice.

Reflection may emerge as a process of intentionally examining and exploring a particular episode of experience, critically analyzing this experience, giving meaning to one's own self, revising the original conceptual perspective, and developing new form of understanding. It may be related to the skills of self-awareness, self-critique, analysis, and generalization (Tsang, 1998b).

Reflection, however, should not be confined to the generation of knowledge for practice, but is more important in understanding human agents. Reflection brings about a more humane and caring form of practice. With the moral concern for the interest of service users, the social worker may reflect if his or her action can really promote the user's well-being, or reserve room for improvement for the clients' interest. Thus, social workers should have the courage to critique

themselves and admit their inadequacies. Similarly, Birmingham (2004) asserts that reflection should embrace moral virtue. The moral dimension and courage should then be involved in reflection. Reflective practice connotes the practitioners' moral consideration, critical understanding and reformulation of their own conceptual frameworks. It can be highly compatible with accommodating the moral affairs and judgment based of social work practice.

According to Schön (1983), professionals depend much on tacit knowing-in-action, the characteristic mode of ordinary practical knowledge. One of the two types of reflection differentiated by Schön is "reflection-in-action," a type which is found in critical practice. There is a focus on the interactivity between the outcome of action, the action itself, and the intuitive knowing implicit in the action. This type of reflection is spontaneous, and can lead to experimentation on a conscious level in the situation. The actor has to be aware of what he or she has done and wants to be done in intervention (Yip, 2006). Reflection-in-action hence necessarily involves on-the-spot experimentation.

Gowdy (1994) further elaborates the concept of reflection-in-action by incorporating two elements. One is bodily knowledge, which includes knowing in action or use of tacit knowledge. Another is participating consciousness, in

which the agent makes sense of the world through participation. Bodily knowing is another form of knowing that scientific knowledge cannot explain. Schön (1983) clarifies tacit knowing by coupling knowing-in-action with reflection-in-action. Participating consciousness is the recognition of interrelatedness between people and the universe. People make attempts to know the world via participation and communication with the context. Reflective conversation within the situation is hence undertaken (Schön, 1983, p. 268). With respect to reflection-in-action, much of the knowledge practitioners seek resides in the action, rather than preceding it.

Regarding reflection-in-action, Yip (2006, p. 778) notes that a professional has a choice between the high ground and the low ground, where high ground is related to the application of research-based theories and techniques, and low ground is involved in clients' feelings, cognition, and situations. He criticizes the tendency of social workers to choose to stand on high ground as a means to avoid stirring up their own emotions and past memories in dealing with the clients' messy and confusing problem. Yip's critique indeed urges social work educators to put more emphasis on educating students with a thorough understanding of humanities, morals, and reflective judgment. Chu and Tsui (2008) echo Yip's (2006) argument that social work teaching should not be

confined to the understanding of particular theories, but should embrace the articulation of personal knowledge and reflective understanding.

D’Cruz, Gillingham, and Melendez (2007) conceptualize reflection-in-action as reflexivity, which is the agent that generates knowledge that operates in the moment. The agent is constantly engaged in the process of questioning (i.e., self-monitoring and reflection-in-action) their own knowledge claims and those of others. Knowledge generation in a particular situation, and the insights gained through this generation, may not necessarily be transferrable because of the unique nature of the practice situation or the client. Learners may need to constantly review their knowing according to the changing context. They are able to locate themselves in the influence of the research act. To Schön (1983), reflexivity is concerned with uncertainty. Reflection thus has emerged as a central issue of concern in the indeterminate zone of social work practice.

Another type of reflection is “reflection-on-action”, the process employed after the event to make sense of action. In critical reflection, the use of a critical incident as the basis for knowledge generation can be considered as reflection-on-action (Schön, 1983). The critical incident is in the past, and reflecting on it is obviously a learning opportunity for the future. For example, in Kolb’s (1984) *Experiential Learning*, the practitioner or actor usually carries

out reflection after action and away from the practice situation for improving future practice. Hence it is a reflection-on-action. The dialectical tension involved in either contextual learning or holistic learning is able to provide greater self-awareness and insight, making a better connection between theories and practice (Tsang, 2000).

This kind of reflection is commonly found in social work practice teaching, in which practice teachers help students reflect on the underlying reasons of their course of action, the feelings or thoughts involved, and how to perform better in the future. Another theorist, David Kolb, whose work *Experiential Learning* (Kolb, 1984) has incorporated this theoretical base of reflection in his deliberation of the learning cycle and dialectical learning.

Critical reflection generates theory from one incident that is generalizable to other incidents and situations (D’Cruz et al., 2007, p. 83). Hence, the practitioner is capable of generating formal knowledge from practice experience inductively via reflection-on-action.

Schön drew upon John Dewey’s work in formulating his idea of reflection. For Dewey, human beings interact with nature and derive their intelligence from a social context (Prior, 2005, p. 7). Reflection is similar to Tsang’s (2007) notion of dialogue, which can occur at the individual, group, and organizational levels.

People may talk within themselves when they want to make sense of events and experiences – internal dialogue. However, internal dialogue in the individual mind cannot provide a critical context for reflection, as learning takes place in a social context. Tsang (2007) thus suggests that social workers (and social work educators as well) make constructive use of external dialogue with various parties to promote co-reflection. Hence, dialogue is suggested to move from internal to external. For instance, a practice teacher can better make use of joint supervision by encouraging placement students to share with the placement partner what comes to their minds regarding a particular practice scenario. Dialogue is promoted among placement students and with the practice teacher for expanding one's perspective of understanding.

One caution is that we should be alert to the unclear time frame in Schön's (1983) depictions of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Eraut, 1994). The actor actually reflects only after the momentary action when undertaking reflection-in-action. Even in Eraut's (1994) claim of "rapid reflection," momentary reflection is made during the actor's interaction with another person within a very limited time span; it is still a reflection-on-action. The actor also reflects within the immediacy after the action that reshapes the immediacy of the next move. Despite the inadequate articulation of the time frame of reflection,

Schön's (1983, 1987) claim of reflection gives priority to personal knowledge, an alternative to scientific knowledge. Personal knowledge is instead experience grounded, embodied, and intuitive, as is the nature of practice wisdom. The moral dimensions and critical understanding of the subject are involved in making sense of the world through active participation and communication within the context. The subject is able to generate new understanding via constant reflection and action. These commonalities of Agential knowledge, reflective understanding and collaborative processes of knowledge acquisition will be addressed in a subsequent discussion of practice wisdom.

Situated learning. The uncertain, participative, and context-dependent nature of social work practice has been discussed previously. Caring and helping professionals, such as social workers, have to acknowledge our ignorance of the diversity of humanity, and learn about life situations from the service user's perspective. "Situated learning" gives attention to the limits of knowing in an individual mind, and to recognition of context-dependent understanding through social participation in which people actively engage with the social context. Learning is carried out in a particular and here-and-now situation. Situated learning embraces the reflective and situated judgment and acquisition of knowing via collaborative learning.

According to Anderson et al. (1996, p. 5), what is learned is specific to the situation in which it is learned. Kwong (2004) defines situated learning as learning that takes place amidst social processes of actors “doing practice” in the site of practice. Action is thus grounded in the concrete situation in which it occurs. It means that the potentialities for action cannot be fully understood independently of the specific situation. For instance, we cannot judge if the residential child care worker is right to restrain a child in a single room without knowing the specific practice situation, such as the emotional state of the aggressive residential child, or the safety of the child and other residential children. The worker is supposed to make a reflective judgment on the current context, such as, the self-control capability of the child, any overt self-destructive behavior, and the availability of immediate support from other colleagues in the site at that moment. Hence, it is necessary to make judgments and take action at the right time for a particular practice situation. The element of time is crucial to effective practice, learning, and teaching. However there is no discussion about the most opportune time for judgment and action in the recent literature of situated learning.

Anderson et al. (1996) suggests that learning is bounded to context, and thus depends on the acquisition of a kind of knowledge that may not be

transferrable to the world outside the classroom. For illustration, the way to handle children in a residential home differs from that in an integrated children and youth services centre (where guidance, supportive and developmental services are provided for young people in Hong Kong) and is not transferrable because of the difference in clients' backgrounds, needs, and service goals. A warm up exercise to promote mutual understanding may not be necessary in the residential child care service setting, because members will already know one another in this around-the-clock service setting. This kind of ice-breaking skill or knowledge is not applicable in closed service settings like the residential child care service. Instead, this task or knowledge is commonly employed in community based services, like integrated centres for young people, especially in the first meeting as informed by formal theories or training institutes. Because of the difference in service nature and client background, knowledge of ice breaking methods may be desirable in a particular service setting, but not in others. Knowledge is generated at the site of practice that is unique, particular, contextually-based, and characterized by moment-to-moment flow in the changing context.

Situated learning is depicted by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Zhang (2008) as a process in which learning and knowledge take place at the site of

practice. The learner is suggested to be context-sensitive, and to learn through the interaction with the environment and/or participants (e.g., clients, peers, colleagues, work supervisors, etc.) for reconstructing the existing knowledge and perceptions. Hence, attention should be put on the kinds of social engagements that provide the proper context for learning to take place. This may explain why practice teachers are quite concerned about the suitability of placement agencies in which social work students learn at the practice site. Lave and Wenger (1991) advocate social participation, which refers to learning mediated by the differences of perspective among the co-participants through the interactive process, that is, co-reflection with fieldwork supervisors and placement partners, and understanding of complex humanities from service users. This is similar to Schön's (1983) notion of participating consciousness, which is the recognition of interrelatedness between people and the universe (p. 268). People attempt to know the world via participation and communication within the context. Reflective conversation with the situation is hence undertaken.

Co-working and live supervision are encouraged by Zhang (2008) for carrying out situational and contextual-dependent knowing. The practice teacher will have participative experiences (Tsang, 2006) as shared by the placement student. Teaching and learning can then be carried out at the site of practice in a

more concrete and interactive way. Actors require some sort of reference point for learning. This reference point should be derived from a community of practice which is able to discern practices that sustain internal good. Learning is not the acquisition of knowledge by the individual, but rather the process of social participation (Prior, 2005; Zhang, 2008). Knowledge and learning will then be the collaborative product.

Based upon the above discussion, scholars agree on the core element of contextualization of learning/knowing in making sense of situated learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) further suggest that meaning, understanding, and learning are all defined relative to action context. The actor and the other participants are then co-participants. The concerned parties can thus articulate, examine, construct, and reconstruct their own perspectives through co-reflection: This is the dialogue that takes place beyond an individual's mind. For example, a placement student reflected and revised her preconceptions of aged clients' interests and desirable life-long learning through interaction and communication with the aged members and the practice teacher, who were co-participants with the student in the process of learning. People can enhance their knowing in better way if they can acknowledge their inadequacies, and co-learning with other participants. These commonalities of reflection with a sense of humility and

collaborative process of knowledge acquisition will be addressed in the following discussion of practice wisdom.

Understanding Practice Wisdom

Aristotle's idea of phronesis. The above parallel concepts indeed represent an alternative stream of epistemology, which is given less attention under the dominant paradigm of technical rationality. The commonalities of moral dimension, intuitive and personal knowledge, reflection, contextual knowledge, and collaborative learning are connoted in these concepts. After years of discussion of a wider perspective on knowledge, scholars tend to give more attention to practice wisdom, which most likely can better embrace the above commonalities within its conceptual boundary. It is better to allow room for discussing practice wisdom in social work. Further discussion of practice wisdom is best served by reviewing the alternative perspective it offers, as referred to in Aristotle's notion of phronesis.

Phronesis is used interchangeably with practice wisdom in Tsang's (2008) and Thompson and West's (2013) work. As early in the ancient period, Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, distinguished "techne" from "phronesis." The former is technical knowledge, while the latter is a form of practical knowledge (Dunne, 1993). For Polkinghorne (2004), phronesis is practical

wisdom that is concerned with actions related to human beings and good life (p. 114). It is a kind of knowledge that varies with the situation, is receptive to particulars, and has a quality of improvisation. Aristotle defines practical wisdom in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book VI) as characterized by thoughtful deliberation on how to secure good human life. A person with practical wisdom is able to deal with both the universal and particular.

Now it is thought to be a mark of a man of practical wisdom to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, not in some particular respect, e.g. about what sorts of thing conduce to health or to strength, but about what sorts of thing conduce to the good life in general. (Nicomachean Ethics, VI. 5. 1140a25–29)

In Aristotle's thought, good character is a matter of doing the right thing with the right desires and emotions (Roca, 2007). Virtuous action has to do with the character of the agent who performs that act, while the role of knowledge is less important. How the agent acted indeed reflects what a person is. Hence, the involvement of the whole person of the agent is acknowledged. "Practice wisdom, then must be a reasoned and true state of capacity to act with regard to human goods.... Plainly, then, practical wisdom is a virtue and not an art" (Nicomachean Ethics, VI.5.1140b20-21). Who a person is determinates what he

or she does. As Dunne (1993) points out, a person possessing *phronesis* must already be good. Character is an innate quality, which is more a gift of the gods than a property of a person, and a motivating source of good acts (pp. 290-291).

And this eye of the soul acquires its formed state not without the aid of excellence as he has been said and is plain; for inferences which deal with acts to be done are things which involve a starting-point, viz. 'since the end, i.e. what is best, is of such and such a nature.... Therefore, it is evident that it is impossible to be practically wise without being good.

(Nicomachean Ethics VI 12, 1144a29-37)

Prior (2005) and Tsang (2008) address the central place of moral reasoning in their understanding of Aristotle's notion of *phronesis*. Prior (2005) understands *phronesis* as having the moral capacity to combine practical knowledge of the good with sound judgment about what will be an appropriate way to express the good. Hence, it is an alternative kind of reasonableness.

Tsang (2008, p. 134) denotes *phronesis* as the practical reasoning for a course of action to bring about something morally good in a situation. It must be a reasoned and true state of capacity to act with regard to the human good.

Phronesis embraces moral reasoning with a wider conception of the good life of human beings. The agent is suggested to have emotional involvement and

connection with people when he or she induces moral responsibility for the good life of human beings.

In addition to moral reasoning, the commonality of particularities of expertise in making situated judgments is found in phronesis. Birmingham's (2004) view is that phronesis is situated in the particulars of a specific time and place, and is concerned with specific events and people in complex or ambiguous situations (p. 315). The agent is required to have the particularity of an expert for making a sound judgment about a specific practice situation at a particular time, despite uncertainty. Lewis (2008) notes that the agent involves practical reasoning, which is a matter of perception in which one imaginatively integrates clues from the environment for the sake of arriving at a response that is fitting or appropriate to the situation (p. 129). This infers that the agent must have active conversation with the situation when drawing up the situated judgment under conditions of uncertainty. Hence, contextual knowledge is required through interaction with the context.

Conceptual analysis of academic discussions about practice wisdom.

Aristotle's notion of phronesis actually is an alternative perspective of practice wisdom. The occurrence of the parallel concepts of tacit knowledge, reflection, and situated learning indeed illuminates the call for a wider notion of knowledge

over time, particularly in professional education and practice. A wide range of discussion of practice wisdom has been made in recent decades. I will review the range of scholars' views in chronological order to capture the pulse of discussion of practice wisdom. Drawing on the analysis of recent discussions of practice wisdom, some commonalities and a four-dimensional framework for the epistemological understanding of practice wisdom will be developed.

As early as 1990, Goldstein refers to practice wisdom in terms of competency (p. 41). It is a dynamic process with an accretion of knowledge, insights, skills, and values. The dominance of positivism in seeking to be the sole legitimate form of knowledge has been questioned. Goldstein's understanding of practice wisdom has exposed the link between social work values and practice wisdom. Practice wisdom is not a kind of pure knowledge, but the dynamic application of insight. Goldstein also identifies three sources of practice wisdom: The first is derived from the ethos of our profession. It concerns the whole person, the context of the situation, and the bond linking the two. The second involves the problems and conditions encountered by practitioners, and the inclusive way they construe them. The third is the knowledge and theories, the clients' lives and from the experiences practitioners shared with them. It implies that the actor is able to generate knowledge from

sources such as experiences and constant reflection, rather than through objective and scientific methods. Clients' lived experiences are given priority, in addition to formal knowledge.

DeRoos (1990) understands practice wisdom as being composed of two features – knowing-in-action and reflecting-in-action. This involves applying practice knowledge and recognition of one's knowledge and ignorance. Socrates (Dybicz, 2004, p. 198) conceives wisdom as the ability to recognize his ignorance, and create an internal dialogue that serves to guide his inquiry into matters. A sense of humility and a kind of self-reflection is involved in the agent. Similar to Schön's (1983, 1987) work, for DeRoos (1990) practice wisdom involves a sense of humility and self-reflection. The agent is capable of acquiring knowledge via reflection and action. Knowledge other than formal knowledge, such as personal knowledge and practice knowledge is acknowledged. DeRoos (1990) and Scott (1990) regard practice wisdom as tacit knowledge that is intuitive, personal and embodied. This intuitive and embodied nature of practice wisdom is similar to Michael Polanyi's claim of tacit knowing (Dua, 2004). Scott (1990) notes briefly that practice wisdom involves generation of knowledge, although it is the neglected side of practice research.

The commonality of the agential actor in knowledge acquisition is commonly identified in the concepts of practice wisdom.

Sheppard (1995) has also emphasizes the contentions of Schön (1983) about the inadequacy of the scientific approach of social science in fully explaining or predicting the human condition. Sheppard (1995) concludes that human beings interact with the changing and diverse social context in an on-going process, thus limiting the possibility of predicting human behaviour. Practice wisdom is depicted as accumulated knowledge that practitioners bring to the consideration of individual cases and to their practice in general. Hence, the opposite natures of universality and particularity of knowledge is recognized.

Like Goldstein (1990), Sheppard (1995) identifies three main potential sources of practice wisdom. Firstly, knowledge can be gained from everyday life, such as the lived experience in interaction with others. Secondly, social science research and ideas can generate knowledge. Thirdly, knowledge can be gained from social work practice. Sheppard (1995) shares the views of DeRoos (1990) and Goldstein (1990) that professional and lived experiences are contributive to knowledge generation. The significance of formal knowledge is given emphasis as well. Sheppard (1995), however, argues that much of practice wisdom developed by workers is not written down, resulting in a tendency toward

highly personalized knowledge. Sheppard proposes a wider perspective of knowledge including professional experience, lived experience, and empirical knowledge.

Klein and Bloom (1995) understand practice wisdom a bit differently from other scholars. They regard practice wisdom as a system of personal and value-driven knowledge emerging out of the transaction between the phenomenological experience of the client's situation and the use of scientific information (p. 799). Social workers are able to learn from experience in making judgments, and practice wisdom is developed following the accumulation of experience. This implies that practice wisdom comes along with experience.

In agreement with the above scholars, Klein and Bloom (1995) give attention to self-knowledge, an alternative form of knowledge other than scientific knowledge. Practice wisdom however is regarded as a bridge between empirical or scientific knowledge and practice knowledge in the immediate practice situation (Chu & Tsui, 2008; O'Sullivan, 2005). Klein and Bloom (1995) try to fit practice wisdom into the scientific paradigm by presenting it in an explicit and empirical way. Around the same time, Kwong (1996), a local scholar, offers an analysis of practice wisdom, in which local knowledge is understood as practice wisdom that is experience and context relevant. The commonality of

context-sensitive as emphasized in situated learning is indeed recognized in Kwong's articulation of practice wisdom. Experience is central to generation of knowledge. Kwong, however, does not discuss practice wisdom at length.

Stepping into the 21st century, there has been wide discussion of practice wisdom. For instance, Dybicz (2004) makes an effort to consolidate the wide range of academic discussions about practice wisdom. For Dybicz, practice wisdom involves competency in the application of practice knowledge and the actualization of social work values throughout the engagement process with clients. This implies that collaborative learning with others, particular clients, is valuable for knowledge generation. Dybicz considers practice wisdom as "personal and value-driven" (p. 200). Similar to Goldstein (1990), social work values and practice knowledge are given attention in Dybicz's understanding of practice wisdom. Additionally, the dynamic generation of knowledge by the agent is proposed. The practitioner derives value from his or her involvement in working with clients. Practice wisdom enables the practitioner to discern what is common and unique in a practice situation. Like Sheppard (1995), the demand for the universality and particularity of expertise is addressed in Dybicz's (2004) work on practice wisdom.

O'Sullivan (2005) advances discussion of practice wisdom to a development model of direct practice wisdom. His work can enrich our understanding of practice wisdom, even though this study is concerned with pedagogical practice wisdom. For O'Sullivan, practice wisdom is defined as a particular type of social work expertise involving the capacity for wise judgment and deep understanding in conditions of uncertainty. Practice wisdom thus requires a flexible and creative use of knowledge, but not the linear replication of operations performed before (p. 228).

The process and conditions for social workers to accumulate and develop practice wisdom are well-established. This implies the need improvisation on the part of the agent, involving the flexible use of an amalgam of knowledge, and requiring a continual process of reviewing and transforming the existing stock of knowledge via three sources. The first source is personal – the individual practitioners' everyday life. The second is professional – the practitioners' experience. The third is educational – the practitioners' knowledge of theoretical and empirical work of others through professional updating, formal training, and educational experience. Similar to the previous scholars' understanding, O'Sullivan (2005) points out that a range of knowledge forms such as personal experience, professional experience, and empirical knowledge are required. The

actor needs to make situated and reflective judgments under conditions of uncertainty.

In the context of the widespread discussion of practice wisdom, Roca (2007) criticizes an excessively intellectual interpretation of Aristotle, in which emotion is neutralized. Roca argues that it is paramount to get back to Aristotelian thinking, in which practical wisdom involves the whole person. She points out that in Aristotle's thought, good character is a matter of doing the right thing with the right desires and emotions, in other words, acting wisely. Roca reconceptualizes Aristotelian practical wisdom with an emphasis on its intuitive and emotional features. She iterates the place of the rational dimension of human and moral action. Roca argues for the interplay of emotion and reason in making wise judgments on moral affairs, such as in social work practice. For her, practice wisdom involves the whole person, who exercises the interplay of emotion and reason in making wise judgments, promoting a flourishing life for people.

Aristotle's practical wisdom draws attention to the duality of the intellectual and emotional aspect. Emotion, indeed, plays an important role in the formation of practical wisdom or phronesis according to the Aristotelian tradition, because emotion shapes one's perception in grasping the salient

feature(s) of a particular situation. For Aristotle, a *phronimos* knows how to feel and act properly in the practice situation.

In addition to the analyses of practice wisdom by scholars in western countries, following Kwong's (1996) relating of local knowledge to practice wisdom, other local scholars have contributed to a flourishing understanding of practice wisdom, and have drawn attention to its significance in social work practice. For example, Chu and Tsui (2008, p. 52) depict practice wisdom as a product of the intersection of theory and practice, namely the outcome of translating theories into an actual context, mediated through personal articulation. Social work is regarded as a judgment-based practice in which the workers have to consider context, such as place, time, and their own experiences and self-knowledge, in drawing up a plan for the good for clients. The kind of instant judgment and the knowledge invoked in the process is practice wisdom.

Chu and Tsui's (2008) understanding of practice wisdom has some implications. First of all, in it is found the feature of moral reasoning in a wider perspective of good life for human beings. Additionally, the use of formal theory with reference to context is acknowledged. The actor is expected to be context-sensitive and make situated judgments. Furthermore, practice experience is acknowledged as alternative kind of understanding in addition to

formal knowledge in the course of practice in a human realm. Practice wisdom is mainly acquired through direct experiences which are mediated via personal articulation. Self-knowledge is tacit and embodied in actions, which is recognized as a form of knowledge.

Around the same period, Tsang (2008) gives more details about the commonalities of practice wisdom. Practice wisdom is a form of practical moral reasoning which discerns what is morally desirable and good in particular situations under the complexity and uncertainty of conditions in practice. Also, the element of time in practice wisdom is explicitly discussed, whereas it has not been thoroughly analyzed by previous scholars. The element of time is vital in practice wisdom, because a practitioner has to undertake the right action for the right person at the right time.

The practitioner is also expected to have an accountable knowledge base, and then accumulate and develop practice experiences into expertise over time. Social workers are able to enhance their competence through reflection and accumulation of practice. Again, practice experience is acknowledged as a form of knowing, separate from formal knowledge. For Tsang (2008), practice wisdom discerns from deliberations of what is morally desirable and good, the desired end for others and exercises moral judgment at the right time in a

particular situation. Hence, the interplay of emotional sentiment and reasoning is required in making context-dependent judgments and exercising possible actions.

The importance of timelines of action is noted.

More recent work on practice wisdom has been done by Thompson and West (2013), who suggest practice wisdom development as a focus of social work education. Practice wisdom is denoted as a dynamic process which incorporates the application of insight, skills, and values into competent practice, the capabilities required in recognizing personal limitations and seeking out additional knowledge (Thompson & West, 2013, pp. 118-119). Indeed, this interpretation of practice wisdom is adapted from Goldstein (1990) and Dybiczy's (2004). However, Thompson and West (2013) do not explain the reason for adopting only part of these two scholars' views of practice wisdom.

In Thompson and West's (2013) work, strategies for the development of a practice wisdom model and a subsequent phronetic learning approach for developing it are suggested. They draw upon Hudson's (as cited in Thompson & West, 2013) knowledge framework, largely in developing the learning strategies in preservice social work training for the development of a practice wisdom model. The focus is the model for development of practice wisdom. As stated in Hudson's model, practice wisdom is understood as a useful focus for

integrating the different aspects of knowledge: background knowledge, empirical knowledge, theoretical knowledge, and procedural knowledge. As argued by Thompson and West (2013), wisdom cannot be taught, as it can only be learned through real life experience. Wisdom requires particulars as well universals.

There are some points which are worth our attention in reference to Thompson and West's (2013) work. The first issue is that practice wisdom is largely conceptualized as comprising different forms and levels of knowledge, in which background knowledge is the base for progressive learning. Thompson and West (2013) tend to use an intellectual interpretation of practice wisdom, despite their emphasis on value-based considerations and the process-orientation of practice wisdom. Students are assumed to have practice wisdom after having acquired the different types of knowledge. The core feature of moral reasoning, as derived from the above conceptual analysis of current discussions about practice wisdom, is given less attention. Besides, practice teachers are assumed to know how to nurture students in the development of practice wisdom through the provision of a variety of stimulated and reflective experiences in preservice training. However, this underlying assumption is questionable. Despite the difference in their conception of practice wisdom, Thompson and West expose the neglect of practice wisdom in social work education. A change of curricula to

incorporate development of practice wisdom with provisions for stimulation of and reflection by learners is called for.

Commonalities of Practice Wisdom

After examined the academic discussions of practice wisdom, it is desirable to draw up a general understanding of practice wisdom as practical moral knowledge, not as a skill or an intellectual ability. It is a system of personal and value-driven knowledge that is often unarticulated. Practice wisdom, or phronesis, makes it possible to decide what constitutes the good, take the right action to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with the right desire, and in the right way under conditions of uncertainty and complexity (Birmingham, 2004; Chu & Tsui, 2008; Dunne, 1993; O'Sullivan, 2005; Polkinghorne, 2004; Tsang, 2008). Despite differences of time and location in which these understanding of practice wisdom and its parallel concepts have been made, some commonalities are found in the understanding of practice wisdom. Details are explained in subsequent paragraphs.

A pair of opposites: Practice knowledge and formal knowledge.

With reference to the scholars' extensive view of practice wisdom, the interplay of practice knowledge and formal knowledge is acknowledged. For example, Goldstein (1990) confirms the belief that the lives of the clients and practitioners'

experience are the source of practice wisdom. The role of positivist empirical knowledge, in addition to practice experience and lived experience, is acknowledged by Sheppard (1995). Klein and Bloom (1995) address the interplay of scientific knowledge and practice knowledge in practice, despite their intention to fit practice wisdom into the paradigm of scientific knowledge.

Practice wisdom is interpreted by O'Sullivan (2005) as an accumulation of the practitioner's personal daily life, professional practice experience, and theoretical knowledge. Practice experience and formal theory are recognized as the features of practice wisdom in Chu and Tsui's (2008) work. Tsang (2008) also addresses both an accountable knowledge base and practice experience of the practitioner in development of particular expertise. They all give priority to both practice experience and formal knowledge in developing an understanding of practice wisdom.

The scholars' view of the central place of both formal knowledge and practice experience implies a wider notion of knowledge in their articulation of practice wisdom. Experience, values, and personal knowledge are alternatives to scientific knowledge. Knowledge can be possibly generated by means other than objective and scientific methods. For illustration, DeRoos (1990) and Scott (1990) praise knowledge other than formal knowledge. Personal knowledge and

practice knowledge are acknowledged in their interpretation of practice wisdom.

The central place of clients' lived experiences and practitioners' experiences are

valued by Goldstein (1990) as a source of practice wisdom. Sheppard (1995)

holds a similar view that practice experience, professional practice, and lived

experience can be sources of practice wisdom. To Klein and Bloom (1995),

practice wisdom is developed from the social worker's experience of making

judgments. For Chu and Tsui (2008) experience helps inform knowledge.

Hence, experience is central to practice wisdom.

Practice knowledge and values are recognized by some scholars in an explicit way (Dybiz, 2004; Goldstein, 1990; Tsang, 2008) as shown by their interpretations of practice wisdom. For instance, Tsang (2008, p. 132) shares Krill's claim that practice wisdom as the development of knowledge should draw from social work theories, religion and philosophy, and reflection on practice experiences with different clients. In this connection, practice wisdom requires practitioners to draw on and make use of both generalized knowledge and personal knowing (including knowledge and understanding as learnt from clients) in practice. Besides, it takes time for the practitioner to accumulate and develop experiences into his or her own expertise. Experience and action are essential in understanding and developing practice wisdom.

A wider notion of knowledge is embraced in practice wisdom.

Experience or personal knowledge is valued as a kind of knowledge, as in Eraut's (1994) analysis of personal knowledge in which the actor reflects on various life episodes and derives general rules for guiding future practice. Each person attaches certain meaning to a concept on top of this shared understanding by connecting it to personal experiences within the existing framework of knowledge.

An understanding of personal meaning and humanity, as in the social work profession, is not the product of technical craft. There are no guarantees that the guiding path will always be the best way to achieve the given end. Social work practice thus needs more active and continuing judgment for practical decisions.

Personal knowledge is unique in that it is gained from direct experience, reflection on personal experience and professional knowledge, and generation of new personalized professional knowledge.

Appraisal of embodied knowledge and intuition. As discussed in above, personal knowledge is experience-grounded, which implies the agential, personalized, embodied, and intuitive nature of practice wisdom. For example, Goldstein (1990) points out the involvement of the practitioner's insight in illustrating his view of practice wisdom. Insight is highly personalized, agential, and intuitive in nature. Scholars like DeRoos (1990), Scott (1990), and Roca

(2007) denote explicitly the intuitive and tacit nature of practice wisdom.

Dybicz (2004) brings about the need for intuition based upon experience in the derivation of new knowledge in practice wisdom. Sheppard (1995), however, argues that much of practice wisdom developed by workers is not written down as propositional knowledge. A tendency towards personalized knowledge, or “practice folkfore,” subsequently results. Similarly, Chu and Tsui (2008) regard practice wisdom as tacit, personalized, and embodied in actions. All these scholars share the commonality that practice wisdom is highly personal, intuitive, and embodied in nature, and that the agent most likely is not aware of it, but refers to it in action. Because of the nonpropositional form of embodied knowledge, people have given less attention to it.

The agential agent in knowledge generation via action and reflection.

Following the discussion of the commonalities of experience embodied in actions of practice wisdom, we are going to examine the related issue of the place of actor and methods in knowledge generation. Drawing upon a range of scholars’ views of practice wisdom as discussed earlier, the actor is agential in knowledge generation via action and reflection. For Goldstein (1990), the actor gives personal meaning and constructs the situation for development of practice wisdom. According to DeRoos (1990), practice wisdom includes knowing and

reflection-in-action. Practice wisdom involves action and reflection. The actor is capable of acquiring knowledge via reflection and action. The place of reflection is also addressed in Chu and Tsui's (2008) work. For them, reflection is a prerequisite for acquiring practice wisdom. Schön (1983) argues that practice wisdom is the knowledge generated from evaluating an action, reflecting on an action, and deliberating over the course of an action. A reflective agent who shows the ability to turn attention back to action and knowledge may emanate from one's action. This means reflection is contributive to derivation of knowledge.

The assumption of generation of new knowledge is revealed from the scholars' view of practice wisdom. Scott (1990) also makes a claim of an actor involving generation of knowledge in his conception of practice wisdom. This is similar to Dybicz's (2004) view that wisdom involves the need for generation of new knowledge based upon experience. In other words, an actor illustrating practice wisdom is supposed to generate new knowledge based upon the accumulation of experience. O'Sullivan (2005) addresses the flexible use and transformation of knowledge via the dynamic use of formal knowledge and experience of the actor in his discussion of practice wisdom. This implies that the agent is able to transform existing knowledge into new knowledge to make

new understanding. Tsang (2008) connects practice experience and development of expertise in his work on practice wisdom. Knowledge is not necessarily generated or acquired via the scientific methods as depicted by technical rationality. Instead, the agent can generate knowledge via instant reflection and action. Other than this, accumulation of experience and on-going action are central to knowledge generation. An actor may give personal meaning to the world and construct new understanding or learning. The role of an actor is proactive and agential in knowledge generation.

The fluid status of knowledge. Another commonality which is closely related to the agential agent in knowledge generation is the fluid status of knowledge. In the previous section, it was argued that actors should critically reflect on their own existing knowing and on the experience gained in the act of doing. He or she then constantly constructs personal knowing through on-going practice and reflection. Knowledge is therefore not static, but fluid, as resulting from the agent's instant generation of knowledge or new understanding via on-going action and reflection. Sheppard (1995) notes clearly that knowledge is necessarily provisional in his understanding of practice wisdom. Hence, the status of knowledge is fluid, as resulting from the on-going development of new

understanding or knowledge of the agent through the accumulation of experience and reflection.

Contextual knowledge. Other than the fluid status of knowledge, the inclusion of contextual knowledge can be inferred from the discussions of practice wisdom or phronesis. The scholars show concern about the interaction between the actor and context in drawing up reflective judgment. Lewis (2008, p. 129) notes phronesis as an agent that involves practical reasoning, which is a matter of perception in which one imaginatively integrates clues from the environment for the sake of arriving at a response fitting or appropriate to the situation. This infers that the agent needs to have active conversation with the situation in coming to a situated judgment under conditions of uncertainty. Goldstein (1990) notes that the interaction of the whole person and the context of the situation is one of the sources of practice wisdom. Knowledge about person-in-situation is noted. For Goldstein (1990), contextual knowledge is a synthesis of knowledge from a variety of sources, including life experiences, for the purpose of understanding the clients' circumstances. Knowledge thus is context-dependent.

Practice wisdom is understood as a context relevant knowledge in Kwong's (1996) work. He draws our attention to the particularity of social work

expertise to the specific practice situation. Knowledge as context relevant is implied. Similarly, Sheppard (1995) gives attention to knowledge about handling individual cases and practice of practice wisdom in general.

Particularity of knowledge specific to the unique practice situation is incorporated in practice wisdom, which is context relevant. O'Sullivan (2005) acknowledges contextual knowledge, but negates the applied science model in the understanding of human interaction. Practice wisdom connotes the exercise of reflection, with reference to the context under uncertainty. Chu and Tsui (2008) raise similar comments on the exercise of situated judgment, with reference to the particular context and at a particular moment. The agent gives meaning to the practice situation, and transforms theories of practice with attention to their contexts. Use of formal knowledge should not be applied in a linear manner, but should be relevant to the specific context, and modified if needed. Knowledge is transferable in the context of social work practice, but is not completely transferable to another because of the unique context, such as the client, nature of service setting, during of intervention, nature of problem, and so forth.

Collaboration in knowledge acquisition. Collaborative learning or collaboration in knowledge generation can be inferred from the discussion of practice wisdom. As revealed from Goldstein's (1990) notions of the sources of

practice wisdom, the lives of clients, and from the experiences workers shared with them, are vital to the development of practice wisdom. The worker is not an expert or knower who imparts knowledge or problem solving to clients. Rather, both the worker and client can learn from each other. The interaction between the worker and client is essential to enrich the worker's perspective of understanding. Dybicz (2004) notes the involvement of worker's competency in the use of practice knowledge and actualization of social work values via the engagement process with clients. Clients should be actively engaged in the working process, as depicted in practice wisdom. O'Sullivan (2005) notes the construction of knowledge through collaborative exchanges with others. Collaboration with clients and contextual knowledge are addressed in the knowledge production process. Tsang (2008) further opines that the actor is able to develop knowledge via reflective conversations with clients. Social workers are not necessary knowers or experts. Rather, they can learn from clients, including their clients' persistence and patience in dealing with problems and their lived experiences.

The above scholars connote practice wisdom with the process of collaborative learning with clients. Collaborative learning is parallel to the concept of "community of practice" of situated learning as suggested by Lave and

Wenger (1991). Learning from clients' lives is suggested by Kwong (2004) in his discussion of situated learning. The learner is capable of participating in the process of knowledge generation. Knowledge is not out there or objective. Knowing and learning are not necessarily happening in an individual's mind, but in the interaction with the context and co-participants. The learner does not passively receive knowledge from the experts as depicted in traditional pedagogy. For instance, a placement student was inspired to reexamine the place of emotional bonding among aged people and herself. For the aged people, a famous scenery spot was a place filled with good memories of their beloved family members, with whom they have intensive emotional bonding. The student became more aware of the central role of emotional sentiment in understanding humanity and working with the elderly through the reflective conversation with the practice teacher and the aged clients.

The above analysis shows that clients, students, and practice teachers can generate knowledge and new understanding via their participation. Participation in context is the starting point in the process of knowledge generation. Learning is depicted as the process of social participation that is the dialogical nature of reflection (Prior, 2005). The actor must be proactive and passionate in reflection, regardless of the reflection being carried out in the individual's mind,

that is, internal dialogue or engagement with other participants, that is, external dialogue (Tsang, 2007). Knowledge is participative and contextual.

Moral reasoning. The last commonality embedded in recent discussions of practice wisdom is moral reasoning, which embraces the two-fold facet of reason and emotion. As stipulated in the discussion of the parallel concept of tacit knowledge, the actor formulates his or her personal knowledge through constant comprehension and making sense of experience in the act of doing. Both intellectual ability and emotion are involved in the process, which draws upon an experimentally established cognitive framework. Referring to Schön's (1983, 1987) notion of reflection, actors are suggested to have both the cognitive ability and the emotional sensitivity to make sense of their actions and what comes to their minds during and after action, and to scrutinize their conceptions and formulate new understanding. As mentioned by Tsang (1998b), reflection does not concern only intellectual thinking, but emotion also plays an important part in understanding the social worker and service user as human agents. The facets of reason and emotion are involved in dealing with moral affairs, as in social work practice.

Phronesis is denoted as practical moral reasoning by most scholars (Polkinghorne, 2004; Prior, 2005; Tsang, 2008). It is the application of good

judgment to human conduct that generally leads to wisdom, in contrast to the more theoretical inquiry. For example, it is hard to judge if the highly structured life schedule of residential homes for young people is good or not, without understanding the problems that lead to the admission of the young people to residential home service or the underlying reasons of the highly structured activities. Social work practitioners, however, can still maximize the sense of autonomy of residential young people by letting them choose when to bathe within the scheduled period, and letting them set the group norms without violating the administrative concern of the agency. Indeed, what the social worker does has involved not only practice skills, but also moral virtues, for example, freedom and autonomy of human beings, ethical principle of self-determinism, and the humanistic dimension of respect.

Roca (2007) calls for attention to the interplay of the emotion and reason in understanding practice wisdom and handling moral affairs. Chu and Tsui's (2008) work on practice wisdom reveals the practitioner's judgment on what constitutes the good for the clients. Tsang (2008) regards practice wisdom as a form of moral reasoning within a wider sense of good living, and the agent is needed for moral reasoning. Without emotional involvement, the agent will not include the moral dimension in judgments on a good life for human beings. The

rational dimension, or reason, is involved in giving reflective and wise judgment with reference to the context at a particular time. Critical reflection is necessarily involved in making morally good judgments for the human good.

Summing up. As early as Aristotle's notion of phronesis, an alternative comprehension of epistemology, practical wisdom, is advocated in response to the overwhelming influence of technical rationality in understanding moral affairs. For Aristotle, the virtuous character of the agent is more important than the role of knowledge. Deliberative ability and phronesis are matters of character (Garver, 1994). In Aristotle's thought, good character is a matter of doing the right thing with the right desires and emotions (Roca, 2007). Phronesis is about the intellectual virtue of exercising moral judgment regarding what is virtuous, and it is inseparable from ethical virtue and moral virtue – the virtuous behavior (Prior, 2005). It is impossible to be neither good without phronesis, nor phronetic without moral excellence (Dunne, 1993, p. 297). Then there is an extricable link among moral virtue, character and phronesis. Practice wisdom concerns the whole person, including values, emotion, reason, and experience. The person as a whole should be involved in obtaining a vivid understanding of humanity and generating knowledge. This places emphasis on the dynamic interplay of the actor's moral character, values, emotion, reason, and experience.

Recent discussions of the parallel concepts of practice wisdom indeed recall a wider notion of knowledge. Michael Polanyi's tacit knowledge can be derived from embodied activity (Dua, 2004), an action which involves comprehension of experience and making sense of it. It is a kind of personal knowledge in the act of doing that is bounded to experience. In reflective practice, the actors (including the professionals) depend much on tacit knowing-in-action. Hence, it is the characteristic mode of ordinary practical knowledge (Schön, 1983, 1987). Bodily knowing, another form of knowing that scientific knowledge cannot explain, is necessarily found in reflection (Gowdy, 1994). Similarly, in situated learning the practitioner is suggested to be context sensitive, and to undertake instant reflection in the practice site. The process of knowing involves the actor's personal knowing, experience, professional knowledge, and new understanding generated from different perspective of co-participants.

Practice wisdom reflects the challenge to the dominant mode of technical rationality as revealed from its epistemological basis in the above commonalities. Ruan (2005) criticizes the dominant epistemological perspective of formal knowledge and propositional presentation of knowledge that has restricted the scope of knowledge. Knowing about life is not considered as knowledge (Ruan,

2005, p. 131). People value the technical rationality model of knowledge, but pay less deliberation or attention to understanding of humanities, social phenomena, good living, morals, or values issues. In this positivists' view, knowledge is defined as out there, scientific, achievable via objective methods, and technically applicable to the real world. The fundamental problem of the positivists' view is that they legitimize only this form of knowledge as true knowledge, and exclude any other possibility. Prescribed knowledge-based assessment is widely adapted by training institutes even in fieldwork practicum – a practice site which is filled with real life experiences, complex humanity, uncertainty, and the caring element.

Practice wisdom represents an alternative epistemology. Specifically, knowledge is no longer restricted to the positivists' view, under which knowledge is defined as out there, scientific, technically applicable, and achievable via objective methods. Rather, embodied knowledge, and personal knowledge bounded by experience, cannot be primarily explained by scientific methods, or presented in recognized propositional ways. There is no true knowledge or sole legitimate form of knowledge. Because of the alternative perspective of epistemological understanding, the actor can draw upon his or her practice experience, as well as the existing theoretical knowledge, in generation and

reformulation of his or her knowing via constant reflection and action. Due to the revolution in epistemology, knowing can go beyond the existing categories of formal knowledge. Understanding of humanity, morals, or values, knowing about life can be considered as knowledge that is particularly important in human service professions, such as the caring and helping profession of social work. Knowledge is then multi-facet in nature, embracing the life experience, personal knowing, cognitive knowledge, emotions, and morality of the whole person. It is not my intention to privilege practice wisdom at the expense of either propositional knowledge or practice skills in social work practice. Rather, I would like to call attention to the limits of the positivistic view of knowledge and the compatibility of practice wisdom with understanding human conduct.

Having identified these commonalities of practice wisdom, what follows is the conceptualization of these commonalities in a four-dimension framework for the epistemological understanding of practice wisdom. This framework helps to differentiate the fundamental difference of epistemology between practice wisdom and technical rationality.

The Four-Dimension Framework for the Epistemological Understanding of Practice Wisdom

Based up the above commonalities of practice wisdom, a comparison between technical rationality and practice wisdom is made in terms of four domains of epistemology. The four domains are the nature, status, process of generation, and facet of knowledge. A four-dimension framework for the epistemological understanding of practice wisdom is developed based upon these four domains as shown in Figure 1. In Figure 1, the colored sectors represent the features of practice wisdom for investigation in this study. The reasons for studying these features in the context of social work practice teaching will be explained in the following chapter. Opposing sectors, such as Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge, illustrate dialectical relationship. Details of the four-dimension framework for the epistemological understanding of practice wisdom are explained as follows.

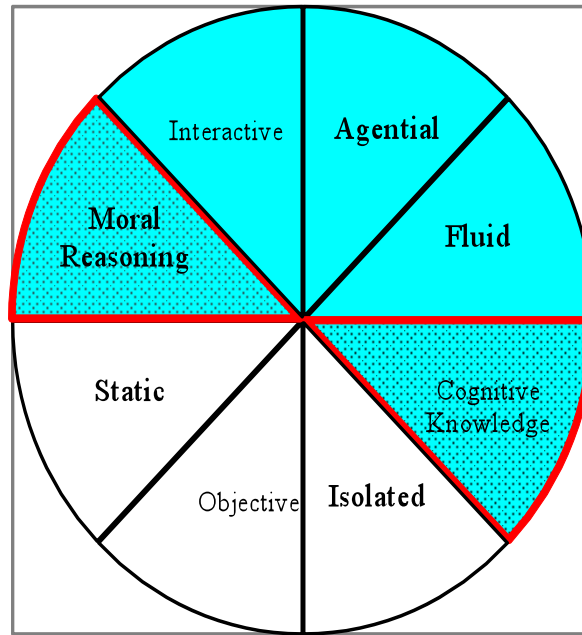
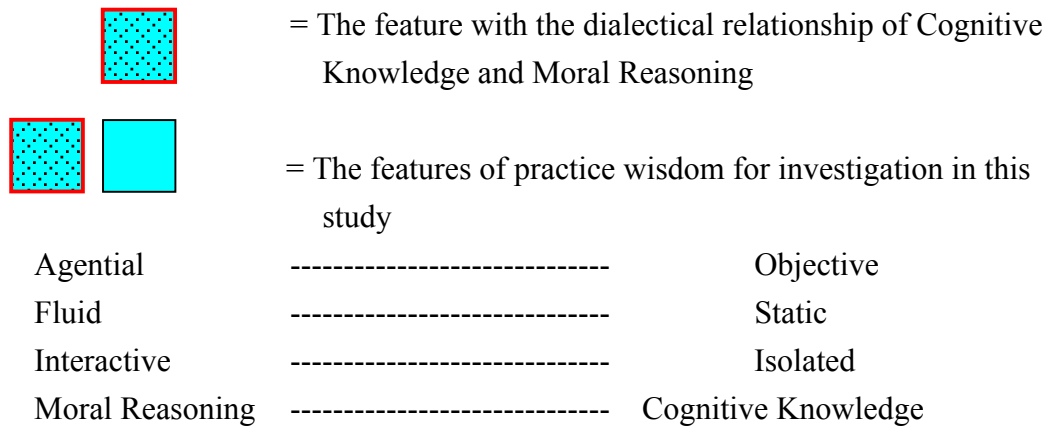


Figure 1. The four-dimension framework for the epistemological understanding of practice wisdom.



Agential – Objective. The first dimension is “Agential – Objective” of the nature of knowledge. The nature of practice wisdom is Agential, which is relevant to the commonality of the agential agent in knowledge generation as stipulated in earlier discussion of the section Commonalities of Practice Wisdom.

It captures the argument of whether knowledge is an out-there object that the actor can derive via the linear application of knowledge. From the perspective of practice wisdom, the actor is proactive in understanding humanity, giving personal meaning to his or her experiences and formulating or reformulating one's cognitive framework based upon generalized knowledge and personal knowing. The actor is agential in knowledge generation via action and reflection.

Peter Jarvis's (1999) work on the development of personal theory may help illustrate the agential agent's generation of knowledge and its relationship with practice. Practical knowledge and personal theory are used interchangeably in his work. As discussed earlier, social work practice is context-sensitive and indeterminate in nature. Practitioners should not apply – in practice – the context-detached formal theories in a deductive way without adaptation to the particular practice circumstance. Jarvis (1999) depicts that practitioners acquire knowledge from reflecting on practice, and incorporate and update what they have learned for developing their own personal theory. The practitioners' practical knowledge is undergoing continuous change as they adapt their practice to the changing practice situation and learn to innovate in response to these changes (Jarvis, 1999, p. 132). Hence, knowledge learned in practice is driven by the demands of practice (Jarvis, 1999, p. 145). Agents are capable of generating

new knowing or understanding through practice and reflection and re-constitute their knowledge base by incorporating insights or new understanding. They continue to learn from practical experiences and adapt their practical knowledge making it workable for them. Jarvis however does not confine the source of change solely to practice, but recognizes other sources such as professional exchange, professional education, and so forth. To him, practice and personal knowledge are individual, personal, subjective, and dynamic (Jarvis, 1999, p. 133).

Knowledge is not out there or objective, as depicted in positivist view. There is no standard procedure for the actor to follow for acquisition of intended knowledge or understanding in practice wisdom. Acquisition of knowledge or the intended outcome is thus unpredictable, and it depends on the personal meanings the actor acquires. For example, the placement student mentioned above recognized the vital role of sentiment in understanding aged people – a role that probably would not be recognized by another student. The student learnt to treasure the personal experience of the elderly, and reconstituted her understanding of the elderly, who were not as disengaged or passive as she thought. The kind of knowledge is personalized, less articulated, and not presented in propositional form.

Fluid – Static. The second dimension is “Fluid – Static” of the status of knowledge. Practice wisdom connotes the Fluid Status of knowledge, because the actors constantly reflect on action, and modify their pre-thoughts and personal frameworks instantly. The Fluid Status of knowledge is closely related to the Agential Nature of knowledge and to the agential agent in knowledge acquisition as stipulated earlier. The agent involves an on-going process of reflection in action with reference to personal experience, professional experience, and the existing store of knowledge, and reconstitute his or her own cognitive knowing. The agent thus is able to develop an understanding of a specific subject matter at a particular time. This kind of understanding or knowing is provisional, which is trustworthy at a specific time under a particular situation. The nature of knowledge is fluid, and not static, objective, or eternal as depicted in the positivist’s view.

Interactive – Isolated. The third dimension is “Interactive – Isolated” of the process of knowledge generation. Following the discussion of contextual knowledge and collaborative learning, practice wisdom connotes the Interactive Process of knowledge generation. It captures the argument of whether knowledge is derived in the isolated mind of individuals or in interactive with the context. Practice wisdom puts emphasis on contextual and participative

knowledge. The actor is suggested to have a sense of humility, acknowledging personal limits and reflecting on conversations within the context, including the clients and the particular practice situation. For instance, through the interactive dialogue between the student and aged clients illustrated in the case presented earlier, the student was inspired to reflect on her preoccupied thoughts of “good life” for the aged people, and became more aware of her bias. Without this Interactive Process, the student could not know what came to her mind, which would have affected her understanding of the good life in the eyes of the elderly. Learning or acquisition of knowledge does not happen in an isolated situation or through scientific methods. Rather, learning is in the process of social participation.

The interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge. The fourth dimension, “Moral Reasoning – Cognitive Knowledge,” concerns the two-fold facets of knowledge. The term Cognitive Knowledge is employed in this study because of its embracive nature of including the positivist empirical knowledge, theories, and theoretical concepts. As depicted in the dominant technical-rationality perspective, scientific and generalized knowledge is the sole form of true knowledge, and in addition, knowledge is value-free. However, use of Cognitive Knowledge with moral capacity in human interaction is privileged in

practice wisdom. Here Moral Reasoning means that the agent is emotionally infused with a moral element in making sense of the situation in order to derive a moral judgment. The agent shows a rational passion in striving for the right action, and respect for common humanity. A range of emotional attunements and the emotional capacity to face and make sense of diverse humanity with moral considerations are embraced. Practice wisdom, however, does not only place emphasis on the facet of Moral Reasoning. Rather, it puts focus on the interplay between Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge, hence the dialectical relationship between them. Putting this in the context of practice teaching, it illustrates in what way practice teachers bring to bear Moral Reasoning with a notable base of Cognitive Knowledge to make sense of the situation and derive moral judgments.

The Four Features of Practice Wisdom

Practice wisdom deems to be a multifarious concept which embraces various features within its conceptual boundary. Drawing upon the chosen comparisons between the epistemological assumptions of technical rationality and practice wisdom across these four dimensions, four features of practice wisdom are identified. They are the Agential Nature, Interactive Process, Fluid Status,

and the interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge. These four features and its commonalities are laid down in Figure 2 below.

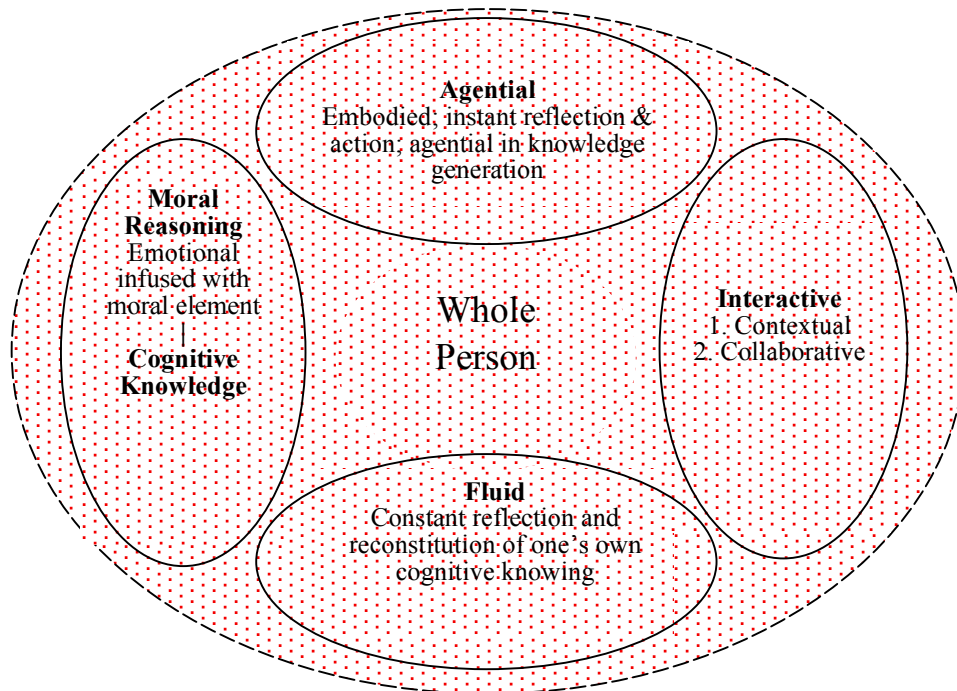


Figure 2. The four features of practice wisdom and their commonalities.

There is an inextricable link between practice wisdom or phronesis and moral character. As Tsang (2008, p. 134) says, one must accomplish the formation of one's moral character for achieving phronesis. To Aristotle, character has to do with one's attitudes, sensibilities, and beliefs that affect how one sees, feels, and acts in a habitual way. Practice wisdom requires the moral capacity to give deliberation, combine practical knowledge of the good with

reflective judgment. Hence, this kind of deliberation does not only embrace the rational facet, but also the moral facet. It is not only a skill or an intellectual ability, but an unarticulated practical moral knowledge that, in the living of one's life, which with practice, experience, moral deliberation, and reasoning of the practitioner. The whole person is involved in exercising these four features of practice wisdom.

Practice Wisdom as an Alternative Epistemology in Social Work Practice

As discussed in Chapter 1, the influences of formal theories and propositional knowledge derived from scientific research and positivism have stretched out to moral affairs like social work education and practice. Current academic discussion of practice wisdom and its parallel concepts indeed is a force that counteracts the influences of the positivists' view in fields involving human interactions. Practice wisdom, or *phronesis*, is deemed more desirable in human service professions like social work. Roca (2007) notes "practical wisdom could emerge as an alternative to the kind of reason advocated by modernist epistemologies" (p. 196).

The multifarious nature of practice wisdom can accommodate the nature of social work practice in a nice way. In face of the ambiguity, uncertainty, and complexity of human experiences, and context-dependent knowledge in practice

as discussed previously, the human problem is not so well defined. Positivist empirical knowledge can only provide approximate information, not the full picture of the complexity of real life. Knowledge cannot capture truth, only approximate it (Dybicz, 2004). Our practice zone requires practitioners to be more flexible in carrying out intervention and reflection in making judgments and decisions. There are no rules for practical judgments, since, as Aristotle asserts, virtue is what is right and good. The nature of understanding, reflective judgment, and decision are embodied in professional action, and experimentally generated by practitioners in a specific practice site for unique practice situations at particular moments. It is particularly important, but difficult for social workers or students, to grasp and develop such kinds of personal knowledge.

Practice wisdom is practical reasoning knowledge that helps the practitioner decide on a course of action for bringing about something morally good in a particular situation. It must be a reasoned and true capability to act with regard to the human good. Critical reflection is necessarily involved in evaluating one's practice, and determining whether the action taken is good or bad for a human being. Phronesis is a perfected form of experience – bringing the accumulated experiences into play and testing them (consolidation of

knowing) to draw from the result what is relevant, and to see where it does not fit (extension or modification of knowledge; Dunne, 1993, p. 305).

In addition to the characteristic of improvisation, focal attention is given to the morally good and virtuous character of the practitioner of practice wisdom. This is particularly meaningful to social workers (and other human service professionals) under the contemporary dominant influence of managerialism, which values money, cost-effectiveness, and output. Moral deliberation and emotional sentiment are less valued or considered. It is desirable to bring discussion and attention to the promotion of moral reasoning and virtuous character in our social work education and practice. It is high time for social work educators and practitioners to pay great effort to bring in a resurgence of value, morality, and humanities in our caring and helping profession of social work.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, practice wisdom is a multifarious concept that can accommodate the nature of social work practice well within its conceptual boundary. It is desirable for the social work practitioner to exercise moral reasoning in dealing with moral affairs and human interaction. These four features of practice wisdom connote emotional involvement, the interplay of

moral reasoning and cognitive knowledge, and reflection and use of personal knowledge, all of which are essential for solving human problems.

Despite the significance of practice wisdom to social work practice, there is, however, it has not been the subject of empirical study except for some academic discussion. O'Sullivan's (2005) and Thompson and West's (2013) work are about the development of direct practice wisdom among social workers and students, respectively. It is assumed that social workers and students can develop this kind of practical reasoning on their own, following the development model. What is the role of social work educators that provides training to a huge number of social workers? Among them, practice teachers render teaching at the site of practice – a real practice situation. This view of the central role of practice teaching in social work education and development of competent social workers, it aroused my interest in conducting an empirical study on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in practice teaching. However, practice wisdom is a slippery concept, and there is no empirical reference for knowing what it is. What may be known are its features and commonalities, as analyzed in this chapter, for enriching our understanding of practice wisdom and guiding this study. This study thus focuses on how practice teachers exercise the four features of practice wisdom in practice teaching. It is in part a discussion of

morality of practice teaching but not of the technical aspect. Details of the research focus, research methodology, and methods are discussed at length in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS

There are two broad sections in this chapter. The first section deals with research methodology, research questions, and the procedures. It is meaningful and paramount to capture the lived experience and the perspectives of the research participants by adopting qualitative and interpretative approaches. The second section deals with the data analysis. Co-reflection and videotape reviews of the participants' teaching practice are mainly used, supplemented by focus-group interviews for enriching understanding. This echoes the conceptual analysis of practice wisdom that knowledge is generated in the process of social participation.

Research Focus, Questions, and Methodology

Referring to the discussions in the Review of the Literature, practice wisdom is practical moral knowledge that in the living of one's life, comes with practice, experience, moral deliberation, and reasoning. Recent cuts in government funding have significantly increased pressures and constraints to both the higher education institutes and social service organizations in which social work students learn about social work practice through field learning. Subventions system reform has been introduced in the social welfare sector since 1995. Pressures to increasing productivity, controlling costs, and remaining competitive are witnessed in both the academic and organizational environments.

These changes result in demands for corresponding changes in social work education (Bischoff & Reisch, 2000).

Rapid changes in the external environment of education in Hong Kong, and the increasing complexity of human problems in general, demand new ways of learning and teaching in social work, and particularly in the field practicum. It is vital to move away from teaching instrumental problem solving by applying rigorous and scientifically tested and derived methods – technical rationality to – alternative ways of human knowing (Gowdy, 1994). Practice wisdom places emphasis on the involvement of the whole person and the exercise of practical Moral Reasoning according to the right reason at the right time in a particular situation. At times it can be highly personal and Agential, probably situated, and embodied. Knowledge can inform practice, but practice can reform knowledge (Valentine, 2004). Next, the research focus, questions, and methodology of this empirical study are discussed.

Focus of the Research

I have been teaching social work for more than ten years. It is usual for practice teachers to involve practice experiences and personal knowledge in carrying out their teaching, supervising, and liaison duties. “Formal theory has been privileged over practice experience, while practitioners have rejected formal

theory in favor of practice wisdom” (D’Cruz, Gillingham, & Melende, 2007, p. 79). It is interesting that in their work social workers seldom make reference to any theories, and even almost total avoid the use of research-based knowledge or formal theories in the ways depicted in the applied science model (Berman, 1996; Kwong, 1996; Tsang, 1998a; Thompson & West, 2013). There is little connection between what they have learned in the classroom and their actual practice. Social workers instead use value-based normative assertions in decision-making that are similar to practice knowledge (Berman, 1996) and the intelligence of their emotions (Taylor & White, 2006). Social work educators are encouraged to reflect why social workers do not use propositional knowledge in their day-to-day practice, yet they still put focal attention to teaching formal knowledge.

Chui (2005) comments that both students and practice teachers seldom draw attention to knowledge not stipulating in fieldwork assessment criteria, because it is not needed to be acquired or cultivated. Drawing on my direct practice experience in practice teaching, students usually feel it very difficult to reflect about humanity-related issues, as they seldom think about them. They are anxious not only to apply what they have learnt in the classroom, but also to accumulate their experiences in working with various target groups in various

practice settings by deploying different intervention methods. In addition, they find what happened in practice is remarkably different from what they planned. With this respect, it is necessary for social work educators to nurture students in the capability to face the complicated nature of social work practice.

Given that practice wisdom is so vital in the social work profession, there is, however, no empirical study on the exercise of practice wisdom in social work education. For instance, Kwok et al. (1997) suggest a cooperative inquiry among practice teachers and students for enhancing field teaching and learning. They emphasize the artistry of social work practice required for action-reflection, instead of the technical rational practice. Liu's (2007) study is mainly focused on social work practical knowledge. A brief discussion of practice wisdom is included. Thompson and West (2013) propose practice wisdom development as a focus of social work education. There are different forms and levels of knowledge, as laid down for student learning. However discussion about the exercise of practice wisdom in practice teaching is absent. The possible reason is an overlooking of knowledge other than empirical and prescribed knowledge. In particular, implicit and unarticulated knowledge, like practice wisdom, is placed at a lower status or not valued as valid knowledge by the profession (Arnal & Burwood, 2003; Chu & Tsui, 2008; Kwong, 1996; Scott, 1990).

I choose to study the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in practice teaching mainly for three reasons. Firstly, social workers are affected by social work education. Practice teachers may be informed by their direct practice wisdom in rendering teaching. It is thus meaningful to unravel how the practice teachers exercise practice wisdom in practice teaching. Secondly, I am a practice teacher. As learnt from personal experience, one seldom makes reference to positivist empirical knowledge in rendering supervision, but utilizes personal experience instead. This aroused my interest in conducting an empirical study on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in practice teaching. Thirdly, field experience provides access to the real situation and the most concrete moments, where student social workers really learn to work with clients and handle the uncertain practice situation. The desirability of teaching and learning in the site of practice is noted. The field practicum is then chosen as the context for investigation.

The Research Question and Context

The research question is how practice teachers understand and identify practice wisdom in rendering practice teaching in Hong Kong. As stipulated in Chapter 2, practice wisdom is a slippery concept. In this study, pedagogical practice wisdom is confined to the use of the four features of practice wisdom in

practice teaching as depicted in Figure 2. It proceeds to understand how practice teachers exercise the four features in their teaching practice. Practice teaching takes place between the practice teacher and the student in a unique placement service unit. For a systematic investigation on understanding the pedagogical practice wisdom, the interaction between the practice teacher and the student in the teaching and learning process is given attention. Hence, a practice teacher makes morally good judgments in bringing about good student learning.

Besides, the teaching and learning process does not happen in a vacuum, but in an interaction with the concrete practice situation. The external dialogue between the practice teacher and the student, and their conversation with the practice situation, provide a background for investigation of the four features of practice wisdom in practice teaching.

Placement agencies, social work training institutions, and the power relationship in practice teaching may have influences on teaching and learning. However, due to the limited scope of this research and the author's interest in pedagogical practice wisdom, the teaching of practice teachers is the focus of study. The videotaped scenarios of practice teaching provided abundant empirical reference for generation of focus of discussion for co-reflection. In making sense of the data, the possible influences of contextual factors on teaching

are considered in the data analysis. This study may leave the influences of the context under which the practice teaching is conducted to further inquiry.

In this study, Stenberg's (2010) didactic triangle is referred to in making sense of the pedagogy of practice teachers. The didactical triangle can provide an apt model for a theoretical framework of teaching practice for understanding what, how, and why practice teachers act and teach the way they do. Didactics here means pedagogy (Kansanen & Meri, 1999). Stenberg (2010) explored the potential of identity work, which consists of self-identity and professional identity, in promoting the professional development of student teachers. She did her analysis on narratives based on the student teachers' video diaries of classroom teaching of interests and forms of reflection. The similarity of research method, that is, reflection on videotaped teaching scenarios and the central place of reflection in Stenberg's work and this study is noted. It is then desirable in this study to refer to Herbart's didactic triangle (as cited in Stenberg, 2010, p. 333) and its relation as the framework for capturing the teaching practice, including the content, on how and why to teach social work practice teachers.

Stenberg's work gives insight into the practice teachers' epistemological assumptions with reference to the four features of practice wisdom from three aspects – the actual contents of teaching, the way to teach, and the pedagogical

relation. The actual contents of teaching refer to what the practice teacher teaches. The way to teach implies how a teacher supports student's learning. It is about the strategies or teaching methods the teacher adopts. The pedagogical relation depicts the interaction between the practice teacher and the student. The way the teacher supports student's personal growth, and is concerned about their thoughts and experiences, is addressed. It is also concerned with whether the practice teacher strives to do the right and proper action via the interaction with the student. Teaching, therefore, is not solely teaching, but an activity with a moral element. Because the foci of this research is pedagogical practice wisdom, attention is given to understanding how practice teachers refer to their own practice wisdom in teaching, such as the strategies or teaching methods for promoting students' learning, but not how the students study. Epistemological assumptions on social work practice, and the unique understanding of practice wisdom held by the practice teachers, could be manifested through the investigation of the teacher's relation to content and didactical relation.

Kansanen and Meri (1999) note the asymmetrical pedagogical relation between teacher and student, even when the students are adults. When the students are children, the asymmetric quality of the relation is emphasized. As informed by Kansanen and Meri, it should be noted that the pedagogical relation

is not a permanent relation, because our young social work students gradually grow out of it, developing independence. Stenberg (2010) instead pays attention to the interaction between the teacher and students, and to what way the teacher supports the student's personal growth in the pedagogical relation. The pedagogical relation is interpreted as relational oriented, because the teacher still has concerns about the student's personal growth within the background of the asymmetrical relation. The teacher also is concerned with whether teaching actions are rights and proper, as manifested through interactions with the student. Teaching activity is thus viewed as a moral activity.

The field practicum is a good platform in which practice wisdom may develop through modeling the effects of one-to-one based intensive teaching and learning processes. It is feasible to determine if the practice teacher who enacts the moral agent or infuses students with moral consideration and/or makes them morally good agents. A teacher's relation to personal practical theory is through his or her values, beliefs and ideology, which guide one's own teaching practice. A person's personal practical theory is derived from professional and personal experiences. The personal practical theory of the practice teacher, and its influences on his or her pedagogical practice, can be unraveled.

In sum, this study makes reference to Stenberg's (2010) didactical triangle as the orientation to make sense of how practice teachers understand and identify the four features of practice wisdom in conducting fieldwork supervision. The sub-questions of the study are as follows:

1. How do practice teachers understand practice wisdom?
2. What are the contents of practice wisdom?
3. How do practice teachers exercise the features of practice wisdom in rendering practice teaching?
4. What are the possible difficulties encountered by practice teachers in the use of the four features of practice wisdom in their teaching practice?

Use of Qualitative and Interpretative Approaches

If we are more aware of the realm of our everyday experiences, we will become more attuned to the myriad influences that impinge on human thought, speech, and action, and see that we can no longer strive for some unitary truth of human behavior using exclusively reductive, positivist procedures. (Angen, 2000, p. 380)

Interpretive approaches to social inquiry will enlarge and deepen our understanding of what it means to be human. From an interpretive perspective, what we can know of reality is socially constructed through our intersubjective

experiences with the lived world is negotiated through dialogue and interactions with the world around us. We may formulate and reformulate our understanding and claim of knowing via constant co-creation.

Qualitative and interpretative approaches are adopted for exploring how practice teachers make sense of their lived experiences, that is, their own practice wisdom, from their perspective, and capture their moment-to-moment flow of thinking, judging, and acting. Zimmer (2006, p. 315) regards truth as a result of constructed and intersubjective meanings. The aim of the interpretive inquirer is to come to have a deeper understanding via further external dialogue for extended understanding of mutual perspectives. The interpretive approach allows representation of the perspective of the participants. Thus, the epistemological comprehension of the intersubjective creation of meaning and understanding through dialogue is upheld.

Qualitative research is thus more desirable for understanding rich description, emergent concepts and theories, and meaning and interpretation (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things (Berg, 2009, p. 3). It allows for rich descriptions of social life, detailed explanations of social processes, and generation of theory (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004, p. 5).

Self-reflexivity on the practice teachers' and students' experiences, and openness to emergent concepts and ideas, may also revise the conceptual framework of this study. I acknowledge the influence of my own background and beliefs to this understanding, since they may affect or further interpretations of the research participants' perspectives of reality. It is therefore paramount to reflect upon ways in which such influences might creep into the study. The following discussion will present the research methods and data analysis of this study.

Research Procedure

As discussed in the previous section, fieldwork supervision is a good platform for such systematic inquiry. How the practice teacher understands the practice scenario, and the knowledge, judgments, and actions he or she brings into the field practicum can be investigated. Each practice teacher attaches a certain meaning on top of the shared understanding of a concept by connecting it to personal experiences with the existing framework of knowledge. Practice teaching takes place in a unique placement service unit. As mentioned previously, the influences of the context within which practice teaching takes place are left for further inquiry. The influences of the context have been considered in making the analysis. For instance, some practice teachers have to

consider accountability to the placement agency in deciding the priority of teaching contents in that supervision, or in striving for a sound assessment of the placement student.

As iterated in Chapter 2, practice wisdom is highly personalized, situated, and tacit in nature. Some may question if this research eliminates the tacit dimension of practice wisdom by investigating its four features; however, it is recognized that knowing is more than one can say. Despite the limit of tacit knowledge in articulation or cognitive awareness, it does not mean that the action taken by the agent is unobservable or totally inarticulate. In this study, focus group interviewing, videotape review, and co-reflections are the main methods for promoting external dialogue, sense-making through collaboration, and eliciting people's own understandings. Knowing is co-constructed between the participating teachers and the researcher. What follows is about the research methods and data analysis.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviewing is more than a collection of individual interviews (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Data are generated by interaction between and among the participants and the researcher. The researcher is both an interviewer and the moderator (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004; Smith, 2008),

playing an active role in facilitating group discussion and encouraging group members to interact with each other for data collection purposes.

Co-participants are likely to stimulate debate and produce sense-making collaboratively in the course of interaction. It is a good choice for eliciting people's own understandings, opinions, or views (Smith, 2008).

Focus group interviewing with practice teachers. The concurrent mode of placement in the local social work training institutes is most likely to be begin between September and March of next year. A focus group meeting was held in early October 2010. Firstly, the focus group meeting serves as an introductory event in which practice teachers are inducted into their role in the research project. Secondly, it helps to capture practice teachers' views about the functions of practice teaching and its connection of research-based knowledge and practice. In addition to these planned objectives, wide-ranging discussions of practice teaching provide space for the practice teachers to raise important concerns. For instance, having incorporated their views, the guidelines for taking videotapes were revised. The conversations of the respondents in the focus group meeting were taped and transcribed to be used for analysis. Details of the discussion guide are spelt out in Appendix 1.

Focus group interviewing with placement students. It is not strictly necessary to see what the students think of the process of being supervised in view of the focus of this research on pedagogical practice wisdom. However, it is desirable to capture the students' perspective with the goal of unraveling the mysterious and intersubjective nature of practice wisdom a little bit more.

Students may find the freedom and spontaneity to share their views in a group context. Having considered the research focus, the participating students were involved at once. Regarding the timing, it is desirable to conduct the focus group interview after the students are graded at the completion of placement.

However, it is worth noting that the participating students' inclination to present their learning experiences with the practice teachers may still be affected if the grades are too good or unacceptable. The focus group finally was held in April 2011 after the completion of placement. The participating students might convey their impressions of their learning experiences with the practice teachers, but not the details of the teaching and learning scenarios. The discussions were taped and transcribed for analysis. Details of the interview reference guide are spelt out in Appendix 2.

Co-Reflection Together With Videotape Reviews

The conventional mode of fieldwork supervision largely relied on written plans and records submitted by students, and then the practice teachers gave corrective feedback and guidance accordingly. This means that most practice teachers put focus on what was done as narrated by students in supervisory sessions (Kwok et al., 1997; Zhang, 2008). The desirability to investigate field teaching and learning at the site of practice is noted. However, there is a practical problem of seeking consent of the different parties, including the service users, social work students, placement agencies, and the training institutes in doing the research on-the-spot. Besides, the presence of a third person at the supervisory meetings inevitably will lend pressure to both the practice teacher and the placement student. Student learning and service delivery may be affected as a result. Thus, it is less feasible, and also undesirable, to directly assess the teaching approach of the practice teachers during the supervision. It is more feasible to access the on-the-spot practice teaching through the videotaped supervisory sessions.

To capture the moment-to-moment flow of thinking, judging, and acting in the immediacy of the moment in a context-relevant manner, an investigation of live supervision is desirable. This helps to get access to why and how a practice

teacher frames a practice scenario, understands the service users, and gives deliberations on the possible actions to be taken, as well as what knowledge he or she refers to in practice teaching in the here-and-now. Other than this, how the practice teacher acts in facing the “swampy lowland” of the practice world as depicted by Schön (1983) can be known in a better way. Practice teachers need to face the uncertain practice situation, as do the students.

Live supervision is a good entry point for investigation of the practice teacher who acts in the immediacy of the moment in a context-dependent and uncertain condition. As revealed from current practice, there is no formal requirement for practice teachers to conduct live supervision. It largely depends on the will of the service users, placement agency, and the teaching preference of the practice teacher. Regarding the mode of live supervision, some practice teachers may just sit aside as an observer, while some may participate in the process of direct practice. The latter is preferred in this research, because it can better reveal in what ways the practice teacher and student make sense of the practice situation and perform in the immediacy of the moment in a context-relevant manner.

However, it is difficult to seek consent from the different parties, in particular the service agency and the service users, for taping on-site live

supervision. It is more feasible to allow videotaped supervisory sessions than live supervision solely. To a great extent, practice teachers won't be able to recall or articulate in an explicit manner until they have stepped into a practice scenario. Even so, they may not be completely aware of what had been going through their minds in the process of making pedagogical decisions about what and what not to do in the process of practice teaching. Therefore, having a chance to observe the practice teaching scenarios together with them, and making attempts to reflect what actually happened, will be a good way of tackling its nature and operational aspects.

Videotaped teaching scenarios. The participating practice teachers were invited to choose an experience or event (not the whole session) lasting about 20 minutes that could best represent their pedagogical practice wisdom by showing improvisation in facilitating student learning in a beneficial way or when they got stuck. The practice teachers exercised full autonomy in deciding when and what would be videotaped. Finally, all the participants drew out the scenario that presented their practice wisdom according to their understanding of the tentative definition. The videos provide empirical raw data on the embodied practice of practice teachers for generating the focus for co-reflection.

Throughout the placement, each practice teacher provided a videotape with the same student at both the first and second semesters of the placement (divided based upon the mid-term evaluation). For practical convenience, a helper was provided for preparing the audio-visual equipment and undertaking video shooting, if needed. Finally, 10 videotapes of practice teaching scenarios were reviewed; among these, three were of live supervision. The researcher could not identify the personal data of service users. In compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and ethical principles of confidentiality, no identifiable personal data, such as the agency name or participant's full name, was required. Details of the guidelines on taking videotapes and the consent form are laid down in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4, respectively.

Co-reflections. A more thorough and in-depth discussion was made with the practice teacher after having reviewed each videotape. As iterated by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2004), in-depth interviews can yield large quantities of descriptive qualitative data, and preserve the multivocality and complexity of the lived experiences of research participants. Moreover, the interview is generative in nature, which allows new knowledge to be created. This work of bringing in co-reflection between the practice teacher and the researcher for linking self-reflection (i.e., from internal conversations to external dialogue) is adopted to

extend the parties involved in reflection from an individual mind to a small group of two or more, consisting of researcher and participants.

A pilot test was conducted in August 2010 with a practice teacher (not the research participants) for determining how to conduct co-reflection and to formulate the discussion guide. The discussion guide (see Appendix 5) was set for reference, in particular, in the beginning phase of data collection before she was acquainted with the discussion flow. In fact, I seldom made reference to the guide due to the fluid status and interactive process of co-reflection between her and the practice teacher.

The research was designed to offer each practice teacher four rounds of co-reflection at different stages of the placement. For instance, after the videotape review together with co-reflection, the draft analysis was prepared for inviting the practice teacher's views in the following up meeting for clarification and confirmation of understanding. An external dialogue was provided again for extended understanding of mutual perspectives. The same research process was conducted twice with each practice teacher. This repeated schedule allowed both the author and practice teachers to reflect on their discussions and experiences with some hindsight. This research process (see Figure 3) echoes

earlier conceptual analysis of practice wisdom in which learning or acquisition of knowledge takes place in the process of social participation.

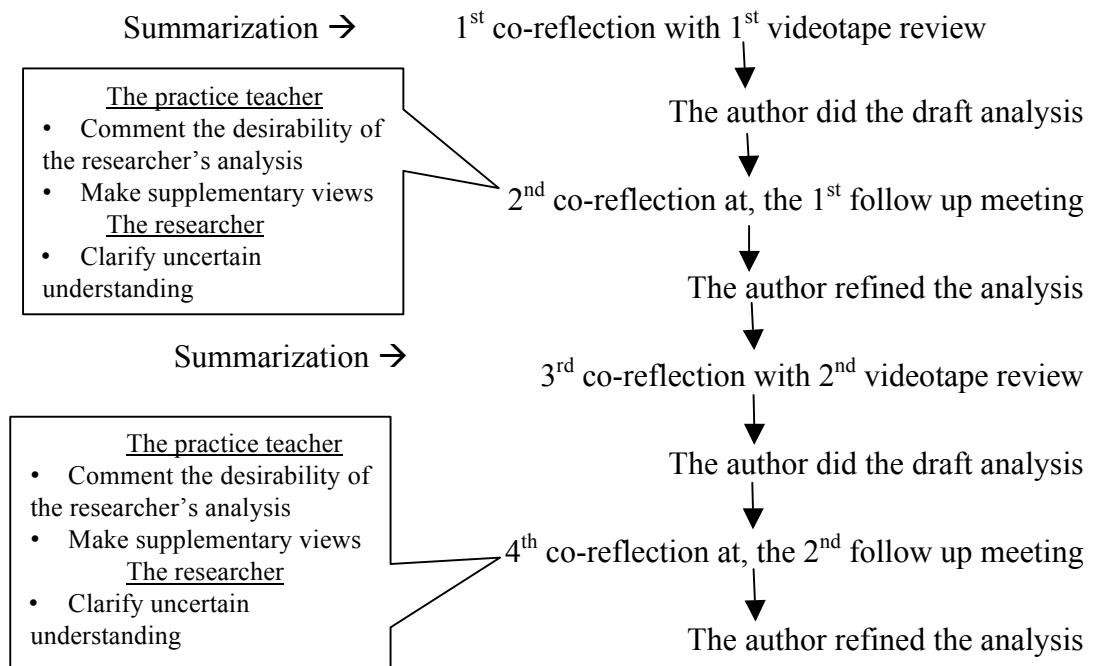


Figure 3. Built-in stakeholder checks in the research design.

Recruitment Procedures of the Research Participants

This author was the fieldwork coordinator of a teaching institute.

Informal communication with some practice teachers and the fieldwork coordinators was made before rendering formal invitations. Invitation was extended to the six local social work training institutes offering a bachelor degree training – the global professional qualification of a social worker – in early August 2010 (see Appendix 6 for details of the invitation letter). Each training

institute has its own epistemological assumptions and pedagogical characteristics. The diversity of research participants' backgrounds might add richness to the understanding of field teaching and learning that the practice teachers and students experienced. Besides, it is uncertain if the participating practice teacher can exercise the features of practice wisdom in rendering teaching if this study involves one teacher only. It was better to recruit participants from the six universities. Understanding how the practice teachers are informed by their direct practice wisdom in using the four features of practice wisdom in teaching was thereby enriched.

Recruitment was started through the formal channel of seeking support from the department heads or the fieldwork coordinators. They were invited to recommend practice teachers who might have demonstrated in practice teaching similar commonalities of practice wisdom, such as improvisation and ongoing adjustments informed by situated practitioner judgment. Hence, purposive sampling was conducted. The participating students were recruited via the university or the practice teacher first, and then contacted by the writer.

Greater difficulty than anticipated was encountered in recruitment. For instance, a potential participant withdrew his participation after having become aware of the long engagement required in this study. Additionally, it was

necessary to gain support from the administrative level – the department head and/or the fieldwork coordinator of the respective university. At the implementation level, the fieldwork coordinator should consider both desirability and feasibility. For instance, a practice teacher might demonstrate the commonalities of practice wisdom, but the placement unit might not favor this study because of the sensitive background of the client or administrative considerations of the placement agency. Furthermore, practice teachers had to explore carefully the student's determination, since starting the placement in September 2010. The time schedule thus was very tight.

In view of these difficulties, it was necessary to accept reality and adjust the criteria for the selection of research participants. Specifically, the practice teacher from the Chinese University of Hong Kong had more than 4 years of experience in practice teaching (10 years in frontline service), instead of the 5 years originally expected. The practice teacher from the City University of Hong Kong had experience in practice teaching for 3 years and 9 months, but had 16 years in frontline service. It is believed that practice teachers can accumulate their rich experience and derive their personal knowledge in practice teaching. They were involved in this study, finally.

Due to the hesitation of the students under the supervision of a potential research participant from the Hong Kong Baptist University, no participant was successfully recruited from that university. In short, one pair of practice teacher and student from each university was successfully recruited. Confirmation of the voluntary participation of the students was made over the phone and by email. Details of the recruitment and the profiles of the research participants are shown in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively.

It is fully understood that “the practice teacher most likely may involve Eraut’s notion of deliberative reflection” (Tsang, 1998b, p. 22), in which he or she reflects on his or her course of action after a few weeks or months. The co-reflection session was to be held preferably not later than two weeks after the taped supervisory session to ensure fresh memories in their minds. Rapid reflection may be involved during interaction with the researcher within a very limited time span at the co-reflection session. What the data capture is largely the reflection on action. Details of the data collection process are shown in Table 3.

The Conceptual Framework for Capturing the Data

In view of the abundant data from 10 videotapes and 20 rounds of co-reflection, one must have a framework for capturing the data. As previously

stipulated, Stenberg's (2010) didactic triangle and its adaptation as an apt framework for capturing the data on practice teachers' teaching, has been discussed. The unique understanding of epistemology held by the practice teachers can be manifested through the investigation on what and how they teach. What the practice teacher taught can reveal his or her understanding of the nature of knowledge. For example, a practice teacher teaches students theory and distinguishes the uniqueness of different groups of elderly through the use of a theory. Thus the domain of Cognitive Knowledge and its contextual nature are illuminated.

Another practice teacher may be inspired by the student's critique of the client's poor motivation, and decide to pick up the scenario for coaching the student to examine her or his preconception of the client to understand the client's inner feelings. The Interactive Process of knowledge acquisition and the dimension of human understanding are inferred. The place of Moral Reasoning can be revealed from the pedagogical relation and the moral elements the teachers bring in their teaching. These three aspects, as stipulated in Stenberg's (2010) didactic triangle, provide an orientation to capture data for enriching the understanding of the exercise of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching.

Having looked into the teacher's teaching practice from the chosen three aspects, the data were fitted back to the features of practice wisdom for illustrating the contents of their key commonalities. Besides this, the teaching scenario(s) illustrating the exercise of the four features of practice wisdom in rendering fieldwork supervision are captured as well. Data including the practice teachers' conception of practice wisdom and the hindrance or facilitating forces to their use of the four features in teaching are incorporated in making the analysis.

Data Analysis

Coding and Analysis of Qualitative Data

All the co-reflection meetings and focus group interviews with the practice teachers were tape-recorded, and lasted about one hour to one and one quarter hour. Ten videotapes of the practice teaching scenarios were reviewed, and among these, three were of live supervision for review of direct teaching practice. Some technical problems were encountered, namely inability to retrieve data from some discs and premature termination of video recording. The approach taken was that the concerned practice teacher chose the best among the available videos for this research. The focus group with the students was taped and lasted for

about 1 hour and 40 minutes. The words of the participants in all these meetings were transcribed for the purpose of thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon. It is a form of pattern recognition within the data where emerging themes become the categories for analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p. 82). This includes the analysis of their meaning in context (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). I coded the data in reference to the existing theoretical idea, that is, the features of practice wisdom, for extending the understanding of its features. In addition to deductive coding, the raw data were encoded inductively to inspire the generation of new understanding. The examples on coding are illustrated in Tables 4 and 5.

Trustworthiness of Data Analysis

The criticisms of lack of research validity that commonly leveled toward qualitative research are well acknowledged. However, there is no legitimate or sole reality in the social world. Human agents instead give meanings and understanding to their lived experiences. Analysis of in-depth co-reflection interviews and focus group meetings and observations of videotaped practice teaching provide the substance for discussion. Data triangulation in a cross study is adapted here for extending understanding and enhancing research

validity. Triangulation involves the use of different methods and sources to check the integrity of, or to extend inferences drawn from the data (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 41). This process is expected to enrich understanding by the investigation of the similarities and differences among the research participants and the researcher in making sense of similar practice situation from one's own framework.

Stakeholder check. There are procedures for assessing the trustworthiness of the data analysis. Stakeholder checks are built in the design of the research methods, as shown in Figure 3. Hence, the research is designed to gather data at different times (i.e., four rounds of co-reflection at different phases of placement) from the same practice teacher to identify similarities, differences, or changes of views and experiences. For the data gathered at each co-reflection together with tape review, the draft analysis was prepared for reference during discussions in the following meeting. During the follow-up co-reflection, practice teachers had the chance to comment on whether the researcher's interpretations and the data gathered from earlier co-reflection was accurate, and they could provide supplementary information or change the researcher's interpretation wherever appropriate.

This research design has incorporated the research participant's understanding of my interpretation of his or her practice and thinking. Practice teachers were invited to give comments on the analysis for enhancing the trustworthiness, that is, the process of respondent validation (Smith, 2008). This also provided the opportunity to clarify issues that I did not fully understand. Each practice teacher thus attended four rounds of co-reflection, among which were two were videotape review together with co-reflection sessions. Additionally, during and at the end of each co-reflection, discussions were immediately summarized for reconfirmation by the practice teachers. Such checks are important in establishing credibility for the research findings (Thomas, 2006). In addition, students' perspectives can be used for cross checking of practice teachers' views.

The interpretation of the findings are drawn up, based upon the principle of consistency, in reference to the videotaped teaching scenarios and practice teachers' views obtained throughout the four rounds of co-reflection. Consistency here means the repetition of occurrence or absence of a specific way and/or content of teaching, and reconfirmation of this understanding with the individual practice teachers throughout the four co-reflections and two videotapes. Stakeholder checks have been included in ensuring the trustworthiness of

interpretation. Furthermore, the videotapes reflect the respective practice teacher's teaching practice with the respective student. Practice teachers selected the teaching scenarios that best represented their pedagogical practice wisdom. It is reasonable to draw the conclusion that the teaching scenarios indeed generally reveal their teaching style. To a certain extent, the trustworthiness of interpretation of data has been well guaranteed.

Coding consistency check. Another procedure that can be used for assessing credibility is a coding consistency check. For a coding consistency check, an independent coder is given the research objectives, and the categories and descriptions of each category, without the raw text attached (Thomas, 2006, p. 7). A scholar who has a specific interest in practice teaching and learning was invited to be the independent coder to do coding consistency checks. The intended objective of having an independent coder is to enhance the trustworthiness of the data analysis. The independent coder helps to code one piece of raw text from each round of co-reflection. It is thus necessary to consider which four samples of co-reflections best serve the objective of assessing the credibility of data analysis. The independent coder gave due consideration for the procedures of selection of four participating universities of five for this coding consistency check exercise.

Selection of the co-reflections for coding consistency check. The independent coder has been teaching at the City University of Hong Kong for years, and she knows the participating practice teacher well from the same training institute. Given the time constraints, it is desirable to understand the pedagogical practice of practice teachers from other training institutes to maximize the benefit. Besides, I share a similar training background as the teacher from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. It is then desirable to consider the co-reflection with this practice teacher to know if the data are appropriately interpreted. The co-reflection with the practice teacher who comes from the same university is included for enhancement of credibility. The University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong have comparatively longer history in giving social work education, and thus were included in the coding consistency check exercise. The selected text for coding consistency check is shown in Table 6

Procedures of implementation of coding consistency check. The duration of each tape review together with co-reflection and follow up co-reflection was, on average, around an hour and 15 minutes and an hour, respectively. It was agreed to extract the middle section of each co-reflection, lasting for around 45 minutes, for coding consistency check. It was believed that

most discussions could be revealed in the middle section of each co-reflection, and that the independent coder could also grasp the flow of discussion in a nice way. The necessary information and the assigned sections of the raw text were provided for reference and coding of the independent coder.

Views of the independent coder. The independent coder's work supports the interpretation of the empirical data. For instance, the independent coder notes Teacher K's effort in fighting for a student's right and sense of confidence. Teacher K demonstrates a deep understanding of humanity in teaching that best illustrates the expanded perspective of knowledge in which understanding of humanity is embraced in her teaching. Moreover, it also affirms Teacher K's facilitative teaching. Regarding Teacher M, the coder notes his practice of role shifting for facilitating the student to reflect on her value system and understand the client's suffering. For Teacher M, understanding and attitude are not treated as skill teaching. The participating student was requested to narrate the full process of her work with the client for inducing learning. The coding supports the interpretation of Teacher M's humanistic teaching. The student is participative and collaborative in the process of knowledge acquisition.

Other than the commonality of understanding, the independent coder points out two other issues of concern. One is about the difference in making

sense of the personal practical theory of Teacher L. Teacher L acknowledges that he adopts “experiential learning” in teaching. It is understood that he probes the student to reflect on her anger and the underlying reason. The independent coder, however, does not think of this as experiential learning, because the practice teacher informs the student of his understanding. This difference in understanding may have resulted for two reasons. The first reason is that Teacher L probed the student to reflect on (reflective observation) what she does (i.e., concrete experience), and then to teach her the theoretical concepts or tell her the underlying reasons (abstract conceptualization). Furthermore, Teacher L always encourages the student to get back for discussion after action (i.e., reflection on action). The second reason is that the teacher allows the student to figure out the answer on her own, but informs her of the how or what if she cannot not figure it out. This reveals that the practice teacher needs to offer guidance in an explicit way if the student is not capable of figuring out the issue.

Another concern is that Teacher K expects the students to suit her teaching style. This concern is noted and understood as the match and mismatch of the teaching style and the learning style. I share this concern with the independent coder’s view, included in Chapter 4, Findings and Discussions. Teacher K also points out the reality that some students show improper learning attitude or

inadequate competency. She thus notes her difficulty in working with this sort of student in the co-reflection meeting. However, with reference to the four rounds of co-reflection and the two videotapes with Teacher K, she indeed shows concern about student's experience and input in her teaching. Anyway, the views raised by the independent coder are beneficial for fine-grained analysis.

Research Ethics

The significance of respect for research ethics, in particular the informed consent of research participants and the protection of privacy, is well addressed. To make sure that the research participants fully know the research objectives and their rights as participants in this project, sets of consent forms for social work students (see Annex 3 of Appendix 6), practice teachers (see Annex 4 of Appendix 6), and service users and placement units (see Annex 5 of Appendix 6) have been prepared. Written consent forms from the students were collected. Besides, practice teachers were reminded constantly not to include the personal identifiable data of clients or agencies in the videotapes, in addition to the written reminder marked on the guidelines on co-reflection meeting together with videotape review. The signed declaration form documenting the disposition of the personal data of research participants (see Annex 6 of Appendix 6) will be submitted to the research participants after the project completion. Having

sought the approval of the study by the Human Subjects Ethics Sub-Committee of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in August 2010, in the following semester, the data collection process was started.

Conclusion

Qualitative and interpretative approaches are adopted to enrich the author's understanding of the highly personalized and probably situated nature of pedagogical practice wisdom at the site of fieldwork education. Co-reflection and videotape reviews are mainly used for capturing the moment-to-moment lived experience of the practice teachers and generating understanding from internal conversation to external dialogue. With reference to what and how practice teachers teach, it was possible to capture data for understanding the conceptual framework of practice wisdom in the context of practice teaching. What follows in the following chapter is to use the empirical reference to discuss the substantive contents of the four features of practice wisdom, the way practice teachers exercise them in their teaching, and its dependent factors.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

As reviewed in the section of Conceptual Analysis of Academic Discussions About Practice Wisdom, many scholars have addressed the slippery concept of practice wisdom. The contents of practice wisdom and its operation in teaching have not been covered yet. Four features of practice wisdom are conceptualized, based upon current academic discussions for guiding this study on unfolding the contents, and revealing how practice teachers exercise them. The findings are spelt out in three sections in this thesis. The first section is about the Substantive Contents of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in the context of fieldwork education. It helps to enrich our understanding of this slippery concept, and advances the current discussions on conceptual analysis. The dynamic interaction of the features of practice wisdom, as exercised by the practice teachers in rendering fieldwork supervision, is discussed in the second section. The practice teachers put relative emphasis on different features, which shapes the pedagogical practice wisdom unique to each of them. A kaleidoscopic view of pedagogical practice wisdom is suggested.

Practice teachers refer to their personal practical knowledge, which comes from professional and teaching experience obtained largely in rendering teaching. Hence, experience grounded teaching is also discussed. They also make

nondeliberative reflection in exercising the four features of practice wisdom in teaching. A possible problem is unraveled, challenging the assumption that an actor simply exercises the four features of practice wisdom as necessarily good. As a result of the rich empirical data on the dynamic operation of the four features, hindsight on the feasibility of nurturing the capability of exercising practice wisdom in teaching in practice teachers is made available. The third section discusses the factors that affect the exercise of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching.

The Substantive Contents of the Features of Practice Wisdom

In this chapter, we unravel the contents of the four features of practice wisdom exercised by practice teachers in teaching. The four features are “Moral Reasoning – Cognitive Knowledge,” the “Agential Nature” and “Interactive Process” of knowledge acquisition, and the “Fluid Status” of knowledge. Before moving on, it is desirable to recapitulate the four features briefly, following the previous conceptual analysis on practice wisdom.

The first feature is the interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge. Moral Reasoning here means that the practice teacher embraces moral value, and is emotionally infused with moral elements when making moral judgments for a particular practice teaching situation. The agent shows a

rational passion in striving for the right and proper action, and a respect for common humanity. The interplay of the Cognitive Knowledge and Moral Reasoning brings the best outcome for human beings. In the context of practice teaching, an analysis of Moral Reasoning discerns in what way the practice teachers combine Cognitive Knowledge with moral capacity to promote the good life of the users. The second feature, Interactive Process, denotes that knowledge is generated through reflective dialogue within the social context. Contextual knowledge and collaborative acquisition of knowing are acknowledged. The third feature, Agential Nature, connotes that the proactive agent gives personal meaning to his or her experiences. The agent formulates or reformulates his or her cognitive framework, based upon the generalized knowledge and personal knowing. The agent does constant reflection in action, and modifies his or her previous thoughts and personal framework instantly. The fourth feature is the Fluid Status of knowledge. Knowledge about specific subject matter may be desirable at a particular time, but does not remain unchanged.

Having briefly recapitulated the features of practice wisdom and their features, what follows is an examination of their substantive contents, based upon the empirical data. The way the practice teachers exercise the four features in

rendering fieldwork supervision and its substantive contents will be discussed subsequently. The contents of the features of practice wisdom provide an empirical reference for enriching our understanding of this slippery concept. For confidentiality and easy reference, in the following sections each practice teacher is assigned an alphabetic letter.

The Interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge

Moral Reasoning. The salient features perceived by the practice teachers are largely moral concern about client's interest, moral principles, moral sensitivity to student's vulnerability to learning, and ethical responsibility to professional social work practice. Relevant examples from each practice teacher are cited for discussion.

Uphold the moral principle of integrity for scrutinizing one's teaching.

Teacher K argued that the practice teacher should be the mentor for student's learning in addition to his or her teaching role. The way the practice teacher performs should be consistent with his or her beliefs. She thinks that she performs consistently in accordance with her beliefs, that is, with integrity, and tries to teach students to behave in this way. She thinks the students will find her actions unconvincing and artificial if she asks them to perform with integrity, but does not do so herself. This implies that she perceives the moral principle of

integrity as the salient feature in guiding herself and students to act in the proper way.

She shared an experience of fighting for the right of an adult student (not the participating student) subjected to ungrounded criticisms by an agency supervisor at the mid-term evaluation meeting. The placement student had an attached placement in which she worked on nonplacement days, and the agency supervisor was her work supervisor as well. She thought that she needed to protect the student because the agency supervisor made harsh comments on the student's capability, while he overlooked the work the student did. Teacher K did not put blame on the student for the agency supervisor's negative comments. She rather gave credit to the student for giving a counter argument against this view of her performance. She expressed a view that differed from the agency supervisor's, and told him what the student did in reality.

For Teacher K this was not an offence to the agency supervisor, but just the right action to tell the truth she knew it. In this process of making a counter argument to the agency supervisor, Teacher K insists that she performs in a way to uphold the correct views of the student's performance. She upholds the moral principle of integrity and scrutinized if she performs in as way consistent with her beliefs. If she does not voice her positive comments on the student's

performance in front of the agency supervisor and the student, she acts inconsistently with her moral principle of integrity. Also, if she does not voice her real views, she cannot enact her teaching of integrity, nor coach the student to perform with integrity. She chooses to act in the way she is, and give the agency supervisor her genuine view that the student indeed performs fine. Besides, she shows discernment in the student's vulnerability to the unsymmetrical power relation with the agency supervisor. The student is also a member of the staff in the same service unit, and the agency supervisor is her work supervisor simultaneously. The student is powerless and helpless to address the hierarchy and power imbalance between them, irrespective of the issue of placement days or nonplacement days.

We do not know why Teacher K comments on the agency supervisor overlooking something the student did. Teacher K as the practice teacher should know well about the student's performance during the placement. It is paramount for her to exchange views with the agency supervisor, especially at the mid-term evaluation meeting in which the practice teacher will take into account of the agency's perspective in assessing the student's performance. She has the moral responsibility to protect the powerless student from unnecessary harm, and to build up the student's sense of confidence. This also helps to induce

enthusiasm in the student for having respect for integrity, as learnt from her.

Teacher K strives for the right action of acting consistently with her beliefs, and protects the student's right and dignity under this unsymmetrical power dimension.

Prioritize client's best interest by teaching student the vigorous process of assessment and deliberation. Teacher F is concerned about the grounds the student considered during an initial child welfare investigation. Teacher F shows a different view of the need to assess the child's mother, who newly arrived from the Mainland. Even though Teacher F does not agree with the student's assessment, she coaches the student to reexamine the grounds for the judgment that there is no need to provide service to the client. For instance, teacher F asked the student why she thought the mother made improvements in parental practice and social support networks. When she found the student could not tell her details of the reason behind her judgment, she asked the student to further explore the updated parental practice and the number of friends the client made in Hong Kong. She immediately demonstrated how to chat with the mother when the student showed difficulty doing so. In addition to this, she taught the student to collect information from other colleagues about the client, as revealed from her participation in the agency service. Teacher F is sensitive to

the student's incapability for doing the rigorous assessment, which may hinder her from taking further investigation of the client's need. She shows the student how to start engaging and collecting information for assessment, and does not leave the student to shoulder the work alone.

Teacher F insists the student shall make a well-grounded assessment before coming up a judgment of no service need, because of the case nature of child protection. She finds the student does not mention or consider the core element of child protection in her assessment. To Teacher F, the student makes the ungrounded assessment because she cannot substantiate her judgment of "improvement" in parental practice and social support network. She discerns the vulnerability of the newly arrived mother to the adjustment of life in Hong Kong, and the need to care for a kid without adequate social support. What concerns here is that the student does not make a deliberative assessment of the protective factors and the risk factors of the mother. The student should make a thorough assessment with deliberative thinking before drawing up the judgment of no service need of the client. The student's decision has possible impact on the client's welfare, especially for the minor's safety. Teacher F is compassionate towards the well-being of the client. She prioritizes the client's welfare in

teaching the student to make vigorous and deliberative assessments and judgments for bringing about the best outcome for client.

At the same time, Teacher F encourages the student to act responsibly.

The mission of the placement agency is to promote children's rights. The student thus should make an effort to work for the best outcome for the children. If the core element of children's safety has not been fully explored, the parties concerned, including the placement agency, the practice teacher, and the student have to shoulder their ethical responsibility to the clients and the social work profession. The student is taught to undertake the ethical responsibility of going through the comprehensive procedures of collecting data from different sources for a well-grounded assessment and judgment for the best interest of the clients.

Prioritize client's best interest with discernment in student's vulnerability

to learning. Teacher M diagnosed a teenager with a complicated family relationship, particularly with the mother. He derived the judgment of rendering a home visit for capturing the crisis for family intervention. The student, however, hesitated to do. As determined from the video, Teacher M checked with the student to see if the placement agency did not allow placement students to conduct home visits. Having clarified the situation, the student just needed to fill out an agency form for getting an endorsement. Teacher M intended not to

make a point of the student's hesitation, but asked her to fill out the form for making arrangement of the home visit accordingly. What followed was that Teacher M helped the student to imagine the family setting, including the distance between the living room and the bedroom, the presence of some family members at the interview, the possible reaction of the teenager, and so forth.

When inquired, Teacher M admitted that he is uncertain if the student can overcome her psychological barrier to render the home visit. He fully understands that the student is inexperienced in working with parents or families. What he is concerned with is to render help to the whole family, in particular the teenager's mother. He is moved by the suffering of the family. It shows his emotional capacity and sensitivity to diverse humanity in undertaking teaching. He prioritizes the best interest of the client, that is, the whole family, over the student's will.

Teacher M engenders the student to take up responsibility as revealed in this teaching scenario. The student is asked to fill out the agency form for rendering a home visit. The action of filling out the agency form indeed is an action of commitment to the agency, the client, and herself. She needs to be accountable for these parties and herself in undertaking the home visit. Meanwhile, teacher M starts from his good intentions of making use of the agency administrative

procedure to build up the student. He knows well that the student is capable and devoted, but has shallow experience in working with families and parents.

Complied with the agency procedure of rendering a home visit, there is no excuse for her to withdraw from taking the family intervention. Teacher M notes it will be a breakthrough for the student if she can make the home visit.

The student faces the tension of undertaking work for which she is less competent, while she is urged to do so. Teacher M does not blame the student's hesitation for a home visit, or let her face the challenge alone. He coaches her on how it will be with demonstrations that take into account the student's limits in working with parents. The way to conduct the home visit is illustrated with the detailed description of the possible home, such as the environment and the response of the family members. He does a rehearsal with the student, and prepares her to conduct the home visit. The student is helped to develop her capability and motivated to work with the family under Teacher M's support and coaching. Teacher M demonstrates the moral sensitivity to the student's vulnerability in facing challenges. He helps to generate a sense of competence and safety in the student, instead of fear in undertaking the home visit.

As referred to above, Teacher M indeed dealt with multiple moral considerations simultaneously. On the one hand, he teaches the student to work

for the client's best interest, and to be responsible to the agency and the client.

On the other hand, he takes care of the student's vulnerability in facing challenges by giving her concrete guidance. He shows the good will to develop the student by making a breakthrough in her learning journey – to work with parents and families although she feels incapable.

Strive for the genuine practice with trustworthy evaluation of one's own

practice. Teacher A perceives genuine practice as the salient feature that influences him to teach the student how to produce a trustworthy and vigorous outcome evaluation. In the supervisory meeting, the student consulted Teacher A about the way to do programme evaluation, as referred to in the agency evaluation form. He taught the student that the form certainly would bring favorable results because of its design. He insisted teaching the placement student to do the outcome evaluation strictly, despite the infeasibility in practice because the intervention was short term, and because of practical considerations of the placement agency. He pointed out the problems with the agency evaluation form, and cited another two types of evaluation methods for student learning. The student was taught not to strive for favorable results with inappropriate means, but to solicit client's feedback in a genuine way.

Teacher A advocates passing down the core values of working with clients in a heartfelt manner. He upholds the moral principle of genuineness in teaching the student to be honest and diligent in getting client feedback on one's work and the intervention outcomes. Several moral elements are involved in his act of teaching. He explicitly teaches the student to know right from wrong. He comments that the agency evaluation form is not scientific, and its design indeed has directed the users to fill in favorable answers. The student is taught not to use inappropriate means for getting favorable results. What follows is instruction on how to do evaluations in a proper and correct way. Teacher A introduces two evaluation methods to the student. He tries to show the student the alternatives that he perceives as good and trustworthy in getting client's feedback.

To Teacher A, teaching of the vigorous procedure of doing evaluation or the scientific evaluation method is not an end. Rather, it is a means to teach the student a genuine attitude. He teaches the student to do the right action by self-scrutinizing his or her work in a genuine way – “Is it right and proper to act in this way?” Despite the practical difficulty, he insists to inform the student of the ideal practice. He has a strong moral perception for genuineness, and encourages the student to discriminate right from wrong. He thus puts great

emphasis on student's compassion for or devotion to working with people.

Teacher A iterates that a compassionate or devoted worker should not strive for favorable results without giving ethical consideration of the intervention mean.

It shows his strong emotional involvement in striving for genuine practice and integrity in his teaching practice.

Privilege ethical responsibility to social work profession by rendering competent practice to clients. Teacher L showed compassion in social work education, which generates his enthusiasm in teaching students the moral responsibility of social work profession to deliver competent practice to clients. For illustration, he conducted three supervisory meetings per week with a placement student (not the participating one), and worked with him in rendering a group, because he recognizes the student's incompetency in reaching the professional standard. Teacher L takes on the role of a moral responsible supervisor, and for the client's benefit, puts extra effort into helping the student improve his practice up to the expected level. He told the student not to enter the social work field, as he could not perform well or meet the professional standard. Teacher L's concept of professional practice and great compassion for the social work profession caused him to teach students to be ethical in rendering competent practice through his intensive teaching.

Teacher L generated enthusiasm in the participating student for rendering professional practice. He repeatedly taught the student to strive for consistency among the goal(s), intervention, and the outcome based evaluation with reference to her work proposal. He regarded the intended goal as teaching the student to achieve the professional standard. For Teacher L, the consistency of the objective, work plan, and outcomes represents the professional standard. He then picks up the SMART model in teaching the student how to refine the intended objective(s) and make it measurable for implementation. As informed by Teacher L, “S” refers to specific, “M” to measurable, “A” to actuality, “R” to realistic, and “T” to timeframe. He shows the importance of moral responsibility in the social work profession, and imbues the student with a sense of commitment to good practice. Teacher L shows emotionally contained capacity and great tolerance whenever the student gets stuck.

Teacher L regards his life as “practice with knowledge.” He upholds the moral responsibility of the profession, and is enthusiastic in inducing students to advance towards the expected professional standards. Students are not condemned despite their inabilities, but coached how to do better. Teacher L shows moral sensitivity and consideration of the student’s vulnerability to learning. Through his enactment of compassion for social work and coaching,

Teacher L generates a sense of capability in students, and a lack of fear in striving for professional practice.

Commonalities of practice teachers in mentoring students. Having discussed the teaching scenarios under which the practice teachers bring in Moral Reasoning, some insights that were gained are illustrated below.

Embrace dual or multiple foci of moral consideration in exercising

Moral Reasoning in teaching. The practice teachers embrace multiple considerations in bringing about Moral Reasoning in their teaching. For instance, Teacher K upholds the moral principle of integrity and moral consideration of student's vulnerability to the unsymmetrical power relation with the agency supervisor. She protects the student from unreasonable critiques and builds up a sense of capability. Teacher F prioritizes the client's best interest, and teaches the student to make a comprehensive assessment for bringing about the best outcome for clients. She needs to embrace moral considerations of the client's interest, ethical responsibility to the placement agency, and student's learning. Similarly, Teacher M takes into account the client's welfare as the paramount consideration. At the same time, he is sensitive to the student's vulnerability in working with families, and motivates her to undertake this responsibility by giving concrete guidance on the way to act.

Teacher A is compassionate about genuine practice, and teaches the student to learn right from wrong and be genuine towards the clients and her.

Teacher L stresses the need to act with compassion in the social work profession, and through his teaching encourages students to do so. Meanwhile, he shows moral sensitivity and consideration of the student's intellectual capability by giving step-by-step guidance. Both teachers refer to the moral consideration of genuine or competent practice by supplying cognitive knowledge through their teaching. The practice teachers do not only show moral concern about the best outcomes for clients, but also for the student's vulnerability during training and ethical responsibility to the placement agency. Furthermore, they take care of multiple moral elements simultaneously in the process of exercising Moral Reasoning in teaching. These include moral responsibility for the client's best interest, moral sensitivity to student's vulnerability to challenges, ethical responsibility to the placement agent and the social work profession, and the moral principle of integrity. Use of Moral Reasoning in teaching is comparatively demanding.

Informed by direct practice wisdom in exercising Moral Reasoning.

There is a notable difference between exercising direct practice wisdom and exercising pedagogical practice wisdom. For example, regarding the former, the

actor is expected to know how to exercise Moral Reasoning in bringing about the best outcome for clients in a nice way. For the latter, the practice teacher is informed by his or her direct practice wisdom in exercising Moral Reasoning in teaching students to learn well. Teacher M shows a different understanding of the teenager's crisis with a complicated family relationship, and conceives the crisis as a good entry point for rendering family intervention that maximizes the best interest of the whole family. Family intervention is regarded as desirable in handling this teenager's explicit behavioral problem and that of the whole family at this critical moment. He learns to adopt family intervention in working with problems of a similar nature, possibly as informed by his practice experience and cognitive knowledge. His practice wisdom likely connotes an accretion of practice experience, the particularities of knowledge specific to this sort of teenager's crisis, and his moral concern for the human good. As informed by his practice wisdom, he makes the moral judgment of rendering a home visit for the good life of the whole family. He coaches the student in a concrete way and facilitates her making a breakthrough in her learning journey.

Similarly, Teacher F is likely informed by her practice wisdom in working with child protection cases or families. She believes that vigorous assessment of the protective factors, such as the parental capability and risks to the child, is

crucial in making sense of the child protection case. Such belief may be developed from her professional experience and cognitive knowledge base. She interprets vigorous assessment with data from various useful sources in making sense of the newly immigrated mother's well-being and parental practice. Such assessment is paramount in tackling child protection cases. The student is taught to collect data in this way for the client's greatest interest. Teacher L is informed by his conception of professional social work practice, in which the intended goals shall be well-defined and consistent with the intervention and outcome evaluation. His conception of good social work practice is probably affected by his values, predisposition, practice experience, and cognitive knowledge. He refers to his cognitive knowledge of the SMART model in teaching the student to render professional practice.

In the case of Teacher A, he shows the cognitive knowledge of different evaluation methods in getting client's feedback in a genuine manner. He conceives that the evaluation methods that he introduces to the student are genuine, while the agency's one not. As guided by both his cognitive knowledge about evaluation methods and moral concern of genuineness, he encourages the student to observe the ethical principle of genuineness in practice. In sum, practice teachers make use of their direct practice wisdom in making

sense of the particular teaching scenario, or making moral judgments in the practice situation faced by the student.

Embrace moral courage. As observed from practice teachers' exercise of Moral Reasoning in their teaching, some of them embrace moral courage in making a decision with an element of risk in making sense of the salient features of a practical situation with a particular student at a specific moment. For illustration, Teacher K is uncertain of the consequence of bringing up views that are contrary to those of the agency supervisor. Possible conflicts may result, which in turn could badly influence the working relationship between Teacher K and the agency in the future. However, she prioritizes the student's rights and the moral principle of integrity, and shows the courage to voice her views. She regarded her action as right as she told the truth and showed discernment in student's vulnerability to the asymmetrical power relation with the agency supervisor. In that context, she exercised moral courage in decision making with an element of risk, subject to her perception of the asymmetrical power relation between the student and the agency supervisor and the unfair critique of the student.

Similarly, Teacher A embraces his moral courage by pointing out the underlying problems of the agency evaluation form for student's learning of

genuine practice. This may be risky, because if the agency becomes aware of his views, it may arouse tension possibly between him and the agency, and even affect the partnership relation between the training institute and the agency in the future. Teacher M takes the risk of overestimating the student's capability, or underestimating the stress induced in rendering the home visit. However, for the good of the client and the family, he gives a lower priority to the student's interest at that particular moment. What he does is to give practical support by rehearsing the home visit with the student. Their teaching likely carries an uncertainty of the consequence on the student or their relationship with the placement agencies. The exercise of moral courage depends on the interaction between the respective practice teacher, his or her perception of the salient feature, and the particular practical situation and the individual student.

Cognitive Knowledge. With regard to the above discussion, the practice teachers bring Moral Reasoning into teaching. Other than the commonality of Moral Reasoning, what is the place of Cognitive Knowledge in practice wisdom? As stipulated in Chapter 2, the place of Cognitive Knowledge of practice wisdom is well acknowledged by scholars. For example, the need for an accountable knowledge base of the practitioner is argued by Tsang (2008). Practice wisdom is regarded as a product of the intersection of theory and practice by Chu and Tsui

(2008). Formal knowledge is helpful in informing the practitioners, especially the inexperienced ones, in making sense of the practice situation and the possible ways of handling it. The term Cognitive Knowledge is adopted here because it can embrace the wider perspective of propositional knowledge, which includes theories, theoretical concepts, knowledge from other disciplines, and so forth. In the following section, we are going to explore in what way practice teachers exercise Cognitive Knowledge in facilitating students to practice in client's best interest.

Teach Cognitive Knowledge for rendering competent practice for the good of the client. This teaching scenario is about Teacher L, who probes the student to identify the key wordings as laid down for the intended objectives of a work proposal. He told the student that to know is different from to grasp (掌握), in terms of its depth of input and understanding, as given and acquired by the student worker and the users, respectively. Knowing is different from grasping, whereas the latter connotes deeper knowing. Teacher L further probed the student to think about the difference among the words teach, nurture, and grasp, as spelt out in the programme proposal. Teacher L informed the student that thinking connoted reflection. The student was requested to define well the objectives that determined the intervention. Teacher L shows the knowledge

base and teaches the student Cognitive Knowledge to discriminate the depth of intervention required for achieving the goals for the client's benefit.

Teacher L believes that conceptual knowledge can guide students to render service in a comparatively accurate way. He points out the common problem that students tend to mistakenly consider the work process to be the objective. The student is requested to figure out her expectation for the parents' parental capacity after the programme. To Teacher L, practice teachers have a role in helping students to practice with the conceptual knowledge or theories, in order to best rendering competent or good practice for the clients. For illustration, he briefly reviewed the key concepts of the course "Programme Planning" with the student. It implies that he is attentive to classroom teaching and makes an attempt to help the student link up classroom learning with practice, for rendering responsive service to clients. Because of his belief of the contribution of Cognitive Knowledge to providing desirable service and intervention outcomes, he persistently teaches the student to differentiate the concepts thoroughly in laying down the intervention goals. Hence, Cognitive Knowledge is not used or taught alone but with moral consideration of client's welfare. He further notes that practice teachers should have concrete experience specific to the placement practice setting, and be alert to classroom teaching for

facilitating students in informed practice. It reveals his wider perspective of knowledge, which includes the particularities of work experience in informing teaching.

Reframe student's input in bringing about new knowing to students.

Teacher K showed similar views as Teacher L about the practice teacher's role in helping students to acquire Cognitive Knowledge for rendering professional or competent practice. The difference between them is that Teacher K reframed student's input in bringing about new learning to students. She noted the training institutes are responsible for teaching students theory, while she helps students to identify the underlying conceptual knowledge of their practice.

Teacher K critiqued the paradoxical demand on both the practice teacher and the student in undertaking the difficult task of integration of theory with practice while there is less support for practice teachers. This helps illustrate why Teacher K does not teach theories to the participating student.

Teacher K reiterates that she does not want to impart new knowledge to students. Rather she prefers to make use of their inputs in bringing about new understanding or knowing. For instance, she helps the student to review her understanding of the teenager, and reframes this understanding for giving new insights to her. Reframing here is the conceptualization of the concrete practice

experience. Teacher K conceptualizes key concepts, such as engagement, review, and reflection, immediately after having listened to the student's report of her work with the teenager. As observed from the videotapes, she pointed out the respective stages of the helping process following the student's verbal report of her work with the teenage client. This resulted in the student consolidating the work she did with the teenager. Teacher K transcends the student's concrete experience with abstract concepts, and inspires the student to render professional practice with the backup of conceptual knowledge. Professional or good practice should embrace Cognitive Knowledge.

Teach integrative knowledge and differential use of knowledge for

client's benefit. In the supervisory meeting, Teacher A encouraged the student to learn youth employment service from multi-perspectives. He explained to the student the youth employment policy and the current supportive services provided by different departments, including the Labour Department and the Social Welfare Department. The Labour Department is concerned with this issue mainly from a political perspective, to promote the stability of the society. The Social and Welfare Department is largely concerned with the youth, from both the psychological and developmental perspectives. Teacher A notes that students have to discriminate the underlying ideology of different policies in making sense

of the youth employment issue. They thus can appreciate the roles of different disciplines, and their contributions to the wellness of the young people. This possibly reflects Teacher A's teaching of the integrative knowledge. As he argued, the participating student is encouraged to learn why and in what way social workers can meet the multifarious needs of the unemployed youth by knowing what existing services are provided by different parties. The student will gain a better understanding of why and how to provide services for unemployed youth with regard to their psychological and developmental wellbeing.

Like Teacher L, Teacher A thinks that students have learnt the theories in the classroom, but they do not know how to apply them in practice. He inspires the student to acquire knowledge about youth from the psychological perspective and the political perspective. The student is facilitated to look into the youth policy for enriching her understanding of the youth services and the possible ways to work with the young people. Students are expected to acquire knowledge from multi-perspectives (he names it “通” in Chinese). He is concerned about the place of formal theories or theoretical knowledge in teaching. For illustration, he always taught the student to make hypothesis or assumptions on understanding students newly arrived from the Mainland, as revealed from the

videotapes. He is concerned if the students' intervention was guided by hypothesis, that is, a theoretical framework, such as self-concept, conception of family, and so forth. To him, students should acquire the prerequisite of basic understanding of the concepts before using the theories in practice. Acquisition of knowledge from different disciplines helps students to understand clients' multifaceted needs from an alternative perspective, and to render responsive services in a better way. The actor is informed by cognitive knowledge in making sense of the practice situation or the social phenomena, and guiding his or her intervention for desirably catering to the client's needs.

Teacher A notes the significance of having the intellectual capability to discriminate the nature of theories, which is seldom appreciated by social workers or students. According to him, some theories are helpful for making analysis of the practice situation, while some are facilitative to intervention. He thus coaches the student to categorize theories into those for working with the children and for analysis. The student is taught to discriminate the nature of different kinds of theories and to make differential use of them. Cognitive Knowledge is used along with moral concerns of client's needs. He has an accountable knowledge base, and the ability to select the knowledge that is useful for making sense of the practice situation. Hence, he does not teach the student Cognitive

Knowledge only, but emphasizes its use with reference to the context. The commonality of contextual knowledge will be thoroughly examined subsequently in this chapter.

Teach the particularities of knowledge. Teacher F notes her role in helping students to practice with theoretical backup for serving client's best interest. However, she does not think it is the practice teacher's role to teach students theories, because the training institutes should be responsible for this. She and Teacher K share the same view about the division of labour between the training institutes and the practice teachers in teaching students theories or propositional knowledge. She is concerned about the particularities of knowledge that is appropriate to the service setting. For illustration, she requests the participating student to review books in advance on parenting skills, including the use of praise, in view of the child protection service nature of the placement agency.

Teacher F uses her lived experience in teaching concepts to the student. For illustration, regarding a case under investigation, the student put focus on the issue of life protection, whereas she determined it to be a nonfilial beating that connoted parental authority. She picked up on the teacher-student relationship for illustration of a relational perspective for which the student could not

understand parental authority. She explained to the student that if a teacher was highly respected by students, he or she would be treated with respect, even she or he had already resigned. Teacher F has been inspired to make use of a parallel example of teacher and student relationships to illustrate the situation when the student cannot understand the relationship feature in parental authority. Hence, Teacher F's teaching is inspired by the student's difficulty in making sense of the practice situation of a nonfilial beating.

As argued by Teacher F, students are expected to perform informed practice, but not to justify their practice based upon the consequence of the action. She argues that most students practice without using the theory that they lay down in the work plan, and thus they just perform fragmented practice. If a trained social worker performs without theoretical backup, he or she cannot help differentiate himself or herself from a layman. This implies that she assumes that professional practice connotes cognitive knowledge. Students are expected to know well the reasons for making such a change in working approach for the purpose of showing their understanding of what they do and its theoretical basis. Teacher F does not rule out the desirability of formal theory for particular practice situations.

Teacher M places less emphasis on teaching of Cognitive Knowledge.

Teacher M performs differently from the aforesaid four teachers in his placement of Cognitive Knowledge in teaching. He is comparatively less active in bringing about either theory or conceptual knowledge in teaching. A teaching scenario illuminates his moral consideration of client's benefit, as revealed from his teaching of group dynamics. Teacher M reviewed a videotape with the student about her work with a group of young people. He asked the student if she always speaks so fast, or this was a single incident. The student noted that she usually speaks in a speedy manner, and did so in presenting to the young people what she prepared. Teacher M cautioned her about her tendency to impart her conception of good to clients without allowing them get involved in the work process. This possibly reflected her dominant attitude. The student was alerted to the interaction among members because she was attentive to her tendency to talk without inviting members' views or participation.

Teacher M prefers to review the videotape with the student by picking up scenarios for facilitating her knowing about group dynamics such as leadership, nonverbal message, dominancy, and so forth. He regards the episode described above as teaching both the attitude and cognitive knowledge of group dynamics. This was the sole episode in which he explicitly acknowledges the teaching of

conceptual knowledge. This possibly reveals that he places less attention on Cognitive Knowledge in his teaching practice. Rather, he puts more emphasis on bringing about an expanded notion of knowledge, which includes understanding of humanity and self-understanding (this will be thoroughly examined in the following section of the Dynamic Interaction of the Features of Practice Wisdom). He brings about the issue of group dynamics for discussion with the student because of his understanding of the student's dominating attitude at the cost of the young people's participation in exploration of the challenges in their lives. He does not judge the student's dominance in a direct manner, but inspires the student to value inputs from clients for expanding their understanding of the heterosexual relationship for their wellbeing. The student is guided to reflect on her dominancy, and give attention to the client's input of valuable lived experiences.

Summing up. Having discussed the ways of exercising Cognitive Knowledge in teaching, all teachers except Teacher M explicitly acknowledge its central place in practice teaching. Teachers K, A, F, and L think that students have learnt formal theories in the classroom. As the practice teachers, they play the role of helping students to use concepts and to widen their knowledge base in practice. Teaching of theories is not the responsibility of practice teachers.

Besides, good or professional practice should pass on cognitive knowledge or theories that can likely benefit client's needs. Despite these commonalities, practice teachers show different views on the way students acquiring cognitive knowledge.

Cognitive knowledge informs good practice for client's well being. All practice teachers except Teacher M show explicit concern that students should be well-informed by cognitive knowledge in rendering practice. As referred to in the previous discussions, Teachers K, L, A, and F explicitly address the contribution of cognitive knowledge or theories about good or professional practice. For example, Teacher K calls students laypeople, as they are not aware of the underlying concepts of their practice. This means that professional practice is grounded on cognitive knowledge. Teacher L notes that cognitive knowledge helps students to render service in a comparatively accurate way. This means that cognitive knowledge can lead to good practice, which in turn most benefits. Teacher F comments that students' work is fragmented because they practice without understanding of the theory. Teacher A iterates the need of having hypotheses in guiding one's practice. All of these illustrate an underlying assumption that good or professional practice should incorporate conceptual knowledge or formal theories. Despite the central place of concepts

and formal theories in their teaching, they do not rule out alternative forms of knowledge, such as self-understanding and experience. This will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs of this chapter.

In view of the significance of cognitive knowledge, the training institutes are expected to teach students formal theory. The participating practice teachers do not assume to undertake this responsibility at the site of practice. Among them, Teacher K and Teacher F explicitly spell out the above-mentioned division of labor between the training institutes and practice teachers. They note that for the benefit of clients, practice teachers should facilitate students in connecting practice and cognitive knowledge when rendering good professional practice. This reveals the place of cognitive knowledge in informing practice. The facet of Cognitive Knowledge is actively exercised as revealed from their teaching but not in a technical, rational way. For instance, Teacher K reframed student's input in bringing about new knowing for students. Teacher A taught integrative knowledge and differential use of knowledge for the client's benefit.

Acquire new knowledge versus new understanding of knowing.

Practice teachers act differently in bringing Cognitive Knowledge into their teaching. For illustration, Teacher A puts emphasis on teaching students to differentiate the nature of theories and use them differentially in view of the

context. Additionally, he is directive in teaching students the integrative knowledge from different disciplines to make sense of the youth employment services. Similarly, Teacher F is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge specific to the service setting or clients. She requests students to review books on knowledge specific to the placement setting, and have discussions with her. These help the students to equip themselves with knowledge that is beyond their existing store of cognitive knowledge, in order to meet clients' needs in the best way.

Teachers K, M and L adopt an approach that is different from Teachers A and F. Teacher K shapes the participating student's input, such as work assignments, verbal reports, and ideas about acquiring new understanding of knowing. As she said, she just helps to conceptualize the underlying concepts based upon the student's work. Similarly, Teacher M does not teach new cognitive knowledge, but encourages the student to reflect on her dominance and the resulting inactive group interaction, which are out of her awareness. The student thus gains new understanding of herself. Teacher L believes that students have learnt theoretical knowledge or theories from the classroom, but cannot not recall or use them in practice. He thus helps students to recall classroom learning first, and then to use it in making sense of their practice.

Both teachers tend to start from what students have, and inspire them to gain new understanding of what they have done or learnt.

Recapitulation of the contents of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive

Knowledge. Practice teachers embrace value and are emotionally infused with moral considerations in making sense of whether their teaching is right and proper for unique and uncertain practice situations. In their teaching practice, they capture the salient features of client's interest, moral principles, moral sensitivity to student's vulnerability to learning, and ethical responsibility to professional social work practice. As stipulated before, practice teachers usually embrace dual or multiple foci of moral consideration in exercising moral reasoning. They show their moral concern about the good life of clients and the desirability of students' work for clients' interest. Students are nurtured in the capacity to use cognitive knowledge in the work process for rendering good and competent practice. Goldstein (1990) notes that theories and knowledge are one of the sources of practice wisdom. O'Sullivan (2005) also acknowledges the practitioners' professional knowledge as derived from professional training and empirical work of others. All practice teachers except Teacher M explicitly recognize the contribution of cognitive knowledge or theories to good and competent practice. Although he does not place cognitive knowledge in such a

central role as the others, he teaches the student the group dynamics of getting the users' views, and inspires the student to reflect her on her dominating style.

These five practice teachers teach students cognitive knowledge, and nurture in them the capability of discernment in practice for the good life of clients.

The Interactive Process of Knowledge Acquisition

Having analyzed the contents of the feature of interplay between Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge, the next feature to be analyzed is the Interactive Process of knowledge acquisition. This includes contextual knowledge and the collaborative process of knowledge generation. Contextual knowledge refers to the use of knowledge with reference to its context. Contextual knowledge is specific to the context at a particular time, and is concerned in understanding pedagogical practice wisdom. The collaborative process refers to knowledge that is generated in the interactive process with the context. Generally speaking, the nature of practice teaching is more interactive than classroom teaching. Practice teachers are expected to render teaching in response to the student at the site of an uncertain and complex practice zone. Empirical reference reveals that individual practice teachers exercise differently in bringing about the aforesaid two commonalities.

Collaborative learning of the complicated humanity. Referring to an earlier discussion, Teacher K utilizes student's input in the generation of theoretical concepts. Without the input of the student, knowledge generation is less feasible in her teaching. It indeed is a sort of collaborative learning. She reframes the student's input, and works collaboratively with the student, in bringing in new learning or understanding to the student. Instead of teaching the concepts, Teacher K works collaboratively with the student in making sense of a teenager's sense of inferiority, and building up a new understanding of the challenges the teenager faced in his life.

For illustration, the student reported that the teenager regarded himself "*hea*". (In Cantonese this carries the negative meaning of nonconstructive contributive behaviours. It is commonly used for describing young people in Hong Kong). Actually, the student considered the teenager not to be active in the work process, as he arrived late for meetings several times. Teacher K inspired the student to examine what came to her mind when she was picturing the client's work performance. Teacher K further encouraged her to consider why the client felt "*hea*", but not happy when he did not need to do much work. The student replied slowly that the client did not mind to work. The student

acknowledged the teenager's need for a job and great effort made in undertaking the labour.

As revealed from the above discussion, the student has been guided to reflect her feelings towards the teenager and the underlying messages as brought about by him. The student reexamines her feelings towards the teenager's vulnerability – sense of worthlessness, hardship in taking up the labour, and the psychological burden of being inspected by a superior. The student finally re-understands her conception of the client, and acknowledges the client's commitment to self-enhancement. She begins to recognize the client's efforts made in the helping process, as he waits for her call for an interview. Teacher K demonstrates the dimension of humanity, and engenders the student to reflect and reconstitute her understanding of the teenager's vulnerability. Other than the reconstitution of understanding, the student is coached to acquire self-understanding via self-reflection. The student gets a better understanding of the client via the external dialogue with Teacher K and her self-dialogue about her preconceptions of the client. Teacher K and the student work collaboratively in bringing about a new understanding of the client's frustration in his life journey. Without the participation of both parties, new understanding of the teenager's vulnerability most probably cannot be acquired.

The above situation is similar to that of Teacher M, who collaboratively works with the student in making sense of a teenager's mother's sufferings. As observed from the videotape, Teacher M probed the student to think why she asked the client to empathize with her mother's feelings. The student expected the client to feel the unhappiness of her mother, and to show acceptance of her. What Teacher M did was to repeat the client's conversation as narrated by the student in the first person: "I will not do it again as mum is very hard." He further asked the student what the challenge was to the client. The student replied that it was the client's mother's desperation. The student noted that the mother indeed loved the client, but the client did not know her central role in her mum's life.

With strong emotional involvement, Teacher M and the student work together to make sense of the conflicting feelings of the mother towards the client – love, pain, anger, and so forth. He inspires the student to tune in to the client's role and understanding the mother's suffering at a deeper way. The student is coached to connect her feelings with the client's mother and "witness" her pain. The teenage client is helped to acquire dignity in view of her significance in her mother's life. The client will not focus on her mother's words only, but on her love as well. Teacher M recognizes that the understanding of the mother's

suffering will not happen if the student is not sensitive enough in making sense of human nature. With this initiative, he brings this sensitive student to know humanity in a deeper way. Further, he notes that this kind of new understanding is generated via a collaborative process between the practice teacher and the student who possesses a sufficient sense of safety. Sense of safety, a factor that influences the exercise of the features of practice wisdom in teaching, will be examined in the section of the Factors in the Exercise of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching in Chapter 4.

Pace teaching to student's capability. Teacher L shows moral sensitivity to the student's pace of learning, and facilitates on-time collaborative learning. He upholds the belief that students are able to own their learning if they discover learning on their feet. A teaching scenario shows that he probed the student to think of why she took a break when the children's group was still in progress. The student replied that the children moved around, so that she had to take a break. He then probed the student to recall her learning about children's attention span and the possible reasons for their inattentive behaviors. The student replied: "At the client's pace." Teacher L then instructed the student about the short attention span of children, and how they became bored because of her long debriefing. This illuminates the collaborative process between Teacher

L and the student in making sense of the children's behaviors with reference to the conceptual knowledge of children's characteristics.

Teacher L opines that the collaboration of the practice teacher and student can generate deeper learning. To him, practice is essential for students to grasp learning in a deeper way. It is fine with him even when students make progress steadily through trial and error. He shows acceptance for student's limits, and paces his teaching to the student's capability in facilitation of collaborative learning.

Tension between the fancy wish and the reality. Both Teacher F and Teacher A acknowledge the interactive nature of fieldwork supervision in which the practice teacher should conduct teaching in response to the student's need in learning. Students are expected to explore knowing on their own via the interactive teaching and learning process. However, as revealed from the primary data of videotapes, they both are less active in involving students to generate knowledge or understanding in a collaborative way. This may be explained by the differing emphasis they place on other features of practice wisdom in their teaching. This will be investigated in more detail in the next section.

In Teacher F's case, practice teaching is regarded as interactive, and she expects students to be participative in knowledge acquisition. However, she comments that the participating student who does not explicitly voice her views or state the concrete content of the practice scenarios is introversive. She sometimes does not wait for her response, and continues to talk more. The student is less able to get involved in the process of knowledge acquisition. Teacher F shares her usual practice of raising more questions with the capable student and talking less about her experiences. The student's ability to give verbal response to her questions determines the availability of opportunity of acquiring knowledge in an active or interactive manner. The intellectual capability of students likely has influence on the nature of collaborative learning in teaching in Teacher F's teaching practice.

Similarly, Teacher A notes firmly that he renders teaching in response to students' needs. He asks for students' feedback in deriving the substantive contents of his teaching. Teacher A shares his practice of incorporating students' feedback in deriving the contents of supervision. As observed from the teaching scenarios, he tends to ask probing questions. He wants students to figure out the answers on their own, and gives coaching if needed. However, in practice, he usually informs students directly, which has led to an inactive role of

the participating student in the process of knowledge acquisition. He prefers apprenticeship in practice teaching, and that has led to directive teaching. He acts as a master who imparts knowledge and or skills to his apprentices via the provision of a short cut to the best end. This helps to explain why the student usually only listens to him, and is less participative in the generation of knowledge. This is inconsistent with his expectation for the student's active role in knowledge acquisition.

As revealed above, none of the teachers confine knowledge generation to a single mind, but consider it an interaction with the context. The active role of the participating students in the process of knowledge acquisition is cognitively acknowledged. However, they exercise the commonality of collaborative learning differently. In the cases of Teacher K and Teacher M, it involves dialogic reflections of dialogues that occurred between the practice teacher and the student. They treasure the dialogue with students in making sense of the complicated nature of humanity. Regarding Teacher L, he captures the student's relevant learning experience, and inspires the student to make sense of the practice situation in acquisition of new understanding together. Acquisition of knowledge or understanding with the full awareness of the existence of the other – student's voice is well recognized. For this reason, knowledge is always

provisional and never monopolized. Teacher F and Teacher A intend to render teaching in response to the student's capability and learning needs. However, the less verbally expressive students are less able to be involved by Teacher F in the process of exploration of learning or knowledge. Teacher A's predisposition to directive teaching has possibly limited the opportunity to generate knowledge in interaction with students. They act in a way that is different from their ideal Interactive Process of learning and teaching.

Understanding or knowing is derived through external dialogue in the collaborative process. As Stenberg notes (2010), "An experience is approached from different viewpoints and both parties find a new understanding." (p. 340). Knowledge is generated through the interactive process with the context including the clients. Donald Krill (1990) addresses that reflection from practice experiences with different clients contributes to the development of practice wisdom. Dybicz (2004) also acknowledges learning from the engagement process with clients and the ability to recognize his ignorance through self-reflection as argued by Socrates. Practice wisdom is not generated within the single mind of an individual, but in collaboration with the context, including the clients and students. The extent to which practice teachers involve students in the collaborative generation of knowledge or understanding may best be

illuminated by how they exercise the commonality of collaborative learning of practice wisdom in teaching.

Contextual knowledge. Having discussed the contents of the collaborative process of knowledge generation, I will now examine the substantive contents and operation of another commonality – Contextual Knowledge. It means that teaching is rendered with reference to the practice situation. The use of knowledge with consideration for a particular type of person in a particular situation is a concern of practice wisdom. The commonality of Contextual Knowledge as brought in by the practice teachers, along with the supporting empirical reference, is discussed below.

Render context dependent teaching. Teacher M often asks the student about the teenage client's reaction in response to her intervention. As the practice teacher, he can see what the student does with the client during the process of interview, as well as the impacts of the student's action on the client. He can then help the student to acknowledge, for her learning, client's reactions that she has overlooked. Teacher M plays the student worker role, and tries to reflect what the student does with the client, in order to reveal the practice situation and teach the student in a concrete way. For instance, in the supervisory meeting, he found the student only mentioned the client's promise to

write an apologetic letter to her mother, but did not go into the details with the client. He asked the student if the client specified the date of issue and who usually collects the letters from the mailbox. Obviously, Teacher M coaches the student to drill in the concrete practice situation. It illustrates his concern about knowledge and teaching that are specific to the unique practice situation.

Similarly, Teacher K puts great emphasis on knowing the details of the student's direct practice, and rendering teaching in a specific way. In the supervisory meeting, the student was asked to voice her views about the teenage client who works in a tough work setting, in comparison compared with the general characteristics of teenagers. She inspired the student to make sense of the client's hardship compared with the larger group of teenagers at the same age. Teacher K notes that the detailed and concrete practice situation can facilitate learning and teaching. She thinks that the concrete information of the practice situation can facilitate her knowledge of the direction of teaching, and then guide the student to reflect. With reference to the particularities of information, she is more able to taste the student's response and the client's reaction to the student. In-depth discussion is feasible after having explored the concrete conversations between the student and the client. In short, she tends to look for more concrete or substantive details of the practice situation in rendering teaching.

Following up an earlier discussion, Teacher F usually requests students to review books on theories and knowledge specific to the service setting or the clients. Additionally, she puts focal attention on the specificity or concreteness of knowledge, as do Teacher K and Teacher M. For instance, she constantly raised questions in a specific manner immediately following the student's verbal report of work in the supervisory meetings. The student was queried why she thought the mother well-adjusted. The student replied that she went to the market with some neighbors. She then asked the student how frequent the mother went there with her neighbors. To her, it is impossible to assess the desirability of the student's intervention or assessment if the student cannot provide concrete or specific information on the practice situation. As a practice teacher, she needs to make use of the student's perspective to help her know the client. Teacher F iterates that she will not teach students the general principles, but will only address issues specific to the practice situation.

Teach context dependent knowledge. In addition to teaching in context, some practice teachers also bring contextual knowledge to their teaching.

Teacher F points out that knowing is a relative concept, and people need to make reference to the context for better understanding. It may be fine for one individual to have three friends, but not for others. Therefore, it is difficult to

judge if a certain number of neighbors is adequate for having informal support.

She further argues that people should make reference to the context in making sense of the theories. Social work theories are built up by collating people's accumulated experience at a particular time. There is inevitably a change in either the societal or the cultural aspects after a certain period of time. She recognizes the changeability of the context, suggests that students reconstitute their knowing with reference to the context. Some people may not prefer the worker to have self-disclosure, but some do. The contextual dimension in using practice skills and theories is addressed.

Teacher A also acknowledges contextual knowledge in his teaching. For instance, the student intended to use Piaget's theory of cognitive development in working with adolescents. Teacher A told her that the theory was relevant for understanding children, but not adolescents. He asked the student to think about the cognitive stage of the children and the adolescents as informed by Piaget, and the relevancy of Eric Erikson's stages of psychosocial development to her group members who came from a school of lower academic banding. He did not think that the adolescents from a lower banded school developed in the way as depicted by Eric Erikson. The student was taught to consider the desirability of the theories with reference to the particular practice setting or clients, but not to apply

it in a deductive hypothetical way. Thus he does not instruct the student about propositional knowledge only, but also teaches about its desirability to the particular target group under a specific practice situation.

As for Teacher L, he regards acquisition of contextual knowledge as the direction of professional development for the new generation of social workers. In the supervisory meeting, he taught the student to reexamine her understanding of group development in view of different group structures, objectives, and backgrounds. He believes that the student's understanding of the duration of the group for a particular service goal at a particular practice setting is not necessarily desirable in another service setting or target group. Hence, he addresses the particularities of knowledge under different practice situations, that is, the variation of group development from case to case. He recapitulates his expectation that students deliberate on the effect of the intervention for the client's interest when making a decision on the required number of group sessions.

To Teacher L, what the students planned is their tentative idea, but it is not necessarily feasible in practice, as they do not know the clients. For example, the number of games or work exercises to be conducted varies from case to case, and depends upon its impact on the clients. It is understood that the quality of

improvisation is needed, as the student is engendered to work with the unplanned rather than the planned situation. He nurtures students in the development of such flexibility in practice.

In sum, practice teachers exercise the commonality of contextual knowledge in different ways. Teacher K and Teacher M do not express explicitly the use of theory or theoretical concepts with reference to the actual practice situation. Instead, they both are concerned about the particularities of knowledge of the practice situation for facilitating teaching in context. Teacher F is concerned about both the particularities of knowing and teaching that are relevant to the context. To them, the concreteness of the practice situation and the particularities of knowledge are prerequisites for rendering teaching that is appropriate to student's learning in a good way. Teachers F, L, and A teach students the use of theories or practice skills with reference to the specific practice situation and target group for the client's best interest.

As noted by Polkinghorne (2004), phronesis is the reasoning used to deliberate about good actions (p. 114). The activity of living well is termed "praxis" by Aristotle. Phronesis is practical knowledge that is concerned with actions that related to human beings and are expressions of the good life.

Practice in the realm of change and contingency is acknowledged. The agent is

receptive to particulars and has the quality of improvisation. This is similar to Tsang's (2008) view of context-dependent knowledge of practice wisdom. Kwong (1996) also interprets practice wisdom as a kind of context-relevant knowledge. Practice teachers exercise the commonality of contextual knowledge that is the Interactive Process in teaching, and engender students to acquire the particularities of social work expertise for the specific practice situation.

The Agential Nature of Knowledge

The third feature of practice wisdom is the Agential Nature of knowledge. It includes the commonalities of a range of knowledge forms and the agential agent in knowledge generation via on-going reflection and experience. All practice teachers except Teacher A exercise this feature actively. The overall picture of Teacher A (and the other four teachers) in exercising the four features of practice wisdom in his teaching will be discussed at length in the next section.

Experience is a form of knowledge. As referred to in the previous discussion, all practice teachers except Teacher M explicitly acknowledge the place of cognitive knowledge or theories in informing practice. Despite the due attention they give to cognitive knowledge, they do not take it as the sole valid form of knowledge. They rather adopt a wider perspective on knowledge.

Teacher F and Teacher L acknowledge experience as a kind of knowledge.

Teacher F recognizes the desirability of theories and conceptual knowledge in informing practice, but highlights the need to modify one's own understanding of the theories if needed. Experience and practice are contributive to people's growth. She believes that experience and practice wisdom are accumulated in this way. This implies that the agent knows the pertinent theories, including its limits and desirability in practice. Lived experience contributes to the acquisition of knowledge and the development of competence.

Teacher F regards social work practice as being about the lived experience of human beings. Students or workers with lived experience are capable of using theoretical knowledge in making sense of the practice situation in a better way. She encourages the participating student to pay attention to her surroundings and to learn from daily life experience. This reveals Teacher F's dual focus on lived experience and cognitive knowledge in her teaching practice. She believes that theories can inform practice, but they are not necessarily permanently correct due to the changing context. Instead, practice can inform theory. She notes that the actor whose has accumulated experience via action can revise his/her understanding of the concepts (or theories) or review the limits of the theories. Knowledge is not regarded as objective truth, but provisional

and changeable. She demonstrates the vision of proposing the alternative for revision of theories.

Similarly, Teacher L places emphasis on the role of informed practice, but also acknowledges the possibility of the agent in acquiring new knowing simultaneously. For instance, the participating student is suggested to interact with the practice situation, and to generate particular knowledge on group development specific to the particular practice situation. As discussed earlier, he teaches the student to understand the nature of the ill-defined number of group sessions, which is required for going through the group development. Hence, there is an absence of a well-defined answer on the number of group sessions for going through different stages of group development. He concludes that the participating student may be able understand in a better way the brainstorming stage with reference to clients' conversations and the dynamic interaction among them. To him, students have to acquire concrete experience, and develop and consolidate their knowledge of the way they act under different practice settings. The student has been granted support for the transformation of practice experience into knowledge. Practice can help a person to reinterpret theories and create new understanding. Practical knowledge comes along with accumulated experience.

Proactive in generation of new understanding via reflection. The above discussion of practice teachers' teaching practice illuminates the ways Teacher K and Teacher M have unfolded the understanding of humankind with students in a collaborative way. It indeed reflects the underpinning epistemological assumption of the agential agent in knowledge generation. Students are regarded as participative and proactive in the process of acquiring knowledge or new understanding. Teacher K arouses the student's motivation and interest in discovering and making sense of the teenage offender via self-exploration. She conceives that the student unconsciously discovers an understanding of the teenager on her own, via self-dialogue. She mainly helps students to organize their thoughts in a constructive way, and to capture issues that are out of their cognitive awareness. This illustrates her epistemological assumption of the agential agent in acquisition of new understanding via reflection.

Similarly, Teacher M always probes the student to figure out her understanding, and teaches the student to inspire the members to voice their ideas, rather to listen to her solely. He, however, notes that he is uncertain if he is right. This likely represents the Agential Nature of knowledge as understood by him. He intends to inspire the student to think or generate insights by asking

probing questions, like “What else?” He puts emphasis on equipping the student with an alternative perspective, and engendering her to undergo self-reflection on her dominancy. The student has been inspired to figure out her understanding via reflection, and not to receive knowledge from him solely. Teacher M believes that the fieldwork practicum belongs to students. He as the practice teacher is an assistant to facilitate students in the acquisition of knowledge and new understanding. The participative nature of the student in the process of knowledge generation is given good attention in his teaching.

Built-in dialectic in teaching: A sense of self-query. In reference to Teacher A’s teaching practice, he is directive in teaching because of his preference for apprenticeship in practice teaching. He usually informs students of what to do, and corrects the student’s practice in a directive way. This helps to explain the less salient feature of the Agential Nature in his teaching. Despite his directive teaching, he expects students to demonstrate critical thinking and challenge him. It is best exemplified from his giving grades of A to those students who give contrary views or challenges to his teaching. On the one hand, students are expected to follow his instruction in what to do and how to do it properly. On the other hand, he appreciates those students who demonstrate the ability to raise contrary views or point out what is wrong with his teaching.

He, as the master, instructs students on how and what to do, but simultaneously allows them to express contrary views. A sense of self-query is built in into Teacher A, which leads to a dialectic mind and fluid teaching.

As referred to in the above-mentioned discussion, most practice teachers exercise the feature of the Agential Nature of knowledge in their teaching.

Knowledge is not objective, or out there for acquisition following a set of procedures. Rather, it is agential in nature, and the subjects, for example, the students, are proactive and participative in the generation of knowledge or new understanding. Practice teachers' conception of knowledge as reflected in their teaching can be understood via two points as follows.

The wider perspective of knowledge. Practice teachers interpret knowledge with a wider perspective. It includes experience and the understanding of humanity. Teacher F finds that the participating student is less spontaneous or capable of making sense of the practice situation because of inadequate lived experience. She suggests that the student nurture her sense of sensitivity and spontaneity, starting by giving attention to daily life experiences. Similarly, Teacher L acknowledges experience as a form of knowledge. He opines that students can enhance their practice competence via the accumulation of experience. To them, experience is both a form of knowledge and a source of

knowledge generation. Teacher K and Teacher M put understanding of humanities is the content of teaching. For instance, Teacher K helps foster in the student the capacity to connect with her own feelings and the feelings of the young offender, such as shame, pain, and inferiority. Knowledge is not confined to propositional knowledge, but is expanded to lived experience and understanding of humanity.

Knowledge comes along with action and reflection. In the wider perspective on knowledge, knowledge acquisition does not occur solely because the knowledgeable person passes on knowledge to the receivers. Instead, knowledge can be acquired via the agent's ongoing action and reflection. Teacher F and Teacher L hold the belief that theory can inform practice, while practice can inform theory as well. They teach students to reconstitute or generate new knowing via practice and experience. Teacher M and Teacher K regard students participative and proactive in knowledge generation via reflection and self-exploration. They both believe that students can discover learning on their own, and that they own the new learning. Knowledge can be acquired via ongoing action and reflection, and does not necessarily depend on scientific means or procedures.

Practice teachers exercise the feature of the Agential Nature of knowledge in teaching. Students are taught to go beyond the acquisition of pure knowledge, and acknowledge experience and understanding of humanity for development of their personal knowledge via experience and practice. These epistemological assumptions on the nature of knowledge and the agent indeed reveal the commonalities of practice wisdom as stipulated in Chapter 2, Review of the Literature. Practice wisdom connotes a form of practical knowledge that comes with experience. The practitioner is expected to have the moral competency to exercise sound judgment for the good life of human beings. Here, a range of knowledge forms are valued that goes beyond pure knowledge. Experience is a form of knowledge. As depicted by Tsang (2008), an actor is able to accumulate and develop his or her practice experiences into expertise over time. It reveals that the agent is agential in generation of knowledge via action and experience.

The Fluid Status

The last feature is the Fluid Status of knowledge. Referring to the original cognitive understanding of practice wisdom in the section of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Chapter 2, the Agential Nature and the Fluid Status features often pair for operation. The practice teacher who actively exercises the feature of Agential Nature of knowledge can be understood as

holding the belief of proactive agent in knowledge generation which is constant action and reflection. Knowledge then is not fixed. However, it was discovered that two of the practice teachers hold the assumption of the Agential Nature of knowledge acquisition, but do not exercise the Fluid Status feature in an explicit way. The two features do not necessarily pair for operation. It helps to reconstitute the understanding of pedagogical practice wisdom. Two other practice teachers perform actively in exercising the features of the Fluid Status and Agential Nature of knowledge, but do so differently in placing the student in the role of knowledge exploration.

The Agential Nature and Fluid Status of Knowledge Pair or Do not Pair in Operation

In the discussion of experience as a form of knowledge, Teacher F and Teacher L acknowledge the place of experience in informing theory and acquiring new knowing. The status of knowledge is fluid due to the constitution and reconstitution of knowing. Teacher F notes that social work theories are built up by people who collate their accumulated experience. Theories cannot remain unchanged due to the changing contemporary culture and context. She teaches students the limits of theories, and to not regard them as golden laws and precious rules. This illustrates her conception of the Fluid Status of knowledge.

Teacher L regards knowledge as acquired through on-going practice and accumulation of experience. He suggests that students need to practice and consolidate their experience. The complexity of human beings and the uncertainty of the practice situation are noted. He denotes knowledge as mobile in nature, and expects the participating student to be flexible in practice and reconstitute her understanding of group development with regard to the particular group nature and the intervention goal.

Despite the similarity between Teachers F and L, there is a significant difference in the way they value the student's participation in the generation of knowledge in their teaching. The student under the supervision of Teacher L is highly involved in the process of knowledge exploration, for example, the group development process and the inattentive behaviours of the children. However in the case of Teacher F, the student is less involved in the process of acquiring knowledge. Teacher F is less patient for the prompt response of the less verbally expressive student. Teacher L, however, could better pace his teaching to the student's capability of learning. The personal attribute of containment of practice teachers seems to have profound influences on the exercise of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching. Detailed discussions with empirical

references will be well-addressed in the section of the Factors in the Exercise of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching in this chapter.

Teacher M and Teacher K actively exercise the feature of the Agential Nature, but less so for the feature of the Fluid Status. Teacher M indeed acknowledges the uncertainty of the desirability of his knowing. This understanding likely illuminates that knowledge is not static or objective for knowing how to follow a set of procedures. As Teacher M seldom mentions cognitive knowledge in this study, this possibly restrains him from further elaboration of his views about the status of knowledge. In the case of Teacher K, she does not go through discussions about the Fluid Status of knowledge despite her active exercise of the features of the collaborative process and agential agent in knowledge acquisition. There is insufficient data for discussion of this feature in Teacher K's teaching. As stipulated in the discussion of tension between a wish and the reality, Teacher A is not active in involving the student in generation of new understanding or knowledge.

Teacher F and Teacher L actively exercise the feature of the Fluid Status of knowledge in their teaching, while the latter actively involves the student in the process of knowledge generation. They both regard experience as central to knowledge generation. Because of the constant action and accumulation of

experience, knowledge is generated constantly, and is thus not static, but fluid. Teacher K and Teacher M actively exercise the feature of the Agential Nature, while exercising less the feature of the Fluid Status. These findings help to reformulate the original understanding of the relationship between the features of the Fluid Status and the Agential Nature of knowledge. Practice teachers do not necessarily exercise these two features simultaneously. Teacher L is the sole teacher who exercises, with high involvement of the student in the features of the Interactive Process of knowledge generation, the Agential Nature and the Fluid Status simultaneously. This may be explained by his uniform attention to the different features.

Practice wisdom is a particular social work expertise relevant to a specific practice situation at a particular time (Chu & Tsui, 2008; O'Sullivan, 2005; Polkinghorne, 2004; Tsang, 2008). Because of its receptiveness to particulars and variation with situations, that is, its context-dependency, the knowledge involved cannot remain static, but is fluid. Chu and Tsui (2008) conceive of a kind of instant judgment invoked in the process of exercise practice wisdom. The agent is proactive who gives meaning to the practice situation and transforms theories in practice with attention to its context. This is similar to Goldstein's (1990) view that the practitioner gives personal meaning to the problems and

conditions, and actively constructs the practice situation in the process of developing practice wisdom. For O'Sullivan (2005), practice wisdom is a continual process of reviewing and transforming the existing stock of knowledge. All these imply the fluid status of knowledge and the agential agent in the process of transformation of the existing knowledge into a new one. Although practice teachers exercise the feature of Fluid Status of knowledge differently, they help to cultivate in students an awareness of the changeability of knowledge and the proactive nature of the agent in generation of new knowing in face of the uncertain and complex practice situation.

Conclusion

To sum up, the discussions of this section provide the concrete contents of the features of each feature that has enriched our understanding of the slippery concept of pedagogical practice wisdom. For instance, we know the operation of Moral Reasoning in practice teaching with the support of empirical data. It shows that the practice teachers exercise the four features of practice wisdom in teaching with different emphasis and in different ways. It provides the foundation for further analysis of the dynamic interaction of the four features as a whole in each practice teacher. These features shape the pedagogical practice wisdom that is unique to each teacher. In the next section, we are going to

examine at length how these four features act together and shape the practice teachers' teaching in a way unique to each at a specific moment between a particular practice teacher and a particular student.

The Dynamic Interaction of the Features of Practice Wisdom as Exercised by Practice Teachers

In the previous section, I discussed the substantive contents of the four features of practice wisdom as exercised by practice teachers in rendering practice teaching. This helps to enrich our understanding of the inquiry about the contents of the four features of practice wisdom. The next research goal is to unravel how practice teachers exercise the four features of practice wisdom in carrying out their teaching. As indicated by the empirical data, the features act up together, which generates the dynamic interaction of the features of practice wisdom.

Practice teachers exercise the four features in their teaching practice in different ways. For instance, as spelt out in the previous section, practice teachers demonstrate moral reasoning, while the moral element with an infusion of emotion is different. The addition of moral concern affects the emphasis they place on various features of practice wisdom in teaching. This section will provide a holistic perspective on how the practice teachers use the four features in their teaching practice. The features act together, which shapes their teaching in a way unique to each. Analyses of the commonalities and the differences among the practice teachers in the use of the four features will be discussed first. What

follows that is about the other side of the exercise of the four features of practice wisdom – its demerits as resulting from an unbalanced and nondeliberative use of the four features in teaching.

Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching

As suggested by Goldstein (1990) and Roca (2007), practice wisdom involves the whole person. It is desirable to look into the use of the four features of practice wisdom as a whole. A holistic picture of the way each practice teacher exercises the four features of practice wisdom is presented. The rich empirical data that emerges from the co-reflections, videotaped teaching scenarios, and focus groups are drawn upon to widen the perspective and deepen the understanding of the way practice teachers exercise the aforesaid features in their teaching practice.

Teacher A's teaching practice. *Actively use Cognitive Knowledge and practice skills with moral consideration for the best practice.* As discussed in the section of the Interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge, Teacher A enacts strongly the rational passion for genuine practice. He demonstrates strong moral concern about the ideal practice with active teaching of cognitive knowledge and practice skills. For instance, in the selected two videotapes in this study, he shows that he considers teaching of practice and

assessment skills to be of pedagogical significance. Teaching of counseling and micro-skills is regarded as the foci of live supervision. Two other practice teachers, M and L, also each provide a videotape on live supervision. However, they do not confine teaching to skills only, but also to self-reflection and the moral dimension of social work practice. This reveals that Teacher A conceives teaching of skills and knowledge to be the most salient point of live supervision, and an important agenda for practice teaching. He reiterates that one should do the right action for ideal practice, which has led him to give due attention to the teaching of skills and knowledge. Students are expected to know the advanced level of practice, and he thus pushes them to strive for the best, continuing professional development. He calls his ideal “utopia,” because students may not be able to achieve the ideal level, but they need to know the ideal goal.

Less use of the Agential Nature and Fluid Status of knowledge, and collaborative learning. The features of the Agential Nature and Fluid Status of knowledge, and the element of collaborative learning, however, are less active in his teaching as evidenced by the empirical reference in the section of the Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching as discussed previously. Teacher A has rich work experience (about 16 years) in counseling service with young people. His expertise will be of great help to the student who works with

young people in a secondary school. The participating student treasures Teacher A's teaching, from which many concrete suggestions and rich work experiences are provided. However, a carry-over effect occurs because the influence of Teacher A's expertise on student's learning is felt continually. As revealed from the videotaped teaching scenarios and his views in the co-reflections, Teacher A tends to inform the student how to act because he is familiar with the placement setting and service target group. The student thus has less opportunity to participate in the process of knowledge acquisition.

Overwhelming rational passion without adequate discernment.

Referring to the previous discussion of the interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge, Teacher A enacts strong passion for social work and urges students to be passionate, and he performs genuine practice by making trustworthy evaluation of their own practice, based upon his moral perception. He comments that the agency evaluation form is not scientific because it tends to guarantee favorable answers from users. He insists passing down to students his social work values, and does not agree with striving for the most favorable result without regard to the means. He shows the virtue of Parrhesia—truth telling—to the student despite uncertain consequences, such as condemnation by the placement agency. There is a clear risk of criticizing the agency's evaluation

form. His attitude most likely reveals his high moral qualities and his sincerity (Peters, 2003). It, however, also illuminates his inadequate discernment of potential consequences, which results from the dominant force of rational passion.

Teacher A acts as a morally responsible agent, who strives for users' feedback and strict evaluation of one's work performance. The participating student surely can benefit from his teaching in the aspects of cognitive knowledge and genuine attitude. However, in the absence of articulated coaching of the huge discrepancies between the agency evaluation form and his teaching, the student will face the tension between complying with agency policy and his instruction not to use the biased agency form. It would be better to temper moral courage and rational passion with greater discernment. For instance, the student can use the agency form for good accountability. Meanwhile, the student can be taught to get the clients' supplementary views in a proper way. The aim is to maintain the partnership between the training institute and the service sector by complying with agency policy while soliciting clients' honest feedback.

Teacher A shows less discernment as revealed from the captured videotaped teaching scenario. The participating student, however, appreciates Teacher A's moral concern about her. The student comments him as being supportive and observant of her sense of inferiority in face of abundant comments

from the agency staff. The student is happy to see that Teacher A has walked with her in facing the difficulties throughout the placement. As learnt from Teacher A, he invited the placement students under his supervision to the reunion dinner. He regarded himself as the father who asked the children to return home for a meal. A reunion dinner has symbolic meaning to the Chinese. It carries a strong sense of togetherness for family members. It implies that Teacher A has invested strong emotion and built up good emotional bonding with the students in his teaching practice. The supportive relationship between the participating student and him is central in supporting Teacher A to conduct teaching in a directive manner. Teacher A is possibly overwhelmed by his strong salient moral perception, and this leads to inadequate discernment in the student's learning. Good emotional bonding promotes his teaching being infused with the overwhelming moral perception, but with less discernment.

Enact the moral agent in encouraging students to embrace the moral dimension in practice. Teacher A is a person with strong moral perception who sets high expectations on social workers. He notes that a social worker can accumulate knowledge steadily, but passion and heart are more important to a social worker. He always uses an analogy of the “blazing fire” (he names it “**個團火**” in Chinese) for illustration of passion. It is acceptable for staff to strive

for promotion and power. A social worker instead should be concerned about righteous actions for the enhancement of human relationships and the client's rights. Social work is a profession and social workers should be passionate with respect to clients and the profession.

As revealed from Teacher A's teaching practice, he considers teaching to be a moral activity in which moral issues, the attitudes of a human being, and a social worker are well addressed. He expects students to learn from him regarding the skills, attitudes, and passion. He conceives passion as the core feature of fieldwork training. He does not confine teaching to skills only, but also his heart and whole person via his personal enactment—the role modeling effect. He performs like a master who demonstrates moral elements for the modeling of his apprentices, that is, the students, and implores them in a directive manner to have great passion for clients. He regards apprenticeship as the ideal pedagogy, in that it is not only effective in imparting to students the skills, but also nurturing in them the heart. It is his mission to pass on the heart and passion to students via his personal enactment.

Nondeliberative pedagogical decisions and the act of teaching. It is discovered that Teacher A makes nondeliberative pedagogical decisions in teaching of cognitive knowledge and practice skills. Teacher A's teaching

practice, as illuminated in a live supervisory session, best illustrates this. As observed from the live supervision, teacher A listened to the audio tape with the student about her interview with a newly arrived student from the Mainland. He decided to stop the tape player and choose eight episodes for teaching the student the practice skills and conceptual knowledge. Although asked, he cannot articulate explicitly his considerations for making decisions on the choice of the episodes for rendering teaching. He rather iterates that the interviewing process “is not going smoothly” (he names it “唔順耳” in Chinese), and that the student should make improvements in rendering service in a better way.

In response to further query of not going smoothly, he points out that there are many things which mix together in his mind. This includes his experience and knowledge of theories in particular family therapy. He iterates that the student should reserve room for improvement, and he then decides to stop the tape review for teaching the student to perform good practice. For instance, he taught the student not to shift the discussion topic, but to make deeper exploration with the client about his comment on his parents’ predisposition to his siblings. He gives comments to the student whenever he feels the counseling process is not progressing smoothly, based upon his working experience in counseling.

However, he is not aware of this during the process of action, but only during the co-reflections. Hence, he likely makes pedagogical decisions by intuition.

Teacher K's teaching practice. *Active collaborative learning with moral consideration for student learning.* As previously noted, Teacher K collaboratively works with the student in making sense of the complicated nature of humanity in the case of a teenager. She inspires the student to taste the teenager's conflicting feeling via her probing questions and the student's self-dialogue. The student is coached to reflect her feelings and preoccupied values towards the client. Teacher K chooses to teach the student to enter the "low-ground" which involves a process of self-encounter in terms of self-reflection on one's value system, preoccupied thoughts or understanding, and so forth (Yip, 2006). Teacher K notes her focal attention to the student's intrinsic motivation and or interest in learning. It is observed that she usually inspires the student to reflect via probing questions, and the summarization the results to aid the student's learning. The way she taught indeed is consistent with her pedagogical significance she places on the discovery of insight via the process of self-encounter.

Teacher K's predisposition to affective expression has led her to involve the student's participation actively in bringing about her teaching. For instance,

as evidenced by the videotaped teaching scenarios and her discussions, she showed respect for the student's thoughts and experience. As observed from her teaching scenarios, she never negated the student's views or thoughts. The input of the participating student is highly involved in generation of concepts as stipulated earlier. She tends to bring in conceptual knowledge by shaping the student's input of the concrete experience. The participating student shares similar view of her collaborative relationship with Teacher K and her experience of active participation in exploring knowing. She notes the discovery of new understanding via the articulation of many issues in the process of external dialogue with Teacher K. Teacher K, however, is less active in using the feature of the Fluid Status of knowledge or the commonality of contextual knowledge in her teaching.

Have a sense of self-compassion and virtue in caring for students.

Teacher K opines that God's words influence her pedagogical practice. She demonstrates mindfulness by praying for wisdom in her life, and teaching students to learn in a good way with greater satisfaction. She learns self-kindness by taking good care of her physical and mental wellness as much as possible, to give an example to students. The pedagogical significance of the videotaped teaching scenarios is regarded by her as the understanding of human

suffering and enhancement of personal growth of the student. Hence, Teacher K shows strong emotional involvement in her teaching and moral concern about student's good life and learning. The participating student also acknowledges the positive experience in personal growth and enhancement of confidence under Teacher K's teaching. This best illustrates Teacher K's virtue of caring in building up human existence. As she says, it is a calling from God, who delegates her to give comfort to some students. In a co-reflection meeting, she noted the significance of self-compassion for rendering competent teaching for student learning. She learns to have self-compassion for cultivating her moral sensitivity to human beings, including students and clients. Student learning and personal growth are perceived as salient in the practice teacher and student relationship. She shows discernment in student learning and personal growth. Without such kind of virtue in caring, she may not act with regard to students' good life despite the vital role of religion in her life.

Modeling the personal life and professional life. Birmingham (2004, p. 322) opines that the promotion of phronesis happens largely through modeling. The field practicum is a good platform in which practice wisdom may develop through the modeling of one-to-one based intensive teaching and learning processes. Teacher K addresses the dual roles of practice teacher—a teacher and

a mentor. For students' learning, she enacts the role of a moral responsible agent with humane attitude. For illustration, some students tell Teacher K that they learn to give compliments to clients from the way she gives compliments to them. They then learn how to praise clients for the efforts they made in handling their problems. Teacher K believes that if the supervisor can demonstrate attitudes appropriately, it can be fruitful to students irrespective of their learning and future careers as a social worker. She expects practice teachers (including her) to act like the mentor who enacts the attitudes appropriate for student learning. Teacher K does not confine her role to building up students in their working life, but building up their personal lives as well.

Nondeliberative teaching. Referring to the way and the contents of teaching, it is found that Teacher K carries out teaching largely on a nondeliberative basis. For instance, a teaching scenario illustrates that she informed the student explicitly about the stages of case engagement and review after having listened to the student's verbal report of cases. She notes that she does it without cognitive awareness. She makes use of her professional experience in counseling and in classroom teaching to help the student to reframe her work with the teenager, and generate the concepts.

Another scenario is that she asked the student to identify the behavioral pattern of the teenage service user. She taught the student to explore if the teenager showed repetition of behavior. Teacher K points out that she provides the framework in a nondeliberative way for the student's reference in making sense of the case. She reiterates that she conducts practice teaching without cognitive awareness or any theoretical backup. She was not cognitively aware of her teaching practice until having co-reflection with the researcher.

Additionally, Teacher K is found to bring up the theoretical concepts based up the student's input of concrete experience. During the discussion, she continuously asserted to the researcher that her teaching practice was consistent with her predisposition to the "Strength-Based" approach. She usually involves clients' inputs in bringing about insights or new knowing collaboratively with them for building up their strengths. She acknowledges her nondeliberative use of this approach when working with students in rendering teaching while having co-reflections. It shows her internalization of the Strength-Based approach, and the collaborative generation of understanding with the participating student in a spontaneous way. Teacher K acknowledges that she performs such teaching practice whenever she picks up the teaching work. It is found that she cannot articulate this sort of personal and embodied knowledge explicitly, but

demonstrates or does it in action. This is similar to Schön's (1983) notion of tacit knowing-in-action. She does not give deliberation or have pre-thoughts, either about the pedagogical decision or the contents of teaching. She becomes aware of her teaching in the process of external dialogue with the author in co-reflection meetings.

Teacher M's teaching practice. *Prioritize understanding of humanity over Cognitive Knowledge.* Following up the earlier discussions of the Substantive Contents of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in this chapter, Teacher M's putting less emphasis on the facet of Cognitive Knowledge in teaching is noted. There are probably two reasons for this. The first reason is Teacher M's moral sensitivity to the participating student's pace in learning. The student may help inform our understanding. The student notes her poor learning experience with her former practice teacher, who always put great emphasis on theories and asked her to spell out the seven principles of casework at the first supervisory meeting. She regards this practice teacher as "bad and aggressive." The student wonders if Teacher M intends not to use professional jargon or theories for discussion with her. Rather, he brings up the theoretical concepts or theories when they come across the relevant practice situations. For this student it is impressive to learn from Teacher M that "attitude is a matter of

skill” and “caring is a matter of skill.” Teacher M has inspired her to clarify her values and attitudes. This is closely related to the second possible reason that Teacher M gives priority to understanding of humanity in his teaching practice.

As highlighted in the previous section of the Substantive Contents of the Features of Practice Wisdom in this chapter, Teacher M shows moral concern about the good life of clients as revealed from his exercise of Moral Reasoning in coaching the student to conduct family intervention and expose the complexity of humanity. As informed by the hermeneutic approach, he helps the student to acquire better understanding of the client’s, in particular the mother’s suffering via crisis intervention. To him, the student is able to learn empathy in a deeper way if she can make sense of humanity by connecting her own feelings with the clients’ feelings. The client’s mother’s suffering calls on Teacher M’s moral responsibility to offer help for the good of the family via the student’s timely intervention. He in turn urges the student to feel the mother’s frustration in view of her daughter’s attempt to commit immoral sexual behavior. Teacher M deems it appropriate to pick up on the client’s suffering as most morally salient, and shows a range of emotional attunements to make sense of the diversity of humanity. The student is engendered to nurture her emotional capacity and sensitivity in order to understand and contain human suffering. This also

illustrates the collaborative process of Teacher M and the student in bringing about understanding of the client's mother's pain and its meaning to the client's existence. The element of emotion in working with human interactions is well-addressed in his teaching practice. As noted by Teacher M, after the supervision, the student starts to capture knowing of humanity and understanding of the case direction in an appropriate way.

In addition to the central place of understanding of humanity, Teacher M prioritizes attitude over skills or theories in teaching. This is consistent with the student's feedback on his emphasis on "attitude as a matter of skill." For illustration, he regards attitude as pedagogically significant, even though he teaches the student group dynamics in a live supervision. The student is regarded as domineering because she thinks she knows what's best for clients. Teacher M intends to arouse her awareness and make a change in her dominance. Teaching of skills or cognitive knowledge is placed in a lower priority. The feature of attitude is perceived as most salient in his teaching, which is quite different from Teacher A or Teacher L, who render similar modes of live supervision. It helps us to understand why the feature of the Fluid Status of knowledge and its contextual nature are less articulated in his teaching.

The implicit place of contextual knowledge and the Fluid Status of

knowledge. As discussed above, Teacher M does not bring in teaching of the contextual nature or the Fluid Status of knowledge in an explicit manner.

However, we can identify them in reference to the way he teaches the student.

In a supervisory meeting, Teacher M always told the student several times of his

uncertainty of knowing and fallibility. He iterates that he just makes a guess,

and that it is not necessarily correct. As informed by the hermeneutic approach,

he argues again the uncertainty of his knowing. He learns to be humble and

feels comfortable to admit “I may be wrong.” Human beings most often have

misunderstood the world because they make sense of the world only from their

own perspective when they become more knowledgeable. When he gets more

information, he often realizes his understanding is wrong, and tries to make sense

of the world from different perspectives. He believes that a person’s

understanding is desirable only at a particular moment. It seems that there is no

absolute or objective answer, but there are different kinds of understanding as

revealed from his views of what is known.

He teaches students that professional assessment is a “guess.” However,

he still finds assessment important for providing the possible work direction. He

seldom says “wrong” to students because of his sense of humility and his

acknowledgement of the uncertainty of his knowing. As observed in the videotaped scenarios, like Teacher K, he has never negated the student's ideas, but usually accommodates the student's views or thoughts properly. He thinks that his practice of not saying "wrong" is relevant to his belief in the hermeneutic approach regarding the central place of attitude. He considers "I may be wrong" and thus does not judge students to be wrong. This conveys the epistemological assumption of the Fluid Status of knowledge as learnt from his claim of uncertain knowing.

Similarly, he does not exercise the commonality of contextual knowledge in an explicit way, as do Teachers A, L, and F. Instead he carries out teaching in context, like Teacher K, through the acquisition of the details of the practice situation. As discussed earlier, he often authentically shifts between the client role and the supervisor role in rendering teaching. The participating student was requested to tune in to the client role (both the girl and the mother) for getting in touch with the client's feelings through a series of probing questions. He proposes to know what happen in the real practice situation, for example, what the student does and the client's response, in facilitating teaching. This is understood as teaching in context for the facilitation of student's learning.

The Agential Nature and collaborative generation of knowledge pair in

operation. Teacher M refers to Gadamer's notion that "Education is self education" in explaining his view that learning should come from students themselves. The ideal pedagogy is the inspiration of self-learning. To him, an extrinsically motivated agent cannot acquire learning as good as a self-initiated agent. This reflects his belief in the student's participation and autonomy in acquisition of knowledge. The participating student regards her learning relationship with Teacher M as collaborative. Teacher M gives her a broad framework to guide her to think gradually via probing questions. She does much reflection in that placement. As referred to the succinct examples in the section of the Interactive Process of Knowledge Acquisition, Teacher M and the student actively work together to make sense of the complexity of feelings of a mother towards her daughter's intention of having immoral sexual behavior. His predisposition to an equal footing in the dialogue between the practice teacher and the placement student leads to the active exercise of collaborative learning, and the agential agent in acquisition of knowledge via constant reflection and external dialogue.

Informed by intuition in rendering teaching. A teaching scenario may

best illustrate Teacher M's claim of the intuitive practice of fieldwork

supervision. In this scenario, Teacher M did not look at the student when they were having a discussion about the implications of the case crisis. He, however, restrained from talking suddenly, and turned to ask the student her views. He thinks that his intuition informed him to stop talking, and to involve the student in making sense of the case. He explains that he acts like a social worker, and wants to spell out the case diagnosis and the possible ways of handling it. After having a brief statement to the student, he suddenly tells himself not to give the student his views. He feels the student is attentive and waiting for his analysis. Probably, the student's silence and attention alert him to stop talking about the case analysis. He is uncertain about the underlying reason of his action, and sometimes he acts without knowing the reasons for doing so. He wonders if it is his practice wisdom. Because of his sudden inquiry, the student could not make a prompt response accordingly. Having the external dialogue in the co-reflection meetings, he suspects it is his intuition and sensitivity that alert him to ask the student for her thoughts. He thinks his intuition informs him what to do and how to do it.

As shown previously, Teacher M tunes in to the student worker role and the client role to have conversations with the student for understanding the practice situation. He opines that he develops such teaching practice without

awareness. He does not know when he started the practice of taking role shifts in rendering fieldwork supervision. He thinks that he has adopted such teaching practice at least a couple of years ago. It is usual for him to tune in to other roles if the student is ready for this teaching method. He is not alert to this role shifting when he is undertaking teaching. He however knows when he will practice it at a particular time in an authentic way. Teacher M's constant practice of spontaneously role shift is noted. This kind of knowledge is exercised without alertness whenever he undertakes teaching work, and finds the student ready for the kind of dialogue resulting from role shifts. It is tacit and embodied in nature. This illuminates his use of intuitive knowledge, which is highly personal, embodied, and experience-grounded in nature, within the immediacy of the moment in carrying out teaching.

Teacher F's teaching practice. *A neglect of collaborative learning.* In the section of the Interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge, Teacher F shows a strong rational passion in striving for well-grounded thinking and judgment, in which the worker or the student should be able to reason about his or her work for the best of the client's welfare. She acknowledges the central place of informed practice, and regards people who perform without theoretical backup as laymen, even if they demonstrate the qualities of sensitivity or

connectedness with people. She notes some students are not familiar with theories, but just act spontaneously. In the supervisory meeting, she taught theoretical knowledge to the student by giving an introduction to the tool of guidance imaginary, which she uses for facilitating her work with the clients on stress management and relaxation exercise. She discussed with the student the concept “praise” and the way to use it in working with a client. Additionally, she requests the participating student (and other placement students) to make references to knowledge specific to the clients of the placement setting. All this shows her due concern about cognitive knowledge in bringing about the best service for clients.

Despite her great emphasis on cognitive knowledge, Teacher F is open to change and reconstitution of her own cognitive knowledge, and encourages students to acknowledge the fluid status of knowledge. She does not regard theories as perfect, but finds it desirable to use them with reference to the context. To her, theories can inform practice, and practice can inform theories. An actor who has accumulated experience via action can revise his or her understanding of the concepts (or theories), and review the limits of the theories. She brings in the changing context under which the actor shall reexamine the desirability of using theory or skills. Being experienced means being open to new things, and it

thus creates space for new ways of deriving meaning (Stenberg, 2010). The actor even can know how to make improvement in light of the limits of theories.

Teacher F's conception of the fluid status of knowledge also reveals her assumption of the proactive subject in generation of knowledge via instant action and experience. She, however, does not involve the participating student in collaborative generation of understanding in her teaching practice. She rather informs the student what to do whenever the student cannot figure out the answer or make a prompt verbal response. It is discovered that the capability of containment has influence on the feasibility of bringing in the feature of collaborative learning in teaching. This will be examined in detail in the following section of the Factors in the Exercise of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom.

Strong rational passion possibly restrains students from active learning.

In the previous section, we examined the exercise of Moral Reasoning of Teacher F in striving for grounded assessment for the clients' best interest. She believes that the student should strive for better understanding of the newly arrived mother's parental practice and the child's safety, but that one should not make premature and ungrounded judgments. As revealed from her teaching, she intends to inspire the student to know the grounds for judging that the mother

adjusts well to life in Hong Kong. She intends to know if the student really makes grounded judgments or thorough assessments on the protective and risk factors of the client. Teacher F believes that the mother's need for supportive services on parenting is still valid, as the mother has not shown improvement in parental practice. She insists on the necessity of looking further into the current parental practice of the client, and bringing about an alternative perspective for the client's consideration. Teacher F's moral consideration of the best outcomes for the clients has encouraged the student to do a well-grounded assessment during the initial child welfare investigation.

The significance of having a well-grounded assessment of the service need of a child protection case is fully understood. However there is another side of the strong exercise of rational passion. The force of rational passion may overshadow the student's capability. It may give the student a sense of inferiority whenever she is incapable of making well-grounded thoughts or decisions on her own. The participating student notes that she needs to consider thoroughly the skills or theoretical knowledge needed for intervention in advance, and present them to Teacher F in the supervisory meeting. She sometimes does not have any idea about the theoretical backdrop of her work, but feels stressed to make up the expected presentation. The student does not treasure much her

learning experience because of the pressure that resulted from the overwhelming rational passion of Teacher F in teaching.

Nondeliberative pedagogical decisions and action. Like Teacher A, Teacher F notes that she is not cognitively aware of her pedagogical considerations or the contents of teaching, but she knows how to perform in response to students' needs whenever she gets into teaching. She regards her action as habitual and spontaneous in response to students' learning needs. In a supervisory meeting, Teacher F learned that the student still did not schedule a joint interview with the clients of a nonfilial family violence case, although it was near the ending phase of placement. She instructed the student to wrap up the case by providing the detailed instructions. The student was informed to include three features in preparing the transfer report. These included the work she did with the family, the intended intervention goal, and areas for improvement. When asked, Teacher F noted that she teaches without considering any pedagogical significance, or thinking of the contents of teaching. Rather, she captures the opportunity to render teaching in a spontaneous way (she calls this “順勢呀” in Chinese). She brings up the contents of case transfer and its underlying purposes after having listened to the student's verbal progress report. Also, she is not mindful of the contents that she teaches the student until she is

asked about the underlying reason of teaching these three features in the follow up co-reflection meeting.

As revealed from her teaching of case transfer, Teacher F seems to have a framework or orientation in guiding her to make sense of the practice situation for rendering guidance to the student. There is a logical relationship among the three features of the transfer summary. For instance, the agency worker needs to follow up the case, and must know the intended intervention goals and what the student has done with the client for predicting the intervention's outcomes and evaluating its desirability. The worker may consider the recommendations made by the student in making decisions on the intervention plan in the future.

Teacher F, however, points out that she does not have any intended goals regarding her teaching of the three features in drafting the transfer summary. At the co-reflection, she is mindful of her practice to round up a case with consolidation of the work with reference to these three features at the stage of termination. She regards her teaching as her usual practice of doing case transfer. It seems that Teacher F is informed by her direct practice experience in deriving the contents of teaching at the immediate moment, without going through deliberation on what she will do or have done in response to student's inquiry on learning at the ending stage of placement.

Another teaching scenario helps deepen our understanding of the exercise of nondeliberative teaching. The student commented that a mother did not praise the teenage daughter's good behavior in getting the room tidy, but instead praised her submissiveness. Teacher F agreed with the student's view, but suggested that the student coach the mother to praise more than her daughter's submissiveness, to improve her parenting skills. In discussion with the student, Teacher F raises the use of praise, with the intention of widening the student's horizon. However, she gets this hindsight after the co-reflection. Again, she renders teaching spontaneously at that moment, and does not deliberate on what she does or why she acts. As Stenberg (2010) says, pedagogical decisions are largely made unconsciously or semi-consciously (p. 331). This illustrates that Teacher F's self-awareness is sharpened whenever a context (i.e., co-reflection) is provided for critical reflection and she is capable to articulate her tacit knowing step by step.

Teacher L's teaching practice. *A balanced use of the four features.*

The contents of the individual features of practice wisdom as exercised by Teacher L have been examined in the previous section. It is noted that he can maintain a balance in the use of these four features in teaching. For illustration, Teacher L is the sole participating practice teacher in this study who improvises a

paper folding exercise on the spot for helping the student to learn in a good way.

The student is able to articulate the commonalities of reciprocal communication after experiencing the structured exercise. Details of Teacher L's work in using this exercise will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs. As learnt from the participating student, Teacher L also improvised an exercise to coach the student to do a group evaluation when she got stuck. The student noted that Teacher L took out a pile of papers and drew a triangle that embraced skill, knowledge, and attitude. He inspired her to figure out and lay down the contents that she used in these three domains. Acquisition of cognitive knowledge is brought about with the active participation and collaborative effort of the student.

Other than bringing up the facet of Cognitive Knowledge with the student, Teacher L also addresses the contextual nature of knowledge. In a supervisory meeting, the student addressed the testing behaviors of the children at its last meeting—the sixth meeting. She wondered why the characteristic of the brainstorming stage happened still at the stage of group completion. He taught the student that the duration of group development was ill-defined, and that the group did not necessarily go through all the developmental stages as stipulated by the theories, even at its last meeting. He coached the student to analyze the group development with reference to group dynamics. The student discovered

that the group was still at the brainstorming stage, in which the children showed nonconforming behaviors. She learnt not to hold only six short group sessions in the future, in order to facilitate mature group development and attainment of the group objectives. He reminded the student to make reference to the context, that is, the nature of clients, in deciding the number of group sessions. The duration of the group varied, and depended on the group nature, or target group, the intended goals.

Referring to this teaching scenario of group developmental stage, Teacher L teaches the student to reconstitute her understanding of group development with reference to the context. Additionally, the Fluid Status of knowledge is acknowledged. He nurtures the student's capability of improvisation with regard to the practice situation and the reconstitution of her cognitive knowledge of group development. Teacher L perceives that six short group sessions are insufficient for going through the mature group development process. He notes that neither he nor the student has decided on the best number of group sessions for the time being, but that considering the issue is a good learning experience for the student. His claim of "practice could inform theory" is best exemplified from this teaching scenario, which illustrates that the student learns to define the group duration with reference to the unique group objective.

When asked about possible huge differences between the classroom learning and field practicum, Teacher L thinks that students should learn how to analyze group development, and define the duration of the group required for going through the group development, since there is no specific number of sessions. It is desirable for them to reconsider the theory of group development in view of the group dynamics. Hence, he brings in the perspective of revising understanding of theory and formulating new understandings. This implies that the agent is active and participative in knowledge acquisition.

Strong dedication to social work education and professional practice.

Teacher L is personally dedicated to social work education and professional practice. As learnt from him, he pushed a student (not the participating student) to reach the professional standard by rendering intensive supervision throughout a summer block placement. In view of the student's complaint of hardship, he told the student not to enter the social work field because of his poor commitment and incapability for rendering competent practice. In the case of the participating student, he insistently teaches the student to work consistently with the intended objective for a desirable outcome evaluation. To him, the student worker must ensure that the intervention is geared to the intended goal for demonstration of professional social work practice.

Teacher L argues that he interprets his life as “practice with knowledge,” which has constructed the way he works with students. Students are expected to perform practice with a knowledge base for rendering professional practice. He, however, will not push them too much about skill acquisition, as they can pick up skills steadily through ongoing practice. Rather, he proposes to teach attitudes, knowledge, and skills in that order of priority. Similar to other practice teachers in this study, he shows due concern about student’s attitudes or sense of devotion to clients. He points out that the feature of attitude predisposes an agent to use knowledge and skills in practice. He thus prefers to nurture in students a sense of dedication and important aptitudes for the social work profession, via his personal enactment of these elements in teaching.

Improvisation in teaching as informed by situated judgment toward a morally good end. Teacher L shows simultaneous moral sensitivity to the student’s difficulty in learning and to cognitive skills, in order to rapidly facilitate the student’s learning in a good way. It is impressive to see Teacher L’s responsive and immediate act of using a paper folding exercise to teaching the student about Cognitive Knowledge. As revealed from a teaching scenario, Teacher L asked the student what reciprocal communication meant as used in her programme proposal. The student, however, could not figure it out. He

suddenly asked the student to take out two pieces of paper. Teacher L then requested the student to close her eyes, fold the paper, and tear off a corner following his instructions. He folded another piece of paper at the same time. After a few seconds, the student was asked to open her eyes and to check if they folded the paper in the same way. The student replied “No” when she saw the paper in Teacher L’s hands. He asked the student why they folded the paper differently. The student replied that she did not have the chance to ask him how to fold the paper, and she could not see the way he did it. Teacher L then pointed out that a person should ask if there is the option of communication. Both parties should have the opportunity to communicate with each other for reciprocal communication. She then replied firmly to Teacher L that she knew how to do this.

As shown by this scenario, Teacher L’s exercise of on-the-spot improvisation at the right time for facilitating students’ good learning is noted. Teacher L notes that he figures out this exercise on the spur of the moment when he finds the student does not understand reciprocal communication or the way to practice. He expects that the student can articulate what reciprocal communication is and inspire the parents to know if it is different from their understanding. Teacher L requires simultaneous consideration of certain

cognitive skills and moral concerns for student learning. He has the discriminative skills that facilitate him to recognize the student's incorrect understanding of two-way communication. It is noted that he has the ability to brainstorm while drawing from his data bank, and to select the relevant option for facilitating student learning in a good way at the spur of the moment. He also demonstrates the ability to identify teaching methods other than oral explanation.

Discussion

Having pictured the overall exercise of these four features in the teaching of each practice teacher, it is found that they share both commonalities and differences in the source from which they derive their teaching practice, and in their emphasis on the four individual features. Practice teachers usually refer to their practical knowledge, which is derived from experience mainly and propositional knowledge in rendering teaching with immediacy and nondeliberative reflection. The central place of experience in the development of personal practical knowledge is consistent with their conception of practice wisdom. This enlightens our understanding of the inquiry about how practice teachers exercise the four features of practice wisdom in practice teaching.

Commonality. *Nondeliberative reflection in using the four features of practice wisdom.* Practice wisdom is conceived of as a particular type of

expertise that constitutes the commonality of here and now deliberation or reasoning within the immediate moment, as referred to in the Conceptual Analysis of Academic Discussion About Practice Wisdom in Chapter 2. For instance, Tsang (2008) regards practice wisdom as deliberations of what is morally desirable and good. O'Sullivan (2005) also interprets practice wisdom as a particular type of social work expertise involving the capacity for wise judgment under conditions of uncertainty. Because of the nature of practice wisdom, which can be highly personal and subjective, it is probably situated and embodied at times. The empirical findings on the participating practice teachers, who exercise the four features of practice wisdom, confirm current academic discussions about the momentary, here-and-now deliberative, and embodied nature of practice wisdom.

As referred to in the above teaching scenarios, all practice teachers exercise the four features of practice wisdom or make pedagogical decisions with nondeliberative reflection. For example, Teacher F and Teacher A are not cognitively aware of either their pedagogical considerations or the contents of teaching, but just capture the moment to bring into play cognitive knowledge and practice skills. It is similar in Teacher L's case. He figures out and uses the paper folding exercise at that immediate moment, without giving deliberation on

what or why to do before action. Teacher K is not mindful of her teaching, and does not ponder how or what to teach. She becomes cognitively aware of her practice of making use of her professional experience in counseling in rendering teaching only during the co-reflections. Teacher M notes his uncertainty about the underlying reasons for his acts of teaching, and regards practice teaching as an intuitive practice. He was more likely to rely on his implicit or hidden knowing in capturing the momentary practice scenario for bringing about teaching.

Further, the practice teachers noted that they just taught students in the way they usually do in supervision without any specific pedagogical considerations or reasons. They knew how and what to do in that immediate moment whenever they engage in teaching. It seems they do not have awareness of why or how they teach but depend much on a kind of tacit knowing-in-action as depicted by Schön (1983) in rendering teaching. The phrase “do not have awareness” does not mean the absence of reflection; otherwise they could not take prompt action in response to students’ learning need in that practical situation. They have to be aware of what they have done and want needs to be done in teaching. It is likely that they perform what Eraut’s (1994) calls “rapid reflection,” which refers to momentary reflection during interaction with another person within a very limited time span. The actor still reflects after the

momentary action, which reshapes the immediacy of the next move. The practice teachers involve a kind of knowing-in-action, which is embodied, intuitive, and tacit. However, this form of reflection is different from Aristotle's notion of deliberation as characterized by men with practical wisdom, which is a rational disposition. As referred to in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, deliberation is:

There is a difference between inquiry and deliberation; for deliberation is a particular kind of inquiry. We must grasp the nature of excellence in deliberation as well... but good deliberation is a kind of deliberation, and he who deliberates inquiries and calculates. (*Nicomachean Ethics*, VI.9.1142a31-b2)

For Aristotle, deliberation connotes the good end, right way, and right time. *Phronimos* are those who can and actually do deliberation of ends before, in, and after practice. As Roca (2007) says, it is impossible to have deliberation without reasoning (p. 198).

Now to have deliberate well is thought to be a good thing; for it is this kind of correctness of deliberation that is excellence in deliberation, viz. that which tends to attain what is good. But it is possible to attain even good by a false syllogism, and to attain what one ought to do but not by the right means, the middle term being false; so that this too is not yet

excellence in deliberation...It is possible to attain it by long deliberation while another man attains it quickly. Therefore in the former case we have not yet got excellence in deliberation, which is rightness with regard to the expedient – rightness in respect both of the end, the manner, and the time. (Nicomachean Ethics, VI.9.1142b20-29)

The practice teachers instead go through a kind of nondeliberative reflection in which they do not go through self-critique or critical self-reflection of their pedagogical assumptions or consider a choice of teaching action for students' good learning before, in, and after practice in a systemic way. They rather engage in a form of reflection which is tacit, spontaneous, and rapid during their interaction with students within a very limited time span. This kind of reflection is less articulate. They all became more cognitively aware of and able to articulate why and how they teach in the process of interactive discussion with the researcher. This kind of awareness is not well acknowledged by the practice teachers when they are in action but could be sharpened or polished through the co-reflections with the researcher. This process is similar to Tsang's (2007) claim of external dialogue which moves dialogue from internal to external. The practice teachers deserve mental space in engaging self-reflection and reflection-on-action when there is a platform provided for promotion of

co-reflection in this study. They make the tacit or implicit knowledge explicit for self-critique, re-construction, and co-construction of meaning in the co-reflections. The co-reflections provide a critical context for reflection. The practice teachers show a kind of post hoc awareness and co-construct with the researcher what has been done and its possible reasons. This paves the ground of making recommendations of providing specialized training in cultivation of self-awareness and reflective practice for practice teachers as discussed in Chapter 5.

Referring to personal practical knowledge which largely comes along with experience. With reference to the above-mentioned rapid reflection of teaching actions, the practice teachers know how and what to teach in action. It seems that they embrace some of kind of embodied knowledge or practical knowledge that they refer to in rendering teaching. As Kolb (1984) notes, there is personal knowledge and social knowledge (p. 105). The practice teachers depend much on tacit knowing-in-action, which comes along with experience. In the co-reflections, all of the teachers point out the central place of experience, which facilitates them in rendering teaching in the immediate moment. Hence, it is the characteristic mode of ordinary practical knowledge (Schön, 1983). The

following analysis helps illustrate the relationship between the place of experience and the exercise of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching.

As noted earlier, Teacher A comments that the student's counseling work "is not going smoothly" as informed by his professional and life experience, and his family therapy, although he cannot articulate the details of his comment. He formulates his personal approach after having been exposed to years of practice in counseling, with ongoing modification of his understanding via personal articulation. He uses the analogy of a technician who repairs hoses every day. The technician is thus an expert in hose repair. As noted by him, he is able to make sense of students' queries in learning, and derives the contents of teaching within 3 seconds because of his rich work experience. This implies that he develops his practical knowledge based upon the intersection of experience and formal knowledge via personal articulation.

Teacher A refers to his practical knowledge, which comes along with his rich experience in counseling. He teaches the student counseling skills and knowledge on the spot. Experience helps him to develop knowledge and to provide prompt and concrete feedback to the participating student for her learning. This implies that his professional experience in counseling formulates his conception of good counseling, and predisposes him to decide when and what

to teach. Practical knowledge is highly personal, and he can use it in teaching spontaneously whenever he is in action. It comes along with experience and formal knowledge in his case.

Similar to Teacher A, Teacher K refers to an accretion of working experience and formal theories in rendering teaching. As discussed earlier, the student is participative and collaborative in working with Teacher K in the process of knowledge acquisition via reflection. Teacher K helps the student to summarize, reframe and conceptualize what has been explored during discussions, and brings about an understanding of humanity. However, she is not aware of her teaching practice before the co-reflection meetings. She regards her practice of making a narrative of what she and the student have discussed, and her wisdom as asking inspiring questions for exploring new understanding. She further relates that her learning experience with the hermeneutic approach has directed her to place due attention on self-reflection and human understanding. In addition to her learning experience, Teacher K always refers to her professional experience in counseling and casework in informing her teaching practice. For instance, she shares her direct practice experience of using the skills of reframing and conceptualization in working with clients. She adopts the same practice now in her teaching, and does reframing

and conceptualization based upon students' inputs of their thoughts or work during their learning.

Teacher K confirms the aforesaid skills in teaching because she discovers them workable and congruent with her belief in the Strength-Based approach. It is her usual practice to inspire students to articulate and consolidate their thoughts and views for acquiring new understanding. She, however, does not know that she has internalized her professional practice experience in rendering supervision before having the co-reflections. She regards her teaching practice as practice wisdom that is derived from her affirmative experience. This implies that she discriminates the relevant and good experiences, and develops a significant store in her data bank for use in rendering teaching.

As for Teacher M, he regards his sudden suspension of instructing the student on the case analysis as intuitive practice, because they did not have eye contact. He quotes Dreyfus's five developmental stages of expertise for illustration of the development of his personal practical knowledge via accumulated experience. Expert nurses do not need to deliberate on the practice situation, but take immediate medical action in response to the patients' health condition at that moment. Teacher M is experienced in practice teaching, and usually does not need to take time for consideration of the teaching action,

although sometimes, he may need a few seconds for figuring out the next step.

He conceives his intuitive teaching practice as his practice wisdom, which is tacit, personal, and embodied knowledge.

He further iterates the central place of experience in knowledge acquisition, and the nondeliberative nature of his teaching. He conceives his practice of taking role shifts, as in the section of the Substantive Contents of the Features of Practice Wisdom, as a sort of implicit knowledge. He gets used to role shifting at a particular moment during the process of supervision, unobtrusively and imperceptibly, without awareness after having accumulated practice teaching experience. He knows the possible role changes, but is not alert to the timeline of doing so. He is able to tune in to the assigned role, and acts authentically in response to the teaching scenario within a few seconds. It means that Teacher M is informed by his implicit knowledge, experience, and well-grounded and nondeliberative practical knowledge in rendering teaching.

Teacher F also recognizes the significance of experience and knowledge about pertinent theories, including its limits and desirability in practice. As indicated in the section of the Agential Nature of Knowledge, she notes that practice and experience help a person modify theories and revise understanding. She notes that she is well-acquainted with practice teaching, and has accumulated

the relevant knowledge in her mind. There is then no need to deliberate, because she knows what to do in a spontaneous way whenever she takes up a practice teacher's role or supervisory work. This is understood as embodied knowledge that is highly personalized and used authentically.

With diverse types of frontline experience, Teacher F nurtures good adaptability and personalized teaching practice. She explores practice teaching on her own, including the identification of student's needs, the role of practice teacher, and so forth. She argues that the experience or knowledge she acquires in undertaking practice teaching is her property and is highly personal. This illuminates her collation of direct practice experience and experience of practice teaching via continued self-exploration for development of practical knowledge, which informs her teaching without awareness. She conceives practice wisdom as developed from accumulated experience.

Last, but not the least, as referred to the discussion on improvisation in teaching in the section of Teacher L's Teaching Practice in this chapter, Teacher L demonstrates the quality of improvisation when he works with the unplanned, rather than the planned teaching situation. He figured out the paper folding exercise in response to the student's difficulty in making sense of the concept of reciprocal communication on the spot although he never did it before. He

addresses the need to give demonstrations facilitating students learning whenever they get stuck. He notes that he does not have prior awareness of when to use his knowledge, but can bring it about spontaneously and immediately in view of the student's learning need. As like other practice teachers, Teacher L is able to articulate why and how he improvised the paper folding exercise during the co-reflection meetings.

Teacher L demonstrates a kind of personal and embodied knowledge in the act of doing that is bounded to experience. Teacher L notes that he developed such a capability of improvisation via his personal articulation of his accumulated experience and on-going actions after joined the career of practice teaching. His rich experience in the social work field and education enabled him to improvise teaching methods to facilitate students to learn nicely. The use of this kind of tacit knowledge depends on the practice situation at a particular moment. With accumulated experience, he is able to use his practical knowledge at anytime spontaneously. This connotes the nature of nondeliberative reflection, reflection-in-action, and improvisation. He believes that practical knowledge is experience accumulated via continuous practice. An agent is able to enrich his or her practice via ongoing action and accumulation of

experience, and knows when to use a practice method or how to improvise. To him, personal practical knowledge is grounded in experience and action.

Summing up. The above-mentioned teaching scenarios illustrate that the practice teachers rely on their personal practical knowledge in rendering supervision, which is comprised largely of experience and cognitive Knowledge. They all address their experiences, which help them to formulate how and what to teach in the immediate moment, without deliberative reflection. With reference to a significant store of pertinent experience, they show a kind of practical knowledge in the act of doing that is bounded to experience and ongoing practice. They are able to bring about the concrete content of teaching in action, but cannot articulate it in an explicit way until the platform of co-reflections is provided for critical reflection. This is similar to Gowdy's (1994) claim that much of the knowledge practitioners seek resides in action, rather than precedes it (p. 364). This implies that they utilize personal practical knowledge, which is embodied and largely experience-grounded.

Practice teachers rank experience over formal theories in guiding the act of teaching. Similarly social workers use practice knowledge rather than research-based knowledge in decision-making (Berman, 1996). They share a commonality in the way that they regard personal practical knowledge. Among

them, Teachers A and K are informed by their professional experience in youth counseling and formal theories, that is, family therapy and the Strength-Based approach. Teacher A makes use of his direct practice experience in youth work to inform the student of his analysis of the case. Teacher K refers to her direct practice experience in coaching the student to explore new understanding or self-awareness. Teachers M, F, and L formulate their personal practical knowledge in reference to their teaching experience. Teachers M and L are able to develop the teaching methods of role-shifting and paper folding exercises, respectively, at the immediate moment for facilitating student learning. Teacher F is acquainted with the time flow of placement and its respective tasks in teaching the student to do a case transfer at a particular stage of placement.

As discussed in Chapter 2, practice wisdom is likely acquired through direct experience. It is tacit and embodied in actions. These five practice teachers are able to exercise the immediate choice of the appropriate pedagogical approach, performing with versatility in teaching as derived from their accumulated experience. Experience is central to knowledge acquisition. In a nutshell, all of the practice teachers follow the paradigm of practice wisdom, in which they make pedagogical decisions or render teaching largely with reference to their experiences.

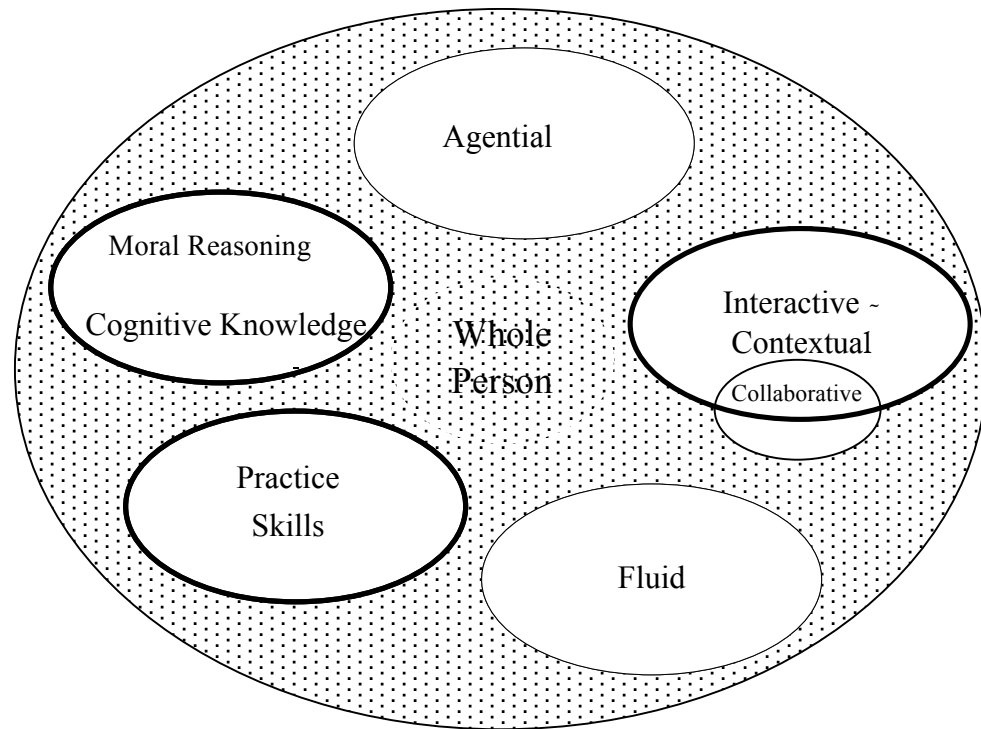
Difference

As discussed above, the practice teachers exercise nondeliberative reflection in use of the four features of practice wisdom in their teaching. This in turn leads to the exercise of relative emphasis on these features. These features with differing emphasis act together, which generates the unique picture of each practice teacher in exercising the four features in teaching.

Teacher A: The moralizing teaching. With reference to the above-mentioned discussion of Teacher A's teaching, he insists passing on his passion to students, and emphasizes in a directive manner the rational passion of doing the right thing for the client's benefit. He shows great passion in encouraging students to render the ideal practice by teaching them practice skills and cognitive knowledge with reference to the context. He demonstrates the salient moral perception and passion for passing down social work values to the new generation of social worker. The participating student says that Teacher A always reminds her and the classmates to work with heart. He promotes a good attitude for the student's learning.

In a recapitulation his overall exercise of the four features in teaching, Teacher A puts greater emphasis on the interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge. He insists on undertaking the right action for the morally

justified end, as exemplified with his advice to obtain genuine evaluations from the client's feedback for the improvement of service delivery. As informed by his rich experience in counseling, he brings another domain of practice skills to teaching. The commonality of contextual knowledge is exercised in an active way, as evidenced by his teaching of the differential use of theories. He is, however, less active in exercising the features of the Fluid Status and the Agential Nature of knowledge acquisition because of his predisposition to apprenticeship and directive teaching. He usually informs the student what to do in a directive manner. Collaborative learning is less active in his teaching as a result. The overall dynamic interaction of the four features as exercised by Teacher A is mapped in Figure 4.



Legend:

- Active exercise
- Less active exercise

Figure 4. The moralizing teaching.

Teacher K: The facilitative teaching. Teacher K shows due respect for human beings as revealed in her virtue of caring for the student, as reflected in her teaching practice discussed earlier. She intends to take good care of herself for giving support to students. She demonstrates the comportment of the self towards others, which has the inherent goal of enhancing the existence of the others (Hooft, 1999). The student is guided to review her achievements despite her sense of inferiority. Teacher K expects herself and other practice teachers to

act as mentor for demonstration of appropriate attitudes for student learning via personal enactment.

As illustrated in the previous chapter and the first part of this chapter, Teacher K usually make use of the student's input of ideas or work with the client in bringing about the theoretical concepts and reevaluation of one's own understanding. Her belief is that students are contributive to knowledge generation and new understanding, which is consistent with her predisposition to Strength-Based approach. The student is actively involved in the review of her conception of the client and the reconsideration of her understanding of the client's suffering via the conversations with Teacher K. Teacher K also gives due concern to the understanding of humanity in carrying out her teaching. Knowing humanity is enfolded in her teaching. The agential nature of the agent in knowledge acquisition, the interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge, and collaborative learning are exercised actively in her teaching. However, the feature of the Fluid Status and the commonality of contextual knowledge are less exercised by her. The dynamic interaction of the four features as exercised by her is mapped in Figure 5.

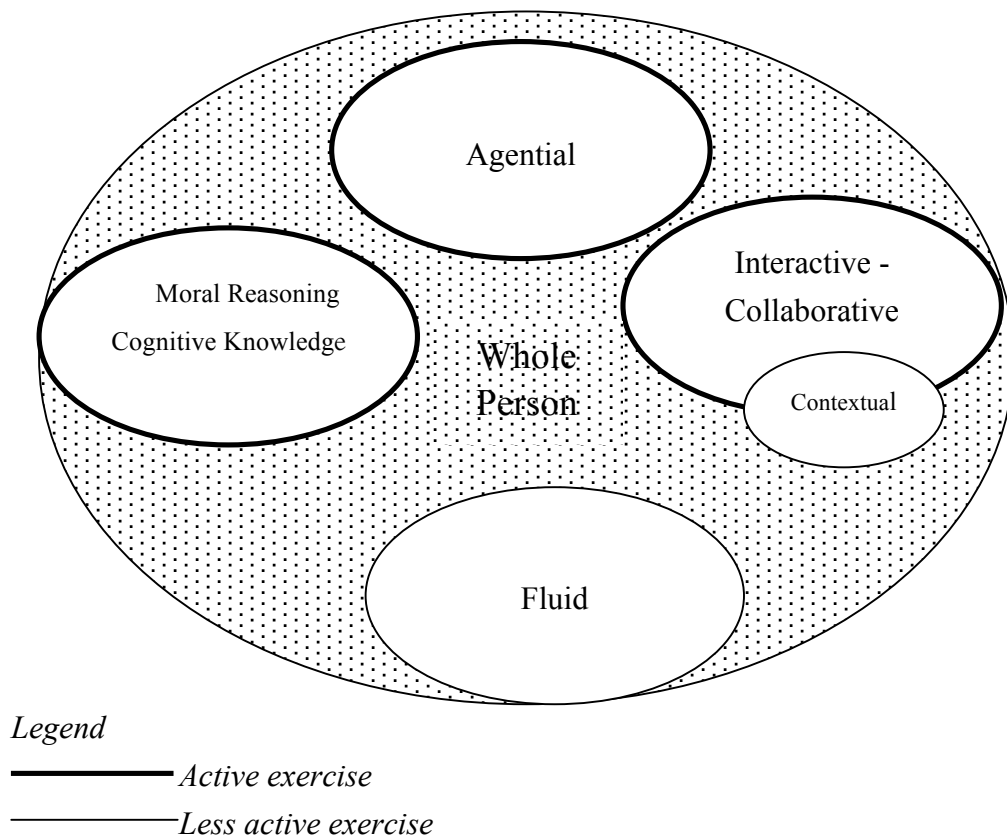


Figure 5. The facilitative teaching.

Teacher M: The humanistic teaching. Teacher M reveals that hermeneutic social work is his teaching approach. As informed by hermeneutics, he brings in due respect and moral concern for the central place of human understanding in social work practice and practice teaching. He shows strong emotional involvement in view of clients' vulnerability, for example, the mother's frustration and the abused young boy. He tends to advocate understanding of human suffering, and nurtures in students the capability to perceive and develop emotional sensitivity. In the two videotapes, he puts focal

attention on unfolding the diversity of humanity and human suffering, and on reflecting on attitude. This best reflects his concern about the moral dimensions of social work practice and the expanded notion of knowledge in his teaching.

Self-education is Teacher M's ideal mode of learning. The student is participative and collaborative with Teacher M in the generation of new understanding of the client's suffering and her dominance in working with the youth. As discussed earlier, he exercises the commonality of contextual knowledge of the Interactive Process and the feature of the Fluid Status of knowledge in a less explicit way than the other teachers. However, we may touch on the feature of Fluid Status and the commonality of contextual knowledge from his views about the uncertainty of knowing and provisional stance of knowledge, and teaching in context. The facet of Cognitive Knowledge is less active in both the videotaped teaching scenarios and his discussions. The overall dynamic operation of the four features of practice wisdom as exercised by him is mapped in Figure 6.

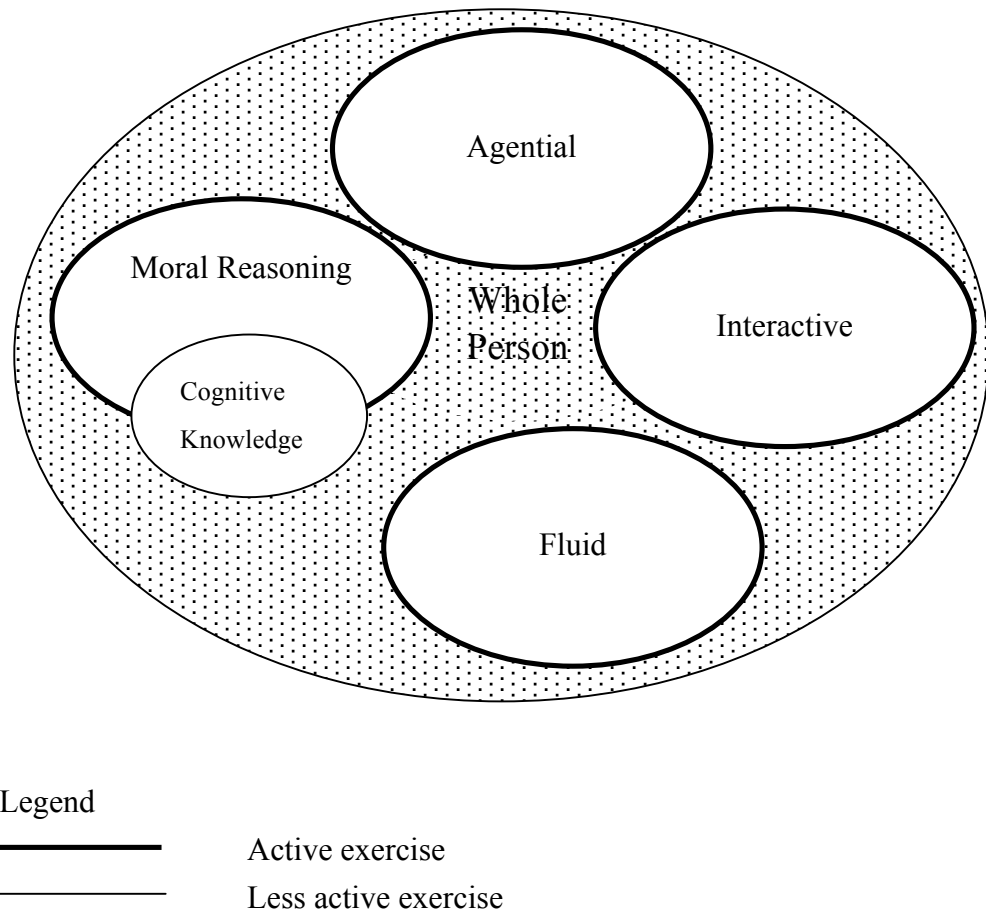


Figure 6. The humanistic teaching.

Teacher F: The rational teaching. As discussed previously, Teacher F argues consistently that the student shall make well-supported and well-grounded judgments on the service need of a newly arrived mother from the Mainland who shows difficulty in child rearing (a suspected child abuse case under investigation). She iterates her moral concern that the mother and the child's welfare have not been thoroughly assessed by the student. To her, the exercise of vigorous assessment and informed practice are paramount in bringing about

desirable outcomes. She is genuine in showing the rational passion for the right action and the best outcomes for the clients.

Teacher F puts equal emphasis on the four features in teaching, except for the commonality of collaborative learning. Referring to the earlier discussion, she is less inclined to work with the less verbally expressive or less proactive students. As commented by Teacher F, the participating student does not appear to be a critical or outspoken person. It is common for her to tell the participating student about her experience, or what to do whenever the student cannot voice her thoughts or make a prompt response. This leads to a neglect of collaborative learning in her teaching, despite her view that the actors are agential in knowledge generation via practice and experience. The factor of containment in the exercise of the feature of Interactive Process of knowledge generation is examined in the following section. In Teacher F's teaching, strong rational passion acts together with differing emphasis on the four features of practice wisdom, as mapped in Figure 7.

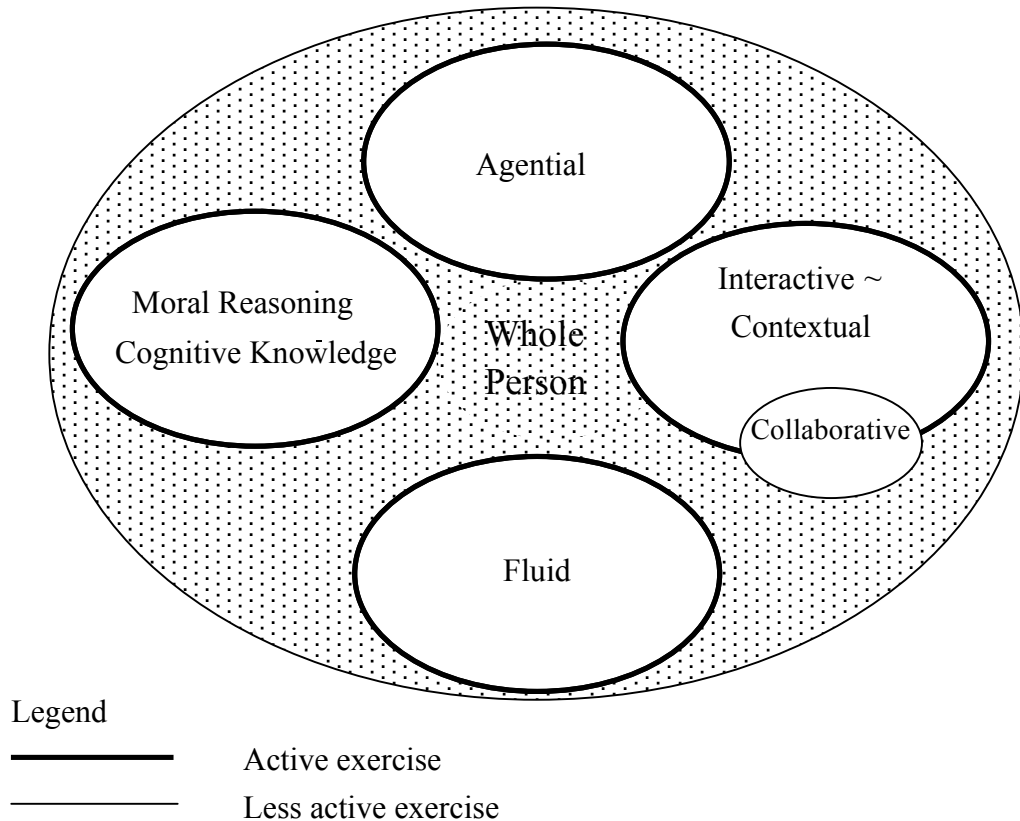


Figure 7. The rational teaching.

Teacher L: The balanced teaching. Regarding Teacher L, he is able to balance the use of the four features in teaching. This helps explaining his improvisation and diversity in teaching. He is receptive to the particularities of the practice situation, and has the quality of improvisation. He does the right action in the paper folding exercise for the student's learning at the right time given the particular situation. He acts with dedication to social work education, and urges students to practice competently with theoretical knowledge and the

goal of desirable outcomes for clients. Cognitive Knowledge with the contextual perspective and its Fluid Status are taught. The participating student is induced to act proactively and collaboratively in acquiring knowledge through action and reflection. The student treasures her learning experience with Teacher L, who gives her a wider perspective of learning. To him, the student is able to acquire knowledge and reconstitute new understanding via ongoing action and experience. For instance, there is no definite answer to the number of group sessions for the respective group developmental stage. This depends on the nature of the group, the target group, the service setting, the intervention goal, and so forth. The status of fluid knowledge is well acknowledged.

In this study, Teacher L is the sole participating teacher who demonstrates improvisation in teaching, as illustrated from his use of a paper folding exercise in bringing about a good learning outcome to the student. As observed from the videotape, he does the exercise with the student without preparation or plan. Rather, he conducts teaching in response to the student's difficulty in figuring out the concept of reciprocal communication during the process of supervision. Besides this paper folding exercise, he improvises another teaching method—drawing for helping the student to consolidate her placement experience. As directed by the participating student, Teacher L drew a triangle on a sheet of

paper, adding three spots to the picture, namely attitude, skill, and knowledge, when she did not know how to make a review of her placement. The student was inspired to articulate the details on each spot, and to get an overall picture of her experience in this placement.

Teacher L improvises the paper folding exercise without plan when the student gets stuck for bringing about good student learning. What this practice teacher does illuminates the notion of practice wisdom: doing the right action at the right time for the right person for the morally justified end. However, we shall pay attention to the limited data in drawing this interpretation. The said interpretation is confined to the data from one practice teacher – Teacher L, with the support of two teaching scenarios. It may be subject to further research about the relationship of the balanced use of the four features and the capability of having practice wisdom. The overall dynamic operation of the features with differing emphasis as exercised by Teacher L is mapped in Figure 8.

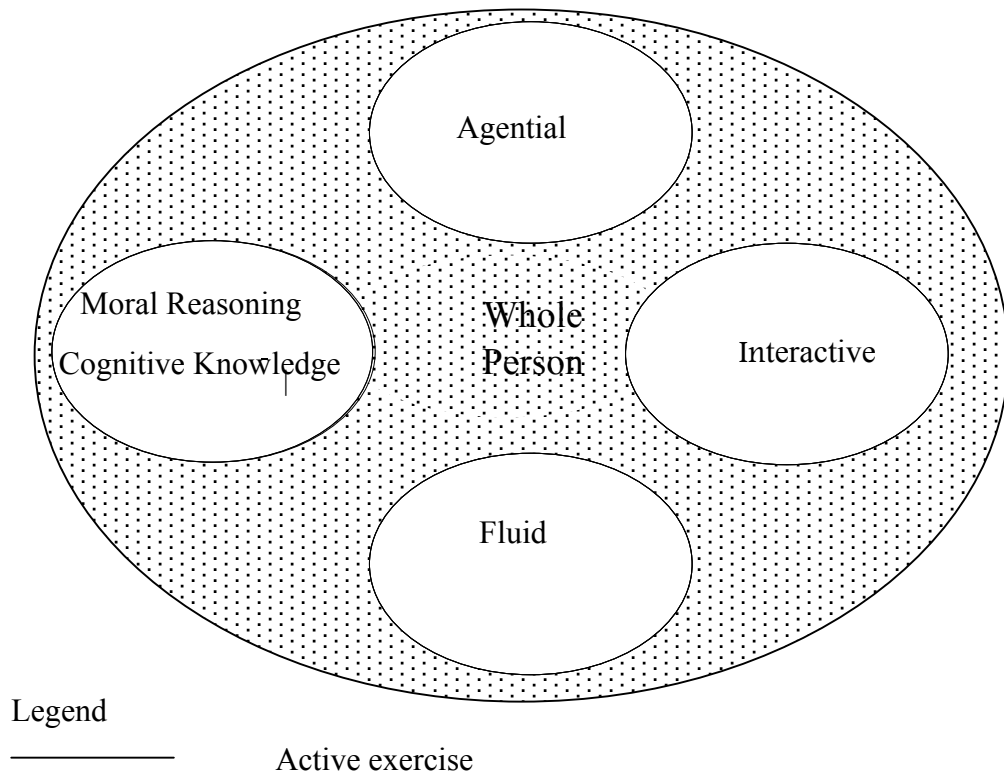


Figure 8. The balanced teaching.

Summing Up

As revealed above, the five practice teachers put different emphasis on the various features of practice wisdom in working with their respective students, which generates five types of teaching. These five types of teaching operate in a way unique to these five practice teachers, who work with the five participating students under their particular teaching situations. The occurrence of a particular type of teaching depends on the dynamic interaction between the teacher and the student at a particular time. For example, as Teacher K said, she would teach students practice skills after they learnt human understanding. She likely will

put more emphasis on the domain of skill teaching than on the moral dimension of social work practice when the participating student is capable of making sense the teenager's suffering. The choice of placing differing emphasis on a particular feature over others should be decided by the practice teacher's perception of the salient feature at that moment. In principle, there may be different types of teaching arising from the choice of the salient feature as perceived by the practice teacher, and these may change with time and circumstance. This is similar to a kaleidoscope in which many and different colored patterns form following the rotation of the tube. It is thus most desirable to adopt a kaleidoscopic view in understanding pedagogical practice wisdom.

In practice, the occurrence of various types of teaching depends on whether the practice teacher has the capability of switching among the various features of practice wisdom in response to student's learning needs at the moment of teaching. However, it is unlikely that everybody will make such a switch, as revealed by some teaching incidents. For instance, the participating student shows great difficulty in matching Teacher F's rational or logical teaching practice, for which sound deliberation on the formal theories or skills is required. Another placement student, under the supervision of Teacher K, shows no desire for participation in collaborative learning or on-going reflection. When asked

about a theory in classroom teaching, Teacher A queries a student (not the participating student) about the role giving to passion. The student may really want to learn the theory, while Teacher A gives greater emphasis on teaching of morality. These counter examples illustrate that the occurrence of diversified types of teaching depends on the teachers' flexibility and capability in the use of the four features with respect to students' needs in learning. The flexibility and capability depend on the practice teachers' self awareness and competence in the use of these four features of practice wisdom in their teaching. This will be discussed in the last chapter of this dissertation.

The other side of the coin: Is the exercise of the four features of practice wisdom necessary good? In Chapter 2, the four features of practice wisdom were developed, based upon a range of scholars' view of practice wisdom. Wisdom connotes "wise" and "good" in itself. This hypothetically assumes that a subject embraces the four features as good, in recent academic discussions. This dissertation study makes the unique contribution of undertaking an empirical study on the exercise of these four features of practice wisdom in the context of practice teaching. The following empirical reference helps unraveling the other side of the coin, showing that the use of the four

features of practice wisdom is not necessary good and it depends on the way how the four features are exercised.

Nondeliberative reflection and experience-grounded teaching. As discussed earlier, practice teachers rely on their experiences largely in making pedagogical decisions and carrying out teaching. They do not go through the form of Aristotelian deliberation as examined earlier on how or why they teach until the co-reflections which provide a context for critical reflection and articulation of their embodied and tacit knowledge. They exercise rapid reflection in bringing in the four features of practice wisdom to their teaching. For instance, as stipulated in section of Teacher A's Teaching Practice, he notes the student's interview is not going smoothly. He then informs the student of his diagnosis of a self-identity problem of the client, based largely upon his working experience in counseling. Both Teacher A and Teacher M note their capability of figuring out the students' queries or the intervention method within a few seconds without deliberative reflection, because of their rich experience.

However, what if the practice teacher is not experienced? What if the practice teacher's professional experience is not relevant to the placement setting or nature of client? A practice teacher's experience is not necessarily desirable for student learning. If so, the practice teacher most likely cannot use his or her

practical knowledge in facilitating students to learn in good way. Also, it is a myth that experienced social workers all know how to undertake practice teaching properly. Chui (2005) offers this same critique in his research on fieldwork assessment in Hong Kong. In fact, nondeliberative reflection, or experience-grounded teaching, does not necessarily bring about good education or beneficial student learning. Practice teachers' views reveal an absence of platform and mental space for reflection and collation of experience among practice teachers. Practice teachers do not have the platform or the opportunity to reflect critically on their pedagogical assumptions or the desirability of their teaching for students' good learning. In the last chapter, we will address this issue in detail.

A particular type of teaching may suit a particular sort of student.

Differing emphasis on the relative use of the four features results from nondeliberative reflective teaching. Based upon the available data, it is apparent that a particular type of teacher may match a particular type of student. For instance, the "facilitative teaching" of Teacher K is desirable for the participating student, who wishes for reflection and collaborative learning with Teacher K. Teacher K actively incorporates the student's thoughts and views in her teaching. The student also shows appreciation for the participative and collaborative

process with Teacher K in exploring knowing in reference to her teaching practice. The student opines that Teacher K usually asks probing questions for inspiring the student to explore knowing via reflection. Teacher K gives the participating student more stimulation, because the student has a desire to give deliberation.

The non-thinking or nonreflective type of student, however, may not fit this sort of teaching, which demands constant reflection of students. Another placement student shows difficulty in receiving supervision from her, because Teacher K asks too much questions, and she or he cannot figure them out. This student is very afraid of having individual supervision, as he or she does not like reflective thinking and shows difficulty in making responses to Teacher K's questions. Teacher K is requested by this student to state what she wants to teach in a directive way, and to shorten the duration of individual supervision. Teacher K comments that this student does not have the potential or the capability of giving deeper thinking, even though he or she performs better in academic performance and with paperwork. The non-thinking type of student may not fit the highly reflective and participative nature of Teacher K's facilitative teaching.

As emphasized earlier, Teacher A is directive in imparting to students the core values of social work and knowledge. The participating student is seldom

involved in the process of knowledge acquisition. The student, however, is very happy with this kind of teaching, because her former fieldwork supervisor always asks her to make reflection when she is uncertain if she is on the right track. The student treasures learning from Teacher A's rich work experience, examples of genuine attitudes of a social worker, and directive teaching style, as she is inexperienced and not confident enough. Teacher A believes that his teaching fits fresh and inexperienced students well because they do not know what to do. However, Teacher A is overwhelmed by his rational passion of passing down social work core values, and declines a student's inquiry about a theory in class teaching. His moralizing teaching may not fit those students who want to strive for formal knowledge or collaborative learning.

Similarly, the "rational teaching" of Teacher F may match theoretically oriented and experienced students, but not green students. Teacher F depicts her fieldwork supervision with an adult student as inspiring and interactive. The adult student is experienced and good at conceptual thinking, and can have prompt and interactive discussions with Teacher F. As learnt from Teacher F, the adult student notes his happiness to have fieldwork supervision from Teacher F. However, Teacher F's rational teaching likely does not fit green students, like the participating student who is inexperienced and not good at conceptual

thinking. This helps explain why the participating student feels it is very difficult, or even frustrating to accommodate Teacher F's teaching of requiring theoretically grounded assessment or intervention. It may be difficult for a green student who is not thinking-oriented to learn under reason-oriented teaching. Logical or reason-oriented teaching probably brings beneficial learning to the reflective and independent students, but not to the green or less reflective students.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, practice teachers share the commonality of making reference to their personal practical knowledge in rendering teaching in a nondeliberative reflective manner. They exercise uniform or varying emphasis on these four features of practice wisdom, as results from nondeliberative reflection of teaching. Different types of teaching result from differing emphasis on the use of the four features, and on the dynamic interaction between a teacher and a particular type of student at a particular time and specific situation. It is more appropriate to adopt a kaleidoscopic view in making sense of pedagogical practice wisdom.

A particular sort of teaching may fit a particular sort of student. It is desirable for the practice teachers to switch emphasis from one to another feature for bringing about competent teaching and student learning in a good way.

Practice wisdom, in turn, implies excellence or good in itself. The hypothetical assumption that the exercise of these four features of practice wisdom as good is not necessarily true. As discussed previously, nondeliberative, rapid reflection in the exercise of the four features and experience-grounded teaching are not necessary good for student learning. It is suggested to provide a platform for practice teachers to sharpen or polish their self-awareness or self-reflection on their teaching.

The features of practice wisdom in teaching are not exercised in a vacuum.

With reference to the above-mentioned concrete experiences of the practice teachers, there several factors that may hinder or facilitate them to exercise the four features in their teaching. For example, the factor of containment affects the feasibility of bringing in the commonality of collaborative learning in the process of knowledge acquisition in Teachers K and F. The factor of students' intellectual capability and capacity of containment affect Teacher M to bring the moral dimension into his teaching. In the following section, the factors involved in the exercise of the features of practice wisdom in practice teaching will be discussed. A contextual perspective is provided to enrich our understanding of practice wisdom from the conceptual level of discussion to a comparatively specific knowledge of its operation in the context of practice teaching.

The Factors in the Exercise of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching

In the previous two sections, the substantive contents of the four features of practice wisdom and its operation as exercised by the individual practice teachers in their teaching have been illustrated. This helps to enrich our understanding of the contents of pedagogical practice wisdom and the way practice teachers exercise it in facilitating good student learning. Use of practical knowledge and nondeliberative reflection in the exercise of the four features confirm the paradigm of practice wisdom. We have also unraveled the other side of the coin, that the assumption that an agent simply exercising the four features of practice wisdom as good is questionable. It is well understood that the exercise of these four features are not equivalent to practice wisdom.

These findings are momentous to our knowing of pedagogical practice wisdom and its place in practice teaching. The analysis of the teaching practice of practice teachers in the section of the Dynamic Interaction of the Features of Practice Wisdom as Exercised by Practice Teachers reveals some factors that possibly can hinder or facilitate the teachers bringing in the four features of practice wisdom in their teaching. The possible difficulties practice teachers

encountered in exercising the features of practice wisdom, which have not been covered yet in current academic discussion, are unraveled. A better knowledge of the dependent factors influencing the exercise of various features will facilitate pedagogy development.

The Time Factor

Time availability affects the way practice teachers teach and what they choose as the contents of teaching. The time factor can be understood in two aspects: placement duration and the supervisory session schedule. The short but intensive placement duration and the tight schedule of supervisory meeting have undermined the feasibility of exercising the features of the Agential Nature and the Interactive Process of knowledge acquisition of practice wisdom in teaching.

Compete with the short and intensive block placement. Four practice teachers point out the impacts of placement duration on their pedagogical consideration of the foci of teaching and the way they teach. The short, but intensive, summer block placement is less favorable for bringing in the attitudinal feature or understanding humanity in teaching. It is also less able to involve students to acquire knowledge in a collaborative way. For illustration, the short and intensive summer block placement allows less room for Teacher K or students having different foci of teaching or learning. The summer block

placement generally lasts for about nine to ten weeks in the local training institutes. Students have to attend five placement days per week. In view of the intensive work schedule within a short period, both the practice teacher and student are urged to handle the practical problems relating to direct service or administration. However, in concurrent placement which lasts about 24-26 weeks in general, Teacher K gives priority to the understanding of humanity and self-reflection in an early phase of the placement. Next she teaches students practice skills and cognitive knowledge. However, it is not feasible to nurture in students either the sensitivity or the capability of knowing humanity in a reflective way in a short period. The short summer block placement duration confines the contents of teaching mainly to practice skills and cognitive knowledge.

In the short summer block placement, Teacher K most likely is less able to bring knowledge of humanity into her teaching than in her work with the student in this study. With physical and mental space, the student is induced to reflect on her preconception of the young offender, as illustrated in previous discussions. Time constraints, in turn, have hindered Teacher K from bringing in the moral dimension of practice wisdom in teaching. Teacher K and students are urged to teach and learn practice skills and cognitive knowledge, respectively, with less emphasis on the expanded notion of knowledge under time constraint.

In addition to the effects on the contents of teaching, the way Teacher K rendered teaching is also affected by the placement duration. Her predisposition to students' active and collaborative role in acquisition of knowledge was fully discussed in the previous sections. For instance, she tends to inspire students to acquire knowledge via self-exploration or reflection, and not to inform them in a directive way. As observed from the videotapes, the participating student was probed to reexamine her work with the teenager and her understanding of the client. However, Teacher K opines that she will inform students of her comments in a directive manner because of time constraints in block placement. To her, it is a bit of a rush to complete the placement within ten weeks. It takes time to involve students in exploring learning collaboratively and to inspire them to have reflection for acquisition of new understanding. Similarly, students take time to digest, review, and reconstitute their framework of understanding. There is no short cut to learning. Because of time constraints in block placement, it is less feasible to utilize in her teaching the commonalities of the proactive agent in knowledge acquisition and collaborative learning.

Teacher M is concerned about the impact of the placement duration on involving students' participation in knowledge acquisition in his teaching practice. He opines on the limits of the 10-week summer block placement for

building up a trustful relationship with students. This, in turn, remarkably affects his ideal education of students through of self-learning. As discussed earlier, he believes that “education is self-education” is the ideal pedagogy. He regards himself as an assistant who facilitates students to attain their learning goals via self-learning. Without trust in him, students will not feel easy to have external dialogue with him, or to participate in the process of self-learning. Students may not feel safe enough to voice their thoughts or participate in the process of unfolding knowledge with him. In summer block placement, students are less able to actualize self-learning in a beneficial way, because they have just built up trust in him around the ending phase of placement. Time is paramount for nurturing the trustful relationship that, in turn, affects students’ active participation or collaboration in knowledge exploration. Hence, the trustful relationship between Teacher M and students is a necessary condition for exercising collaborative learning, and the proactive agent in knowledge acquisition in teaching.

Teacher L also addresses the hindrance to his teaching of the time factor in block placement. As iterated in the section of Moral Reasoning, what concerns him most is the primary ethical responsibility of the social work profession to render competent practice to clients. He is devoted to social work education,

and insists in training students to render competent practice for upholding the social work profession and the client's welfare. According to his understanding, students have grasped the theoretical concepts in classroom learning, and they are expected to learn how to perform good practice via experience and the field practicum training. He strives to teach students to do a similar placement assignment twice to allow them to acquire learning as experienced first in one practice assignment, and then to refine their practice and knowledge base via active experimentation in the second placement assignment. He notes that the participating student knows better how to conduct a carnival event—a placement assignment for the participating student—in the future after having encountered the practical problems of the previous experience in the current placement.

For Teacher L, students are proactive in knowledge acquisition via action and experience. Experience and action can inform knowledge, and are central to knowledge generation. Use of the Agential Nature of knowledge, and the collaborative process of knowledge acquisition in his teaching, has been fully addressed in the previous two sections. Concurrent placement, which generally lasts about 24 weeks among most of the participating universities, is favorable for students in consolidating their previous learning experience for active experimentation in the future. However, the short and intensive summer block

placement is less favorable for teaching students to learn by consolidation of their previous experience, since both the students and the teacher have to rush to complete the work within 9 or 10 weeks. It is not feasible for students to do work of a similar nature twice. As referred to his experience with a less capable student, he conducted intensive and close supervision in a directive way throughout the summer block placement for improving the student's practice competence. He could not have physical space to give the student more opportunities to practice and gain experience for the development of professional competence. This was also true of the student. The time constraint of summer block placement exacerbates the difficulty of using the feature of the Agential Nature or the commonality of collaborative learning.

Teacher F affirms the central place of experience in knowledge acquisition. She intends to let students acquire learning by themselves via ongoing practice and accumulation of experience. However, the time constraint of the summer block placement forbids her from involving students in active participation in self-exploration of knowledge. She points out that due to the tight schedule of summer block placement, she cannot afford the time for students to learn by trial and error, or to explore learning gradually. Eventually, she tells them what to do in a directive manner. In co-reflection meetings, she becomes

aware that time constraints in the summer block has triggered her impatience, and that she is more directive in teaching. She is less capable of allowing students either physical or mental space to make reflection on learning. This helps to explain the inactive exercise of the commonality of the collaborative learning in her teaching, as stipulated in the previous chapter. Her impatience is interpreted as the effect of the time factors in restricting her capability of containment. This will be examined at length in the following discussion on containment.

Teacher F opines that it is a bit of rush to go through different subject matters with students in one and a half hours – the nominal duration of a supervisory session as set by the SWRB in Hong Kong. Even though she decides to spend around two hours for each session, she still cannot have a thorough discussion with the participating student about a case, but moves to a discussion of the hotline service and administration matters. She notes that there are many issues to be handled in a supervisory session. She acknowledges, in theory, the desirability of students to figure out learning or input their thoughts in her teaching. It is good to inspire the student to think about the work of preparing a case transfer. In practice, however, she prefers to save time, and instructs the student how, particularly for the issues related to client's welfare, to get the work done in a supervisory session. Despite the desirability of student

participation in exploration of learning, the availability of time does influence the feasibility of using the commonalities of the proactive agent and collaborative learning in knowledge acquisition.

The other four practice teachers did not say much about the tight schedule of fieldwork supervisory session. Teacher A does not show much concern about the impact of placement duration on his teaching. Probably, this is because of the insignificant difference between the duration of the concurrent placement and the summer block placement in his teaching institute. The concurrent placement is about 12 weeks, which is 2 weeks longer than the summer block. The difference in duration between the concurrent and block placement is not salient. Another possible reason is his directive teaching, which can be explained by his preference for apprenticeships in practice teaching. In reference to his teaching, he usually instructs the participating student on what to do and how to do it. The commonality of collaborative learning of the Interactive Process is less active in his teaching, as documented in the previous sections on the Substantive Contents and Dynamic Interactions of the Features of Practice Wisdom. Placement duration has comparatively less influence on his teaching than the other four practice teachers.

Sufficient mental and physical space for practice teachers. In

Chapter 1, I have examined the intensive and individual work nature of fieldwork supervision. Compared with classroom teaching, practice teaching is suggested to be more interactive, as practice teachers should render teaching in response to the unique learning needs of individual students who work with a variety of human problems in different service settings. Practice teachers are expected to be attentive and responsive to student learning in the immediate situation. The tension in dealing with the demands of practice teaching, which requires both mental and physical space as well as the tight work schedule, is apparent. This affects the choice of the content of teaching, and the extent to which students are involved in the process of knowledge acquisition.

For illustration, Teacher A notes the tight work schedule of rendering on-site supervision from one place to another. The rushed work schedule in meeting the intensive and attentive nature of practice teaching sometimes has badly affected his physical strength. He sometimes cannot make prompt responses to student learning or the particularities of the practice situation as a result of his unfavorable physical state. Teacher M and Teacher K note similar concerns about having enough strength to render good practice teaching. They have to be attentive to what students report in the supervisory sessions, and

capture the chance for inducing timely teaching. Teacher M sometimes is not able to bring about understanding of the complex issues of humanity by authentically undertaking role shifting, as he did in the videotaped teaching scenarios, when he is tired and not in a good mental state. For Teacher M, a good mental state is facilitative to his teaching of human understanding. In contrast, a poor mental or physical state hinders him from embracing the wider perspective of knowledge, including understanding of humanity – a commonality of practice wisdom in teaching.

Concern about a desirable mental state in rendering teaching for proper learning of students is raised by Teacher K as well. As stipulated in the section of the Substantive Contents of the Features of Practice Wisdom, Teacher K insists on going through students' work thoroughly, and giving them concrete comments for addressing the particularities of the practice situation in teaching. The commonality of contextual knowledge of the Interactive Process of practice wisdom can be exercised in a proper way, subject to good mental state. She knows well about the demanding nature of practice teaching, and thus chooses not, as far as possible, to offer supervision for more than two students per day in order to maintain a good mental state for carrying out teaching. As discussed

earlier, she learns self-kindness by taking good care of her physical and mental wellness in order to give students input in as beneficial a way as possible.

Summing up. The time factor is crucial to the exercise of respective features of practice wisdom in teaching. Time availability is necessary for providing practice teachers the necessary condition to exercise various features in their teaching. Teachers F and K share the same view that the short duration of placement will undermine the feasibility of allowing students to experience self-exploration of learning via active participation and input of thoughts.

Without adequate time, the features of the Interactive Process and the Agential Nature of knowledge acquisition are less able to be exercised. To Teacher M, time is critically important for the development of a trustful relationship. A trustful relationship between teacher and student is essential for granting students a sense of safety, which is facilitative to self-learning and active involvement in the Interactive Process of knowledge generation. Availability of time has an influential impact on the exercise of the feature of the Agential Nature and the commonality of collaborative learning of the Interactive Process of knowledge acquisition.

Other than this, it also affects the feasibility of bringing in a wider perspective of knowledge in teaching. For instance, Teacher L is less able to

bring about the expanded notion of knowledge—experience and practice—under the short and intensive summer block placement. He is less capable of deepening student learning via ongoing action and experience in the summer block placement than he is with the participating student in concurrent placement. As noted earlier, in the summer block, students do not have adequate time for active experimentation in their learning as gained from the first placement assignment. What Teacher L did in the summer block was to work with the time constraints and maximize student's learning as far as possible with one-off practice experiences. He strives to adjust his teaching practice in view of time constraints.

Similarly, Teacher K tries to allow time for nurturing students' capability to taste the complexity of humanity. However, in the summer block placement, she concentrates instead on teaching skills and cognitive knowledge due to the overwhelming pragmatic needs of students in completing the placement assignments. Teacher K is alert to the time factor, and intentionally shifts the focus of teaching from understanding humanity to learning knowledge and skills in the summer block placement. The hindsight provided by conducting this study following the concurrent placement are highly beneficial, because

otherwise, the study may not have captured such rich empirical data on the contents of pedagogical practice wisdom and the way practice teachers exercise it.

Availability of time also has a notable impact on the practice teachers' mental and physical strength in bringing about the features of practice wisdom in teaching. With a good mental and physical state, they are more capable of acknowledging the particularities of the practice situation and bringing the commonalities of contextual knowledge and understanding of humanity to their teaching. Despite the differing impact of the time factor on practice teachers' teaching, the tough and intensive work nature of practice teaching deserves our attention in providing support for them in particular the continued in-service professional training. This issue of concern will be further addressed in the final chapter of the Summary and Implications of this study.

Containment of Practice Teachers

Another factor that has not been covered in the current discussion of practice wisdom is practice teachers' containment to accept student's limits in their teaching. Here, containment is understood as the ability to accept students as they are, including their limits. As stipulated in the previous section, Teacher F is intolerant of the less verbally expressive participating student, and tends to be directive in teaching. She acknowledges the need of knowing the student's

thoughts and understanding of the case, and of not immediately directing her on how to handle the case. However, in her actual teaching practice, she became impatient and told the student how to work with the client after only a moment of silence. She regards her common practice of telling students what to do as a “mistake” that frequently occurs in summer block placement. She knows well that she cannot tolerate silence, and becomes directive in instructing students on the way forward.

She acknowledges the need to allow time for the participating student to figure out her learning. However she cannot afford time to wait for her response due to time constraints and the student’s inability to give prompt responses. She shows self-awareness, and knows well about her inability to overcome her limits of accepting students’ shortcomings, especially under the time constraint. The capability of having containment to tolerate a slow pace or even silence is crucial to student participation in the process of knowledge acquisition. The capacity of containment helps explain the neglect of collaborative learning in Teacher F’s teaching as referred to her use of them in the section of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching.

Teacher K performs quite differently from Teacher F in the face of silence. She believes that students are capable of discovering knowledge or

self-understanding via the articulation of their thoughts. As shown in her teaching practice, she demonstrated the ability to tolerate silence when the student did not express any idea, but just tightly held her body with her scarf. Hence, she was patient in probing the student to examine her understanding of the teenage offender in a progressive way. She acknowledges silence as part of the process of supervision, and shows the ability to tolerate silence and refrained from speaking. The participating student is able to become involved actively in the process of knowing via internal and external dialogue, as spelt out in the section of the Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching.

Teacher K usually incorporates the participating student's input in bringing about the theoretical concepts and helping the student reformulate her preconceptions of the young offender. The student is encouraged to participate and work collaboratively with her in exploring learning under her facilitative teaching, as in Figure 5. Her capability of containing students' limits and making good use of their assets is helpful to the use of the feature of the Agential Nature and the commonality of collaborative learning in her teaching.

Interestingly, Teacher K shows great containment with the reflective and devoted students, but not those students who lack such personal attributes. For instance, she points out the difficulty in working with the less reflective or

devoted students, and how less opportunity is available for their participation in learning. Some students, unlike the participating student, are not thoughtful or able to provide detailed information of the practice situation. She regards the depth of input given by a student as indeed reflecting his or her devotion to clients. It is impossible to have in-depth discussions with students who are not eager to know about clients or interested in working with people. Eventually, less space or time is allowed for this sort of students to think or to learn via self-exploration or active collaboration with her.

Teacher K regards herself as a gate keeper, and cannot let those students below the average standard enter the field. She shows impatience in nurturing those students whom she finds do not reach the basic standard. Time is incurred in taking care of them, and there is urgency in directing them on what to do. The way she performs with such students is quite different from her facilitative teaching, as discussed in the section of Teacher K's Teaching Practice. This implies that the way she conducts teaching most likely changes in response to different sort of students. Her containment is affected by her conception of the student's competence and devotion to clients. For illustration, Teacher K states that the participating student has great interest in working with people, and is willing to make reflection. She shows great commitment to nurturing the

student, providing of both physical and mental space for exploration of new understanding. In contrast, she cannot show tolerance to the less devoted or nonreflective students. The opportunity for participation in exploration of knowing is thus less available for them. This shows that the exercise of the feature of Agential Nature and the commonality of collaborative process of knowledge generation is determined by Teacher K's ability to contain students who are incompetent in terms of their knowledge base and devotion. It echoes the finding that a particular type of teaching may suit a particular type of student in the previous discussion.

Summing up. The issue of containment in Teacher F and Teacher K indeed reflects the demand on practice teachers' ability to accept students' limits as well as their strengths, and gently allow them to grow. As discussed previously, Teacher F is a thinking person who renders logical teaching with much emphasis on well-grounded assessment and thoughtful discussion. The student is less capable in the domain which is Teacher F's strength. She is very impatient with students who cannot follow her pace. This likely magnifies Teacher F's incapability to accept the student's limits in reasoning. Teacher K iterates her concern about student's personal attitudes and interest in clients. Her professional learning experience has led to her predisposition toward reflective

practice. Thus, the participating student who fits Teacher K's conception of competence and good learning attitude has more opportunities to work with Teacher K in the process of acquiring knowledge. However, this predisposition also limits her ability to have the patience or containment to coach the less devoted or reflective students on how to acquire learning via self-exploration and reflection. In brief, the containment of practice teachers plays a role in affecting the use of the features of the Agential Nature and the Interactive Process of knowledge generation in teaching.

The Trustful Practice Teacher and Student Relationship

Three practice teachers—L, M, and A—note the significance of granting students a sense of safety for involving their input and active participation in the process of teaching and learning. The trustful relationship between the practice teacher and the placement student is central to the exercise of features of Interactive Process and the Agential Nature of knowledge acquisition. They however act in different ways.

Gently allow students to grow. The ability to tolerate silence and listen to those less verbally active students is exemplified by Teacher M's and Teacher L's teaching practice. Like Teacher K, they show the containment to face silence and coach the participating students to voice their thoughts or steadily

figure out the problems. They demonstrate the ability to take into account the students' pace in learning and to never negate their views. Their capability of containment helps to build up the trustful relationship between them and the students.

As revealed from Teacher L's teaching, he always allowed time for the student to give deliberation, even though she could not answer his questions or figure out the problems. He reminds himself not to push too much, but allows students the space to make progressive learning. He shares his expectation that practice teachers should know well about students' competence levels, and give them the chance to practice even though they do not meet the professional standard. This shows his moral sensitivity to the student's vulnerability in learning, and his capability of teaching students in accordance with their aptitudes.

Teacher L further argues for the importance of granting students a sense of safety. For instance, he shows much appreciation of the student's decision to cancel a scheduled game. He thinks the student can feel safe enough to not following the plan, and to acknowledge flexibility in practice. It is important not to let students have bad feelings of being condemned if they make changes according to the practice situation. He rather pays an attentive ear to the

student's justifications for such a change, and gives her feedback accordingly. It is believed that the student will look for improvement in handling the unexpected situation, even there is negative feedback. He teaches students to practice in the realm of uncertainty and contingency. Students are encouraged to learn by action and experience as depicted in the previous discussions.

There are two points as revealed from his teaching of flexibility in practice. The first is his dedication to fostering in students the capability of improvisation by granting them space and complements. As discussed in the section of the Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching, Teacher L is the sole practice teacher in this research who shows a clear incident corresponding to practice wisdom by improvised a paper folding exercise at the right time for the student's good learning when the student gets stuck in making sense of mutual communication. Hence, he does the right action at the right time for the right person for the morally justified end. He allows the student to build on her capability of improvisation starting from flexible practice. The second point is that he shows moral concern to take care of the relationship between him and the students, which paves the way for bringing about flexibility in practice. The trustful relationship provides a learning atmosphere conducive for nurturing

in students the capability of improvisation in response to the real practice situation, regardless of the scheduled plan.

Nurture students in the capability of self-exploration of knowledge.

Teacher M addresses the importance of constructing a sense of safety among students for facilitation of meaningful self-learning. As discussed previously, he quotes Gadamer's claim of "fusion of horizon" to illustrate the equal footing between him and the placement student for mutual dialogue. The student and he feel easy about sharing their views with each other while they work toward the same goal. His belief "I may be wrong" reflects his open attitude and respect for the student's views. He notes that some students cannot learn as much as this participating student due to their inadequate sense of safety. He considers it critical to grant students a sense of safety to properly facilitate their learning.

Teacher M is cautious about his comments to students who do not feel safe enough. He reiterates his focal concern about the student's sense of safety in interactions with him. It seems that a trustful relationship is fundamental to the exercise of the collaborative process and the Agential Nature of knowledge acquisition in his teaching.

Facilitate collaborative learning. Teacher A also considers the provision of safety in facilitation of collaborative process of knowledge

generation. As learnt from previous discussion, Teacher A acts like a master who instructs the participating student the way to act. Despite his directive teaching style, he is alert to the significance of the practice teacher's open-mindedness in facilitating collaborative learning. He shares his experience in teaching a course subject. The class was invited to point out what's wrong with, his demonstration but no student pointed out the problem. He then explained to the class both the desirability and undesirability of his practice skills as employed in handling the practice scenario. He iterates that he knows "the tip of the iceberg." On the one hand, he shows a sense of humility and open-mindedness to student's views and critiques. On the other hand, he prefers to act as a master and coach students in a way that he regards as appropriate. This may help enrich our understanding of his dialectic in teaching and the sense of self-query as presented in the section of the Agential Nature of Knowledge. He is alert to the possession of power of the practice teacher, and in his teaching, tries to grant students as much a sense of safety as he can to facilitating them in providing inputs.

Summing up. The trustful relationship between practice teachers and students helps cultivate a sense of safety among the latter. It acts as a facilitative force that helps practice teachers exercise the features of Interactive Process and

the Agential Nature of knowledge generation in teaching. Development of a trustful relationship depends on a basis of mutual trust. Teachers A, M, and L acknowledge their roles and responsibility to cultivate a sense of safety in students. They show moral sensitivity to students' need for safety, and are very cautious about their interaction with students. For instance, Teacher A is alert to the power dimension between students and him despite the inevitable hierarchical teacher-student relationship. Teacher M is sensitive to the participating student's anxiety, as observed from the body language of holding her body tightly when they are reviewing a videotape (which is about the student's direct practice) for live supervision. He thinks the student is aware of her only fair performance, and he thus makes engages her attention in a gentle manner by making suggestions along the way. Teacher L gives complements to the student, and takes into consideration her sense of uncertainty in making decision on cancellation of a planned game. They undertake their moral responsibility in building up the trustful relationship with students as far as possible. With a trustful relationship and sense of safety, practice teachers are more able to involve students in collaborative learning and active acquisition of knowledge.

Students' Competence in Learning

The five practice teachers share the same view about issues related to students' competence in learning. Competency here includes work competence, intellectual ability, sensitivity to human beings, and provision of the particularities of practice. As observed from the practice teachers' practice, student's competence in learning has affected their choice of the content of teaching and the extent of student's participation in knowledge acquisition.

The place of work competence. As referred to in an earlier discussion of practice teachers' containment, Teacher F shows less containment in tolerating the participating student's limitations in making prompt verbal responses or well-grounded deliberations. She then tends to be directive, and informs the student how and what to do. Referring to her teaching practice at the later stage of placement, she says less about her views on the handling of a family violence case. She explains that the student shows improvement in engagement with clients, and she no longer needs to coach her on how to chat with clients. Rather, she moves to a discussion about the use of praise as identified by the student. She becomes less directive and is able to involve the student's thoughts and views in her teaching.

The competence base of the student affects the way Teacher F teaches and what she chooses as the content for teaching and student learning. A competent student is facilitative to Teacher F's exercise of the Interactive Process of knowledge generation in teaching. If the student does not show improvement in either work competence or verbal expression, Teacher F most probably will put less emphasis on collaborative learning and involvement of the student in her teaching. Additionally, as revealed from the two videotaped teaching scenarios in the beginning and later phase of placement, over time Teacher F and the student show flexibility in teaching and growth in work competence, respectively.

Teacher L shows the capability to differentiate the student's competence level, and makes changes accordingly in his teaching in response to student's pace. He argues that he gives the participating student more guidance in light of her absence of experience. In contrast, he allows a free hand to experienced and confident students. He discriminates the depth and concreteness of guidance provided according to the experience and sense of confidence of students. He shares his experience in running a group together with a student, in addition to a live demonstration. This is because the student is not capable of integrating conceptual knowledge with practice, or in demonstrating the basic practice skills. He thinks that the less capable students need to observe the way he practices for

better acquisition of learning. He usually does observation only for those capable students. The competent students will have higher levels of participation in self-learning via action and experience. This means that the feature of the Agential Nature of knowledge can be more active than what we find in this participating student, as depicted in Figure 8.

The place of cognitive capability. Teacher K shares similar view as Teacher F in that she tends to raise more inspiring questions to nurture the participating student. The participating student is regarded as reflective and keen in learning despite only fair performance in written work. Teacher K prefers to nurture this sort of student, as she thinks they are good in learning attitude and willing to employ deep thinking. She believes that the reflective participating student can generate new knowledge via reflection on their understanding. She will be more active in bringing about the commonalities of collaborative process and the proactive role of the agent in knowledge generation in working with the capable students.

However, she tends to inform the less competent students on how to proceed, since they cannot figure out the issues. She admits that the incapable students will have less inspiration or chance to acquire new understanding via self-reflection or exploration of learning. The student's cognitive capability and

capability of reflection affect her in the choice of directive or nondirective teaching, and the exercise of the abovementioned commonalities of practice wisdom.

Teacher A holds similar view about the influence of cognitive capability of students in his teaching. Teacher A notes that most students have a shallow theoretical knowledge base and he cites many daily life examples for illustration of the basic theoretical concepts. These students also are not used to self-reflection. He further notes the feasibility to nurture students in the development of their practical knowledge only if they have a good knowledge foundation and are capable of reflection. He possibly thinks that students lack a good foundation of cognitive knowledge or reflection. This caps our understanding of his active exercise of the commonality of contextual knowledge and the facet of Cognitive Knowledge as revealed in the previous section on the Dynamic Interaction of the Features of Practice Wisdom.

The place of sensitivity and emotional capacity. Teacher M shows the ability to differentiate student's capabilities, and like Teacher L, paces his teaching to the student's pace. For instance, he notes the participating student's good sensitivity and then captures the chance to bring in understanding of humanity in teaching via the case crisis intervention. He points out the

infeasibility of teaching the student about human suffering if the student is not sensitive enough or adequate in emotional capacity to take on a deeper understanding. He depicts the interactive nature of fieldwork supervision. He can bring about knowing of humanity in this deeper way, subject to good motivation and sensitivity of the participating student in understanding humanity. As shown in the videotaped teaching, Teacher M inspired the student to make better understanding of the client's mother's suffering. The student made quick responses to Teacher M's inspiring questions. They worked collaboratively in figuring out the mixed feelings of the client's mother. The student's sensitivity to humanity facilitates Teacher M embracing human understanding in his teaching and exercising collaborative learning in an active way.

However, Teacher M notes that he sometimes cannot give the incompetent students autonomy in their learning. He regards himself a gate keeper, who shall uphold the professional standard. Students are expected to reach the professional standard that correspondent to the level of award of qualification. In working with the less capable students, he will be comparatively direct, and even exert pressure on them to reaching the expected standard with intensive live supervision. He and Teacher L show similar concerns and practice in rendering intensive supervision for helping incapable students improve their competence.

He, however, argues that it is not self-education anymore once he pushes students to meet the expected standard. The competence base of students affects the feasibility of using the features of Agential Nature and Interactive Process of knowledge generation in teaching.

The place of the particularities of information. Practice teachers require students' input of concrete information about their work and the practice situation for facilitating teaching and learning in an efficient way. The student's capability of providing input on the particularities of the specific practice situation affects practice teachers in their exercise of contextual knowledge and acquisition of knowledge by reflection.

Use of contextual knowledge. As observed from the findings in the section of the Substantive Contents of the Features of Practice Wisdom, practice teachers tend to render context dependent teaching and teach contextual knowledge based on the availability of the particularities of the practice situation provided by students. For instance, Teacher F says she does not like to provide general principles, but concrete guidance to students. The provision of concrete guidance depends on the availability of the particularities of the practice situation and the student's work. As noted by her, the participating student does not provide the details of work with the clients, and thus she always asks the student

for the details. This reveals that Teacher F renders teaching with reference to the context of the practice situation. The feasibility of rendering teaching in context depends on the availability of the particularities of the practice situation.

Teacher K makes the same point as Teacher F. It is not sufficient if students are devoted, but do not go into the details of their practice. She tries to render teaching based upon student's input of the concrete practice situation.

The participating student shows high motivation in working with people, and is able to provide the particularities of her work with the client. Teacher K strives to inspire her to have self-reflection with reference to the details of her reports.

Regarding those students who cannot provide their work in great detail, she notes the difficulty of working smoothly with them. With detailed information about what the students does with the clients or the practice situation, she can give concrete feedback or coach students to guide their work. The input of the details of the practice scenarios affects her exercise of context dependent teaching.

Teacher M notes practice teachers rely largely on student's narration of their work or the practice situation for facilitating knowledge of the context for rendering teaching. It is desirable if students can prepare written records of their direct practice for informing him of the practice situation in a specific way. If not, he will request videotapes of their direct practice for knowing what they did

and how they performed. From this, he is able to know what the student does, the client's response, and the student's reaction in response to the client's feedback. If not, he finds it infeasible to acquire the cognitive or emotional knowing of the practice situation, or to tune in to the practice situation for rendering teaching appropriate to the context. Student's input of the particularities of the practice situation can facilitate the conduction of teaching in context for facilitating good student learning.

In Teacher A's case, he requests students to submit paper work to him in advance for learning the details of their work in preparation for the supervisory meeting. Although he does not mention the details of student's input of the practice situation in his teaching, this sheds light on the fact that the practice situation and students' work is facilitative to his teaching. Teaching is not conducted in a vacuum, but done with reference to the context.

Active acquisition of knowledge via reflection. Students' input of the particularities of the practice situation does not only affect the exercise of contextual knowledge, but also the active acquisition of knowledge of practice wisdom via reflection. Teacher L notes that students have to give input, for example, reflection on their work and submission of written work. Students may skip something about their work if they rely only on verbal report. They cannot

retrieve or reflect on why they act in a particular way if they do not provide detailed recordings. It is also difficult for Teacher L to bring in discussion, which relies on students' input of concrete experience.

Teacher L knows well that some students do not submit work, but just talk about something else. In this case, students cannot reach the professional standard or practice, as they do not have any evidence, that is, concrete experience, for reflective learning. This likely illuminates Teacher L's predisposition toward experiential learning, for which he usually starts from concrete experience, and then bring about reflection for acquiring knowledge or new understanding. He argues that practice teachers have to be patient and give support to students.

Teacher M also makes use of students' input of their practice experience in facilitating their acquisition of learning via reflective dialogue within the context. As iterated earlier, reflection may emerge as an intended exploration or critical analysis of a particular episode of experience for developing new forms of understanding. He deems it necessary to coach the student to involve the "low ground" reflection as depicted by Yip (2006), in which the student is stirred by her own emotions and the clients' complicated family relationship and suffering.

The input of the concrete experience or the practice scenario is necessary for bringing about the commonality of knowledge acquisition via reflection.

Practice teachers put emphasis on knowing the particularities of the practice situation, which depends largely on the student's narratives in both the written and verbal forms. They are thus more able to grasp the real practice situation and bring in teaching relevant to the context. Other than this, availability of the particularities also provides the context for practice teachers to coach students to have reflective dialogue for getting insights or new understanding of their own framework. In short, students' capability of giving input on the particularities of the practice scenarios or their work is facilitative to the exercise of the commonalities of contextual knowledge and acquisition of knowledge via reflection.

Implications for Practice Teaching

It seems that students' capability of learning plays a role in affecting practice teachers' exercise of features of practice wisdom and the extent to which they can do so. The more capable students are in work competence, cognitive capability, and emotional capacity or sensitivity, the more competent are practice teachers in using the features of practice wisdom in their teaching. What are the

implications of knowing these dependent forces on the exercise of the various features of practice wisdom in practice teaching?

Practice teachers are able to use the four features of practice wisdom under the ideal situation of having emotional sensitive, intellectually capable, and reflective students. If not, they are less likely to exercise the various features in their teaching when working with novice students. However, is it ideal for experienced, reflective, intellectually capable, or emotional sensitive placement students to still be undertaking social work training?

Preparing Students Entering the Fieldwork Practicum

All practice teachers bring up the significance of knowing the particularities of the practice situation or student's work. It is good if students can provide such information on their own accord. However, most students may not have the knowledge and/or skills to solicit and write down such information in a systemic way. Practice teachers are suggested to have the ability and responsibility in soliciting the particular information of a given practice situation at a specific moment from the students. They likely are able to exercise the feature of Interactive Process of knowledge generation in their teaching.

Classroom teaching also plays a role in equipping students with both the cognitive knowledge and skills to solicit the particularities of information about the practice

situation. In the next chapter, I will further discuss the complementary role of classroom teaching in preparing students for placement.

Additionally, social work practice is mainly concerned about moral affairs and human interaction, as discussed in Chapter 2. Social worker and students mostly like will have the chance to face complicated human problems that are unfamiliar to them. Teachers M, K, and A coach students to make sense of the complex feelings of the clients. Their teaching illuminates the significance of emotion in social work practice. They illustrate the way to nurture in students the capacity for emotionally engagement with clients, and tasting the complexity of humanity and moral affairs in practice.

In addition to practice teachers, social work educators have a role in preparing students to deal with human encounters in the fieldwork practicum. All social work training institutes in Hong Kong have their fieldwork handbooks, which generally include the criteria of performance evaluation, as well as information about the fieldwork practicum in propositional language. However, the handbook is less helpful for accommodating the complex nature of social work practice, or equipping students with the capability of working with human interaction. As required by the SWRB (2012), social work training programmes in Hong Kong shall comprise 100 hours of preplacement activities in addition to a

certain number of direct placement hours for different levels of award. Other than this requirement, the training courses shall build in the preplacement preparatory work orientating students to enter the real practice situation, but not equipping them with the practice skills and formal knowledge. In the subsequent chapter, we will address the curriculum design for nurturing students in the ability to accommodate social work practice in a better way. Practice teachers may be more able to exercise the features of practice wisdom in their teaching for facilitating student learning in a good way.

Ability to Show Containment to Students' Limits

In addition to the ability to promote students' capability in learning, it is paramount for practice teachers to show containment to students' limits. It is interesting that Teachers K and F indeed acquaint themselves with reflective practice and reasoning, respectively, as revealed from earlier discussions of their teaching practice. However, they are less able to show containment to gently allow students to grow in their domains.

Teachers M's and L's persistent efforts in rendering intensive live supervision for the incompetent students illuminates the significance of practice teachers' containment in allowing students to make progressive advancement. It would be a breakthrough for both the teachers and students if they were able to

transcend their limits. For illustration, a student (another student under the supervision of Teacher K) may be able to grasp how to reflect and consolidate practice experience if Teacher K can provide more stimulation and opportunities to the student, despite of the inability to reflect. The participating student may be able to know how to make a well-grounded assessment if Teacher F can coach her in the ways of reasoning in an explicit manner. It is better for practice teachers and social work educators to include self in calculation of students' limits in learning.

Ability to Have Self-Awareness of One's Own Blind Spots

It is shown that practice teachers become more aware of their teaching practice, and even their blind spots, via reflective dialogue in co-reflections. For instance, Teacher F worries about her fast pacing and intolerance, which have limited the opportunity for students to participate in the teaching and learning process. She is alert to the impact of her blind spot, that is, less containment, in working with the less verbally expressive or slow pacing students, particularly in the summer block placement. Teacher K also notes her impatience in working with the nonreflective students in co-reflection meetings. This illustrates that co-reflections can provide a good platform for enhancing self-awareness of one's

blind spot. This likely illustrates the direction of professional training for practice teachers. We will address this at length in the coming chapter.

Conclusion

Practice wisdom is not exercised in a vacuum. The aforementioned factors provide the necessary conditions for practice teachers to exercise the features of practice wisdom in teaching. Three insights are revealed in the above discussions. The first point is the mutual influence of the factors. For example, the factor of time constraint has undermined Teacher F's containment in taking care of students' limitations or incapability. Students' capabilities, in turn can enhance or undermine Teacher K's and Teacher F's containment. For example, Teacher K is patient in working with the reflective and devoted students, and allowing more space for them to grasp learning steadily. She, however, does not show patience in considering the learning pace of the less competent or reflective students. Teacher F becomes patient and allows space for the participating student to give input of thoughts in the later stage of placement when she finds the participating student is capable of having engagement with clients.

In addition, in Teacher M's case, the time factor has a positive relationship with the factor of trustful relationship between the practice teacher and student.

The availability of time is contributive to the development of a trustful

relationship, which in turn can encourage students to become involve in collaborative learning and active acquisition of knowledge. Teacher L's and Teacher M's capacity of containment allows them to accept students' limits in their teaching, and involve students' input in advancement of learning. Their containment provides students the sense of safety and facilitates the development of trustful relationships between them and the students. The mutual influence of the factors implies that the control of anyone of these factors is facilitative to the exercise of the features of practice wisdom in teaching. On the other hand, the inadequacy of a factor may hinder the practice teachers from exercising the features in teaching.

The second point is that both the practice teachers and students are contributive to the exercise of pedagogical practice wisdom. As iterated above, students' capability of learning and their input of the particularities of the practice situation and their work affect the practice teachers exercise of the features of the Agential Nature and the Interactive Process of knowledge acquisition. The traditional preconception of students as the receivers of knowledge is thereby challenged. The participation and collaboration of both practice teachers and students are essential to the exercise of pedagogical practice wisdom. This

better reflects the Interactive Process of practice teaching and knowledge generation of practice wisdom.

The third point is about knowledge of the facilitative forces that help prepare the way for bringing the features of practice wisdom into teaching. The findings also enrich our understanding of the difficulties practice teachers likely encountered in using the features of practice wisdom in their teaching. Both the social work educators and practice teachers have a role in improving students' capability of learning and preparing them for the fieldwork practicum, in which human encounters are commonly experienced. This contributes to pedagogy development in social work practice teaching.

Next is the final chapter of this study, which will conclude the empirical findings and present recommendations for social work educators, practice teachers, and those who are interested in carrying out further study on pedagogical practice wisdom in social work education.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND IMPLICATION OF THIS STUDY

In this chapter, I will summarize the discussion and research findings. Implications of this research on social work education, and in particular practice teaching, are drawn upon with reference to the empirical references and analysis. Additionally, the limitations of this study are acknowledged. Before moving to the summary of discussion and findings, it is better to recapture the pulse of discussion of this thesis.

The Pulse of Discussion of This Thesis

In Chapter 1, the development of the social work profession and education, and in particular, the fieldwork practicum training in Hong Kong has been reviewed. A critique of the positivist design of social work curriculum and the “externally determined” or “prescribed knowledge” based epistemology in field practicum assessment is given. Knowledge, other than formal knowledge, is given less attention or even neglected. In Chapter 2, the nature of social work practice, which connotes indeterminacy, contextual, and participative knowledge is examined. The technical-rational paradigm likely is a misplaced model in social work practice—a moral reasoning practice—which is more concerned with human interactions, moral affairs, value, and emotional involvement of the agent.

The limitations of the dominant paradigm of technical rationality in making sense of human conduct have drawn much discussion; leading to an upsurge of alternative understanding of epistemology—practice wisdom—in professional practice and education. A comprehensive conceptual analysis of practice wisdom is made. An alternative perspective of practice wisdom was started as early as Aristotle's conception of *phronesis*. Since the 1950s, some scholars have initiated another stream of discussion that connotes a wider perspective of epistemology. Insights into understanding practice wisdom are made in reference to a cluster of parallel concepts, including tacit knowledge, reflection, and situated learning. The commonalities of moral dimension, intuitive and personal knowledge, reflection, contextual knowledge, and collaborative learning are connoted in these concepts. After years of discussion of an alternative understanding of knowledge, practice wisdom has aroused a hot debate in recent decades. Practice wisdom can better embrace the above commonalities within its conceptual boundary, and accommodate the nature of social work practice. More room is allowed for exploring practice wisdom in the context of social work practice teaching in this study.

Based upon a wide range of scholars' views, practice wisdom is generally understood as practical moral knowledge that is often unarticulated. Practice

wisdom makes it possible to decide what constitutes the good, take the right action to the right person at the right time in conditions of uncertainty and complexity. Practice wisdom connotes improvisation and morally good of the agent. A four-dimension framework for the epistemological understanding of practice wisdom is developed, based upon current academic discussion of practice wisdom. This four-dimension framework helps differentiate the fundamental difference of epistemology between practice wisdom and technical rationality. The first dimension is the Agential – Objective reality nature of knowledge. The second dimension is the Fluid – Static status of knowledge. The third dimension is the Interactive – Isolated process of knowledge generation. The fourth dimension is the interplay of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge. Four features of practice wisdom are identified for investigation in this study. They are the Agential Nature, Interactive Process, Fluid Status, and the two-fold facet of Moral Reasoning and Cognitive Knowledge.

Despite the relevance and significance of practice wisdom to social work practice, empirical studies are rare, except for some academic discussion. In view of the integral part of practice teaching in social work education and its significance for training of the next generation of social workers, this empirical study was conducted to explore the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in

practice teaching for filling the gap. Practice wisdom, however, is a slippery concept. What can possibly be known are its features and its commonalities, as conceptualized from recent discussion of practice wisdom. This study aims at exploring how practice teachers exercise the four features of practice wisdom in practice teaching.

In Chapter 3, details of the methodology, research foci, and methods are discussed. In view of the fluid status and highly personalized nature of practice wisdom, this study employs qualitative and interpretative approaches. It is intended to capture the lived experience and the perspectives of practice teachers and students. Five pairs of practice teachers and students from local five social work training institutes are involved in this study. The participating practice teachers choose a teaching scenario that could best represent their pedagogical practice wisdom in showing improvisation in facilitating good student learning. Practice teachers have full autonomy in deciding what is to be videotaped for illustrating their use of practice wisdom in teaching according to their conception of this tentative notion of practice wisdom.

Vigorous recruitment procedures of the research participants and trustworthiness of data analysis are strictly observed. Co-reflection and videotape reviews of the participants' teaching practice are mainly used with the

supplementary focus group interviews for enriching understanding. Stakeholder checks are built into the design of research method in four-rounds of co-reflection. Additionally, an independent coder is invited to do coding consistency check for ensuring the trustworthiness of data analysis.

Under the vigorous research process, abundant empirical references on the contents of the four features of practice wisdom and its dynamic operation in each practice teacher's teaching practice are explored and discussed in Chapter 4.

Practice teachers do not exercise the features of practice wisdom in a vacuum.

In addition, the dependent factors including the facilitative force and hindrance to the exercise of various features in their teaching are unraveled. Chapter 4

findings are close companions to one another. A summary of discussion and

findings is drawn up in the next section of this chapter. Implications of this

study as referred to the findings are discussed in the later part of this chapter.

Summary of Discussion and Findings

Advance the Understanding of Practice Wisdom in Both

Conceptual and Practical Levels

As mentioned earlier, practice wisdom is a slippery concept, and there is no empirical reference for knowing its concrete contents or operation. This study, however, advances the understanding of practice wisdom in both

conceptual and practical levels. Four features of practice wisdom are developed for exploration of the substantive contents in Chapter 2. The finding of the substantive contents of the four features of practice wisdom has advanced the conceptual discussion of practice wisdom in current academic discussion.

Additionally, the rich and succinct examples illustrating the use of the four features of practice wisdom in practice teachers' teaching have provided empirical information the operation of these features in a practical way. This helps widen the horizon and deepen the depth of understanding of the slippery concept of practice wisdom. Practice wisdom is not restricted to conceptual discussion anymore, but is extended to substantive knowing and practical implementation of the four features in the context of practice teaching.

Kaleidoscopic View of the Operation of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom

Knowing is not confined to substantive knowing or practical implementation of the four features of practice wisdom, but also to its unique dynamic operation in individual practice teachers. As revealed from the section of the Dynamic Interaction of the Features of Practice Wisdom as Exercised by Practice Teachers in Chapter 4, practice teachers put relative emphasis on the four features in their teaching as seen consistently in the videotaped teaching

scenarios, co-reflections, and students' views. Practice teachers put differing emphasis on the four features in their teaching, which formulated a unique teaching style for each. In this study, five types of teaching are found: moralizing teaching, facilitative teaching, humanistic teaching, rational teaching, and balanced teaching.

These various types of teaching are likely found at a specific moment between a particular practice teacher and a particular student, as determined by the ongoing dynamic interaction among the four features. The relative emphasis put on each of the four features generates the unique picture of each practice teacher in the exercise of the four features in teaching. There may be different types of teaching, determined by the changing salient feature as perceived by the practice teacher at particular times under particular circumstances. This is similar to a kaleidoscope, in which many different colored patterns appear following the rotation of the tube. It is thus most desirable to adopt a kaleidoscopic view in understanding the operation of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching.

A Balanced Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom Likely

Exercises Practice Wisdom

As illustrated in Chapter 4, among the five practice teachers, there was one – Teacher L – who equally uses the four features of practice wisdom competently in his teaching. Based upon the available data, a clear incident corresponding to practice wisdom is identified from Teacher L who improvises a paper folding exercise at the right time for the student’s good learning when the student cannot make sense of mutual communication. What he did likely illuminates the notion of practice wisdom – the agent does the right action at the right time for the right person for the morally justified end. On the other hand, there is an absence of an incident corresponding to the notion of practice wisdom identified from the other four practice teachers who exercise different emphasis on these four features. Having contrasted the occurrence and absence of an incident corresponding to practice wisdom under the balanced and imbalanced use of these four features respectively, it is tenable to draw the speculation that if a practice teacher exercises a balanced use of the four features of practice wisdom we may likely find him- or herself making the right decision at the right moment in his or her teaching practice (i.e., exercising practice wisdom). Teacher L demonstrates Aristotle’s notion of practical wisdom – do the good end in the right way at the

right time, which is different from “good practice” of supervision or practice teaching. This empirical finding provides the ground for making the recommendation on specialized training on the differential use of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching with proper strength for practice teachers in subsequent section.

The other four practice teachers put relative emphasis on the use of the four features, which has led to both desirable and undesirable impacts on student learning (as discussed in Chapter 4, a Particular Type of Teaching May Suit a Particular Sort of Student). The findings of these four teachers’ teaching can be understood as related to both practice wisdom and good practice teaching. As noted, we cannot identify a clear incident corresponding to the notion of practice wisdom as referred to the imbalanced use of the four features of these four practice teachers. On the one hand, the exercise of different emphasis on these four features in teaching can be understood good practice teaching. We can simply understand their teaching as good practice teaching but not necessarily related to practice wisdom. However, we cannot rule out the relationship between the findings of these four practice teachers’ teaching and practice wisdom. As a starting point, the four features of practice wisdom are adopted in studying the place of pedagogical practice wisdom among these five practice

teachers. In addition, without contrasting the imbalanced and balanced use of the four features of practice wisdom of these four teachers and Teacher L respectively, it is less persuasive to draw the relationship between the balanced use of the four features and the exercise of practice wisdom. However, I am cognizant of the limited data from the teaching practice of only one practice teacher upon which this interpretation is drawn.

Nondeliberative Reflection in the Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom

Apart from the aforesaid difference in the use of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching, the practice teachers share the commonality of exercising nondeliberative reflection in the use of various features in their teaching. This in turn leads to differing emphasis on various features of practice wisdom, and the unique teaching of individual practice teachers as mentioned above. They all were not aware of their teaching practice until engaging in the co-reflections. With reference to the discussion of the aforesaid five types of teaching in Chapter 4, it is discovered that a particular sort of teaching may fit a particular sort of student. Excessive use of a particular feature may not match student's capacity to learning or learning need. Details of succinct examples are

referred to the section of the Dynamic Interaction of the Features of Practice Wisdom in Chapter 4.

These findings possibly imply the direction for training of practice teachers with attention to reflective practice and differential use of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching. This will be thoroughly discussed in the following sections on the implications of this study.

The Other Side of the Coin: Is the Exercise of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom Necessary Good?

As revealed from recent academic discussion of practice wisdom, the underlying assumption is that an agent exercising the four features of practice wisdom is good. The present study provides the unique contribution of undertaking an empirical study on the exercise of these four features of practice wisdom in the context of practice teaching. Practice teachers generally utilize their experiences without awareness, and make nondeliberative reflection in the use of the four features of practice wisdom in rendering teaching as illustrated in the section of the Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Chapter 4. They do not have either the platform for critical reflection or sharpen their awareness on the desirability of their teaching. The assumption of an agent exercising the four features of practice wisdom as good, as in recent discussions

of practice wisdom, is debatable. We now understand that the mere exercise of these four features does not necessarily bring about good end in student learning.

It depends on the ways these features are exercised.

Acknowledging the Factors in the Use of Various Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching

As mentioned above, both the facilitative factors and hindrance to the use of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching are identified in the section of the Factors in the Exercise of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Chapter 4.

The factors include the time factor, containment of practice teachers, the trustful relationship between practice teacher and student, and the student's competence in learning. The mutual influence among these factors is noted. Practice teachers are likely to enhance self-awareness of their nondeliberative reflective teaching, and even their blind spots, via the reflective dialogues in co-reflections.

Acknowledging the facilitative and hindering forces helps social work educators pave the way for bringing in the features of practice wisdom in teaching and nurturing student's competence in learning. The ground work may include the enhancement of practice teacher's self-awareness and preparatory work for student practicum learning. In the next section, I will incorporate the insights

generated from these dependent factors in a discussion of the implications of this study.

Implications of this Study

Having given a recapitulation of the research findings, there are several implications for the training of practice teachers and social work education to consider. They include the specialized training in practice teaching, fostering student's competence in practicum learning, and the incorporation of development of practical knowledge into the social work education curriculum.

Specialized Training in Practice Teaching

As illustrated in Chapter 1, the fieldwork practicum is an integral part of social work education, while there is no requirement for practice teachers to take formal training in practice teaching in Hong Kong. The previous findings of nondeliberative use of the four features of practice wisdom and nondeliberative reflective teaching have led to differing emphasis on the use of various features of practice wisdom in teaching. This illuminates the desirability of specialized training for practice teachers for achieving competence in teaching. The foci of training can be understood according to the following two aspects.

Cultivation of Self Awareness and Reflective Practice

Empirical references on practice teachers' nondeliberative use of the four features of practice wisdom in their teaching and their nondeliberative reflective teaching have been fully examined in the section of the Dynamic Interaction of the Features of Practice Wisdom. The nondeliberative teaching practice allows little room for practice teachers to collate or reflect on their professional action at the time of teaching or after the action. The educational focus of reflection in practicum learning is acknowledged by Bogo (2010). Practice teachers are suggested to help students develop reflective competence through field education. It is not persuasive to suggest that practice teachers nurture students in the capability of reflection if the teachers are nonreflective in their teaching. Bogo (2010) encourages practice teachers to appreciate the nature of the reflective process, which may be complex, messy, and indeterminate.

As informed by the research findings, it is discovered that practice teachers are able to enhance their self-awareness of their teaching practice, and even their blind spots, via reflective dialogue between themselves and the researcher in co-reflection meetings. For example, some practice teachers become aware of the influence of their professional experiences in affecting the way they teach, while some acknowledge their intuitive practice. A practice

teacher even becomes aware of her blind spot, in this case inadequate containment in working with the less capable students, as documented in the section of the Containment of Practice Teachers of Chapter 4. She is alert to the difference in the pace between the student and her, and acknowledges the need to make adjustment in her teaching. Practice teachers show the ability to enhance self-awareness, including filling in blind spots that possibly bring undesirable influences into their teaching and student learning. This shows that this kind of co-reflection, as illustrated in Chapter 3, can provide a good platform for enhancing self-awareness and cultivating the reflective practice of practice teachers.

A regular platform for practice teachers to have similar opportunities for co-reflection and peer review of their teaching practice is recommended. It is particularly important for practice teachers in Hong Kong, because of its distinctiveness from western countries. As iterated in Chapter 1, local social work training institutes adopt college-based practice teachers either on a full-time or a part-time basis. Based upon my experience in fieldwork coordination, most practice teachers are employed by multiple institutes, and they have to undertake practice teaching for different modes of students in different institutes at the same time. For instance, four of the five practice teachers in this study are employed

on a part-time basis. Comparatively speaking, part-time practice teachers have less communication or support from the employing institute(s). For example, a participating teacher in this study reported that she did not know how to perform practice teaching when she joined the field of practice teaching, but explored on her own the student's needs and the role of a practice teacher.

Self-reflection and or deliberation are a disposition in making sense of phronesis in Aristotelian tradition. With this built-in integral part of training of reflective practice and self-awareness, practice teachers likely are able to nurture the capability of self-dialogue or critical self-reflection on their taken-for-granted ends, hence, the intended impacts on student learning before, in, and after practice for facilitating student learning in a good way. In fact, all participating practice teachers acknowledge the advantages of co-reflection, which helps nurture self-knowledge in pedagogy. Such a platform for nurturing reflective practice and self-awareness is paramount for experienced practice teachers as well. The reason is that although experienced practice teachers are well-acquainted with practice teaching, they may implicitly rely on their experiences with less critical reflection on their teaching, similar to the practice teachers who participated in this study.

Differential Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching With Proper Strength

Another focus of training is the differential use of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching. With reference to the discussion in the sections of the Use of the Four Features of Practice Wisdom in Teaching and Discussion of Chapter 4, practice teachers bring a relative emphasis on the use of the four features of practice wisdom to their teaching. The differing emphasis on a particular feature or various features is affected by their moral conception of the student's learning need at that particular moment. However, as discussed in the section of the Dynamic Interaction of the Features of Practice Wisdom of Chapter 4, a particular sort of teaching that results from the variable emphasis on the four features may match only one type of student. Drawing upon the available data, rational teaching may match the theoretically oriented and experienced students, but not the green students. Similarly, facilitative teaching is optimal for students who desire reflection and collaborative learning, but not for nonreflective students. Moralizing teaching may fit students who desire to learn the genuine attitudes and social work core values, but not those who look for formal knowledge. As reflected in these contrasting examples of teaching, practice

teachers are less likely to switch from one feature of practice wisdom to another one for facilitating good student learning.

There are two points for consideration in view of the differing emphasis on the use of these four features of practice wisdom in teaching. The first point is the desirability of differential use of the four features of practice wisdom in rendering teaching for students' holistic learning in these four domains of knowing. It would be desirable for practice teachers to switch from one feature to another at different times in response to student's multifarious needs in learning. Hence, differential use of the four features of practice wisdom is suggested. Practice teachers are recommended to have the cognitive knowledge of the four features of practice wisdom. They are suggested to equip the capability to differentiate student's needs in learning, and to exercise the respective feature(s) in teaching students these four domains of knowing. For rendering competent social work practice, it is good to teach students to know how to render moral judgments on human problems from a notable knowledge base. It will be good to teach students learning from clients' experiences, and have reflective dialogues for acquiring new understanding.

The second point is the exercise of proper emphasis on the various features of practice wisdom in teaching. Practice teachers put relative emphasis

on a particular feature (or more than a feature) for bringing the intended impacts on student's learning, such as moral practice, theory grounded practice, reflective practice, and so on. An overwhelming emphasis on a particular feature of practice wisdom may subordinate student's learning need to the practice teacher's desire. This is exemplified by the previously described contrasting examples of practice teachers' focal attention to particular features. Practice teachers need to be equally competent and balanced in the use of the four features of practice wisdom in their teaching for students' holistic learning.

Fostering Student's Competence in Practicum Learning

Other than cultivating self-awareness and a reflective practice in practice teachers, it is recommended to foster student's competence in practicum learning. As referred to the implications of the dependent factors in the preceding chapter, the student's level of competence in practicum learning seems to be both a facilitative force and a hindrance. However, we cannot assume students already had capabilities such as emotional capacity, sensitivity, and the knowledge and skills in soliciting the particularities of the practice situation, before entering the fieldwork practicum. In view of the demanding nature and tight schedule of practice teaching, it is infeasible and undesirable to shift to practice teacher the sole responsibility of teaching students these capabilities.

The statutory body, the Social Workers Registration Board, has set the requirement of 100-hour of preplacement activities. Other than this requirement, there is no official specification of practicum subjects for preparing students to enter the real practice situation. Training institutes in general train students to integrate social work theory and practice, and enhance self-understanding via different coursework, skills laboratory, or workshops for fieldwork practicum. The institutes have a free hand to decide the depth and width of the placement preparatory training for students. Reference has been made to the programme structure of various bachelor social work programmes through the following web sources of local training institutes for better understanding of teaching for facilitating student practicum learning (Chinese University of Hong Kong, Department of Social Work n.d.; City University of Hong Kong, Department of Applied Social Studies, n.d.; Hong Kong Baptist University, Department of Social Work, n.d.; Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Department of Applied Social Sciences, n.d.; The University of Hong Kong, Department of Social Work and Social Administration. n.d.).

Differing emphasis on preplacement training is noted, even though we do not know the details of how and what to teach in the relevant preparatory training. For instance, four local universities have provided preplacement training such as

the “Preparatory Workshops I & II,” “Introduction to Fieldwork Learning,” “Social Work Field Laboratory,” and 100-hours of preplacement exposure activities on a self-monitoring basis. Other than this, some universities also offer parallel training courses like integrative seminars during placement for integration of field learning and class learning.

A Cultivation of Emotional Capacity and Sensitivity

Social work educators have a role to prepare students with the emotional capacity and sensitivity to diverse humanity for the fieldwork practicum in view of the complicated nature of social work practice. Bogo (2010) maintains that the self of the student is engaged in field learning (p. 102). As revealed in Bogo’s work, students have intense personal and emotional reactions in view of upsetting client situations or stories of great pain. Students complain that they are ill-equipped in terms of cognitive knowledge and competence to cope with the wide variation of client situations. Hence, this means that students are likely to have the opportunity to encounter clients’ suffering once they enter the field practicum. Students, however, may not have the emotional capacity to make sense or contain clients’ suffering. This is similar to the findings in the section of Students’ Competence in Learning of Chapter 4 that student’s emotional capacity to make sense of complex humanity is influential to bringing in the

commonality of the moral dimension in teaching. It is vital to nurture in students the emotional capacity and sensitivity for emotionally engagement with clients, in order to taste and tackle the complexity of humankind and moral affairs in social work practice.

There indeed are a number of fieldwork instruction books for social work students in the field practicum, particular in United States. For instance, Royse, Dhooper, and Rompf (2007) have developed a field instruction guide for social work students. A range of field-practicum related issues are covered. For illustration, the ways of getting started on the practicum, working with placement agencies, clients, and professionals, the new roles and responsibilities of placement students, and ethical and legal concerns are included. Guidelines on writing the problem-oriented recording and process recordings are provided as well. Another scholar, Garthwait (2008), wrote an instruction guide in workbook format designed to facilitate the integration of social work theory and practice during placement. The guide incorporates a variety of placement issues including the formulation of learning goals, ways of getting started with the placement, learning from supervision, working under the agency context, ethics, merging self and profession, and practice evaluation. Birkenmaier and Berg-Weger (2007) issued a book that guides students through their placement,

and reinforces integration of theory and practice. Detailed information, such as different levels of practice intervention and the use of practicum supervision, is included.

Despite the detailed information in preparing students for field practicum, discussion of the cultivation of emotional capacity to encounter a diverse humanity is absent from these field instruction books. Additionally, the way to differentiate and solicit the significant information of the practice situation is not thoroughly discussed. As revealed from the above-mentioned social work programme structure, social work theory and practice integration are given a high priority in preparing students for fieldwork practicum. It is recommended to give attention to fostering students to emotionally engage with clients in dealing with moral affairs and human interactions. In response to the hindrance factor discussed in the preceding chapter, the cultivation of sensitivity to humanity, reflective practice, and the use of experience, knowledge, and skills in collection of concrete information on practice are suggested for preplacement training and parallel training during placement. Students are encouraged to acknowledge a wider perspective on knowledge, including the Agential Nature, Fluid Status, and Interactive Process of knowledge acquisition. They will be able to tune in to the

real practice situation of fieldwork practicum, which helps facilitate practice teaching and learning in a good way.

Social Work Education Curriculum and Development of Practical Knowledge

Besides fostering in students competence for the field practicum, it is recommended to incorporate the development of practical knowledge into social work education. The role practical knowledge in social work education is vital, as learnt from the experiences of the participating practice teachers and students. For instance, the role of experience is central in the practice teachers' teaching, even they are not aware of it until the co-reflection meetings. An emphasis on experience comes not only from practice teachers, but the participating students also value alternative knowledge, as opposed to formal knowledge, in their learning journeys.

Students note that they have to improvise on the spot in light of unexpected practice situations. Theories are conceived as frameworks which are not necessarily useful in practice. The students identified learning needs as knowing the desirability of theory for a particular practice situation, flexibility in practice, and understanding of clients as human beings. As inferred from their

views, students desire to learn a wider perspective of knowledge, including human understanding, improvisation, and reevaluation of formal knowledge.

Recently, more scholars have shown concern for the development of practical knowledge or practice wisdom in social work education. For instance, Chu and Tsui (2008) suggest that social work teaching should be redesigned to facilitate the development of personal knowledge, which is the basis of practice wisdom and awareness of the importance of determining what constitutes the good. Thompson and West (2013) also argue for practice wisdom development as a focus for social work education. Revision of the course curriculum with incorporation of the features of practice wisdom will possibly help nurture in students the capability to act with improvisation and make situated judgments in a good way.

The influences of the external demands of the environment such as the statutory body and service agencies on course curriculum design are well understood. As examined in Chapter 1, the statutory body, the SWRB, has specified the courses and types of propositional knowledge to be taught. Social work training institutes then have less room to incorporate courses other than the specified nature of knowledge in view of the limited credit units of training programmes. Other than meeting the demand of the statutory body, training

institutes are expected to meet the market demand as well – service agencies. As discussed in Chapter 1, the influences of managerialism, therapeutic-oriented and competence-based practice are dominant in the social welfare sector. Training institutes have a role to meet the expectation of service agencies by training social workers inevitably in the management skills and formal knowledge. Lam et al. (2007) criticize that current social work curriculum structure complies with technocratic demands and fails to encourage students appraising knowledge in a critical way. It is hoped that the statutory body, social welfare agencies, and the training institutes can give more attention to the central place of personal knowledge and allow room for nurturing in social workers the capacity.

Besides the upsurge of discussion of the development of practical knowledge and practice wisdom in social work education, it is encouraging to find more current discussion of phronesis and practical knowledge. Bondi, Carr, Clark, and Clegg (2011) have collated the work of different scholars on professional wisdom. They include discussion of professional deliberation, the affective dimension of professional engagement, and professional judgment. Kinsella and Pitman (2012) draw our attention to the significance of Aristotle's phronesis as professional knowledge, and its significance to the uncertain and complex context of professional practice. The joint effort of these scholars

indeed implies a growing concern about the limits of the technical-rational paradigm in professional practice and education, and the place of alternative understandings of knowledge in human professions like social work. However, discussion of the use of practice wisdom in teaching as this study has not been addressed in recent studies. This study contributes to filling this gap.

Limitations of This Study

Before completing the report on this study, it is necessary to account for its limitations. In Chapter 3, I have addressed the limitations of not including contextual factors, for example, the significance of power relationship in practice teaching and the possible influences of the placement agencies on practice teaching. I am cognizant of their possible influences on the data analysis. Because of the limited scope of this study, the power relationship in practice teaching as referred to in the discussions of containment of practice teachers and the trustful practice teacher and student relationship is only touched upon. The findings and discussions may provide information on the power relationship in an alternative way. The power relationship in practice teaching should be further researched. In addition, it is well understood that teaching cannot be separated from student learning. It is desirable to explore students' perspective of their learning experience under different types of teaching with differing emphasis on

the four features of practice wisdom. Due to my interest in pedagogical practice wisdom, attention is primarily given to understanding how practice teachers exercise the four features of practice wisdom in their teaching, and not to the student's perspective. Nevertheless, a limited understanding of students' views via a one-off focus group interview was conducted for the purpose of enriching data interpretation. This study largely leaves to further inquiry the influences of the context under which the practice teaching is conducted.

Last, but not least, limited data from only one practice teacher suggesting a relationship between practice wisdom and the balanced use of the four features of practice wisdom in teaching. Despite the limited data, it will be necessary to go through this research step for developing a sounder version concerning the nature and the possible way of developing pedagogical practice wisdom. It helps moving from conceptual analysis of current academic discussion of practice wisdom in social work education to the practical level of pedagogical practice wisdom development by speculating on the possible direction of training.

Although it is not yet known if this kind of training is helpful for nurturing in practice teachers the capability of demonstrating more teaching incidents illustrating the notion of practice wisdom, at least it provides a platform or direction for making an attempt on cultivating pedagogical practice wisdom,

which is a “green field” in our social work education. It is hoped that other scholars can go beyond these limitations with further investigations in the future.

Conclusion

From an interpretive perspective, there is no universal fixed truth or reality. Because of the absence of an empirical reference on practice wisdom, what can be known in this study are the concrete contents of the features. The four features in this study probably are features of practice wisdom. This does not mean that practice wisdom is “out there” and objective. We may be able to see the features that comprise what we refer to as practice wisdom, but not the fixed reality of practice wisdom. Some features may be out of our awareness.

Regarding the research question of the place of pedagogical practice wisdom, practice teachers indeed have exercised the four features with differing emphasis in an implicit way without cognitive awareness. They use nondeliberative reflection that has led to differing emphasis on various features of practice wisdom. As a result, different types of teaching are shaped that are unique to individual practice teachers. This unique teaching, in turn, has led to both desirable and undesirable influences on student’s learning as discussed before. Hopefully, this study has made a contribution to the advancement of pedagogy in social work practice teaching, albeit its limitations.

Table 1

Recruitment of Research Participants

Dispatched invitation letter and documents to six universities in early August 2010.

The University of Hong Kong	The Fieldwork Coordinator extended invitation to the practice teachers and circulated the research information.
The Hong Kong Shue Yan University	A list of the practice teachers was provided for personal contact of the researcher. The researcher was the Fieldwork Coordinator of the University (from 2001-2007). Based upon her understanding of the practice teachers and the feasibility of getting consent of the placement agencies, she invited a practice teacher for this research due to his rich experience in practice teaching. Besides, the researcher sought the consent of the placement student with whom she had no teaching involvement (till January 2011.)
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	The Fieldwork Coordinator introduced the research and circulated the information to the practice teachers at its meeting. The Fieldwork Coordinator liaised with the researcher and identified two practice teachers for her contact. One of them agreed to join the study. The researcher had taken into account his training background at the Polytechnic University in writing up the analysis.
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	The Director of Field Instruction showed no objection about this study and requested the researcher to invite the participants by herself. The researcher extended invitation to two practice teachers with whom she had personal contact. A student from the master programme showed voluntary participation. The researcher sought the placement agency's consent as requested by the Director due to the sensitivity of client background.
The City University of Hong Kong	The Coordinator helped circulate the research information to the practice teachers. Meanwhile, the former Coordinator extended personal invitation to those who newly joined the Department (who missed the announcement of this research invitation). Finally, a

The City University of Hong Kong	The Coordinator helped circulate the research information to the practice teachers. Meanwhile, the former Coordinator extended personal invitation to those who newly joined the Department (who missed the announcement of this research invitation). Finally, a practice teacher joined this study.
The Hong Kong Baptist University	The Fieldwork Coordinator circulated the research information to practice teachers. A practice teacher showed

Table 2

Profile of the Participants

University	Research interests or expertise	Years of experience in practice teaching	Placement setting	The placement student profile
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	1. Case work counseling in family service centre 2. Working with ex-mentally clients	4 years 3 months in practice teaching and 10 years working in social welfare sector	Family Service Setting	The second placement for a 2-year full time master course
Hong Kong Shue Yan University	Children and Youth	12 years in practice teaching	Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres	The first placement for the 3-year FT bachelor degree (4-year training programme)
City University of Hong Kong	Parent training programme, Parent-adolescent conflict and culturally sensitive parenting	Practice teaching: 3 years and 9 months. 16 years social work experience	School Social Work	The second placement for the 3-year FT bachelor degree
The University of Hong Kong	Youth Counseling	6 years in practice teaching	Community Support Service	The second placement for the 3-year FT

			Scheme	bachelor degree.
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Children and Youth, Community Development Services	15 years in practice teaching	School social work	Placement (only one) for the final year of PT BSW programme.

Table 3

Schedule of the Data Collection Process

Focus Group with Practice Teachers		6-10-2010		
University	1st co-reflection	2nd co-reflection	2nd co-reflection meeting	4th co-reflection
The University of Hong Kong	11-11- 2010	9-12-2010	24-3- 2011	12-5-2011
Hong Kong Shue Yan University	29-12- 2010	17-1- 2011	21-3- 2011 (live supervision)	12-4-2011
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	6-12-2010	11-11- 2011	22-2- 2011 (live supervision)	8-3-2011
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	22-11-2010	13-12- 2010	14-3-2011	4-4-2011
City University of Hong Kong (end of placement in late December 2010)	20-10- 2010	10-11- 2010	5-1-2011 (live supervision)	28-1-2011
Focus group with the students	15-4-2011			

Table 4

Example of Deductive Coding

Category ↓	Pedagogical relation	Epistemological assumptions	
Theme	The moral element in teaching	The interactive process of knowledge generation	
Sub-theme	Personal enactment	Contextual knowledge	
Code	Personal enactment of the moral principle of integrity	Use the empirical knowledge with reference to the context	Acknowledge the intra-variations among the same age group in different settings
Explanation of code	The practice teacher enacted the moral principle of integrity and impinged student to act via modeling.	The practice teacher has reflective conversation with the context in learning or acquisition of knowledge.	
Description	Practice teacher K argued the mentor role of practice teacher. How a practice teacher performed should be consistent with his or her belief. A practice teacher should perform consistently with his or her belief (i.e., integrity) and be the mentor for impinging student's learning as well.	Practice teacher A helped the student to understand the concept of Piaget's cognitive development and use it with the kids. He taught the student to differentiate its relevancy in making sense of the children and the teenagers. Besides, he identified the lower cognitive development of the teenagers with special education need and it was not desirable to understand this group like the larger group of teenagers.	

Table 5

Example of Inductive Coding

Theme	Conception of Practice Wisdom		Conception of Good Practice or Social Worker
Code	Accumulation of personal experience	The interplay of personal knowledge and empirical knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional or competent practice is grounded with formal theory - Good attitude in learning and receptive to comments - Genuine concern about clients
Explanation of code	In what way the practice teacher understands practice wisdom		In what way the practice teacher understands good social work student or practice
Description ↑	Practice teacher K noted students did not know how to collate their experiences and personal practice. She regarded the matter of practice wisdom. She encouraged students to accumulate their personal experience. She believed students might develop their personal knowledge via	Practice wisdom was personalized and it should embrace empirical knowledge. It comprised the collation of experience and the inclusion of empirical knowledge.	A student commented practice teacher K was strict and not supportive. Teacher K thought she was harsh to the student because the student did not have adequate knowledge. She wondered if the student was capable of being a social worker. The student was regarded with improper mentality and below the standard. She preferred to allow more opportunities for those students who perform above average and have the potential but have not actualized it in the best way. Teacher K insisted that she was a gatekeeper and could not let those below average enter the field. Student's

	an accumulation of experience and selected the particular for further development as one's own personal practice.		personal attitude and interest in clients were important to teacher K. She was intolerant of student's superficial understanding of client.
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Table 6

Selection of the Co-Reflections for Coding Consistency Check

In alphabetic order	1st tape review together with co-reflection	1st follow up co-reflection	2nd tape review cum co-reflection	2nd follow up co-reflection
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	*			
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University		*		
Hong Kong Shue Yan University			* (a live supervision)	
The University of Hong Kong				*

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

The Focus Group Interview Guide With Practice Teachers at the Beginning Phase of Placement (on 6 October, 2010)

1. How do you think about the most significant functions of practice teaching?
2. As emphasized by the training institutes, integration of theory and practice is vital in practice teaching. Despite of its significance, some scholars argue that social workers seldom made reference to any theories and they instead use personal and value-driven knowledge. It is similar to practice wisdom. What is your understanding of ‘practice wisdom’?
3. As revealed from your experience in practice teaching, how to accumulate your pedagogical practice wisdom, that is, exercise practice wisdom in field teaching context?

Appendix 1 (in Chinese)

附件一(中文版)

1. 大家認為實習導師最重要的角色或功能是甚麼呢?
2. 我們都知道各訓練院校都非常著重實習教學中如何協助學生結合理論與實務。雖然如此重要，但有些學者卻指出社工於進行實務時，甚少參考任何理論，反而更多憑個人經驗、價值觀，從而建構知識，進行實務。有些類似所謂的「實務智慧」。請大家分享你們對「實務智慧」的理解。
3. 大家回顧自己的實務教學經驗，是怎樣累積或發展「教學的實務智慧」呢？意思是自己怎樣於教學中運行實務智慧？

Appendix 2

The Focus Group Interview Guide With Placement Students After the Completion of Placement (April 15, 2011)

1. How do you think about the most significant functions of field learning?
2. What comes to your mind regarding the teaching of your practice teacher?
3. As emphasized by the training institutes, integration of theory and practice is vital in practice teaching. Despite of its significance, it is interesting that social workers seldom made reference to any theories and they instead use personal and value-driven knowledge. Do you have such experience (including yourself or your practice teacher)?
4. If you are invited to pick one experience in working with your practice teacher, for some reasons, attracted your attention, what is it? Why?

Appendix 2 (in Chinese)

附件二 (中文版)

1. 大家認為實習給予學生最重要的學習/功能是甚麼呢?
2. 當大家回顧自己的實習導師教學時，會想到甚麼呢?
3. 我們都知道各訓練院校都非常著重實習教學中如何協助學生結合理論與實務。雖然如此重要，但有些學者卻指出社工於進行實務時，甚少參考任何理論，反而更多憑個人經驗、價值觀，從而建構知識，進行實務。你們有否遇過類似經驗，包括你自己本人又或從實習導師身上看到。
4. 如果請你選取一項與實習導師學習經驗中，最吸引/難忘的事件，你會選取哪些事呢?又為何呢?

Appendix 3

The Co-Reflection Meetings Together With Review of Videotaped

Practice Teaching Scenarios With Practice Teachers

Notes:

1. Each practice teacher will produce a video-scenario with the same student **each** at the first and second semesters of placement (it is divided based upon the mid-term evaluation). Hence, each practice teacher will produce two video-scenarios of practice teaching.
2. The practice teacher is required to pick *one event or choose an experience lasting about 15 minutes (not the whole session)* that can best represent his or her practice wisdom in field teaching, for example, use of personal knowledge, flexibility in teaching, concern of moral issues and so on. For practical convenience, the researcher can arrange audio-visual equipment at the site of supervision. Besides, meeting venues with provision of audio-visual equipment at Hong Kong (East), Polytechnic University and Wong Tai Sin are reserved for this purpose. The practice teacher can choose when to videotape which (e.g., the discussion is not related to a particular person) piece of teaching scenario with whom (the same student for the 2 video-scenarios) at where.

3. Review on the video-scenario together with a co-reflection meeting will be held (preferably not later than 2 weeks after the date of the videotaped scenario) with the practice teacher. The practice teacher can suggest the meeting date. The discussions will be taped and transcribed for analysis. It lasts for around 1.5 hours.
4. The researcher will prepare the draft analysis after the first co-reflection meeting and invite the practice teacher to meet again for extended understanding of mutual perspectives.
5. Similarly, the work schedule as mentioned in point 3 and point 4 will be done again when the practice teacher has prepared the 2nd video-scenario for review and co-reflection. Put briefly, the practice teacher will attend **four rounds** of co-reflection meetings in total throughout the research project - two rounds **each** in the first semester and second semester of placement.
6. Compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and ethical principle of confidentiality, no identifiable personal data such as the agency name, student's name or user's full name is required.

Research on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work practice teaching in Hong Kong

Revised notes on taking video-record of supervision scenarios

Having incorporated the participating practice teachers' views at the focus group meeting on October 6, 2010, the researcher has revised the details of taking videotape of supervision scenarios.

1. Each practice teacher will provide a video-scenario with the same student each at the first and second semesters of placement (it is divided based upon the mid-term evaluation). It is preferable to have a scenario of live supervision for investigation of the teaching approach during practice in the immediacy of the moment in a context-dependent and uncertain condition. Regarding the video-recording of live supervision, there are two options provided for consideration:

Option 1: With service users' and agency's consent, the practice teacher can make video-record of the live supervisory session (the practice teacher is present at the site of practice and may or may not take intervention) and provide the tape for co-reflection purpose.

(This option may embrace the possible immediate response of the practice teacher in a context-dependent and uncertain condition. The researcher however is required to go through the process of seeking agency's consent in addition to client's consent.) The consent form is presented as at Annex 5 for this purpose.

Option 2: The placement student may videotape his or her direct practice with service user(s). The practice teacher can then review the tape **with** the student first. Video-recording on supervision could be followed immediately **after** the practice teacher has reviewed the tape with the student for individual co-reflection meeting. *(The researcher could not access the video-record of direct practice and do not need to seek agency consent again. The study however could not embrace the immediate response of the practice teacher in a context-dependent and uncertain condition.)*

2. The practice teacher will have time to review the videotaped session and to pick *one event or choose an experience lasting about 15-20 minutes (not the whole session)* that can best represent his or her practice wisdom in field teaching (such as the commonalities of improvisation, ongoing adjustments informed by situated judgment, interactive process of knowledge building etc.) **OR** The practice teacher can pick *one event or choose an experience lasting about 15-20 minutes (not the whole session)* that he or she got stuck at that moment. It is hoped that one of the two tapes is about his or her pedagogical practice wisdom. Compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and ethical principle of confidentiality, no identifiable personal data is included in the taped scenario.

3. The practice teacher is suggested to propose a date and time slot for co-reflection together with tape review with the researcher within two weeks after having taped the scenario. It lasts for around 1.5 hours (maximum).

The discussion will be taped and transcribed for analysis.

The researcher will write up the analysis of the first co-reflection meeting and then invite the practice teacher to further discuss the analysis for due understanding. The participant might further supplement his or her views and make clarification if needed. It is expected to incorporate the research participant's understanding of the researcher's interpretation of his or her practice and thinking. The discussion will be taped and transcribed for analysis.

Likewise, the work schedule as mentioned from point 1 to 5 will be done again for the second round of co-reflection together with tape review.
4. The audio-visual record of supervision scenarios will be kept by the practice supervisors. They are reminded to destroy the audio-visual record after having completed the research.
5. Put briefly, the participating practice teacher will provide 2 videotapes and attend 4 rounds of co-reflection meetings (not including the focus group meeting.)

Appendix 4

Consent Form for Live Supervision (Option 1)

Research on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work field

(Applicable only if written consent is needed)

Agency name: _____

Unit name: _____

Date of live supervision: _____

I fully understand the videotape is used for this research solely. No identifiable personal data will be used other than this purpose. The researcher shall destroy the audio and visual recordings containing my data after the completion of this research.

Name of service user(s)/parent/guardian	Signature	Date

Unit-in-charge: _____

Date _____

Name of researcher: _____

Date _____

Appendix 4 (in Chinese)

附件四 (中文版)

從社會工作實習教育中看教學實務智慧研究

服務對象錄影同意書

(進行現場需要直接拍攝服務對象才需要用此同意書)

機構名稱：_____

工作單位：_____

面談/活動日期：_____

錄影時間：_____

本人 *明白錄影的目的是為實習社工與其督導老師為研究教學法的用途，研究負責人張愛娥女士將與實習社工的督導老師觀看錄影片段和討論有關教學事宜，並不會向其他人士披露資料。本人同意進行此活動。

*服務對象

簽名

日期

實習社工姓名： 簽名：_____ 日期：_____

督導老師姓名： 簽名：_____ 日期：_____

機構負責人姓名： 簽名：_____ 日期：_____

Appendix 5

Interview Guide for Co-Reflection

Background Information

The supervisory session was taped on _____ at the first/second semester (please circle where appropriate). The student is a PT/FT (please circle where appropriate) mode of student for his or her _____ placement.

Please circle the service setting where appropriate:

Family services/ Residential child care services / Centre based services for children and youth/ Out-reaching service for young people/ School social work/ Community based services for the elderly/ Residential services for the elderly/ Services for women/ Rehabilitation services for disabled people/ Services for ex-offenders and or psychotropic users/ Community services/ Services for addictive users

Interview guide

1. Please briefly introduce the background and reasons for choosing this scenario for co-reflection.
2. Put briefly, what are the contents of teaching as revealed from this experience?
3. How to derive the said contents for student learning? (Knowing the process

and agent of knowledge acquisition

4. What are your considerations of making pedagogical decision under such practice educational context? (Knowing the pedagogical and personal interest→may reflect the contextual factors that the teacher considered in implementing teaching at practice situation.)
5. Have you ever been stimulated by the student's action or questions while you have never planned before?
6. How do you think about the student's role in fieldwork teaching and learning?
7. As referred to your experience in practice teaching, has your student ever inspired you how to help him or her?
8. Could you spell out the participation your student made in making contribution to your teaching?

(either Q. 7 or Q. 8 will be asked)

Appendix 5 (in Chinese)

附件五(中文版)

1. 請你簡單介紹這片的背景及為何選取這片段。
2. 從這教學片段，請你分享當中的具體教學內容。
3. 你是怎樣訂立以上教學內容作為學生學習方向?
4. 於這實務教學環境下，你會考慮甚麼因素作出教學法的決定?
5. 你有否曾經因為被學生的提問或行動，而引發你從未預計而隨之而產生的
當下教學內容或行動。
6. 你怎樣看學生於實習教與學過程中的角色?
於教學過程中，學生有否貢獻意見，提示你如何協助他/她。
7. 於教學過程中，你可否分享學生曾作出的參與，從而有助你的教學方法。

Appendix 6

Invitation Letter to Social Work Training Institutes

Research on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work

practice teaching in Hong Kong

I am a social work educator and currently pursuing PhD studies at the Department of Applied Social Sciences of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University under the supervision of Dr. Chu Chi-keung and Dr. Tsang Nai-ming. It is planned to implement the research on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom starting from October 2010. I am writing to invite for your nomination of practice teacher(s) and student(s) for this study.

It is well known that integration of theory and practice is vital in practice teaching. Despite of the significance of formal theories, it is interesting that social workers seldom made reference to any theories or even almost total lack of use of research-based knowledge or formal theories in the way depicted in the ‘applied science model’ in their work. Social workers instead use personal and value-driven knowledge that is often unarticulated in decision-making. This has aroused much discussion about reflective teaching and practice wisdom.

Practice wisdom is a practical moral knowledge in that, in the living of one’s life which comes with practice, experience, moral deliberation and

reasoning of the practitioner. The actor exercises moral reasoning according to the right reason at the right time in a particular situation. In this regard, it is desirable to conduct the study at the site of practice. The aim of this study is to unravel the contents and process of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work field supervision. Practice wisdom may be more desirable to help move away from teaching instrumental problem solving to alternative ways of human knowing in the practical moral engaged and judgment based social work practice.

Because of the nature of practice wisdom, which can be highly personal and Agential, probably situated and embodied at times, they won't be recalled that clearly until the actor has stepped into a practice scenario. Even so, they may not be completely aware of what have been going through their minds in the process of making decisions about what and why to do or not to do in the process of supervision. It is good to have a chance to review the practice teaching scenarios together with the practice teachers and make attempts to reflect what have actually happened for better tackling its nature and operational aspects. The research shall use videotaped practice teaching scenarios mainly and focus group interviews for unraveling the place of practice wisdom.

Each practice teacher will produce a video-scenario with the same student **each** at the first and second semesters of placement (it is divided based upon the

mid-term evaluation). The practice teacher is required to pick *one event or choose an experience lasting about 15 minutes (not the whole session)* that can best represent his or her practice wisdom in field teaching, for example, use of personal knowledge, flexibility in teaching, concern of moral issues and so on. Co-reflection meetings together with tape review will be held accordingly with the practice teacher. Scenario of live supervision is preferable and the researcher can help liaise with the service unit and service users if needed. Details of implementation are laid down on the attached annexes.

For data protection, the practice teacher can choose when to videotape which (e.g., the discussion is not related to a particular person) piece of teaching scenario with whom. *Compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and ethical principle of confidentiality, no identifiable personal data such as the agency name or service users' full name is required.*

The provision of abundant empirical examples for illustration of the content, process and agent involved in knowledge acquisition in field supervision do make significant contribution to good practice teaching of tomorrow. Besides, both the practice teachers and students will have genuine opportunities to explore teaching and learning experience for advancement of self-knowledge if they can participate in this research. I hope that you can kindly recommend at

least one practice teacher (more than one is desirable for contingent plan) who may demonstrate improvisation, ongoing adjustments informed by situated judgment, personal knowledge and so on in field supervision. The student's consent is required as well.

Your support is vital to enrich our practice teaching and reform social work knowledge. If you would like to know more information about this study, please feel free to contact me at XXXX-XXXX or email XXXX@XXXX..

Looking forward to your favorable reply and thank you!

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXX

Appendix 6, Annex 1

Selection Criteria

For Practice Teachers:

- a. Have provided practice teaching for five years. It is believed that they might have accumulated experience and formulated his or her personal knowing in practice teaching.
- b. Will have field supervision with bachelor degree programme students (the global professional qualification of a professional social worker) in the coming concurrent placement in 2010-11. Flexibility is allowed for taking either the part time or full time mode of students.
- c. One student whom under his or her supervision is willing to participate in this study.
- d. Demonstrate the commonalities of situated teaching, personal knowledge, flexibility and so on in his or her practice teaching.
- e. Preferably have the practice of providing live supervision

For Placement Students

- a. Will take the concurrent placement in the coming academic year 2010-11.
- b. Either part time or full time programme mode

Appendix 6, Annex 2

Time Schedule and Depth of Involvement of Different Parties

For Practice Teachers

a. Focus group interviewing

To attend a focus group meeting with other participating practice teachers (around one and half hours) at the beginning phase of placement (tentatively scheduled in early October 2010). The interviews will be taped for analysis.

b. Co-reflection on the videotaped practice teaching scenarios, preferably the scenario of live supervisory session

- i. Each practice teacher will produce a video-scenario with the same student **each** at the first and second semesters of placement (it is divided based upon the mid-term evaluation). Hence, each practice teacher will produce two video-scenarios of practice teaching. A scenario of live supervision is preferable and the researcher can help liaise with the service unit at a later stage if needed.

- ii. The practice teacher is required to pick *one event or choose an experience lasting about 15 minutes (not the whole session)* that can best represent his or her practice wisdom in field teaching. For instance, the practice teacher finds

that something as right and essential is taught as unplanned. Use of personal knowledge and flexibility are involved in practice teaching. For practical convenience, the researcher can arrange audio-visual equipment at the site of supervision. Besides, meeting venues with provision of audio-visual equipment at Hong Kong (East), Polytechnic University and Wong Tai Sin are reserved for this purpose. The practice teacher can choose when to videotape which (e.g., the discussion is not related to a particular person) piece of teaching scenario with whom (*the same student* for the 2 video-scenarios) at where. Review on the video-scenario together with a co-reflection meeting will be held (preferably not later than 2 weeks after the date of the videotaped scenario) with the practice teacher. The practice teacher can suggest the meeting date. The discussions will be taped and transcribed for analysis. It lasts for around 1.5 hours.

- iii. The researcher will prepare the draft analysis after the first co-reflection meeting and invite the practice teacher to meet again for extended understanding of mutual perspectives.
- iv. Likewise, the work schedule as mentioned in points (iii) and (iv) will be done again when the practice teacher has prepared the 2nd video-scenario for review and co-reflection. Put briefly, the practice teacher will attend **four rounds** of

co-reflection meetings in total throughout the research project - two rounds **each** in the first semester and second semester of placement.

- v. Compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and ethical principle of confidentiality, no identifiable personal data such as the agency name, student's name or user's full name is required.

For Students

- a. Videotaped practice teaching scenarios
- i. The student is willing to participate in the videotaped scenarios.
 - ii. The researcher can only access to the two scenarios (around 15 minutes for each scenario) as chosen by his or her practice teacher, teaching and learning scenario.
 - iii. The focus of attention is the practice teacher's pedagogical and epistemological assumptions but not the student's performance.
- b. Focus group interviewing
- i. The student is required to attend a focus group meeting with other participating students after the completion of placement and all marks are cleared. The meeting is tentatively scheduled in April 2011.
 - ii. For practical convenience, the researcher can arrange the meeting venue at her teaching university (HK East), the Hong Kong Polytechnic

University or a service unit at Wong Tai Sin.

- iii. The discussions will be taped and transcribed for analysis.
- iv. Practice teachers or training institutes cannot access the data
- iv. Compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and ethical principle of confidentiality, no identifiable personal data such as the agency name, student's name or user's full name is required.

Appendix 6, Annex 3

Consent Form for Students

Research on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work
practice teaching in Hong Kong

I _____ hereby consent to participate in the research conducted by Cheung Oi-ngor, Sandra. I fully understand the aim of this study is to unravel the contents and process of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work field supervision. My participation in this research is voluntary.

I know that the supervisory sessions dated _____, _____ and the focus group meeting dated _____ will be videotaped for the captioned study. The researcher shall destroy the audio and visual recordings containing my data after the completion of the research project. The information obtained in this research may be used in future research and published. However, my right to privacy will be retained, i.e., my personal data will not be revealed.

I acknowledge that I have the right to question any part of the procedure and can withdraw at any time without penalty of any kind.

Name of participant: _____

Signature of participant: _____

University name: _____

Name of researcher: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 6, Annex 4

Consent Form for Practice Teachers

Research on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work
practice teaching of Hong Kong

I _____ hereby consent to participate in the research conducted by Cheung Oi-ngor, Sandra. I fully understand the aim of this study is to unravel the contents and process of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work field supervision. My participation in this research is voluntary.

I know that the focus group meeting dated _____ will be videotaped. The co-reflection meetings dated _____ and _____ will be taped for analysis. I agree to provide two video-scenarios of practice teaching for the research purpose. The researcher shall destroy the audio and visual recordings containing my data after the completion of the research project. The information obtained in this research may be used in future research and published. However, my right to privacy will be retained, i.e., my personal data will not be revealed.

I acknowledge that I have the right to question any part of the procedure and can withdraw at any time without penalty of any kind.

Name of participant: _____ Date : _____

Signature of participant: _____ Date: _____

University name: _____

Name of researcher: _____ Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 6, Annex 5 (in Chinese)

(中文版)

服務對象錄影同意書

(進行現場需要直接拍攝服務對象才需要用此同意書)

機構名稱：_____

工作單位：_____

面談/活動日期：_____

錄影時間：_____

本人 *明白錄影的目的是為實習社工與其督導老師為研究教學法的用途，本人的資料並不會向第三者(指實習社工及督導老師以外的人士)披露，並同意進行此活動。

* 服務對象	簽名	日期
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實習社工姓名：	簽名：_____	日期：_____
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督導老師姓名：	簽名：_____	日期：_____
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機構負責人姓名：	簽名：_____	日期：_____
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Appendix 6, Annex 6**Declaration Form of Disposition of Personal Data of Research****Participants**

Research on the place of pedagogical practice wisdom in social work

practice teaching in Hong Kong

I, the undersigned, declare that:

1. I have full understanding of the principle of keeping confidentiality and protecting the privacy rights of the research participants whom I worked with during the research period.
2. I will destroy the audio and visual recordings containing the data provided by the research participants after the final version of thesis is drafted.

Name of researcher: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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