Chapter Two

Education and Training Theories, Competency Development and the Development of
Irish Recruit/Trainee Training and Programmes

‘Literature always anticipates life. It does not copy it, but moulds it to its purpose’

(Wilde, The Decay of Lying, 1899)

Introduction

This chapter presents the current views on police training and education and training in police trainee programmes. Training versus education is explored from many different views and authors, experiential learning is explored and competency development, the frameworks required for it through different organisations is presented. This chapter concludes with the development of three recruit/trainee programmes in the Garda Síochána.

Police training as we know it

Training and education of police trainees and continuous professional development of police involves more than just the police service (Palmiotto et al 2000). There are many different potential stakeholders in police, policing and trainee development. Police training in general, is not uniform in content, style and duration or the number of hours that are required for certifying a police officer (Walsh 1998; Palmiotto et al 2000). However in Ireland, one area of Garda training that has remained fairly uniform in the last 27 years is the manner in which the Garda College Garda trainee induction is
conducted – a two year programme with training and education and accredited (Walsh 1998; McNiffe 1997; Keating 1999).

Many of the current police training programmes worldwide are conducted in behavioural and semi-militaristic environments and this environment has also paralleled police officer selection strategies over the last 50 years (Fielding 1988; Reiner 1992; Palmiotto et al 2000; Das et al 2007). This behavioural training method from an Irish perspective (from mid 1980) was not regarded as the best investment for the teaching-learning transaction to occur and was regarded as antiquated for a policing role in a modern society (Walsh 1985; Keating 1999).

In fact, many theorists have argued that this semi-military model of policing created a myriad of problems not only in the training environment but also in the general body of the organisation (Palmiotto et al 2000). Theoretical scholarship has pointed out that behavioural and semi-military training environment has created a warrior-like mentality on the part of police leading to strong cultural norms (Fielding 1988; Reiner 1992; Palmiotto et al 2000; Das et al 2007).

Research has also shown that the traditional police academy is a site where the new recruits become socialised into the police service and start to assimilate some of the undesirable aspects of its culture (Fielding 1988; Reiner 1992). Since the mid 1980’s many modern police agencies have changed their trainee police programmes (especially in the British Isles and mainland Europe), induction procedures, subjects, subject
delivery, continuous professional development (in-service) and education and training curriculum’s (McNeill 1982).

These police agencies have moved away from the traditional ‘disciplinary’ type training mode to training based on community policing, human rights and diversity to produce the necessary skills required for the operational field of policing (McNeill 1982). This in turn has allowed the utilisation of adult education methodologies (put forward in the Irish Walsh (1985), and Keating (1999) programmes, United Kingdom programmes, to name but a few) rather than behavioural techniques. However, there are many countries that still utilise the old methods (to an extent), in a large number of police colleges and academies (mainly USA) (McNeill 1982; Das et al 2007).

**Education and training in police trainee programmes**

Training and education does not automatically result in learning (Haberfeld 2003). According to Chan et al (2003) learning is the processing of information which leads to change or an increase in competencies. People learn in different ways as they have different learning styles which are normally through using a balanced mix of learning modalities (Patten 1999). Another accepted fact is that courses cannot contain all information available, that information increases on a daily basis as it also loses its validity at the same pace (HMIC 2002).

Currently, there are different normative views on whether police training and education should be separated or whether to integrate training of policing skills and academic knowledge fully or partially (Chan et al 2003; Nolan 2009). Keating (1999) and Nolan (2009) state these diverging opinions reflect different pedagogical ideologies as well as
different traditions in policing and trainee police education and training. Chan et al (2003) argues that this depended on the tradition of the police organisation. This includes command structures employed, the availability of police discretion, at what level is independent thinking allowed, what types of reforms are on-going, the hierarchy structures in control of the policing organisation (national or local) and the composition of society and lastly, how the differences between education and training may look from all these different and diverse perspectives (Walsh 1985; HMIC 2002; Nolan 2009).

A number of definitions were explored and found comparative, for the purposes of this work the definitions as put forward in Haberfeld (2002) were selected. In 2002 Haberfeld adapted the following concepts concerning the above definitions to differentiate between the two. Haberfeld states that training and education can be viewed in isolation to see the difference that exists between the two.1 Haberfeld defines education as:

“...helps prepare to solve problems independently as well as communicate and interact with others”

Training is defined as:

“...unambiguous instructions on the tasks to be performed” (p34)

This concept which involves the learning of general concepts, policies, terms, practises and theories is fully supported in the work of Chan et al (2003), who found this concept

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1 They were adapted from the private security environment education and training programme by Timm and Christian (1991) and converted by Haberfeld to be suitable or facilitative for police induction training environments.
existed in the theoretical element of the police college curriculum involving state law and usually provides more interpretational, theoretical and conceptual frameworks designed to stimulate analytical and critical abilities.

Skills acquisition according to Haberfeld (2002) is in the process of education, Walsh (1985) when describing the proposed experiential learning phases stated it also involves gathering information, using various methods of research and/or investigation, finding solutions to diverse problems and creating alternative approaches that are required in society. Patten (1999) and Chan et al (2003) bring this to a different level and state that these must be major goals of a police trainee programme as they include teaching trainees to recognise, categorise, evaluate, understand different phenomena, communicate, predict outcomes and compete for solutions.

Haberfeld (2002) further argues achieving the correct balance between the two is the key to progression and development. This she argues can be completed through new modes of development and/or a return to traditional methods. This is the one of the central arguments of Keating (1999) and the major argument in Nolan (2009); training and education must be experimentally implemented through theoretical education and skills training at college level combined with mainstream regular uniform units in the operational field supported by allocations to supporting specialised units, (detectives, traffic, drugs).

Chan et al (2003) and Patten (1999) state the relevancy of trainee police work involving community orientation and problem solving in both fields must be structured, planned and evaluated at different levels in the organisation. Nolan’s (2009) damming findings on
the current competency programme will attempt to address these concerns through its proposed problem based learning ethos. This Nolan (2009) states will involve continuous evaluation of project work rather than pure academic work of Keating (1999). This will involve developing preventative and reactive actions in various fields of police work: public order, traffic safety, and crime prevention, volume crime such as burglary and theft and organised crime. Haberfeld (2002) argues forcefully that social consensus among political bodies, police managers, experts, human and social scientists and public opinion must be achieved with a relevant mix of personnel and financial resources determined and secured to achieve meaningful results.
Haberfeld’s (2002) research indicates the work of police is dynamic and police requirements are in a constant state of flux due to societal demands which are proactive and reactive. This is also a central tenet of Nolan (2009) that the Garda organisation must discern between the narrow education and training for the job or role in the organisation and the broader education and training for comprehensive development. Chan et al (2003) argues that their research shows that developing a recruit’s knowledge and skills, to successfully use in the process of problem solving at work and in life generally, must take place. Nolan (2009) while recognising that training suffered at the hands of education in the current Irish competency programme states education must be so that it guarantees the reflection of its goals, means and results and that enables creative inclusion in the processes of decision-making.

Peak and Glensor (2002) further argue to change an organisation or a profession requires training and education with critical examination of past methods of doing business undertaken as adoption of improved techniques to teach new skills. Nolan (2009) further argues that if success is to be achieved for all stakeholders it is important for all police colleges and academies that are involved in training police to have specific knowledge on the most effective teaching/learning methods so that trainees learn and conceptualise new information and tasks more effectively. Swanson (1992) forcefully argues that police-training in any format is an important tool in the process of facilitating change within police organisations. Nolan (2009) argues that their new problem based approach will enhance community-oriented policing strategies in Ireland when implemented as training for all members becomes a critical centerpiece to ensuring quality development of trainees.
Training versus education

Kline (1985) stressed the differences and incompatibilities of the processes of training and education and found that certain criteria objectives were most appropriate for training; a student will exhibit a specific behaviour to a predetermined level or standard and can be assessed. Geller (2000) states training targets behaviour directly by stating the specified steps needed to accomplish a task and training courses provide time to produce the desired behaviour and with constant feedback to ensure the correct procedures are learned. Mullen (2004) views skills training as covering a multitude of abilities; specific, technical and generic. Training is about giving people general or specific abilities that are developed in the main through working experiences. The training element that is designed for work should not be confused with the educational system that has as its basis intellectual content.

Carney (2003) also discussed these issues and in his view, training differs from education in that it seeks to impart a set of established facts and skills and to obtain a uniform predictable behaviour from the students without the necessity of their understanding why they should act in the prescribed manner. To a great extent from a policing viewpoint, this type of learning is primarily passive and incorporates certain reflex actions. Training is built around rote learning and memory, repetition and conditioned reflexes, while education is built on the organisation of knowledge, detail and continual analysis. Haberfeld (2002) argues that training is at the other end of the spectrum away from
education but only if isolated, the goals here involve teaching in a specific method, performing a task and responding to a given situation.

Kline (1985) refers to training as a closed system as knowing the system and having the answers to complete a task. In effect, different situations or issues may arrive but the product can be expected to look the same. Haberfeld (2002) states the subject matter is normally practises and procedures and they are practised until they become second nature and reflective in essence. Training is focussed on how most effectively to accommodate a task wherever a particular situation arises.

Training according to Kline (1985) can produce constraints on job requirements and skills levels where education encourages people to develop to their potential. A task analysis on a curriculum will include a list of skills and knowledge to allow the learner to show competence. Haberfeld (2002) argues that training must be recognised as experiential with goal orientated steps to be followed, which orders to be followed and their associated actions. Kline (1985) also states training also allows a given field to be mastered or to become an expert in, education can often have a lack of exactness and a lack of consensus on what should be taught but it allows an emphasis be placed on individual study.

Patten (1999) saw training as focussed on how most effectively to accommodate a task wherever a particular situation arises. Training is experiential (on the job training and a feature of all modern police trainee programmes) with goal orientated steps and orders to be followed and their associated actions. Patten (1999); Chan et al (2003); Nolan (2009)
further state its true purpose in the work situation is to enable an individual to acquire abilities in order that he or she can perform a given task or job. Haberfeld (2002) argues that police work involving community orientation and problem solving must be planned and evaluated at different levels in the organisation (HMIC 2002). Nolan (2009) states this can be achieved through the introduction of project work (problem based learning) which involves preventative and reactive actions in various fields of police work: public order, traffic safety, crime prevention, volume and organised crime.

Geller (2000) claims that education targets thought processes directly and tries to influence people’s cognitive or thinking processes. Mullen (2004) states education is on a higher plain of development and more than just about acquiring skills, regardless of what part of the training environment is involved. Geller (2000) argues that education and training are heterogeneous processes which cover a broad range of learning and levels of knowledge from the basic models to the highest level of abstract thought. Geller further argues that education is about opening people’s minds for development of thought processes, and in this context imparts what are termed core skills – communications, problem solving and using information technology on a development plateau.

Kline’s (1985) research indicates that education involves cognitive objectives (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation) that are most useful depending on the level of education required at the time. His research also states that when behavioural or criteria objectives are used in education, they are generally broader than when used in the training and relate to the learners ability to generalise on new situations or where issues cannot be visualised. In contrast to training his findings state
education is an open system, continuous, with an ability to learn more while being able to develop enough to handle all responsibilities.

Kline (1985) found from an educational view point the curriculum can contain many ideas which are creative and visionary and are needed not only to deal with needs but provide the ability to predict future needs. Carney’s (2003) view on education states that students learn skills to understand why actions are taken or not. It is on a higher plain of observing, analysing and questioning, to form hypotheses and to make conclusions so an action can be taken. This he regards as an active process.

Kline (1985) also recognises that differences between education and training do not suggest that one facet of learning is more important than the other, only that they are different. The recognition of their relevance in curriculum planning and teaching is that they are different and both can improve an organisation and the individual. Haberfeld (2002); Chan et al (2003) argue that both of these developmental elements can be viewed as stand alone components and/or can be viewed from a combination viewpoint depending on what the police organisation requires or the specific field of policing under development.

Geller (2000) states education and training call for different teaching styles. Nolan (2009) argues that developing a trainee’s knowledge and skills, to successfully use in the process of problem solving at work and in life generally, must take place. In this regard education integrated with training must be that it guarantees the reflection of its goals and results (Keating 1999). Nolan (2009) on discussing the future of Garda trainee higher education refers to it as ‘overlapping’ between education and training and argues that it
has always been there but has increased over the last number of years. In Nolan’s view, education focuses on critical thinking, whereas training is concerned with acquiring or enhancing the capacity to do a particular thing or specific job. This viewpoint has significant importance to police education as often they both overlap in a single process, e.g., a public order incident requires physical intervention, application of law, communications, and reasoning. In this regard Nolan’s (2009) findings show the two previous Irish reports on trainee development failed to integrate and adjust education and training in their respective programmes and the development process failed. Education suffered as the ideals of high academic and intellectual standards were placed into the training arena and training lost ground to education where the normal skills acquisition was lost in favour of developing concepts and ideas.

Messe & Ortimier (2004) argued that a militaristic and behavioural environment in policing may indeed be effective when teaching technical and procedural skills but does little to promote the acquisition of essential non-technical competencies such as problem solving, judgement and leadership. The paradox here is that police learn in a very behaviourist and mechanistic training environment by the very fact most are conducted in police training centres, but as Bayley et al (1984) observed, if police officers acted like automatic machines most of the time, then there would be little scope for learning.

Hence, most police work is fraught with decisions, choice and discretion on a regular basis. Some have pointed out that many trainees have a difficult time adapting to a rigid behavioural training structure in as much as one day they find themselves living a normal
life and the next day they find themselves thrown into an academic environment, the structure of which is based on a semi-military system (Bayley et al 1984).

Another problem identified here is that there will always be police trainers who cling to the notion that we should not tamper with what has worked in the past (Walsh 1985; Elias et al 1995; Keating 1999; Patten 1999; HMIC 2002; Nolan 2009). According to McGreedy (1983) the philosophy of most police-training programme is based on three perceptions: it should closely follow the military model, it is a punishment centred experience in which trainees must prove themselves as it helps screen out those who are not up to the standard required.

Theorists such as McGreedy (1983) and Elias et al (1995) consider the integration of training and education a problem, whereby policing skills with academic education and critical thinking must be achieved at the same time. Patten (1999), Keating (1999); Nolan (2009) believe that this integration is a positive and necessary goal to produce a high quality police education for a modern democratic society.

If this is the position according to Carney (2003) modern policing is knowledge based, an intensive activity rather than just having a pre-determined conditioned reflex action. Based on Carneys (2003) position police of tomorrow can no longer manage on a training curriculum achieving skills to do their work. Modern society requires police to be able to address a wide range of issues through independent and creative thinking. They require communication skills with an understanding of social relations and conflicts that can appear through unexpected situations. They need to understand social, political and cultural complexities and deal with society in a fair and compassionate manner.
Vocational training to achieve basic knowledge from the old police semi-military training regimes is no longer viable (Patten 1999; Keating 1999; HMIC 2002, Nolan 2009). Rather a college level education which integrates academic knowledge with training in more technical skills (self-defence, arresting techniques, practical demos of RTA’s, internal computer systems) is required (Nolan 2009). This level of education and training would be the minimal requirement.

The police organisations under research in this work are moving their police education/training programmes in this direction or have already done so. The technical skills required combined with political, sociological, criminological, psychological, legal and ethical aspect are already in use, but it is their integration that is important in achieving competence in the educational and training environment (Nolan 2009). Integration of theory and practise is in line with how most other professional educations have been developing for a long time, i.e. nurses, doctors, social workers and journalists. One of the most important elements is that the students work with patients, clients or practical problems at relatively early stages in their programmes and then the switch between the academic side (theory) and the practical side (operational work).

McGreedy (1983) remarks that the first problem with learning in the behavioural realm of training is that learning constitutes much more than a uniform, structured environment, as advocated by behaviourists. For example, each individual learner may approach learning with a distinct strategy and style. Secondly, McGreedy stresses that learning is a very complex process and involves many different types of behaviour in order to reveal that learning has occurred. Both of these observations were researched by the Keating (1999);
Patten (1999); Nolan (2009), where they found that a large majority of police training is conducted in a very uniform manner, consistent with behaviourism, with little regard for individual differences.

Further to this all three reports found that a stressful environment fraught with threats is not likely to elicit openness, participation and positive feelings. According to the reports learning is a process central to human behaviour which has been of interest to many for centuries.

According to Palmiotto et al (2000) all investigations of learning phenomena have resulted in many different explanations, and may not allow for the development of a fully comprehensive theory of learning although, the insights are important. Behaviourist instructional methodologies are common place in many police training environments (Palmiotto et al 2000). It is observed by all Irish reports that the Irish police trainee programmes regardless of its methodology, style and/or content may not have moved very far from this position. McGreedy (1983); Elias et al (1995) have argued regardless of change, law enforcement training is a field dominated by a militaristic and behaviourist orientation

Pagon et al (1996) conducted a deep level survey in 17 European police organisations which indicated that there were major differences between the countries surveyed. In 10 of these countries it was possible to obtain a 3rd level education from induction and courses ranged between 1 and 4 years. Basic training took between 4 months and 4 years followed by continuous professional development and specialised courses during their careers. The dominant character found in the study was the existence of educational
institutions within the police or the government agency of the police. This was in sharp contrast with the American model where no educational institutions existed as part of the police organisation, to further one’s education required attendance at regular mainstream colleges or universities.

This broad variety of educational and training programmes was replicated in the research of Hanak et al (2005) who surveyed 26 European countries. Some of the police academies had university status. Other countries colleges for police education awarded degrees and diplomas that were accredited by the countries higher education awards authorities or by academic partner. A number of the smaller European countries such as Estonia, Luxembourg and Malta were still in the format of designated training institutions.

Countries advancing their police institutions have created academic institutions in tandem with their training policies both are conducted in an integrated fashion in their programmes. This advancement has also opened up another debate on whether it is still appropriate to place-related educational institutions under the auspices of the police which keep them separate from non police students in similar fields of study (Patten 1999; HMIC 2002). This made sense in years gone by when police were recognised as instrument of the state, but is no longer relevant in this day and age.

According to Murphy (2009) the police in a modern democracy are now considered a service of the community, rather than just a pure law enforcement agency. Transparency, accountability and responsibility are the buzz words surrounding all major reforms in policing and police training (Murphy 2009). So the arguments for a secluded training

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2 Lithuania, Greece, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Norway
environment for trainees and indeed all police development programmes is growing very thin, some would argue.

This approach is a firm part of the recommendations from the HMIC (2002) report on probationer training in the UK, as a result various segments of the trainee programme is now outsourced within various police services. Patten (1999) also recognised the necessity of conducting parts of the trainee programme in an mainstream college and/or university with a further recommendation for the employment of civilian experts to conduct as much of the programme as possible in the police college.

This type of reform is supported by the work of Conway (2011) on the Irish Donegal policing scandal and Moore and O’Rawe (2005) on training programmes (internationally). Both recognise the potential to change the culture of an organisation that is linked culturally, historically and economically to the country. On the issue of blurring between education and training, Moore & O’Rawe (2005) contend if systems overlap, and are carried out under the same roof of the policing college and/or institution and by the same personnel has given rise to separate the two as it is unfair to students and teacher/trainers. Their research indicates that both teacher and learner have to constantly switch between the mental orientations of education and training and teacher/trainers have to constantly switch between different modes of content delivery.

Walsh (1985); Keating (1999); Patten (1999); HMIC (2002) contend that achieving a balance between theory and skills acquisition ensures the training mentality does not degrade the intellectual content of education or allow education become the dominant orientation. These reports see integration as the way forward and recognise the training
of how without getting too theoretical and the education of why without losing its critical edge as a positive goal for all concerned.

Within the pedagogical strategy of problem based learning, which is on the increase within education (Das et al 2007) e.g., medicine, nursing, engineering, journalism and social work, such integration is a central aspect of the learning process. The Nolan (2009) report has this as its new mode of learning and the core methodology for recruits. The challenge as Nolan (2009) argues is to ensure the new programme has creative integration of both systems.

Das et al (2007) state didactic training is conducted through formal instruction. It is commonly called pedagogical and is the art and science of teaching children under 18 years. Andragogical training is regarded as a mixed approach; adult centred, student centred, experiential learning and self learning are generally the accepted approaches to the delivery of training in organisations (Das et al 2007). The type of approach is regarded as secondary provided the philosophical approach is in congruence with the organisation endeavours (Harvey 1997).

Dubois et al (2004) argue that in this much debated field, contemporary human resource management practice requires all involved to be experts on raising their personnel talent within their organisations. Organisations adopting approaches involving formal classroom training, job differentiation, coaching and mentoring at all levels, self-directed study will be more successful in building employees’ competence.

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3 The term trainee/student will be replaced by ‘recruit’ as that used in the first programme.
Das et al (2007) from their research finds from a policing context current research in education and training suggests that currently, a new and broader policing philosophy is being adapted in many countries. This new philosophy includes more emphasis on public relations, personal development and community orientated policing with human rights, ethical standards and cultural diversity as the basic fundamentals (Das et al 2007).

Palmiotto et al (2002) points to the need to clearly define and state the basic goals for policing in each society; elaborating that a philosophical consideration of the nature and roles of policing in society; and of the basic training philosophies which underpin such roles is necessary. This view is re-enforced by Huitt (2006) who states learning leads to a permanent change in behaviour which is brought about as a result of the acquisition of knowledge and the application of this knowledge through practice and experience.

**Experiential learning**

Experiential learning remains pervasive in current society, whether formalised by educational institutions or occurring informally in day-to-day life. In this sense, experiential learning is not an alternative approach, but the most traditional and fundamental method of human learning (Kolb et al 1975). Since the 1950’s there has been a growing focus in writings and research specifically on experiential learning. Its importance has long been valued by police organisations where in the past a young trainee was assigned to an older police member to shadow that member for a period until it was deemed safe to allow them to progress on their own.

Since the 1990’s it has become an integral part of trainee programmes (Ireland, Northern Ireland and the UK to name but a few) where a designated experiential learning phase has
been interspaced between college phases. According to Brookfield (1983) experiential learning involves the trainee learning to a much greater degree than in traditional (pedagogical) learning environments. Related terms/concepts include: active learning, hands on learning, deep level processing, higher order thinking (Brookfield 1983). Experiential learning is a learning theory that is learner-centred and operates on the premise that individuals learn best by experience (Kolb et al 1975).

A good way to describe this theory is learning by doing (Brookfield 1983). Experiential learning thus has the learner directly involved with the material being studied instead of just thinking and talking about that material (Kolb et al 1975). Experiential learning is regarded as a cyclic process involving setting goals, thinking, planning, experimenting and making decisions, and finally action, followed by observing, reflecting and reviewing (Kolb et al 1975). It uses participants’ own experience, and their own reflection about that experience, rather than receiving lectures as the primary approach to learning. Experiential learning theory allows for the generation of understanding and allows for the transfer of skills and knowledge (Brookfield 1983). It is regarded as particularly effective in adult education as it addresses the cognitive, emotional and the physical aspect of the learner (Kolb et al 1975).

Experiential learning theory is a holistic learning approach (Kolb et al 1975). It is most effective when the learning has intrinsic motivation which is a common characteristic in adult learning (Kolb et al 1975). This emphasis on experience is central to the theory of andragogy that has evolved to describe adult education practice in societies. The belief here is that adult teaching should be grounded in adults’ experiences, and their
experiences represent a valuable resource and it is currently cited as crucial by adult educators of every conceivable ideological hue (Jarvis 1994). Of all the models of experience that have been developed, Kolb’s has probably been the most influential among researchers of adult learning (Jarvis 1994).

Brookfield (1983) states that writers in the field of experiential learning have tended to use the term in two contrasting senses. Kolb’s model of experiential learning can be found in many discussions of the theory and practice of adult education, informal education and lifelong learning. This sort of learning is sponsored by an institution and might be used on training programmes for professions such as social work and teaching or in field study programmes.

The second type of experiential learning is “education that occurs as a direct participation in the events of life” (Houle 1980, p221). Here, learning is not sponsored by some formal educational institution but by people themselves. It is learning that is achieved through reflection upon everyday experience. Much of the literature on experiential learning, as Jarvis (1995, p75), comments “is actually about learning from primary experience, that is learning through sense experiences”. Kolb et al (1975) created his famous model out of four elements: concrete experience, observation and reflection, the formation of abstract concepts and testing in new situations. Based on these, Kolb et al (1975) argue that the learning cycle can begin at any one of the four points and that it should really be approached as a continuous spiral.
According to Coleman (1976) this implies only the ability to see a connection between the actions and effects over a range of circumstances. An educator who has learned in this way may well have various rules of thumb or generalisations about what to do in different situations. They will be able to say what action to take when say, there is tension between two people in a group but they will not be able to verbalise their actions in psychodynamic or sociological terms. There may be difficulties about the transferability of their learning to other settings and situations (Coleman 1976). When the general principle is understood, the last step, according to Kolb et al (1975) is its application through action in a new circumstance within the range of generalisation.

**Competency development**

Competency is a much contested concept (Moore et al 2006) and those who use it shape its meaning (Whiddett et al 2003). Some have used them as behaviours for superior performance while others promote them as the minimum performance required to perform a job. In this context, competency standards are propelled by a strong desire (organisational or academic) to prepare individuals in a workforce (Dubois et al 2004).

The use of competency in education and training allows the individual to gain qualifications that relate to the required performance they will be required to use in the workplace consequently satisfying the employer who sustains a skilled workforce (Boyatzis 1982). Boyatzis (1982) and Kirschner et al (1997), state a level of competency will be achieved if the correct ingredients are involved and by having minimum and superior excellence standards. However, this is based on the organisations purpose.
Patten (1999); Palmiotto et al (2000); HMIC (2002); Moore & O’Rawe (2005), argue that those who had semi-military models of police training eventually created problems that are then reflected and absorbed by new recruits when transferred into the general body of the organisation. This argument is supported by Huiitt et al (2003), who states development leads to a permanent change in behaviour, which is brought about as a result of the acquisition of knowledge and the application of this knowledge through practice and experience.

Whiddet et al (2003) state this is achievable by allowing one set of criteria with common themes. Dubois et al (2004) also supports this direction and defined a competency model as the adhesive/glue, so a unified and co-ordinated approach is taken. If this approach is not undertaken the competencies become meaningless with no firm direction, the end result is extra expense and loss of time with a poor buy in from all and finally unsuccessful performance will be the terminal result (Wood & Payne1998).

Dubois et al (2004) stated if the necessary ingredients are in place, then effective performance could be assessed against standards. However, if there is movement away from the core values or a change outside of the norm those developing will suffer and standards cannot be assessed correctly. This also supported by Whiddet et al (2003) who argues that a framework has one set of criteria to cover common themes and common language for all to use that produces consistency when assessing performance; what the individual needs to be good at.

Different writers in the field of competency based training, favoured different words, explanations and labels depending on their particular view of defining performance. Two
major themes according to Whiddett et al (2003, p5) emerge from all these definitions: *a description of work*, what a person has to do in a job and “*a description of ‘behaviour’*, how a person does their job. Based on these, it has been maintained a general convention has developed between the meanings of competence and competency (Whiddett et al 2003). The following meanings are similar in context to the main theorists in this field of endeavour: “*Competence (competences) is ability based on tasks, what they have to achieve and are usually job or role specific*”, “*Competency (competencies) is based on behaviour, how they have to achieve it, can cover a wide range of different jobs and often cover different levels of job as well*” (Whiddett et al 2003, pp5/6).

According to Dennis (2002) competency based HRM systems use the term competence from a broad perspective which allows them to further their ambitions through identifying competencies by their component parts. This in turn allows the individual overall competence match the organisations competencies which in turn allow the organisation direct its operations through interventions starting with recruitment, promotion training and the cultural aspects associated within the organisation (Dubois et al 2004). Also with the different definitions of competency other applications became apparent and for the purpose of this research one in particular: an organisation competence and core competency which provides the essential values and business link to its employees.

Dubois et al (2004) suggests that a tight link between the individual and organisational core competencies provides for a successful job performance. Competencies, because of their range are more popular and when placed in sets are referred to as competency frameworks (Whiddett et al 2003). Boyatizis (1982) drew a distinction between the tasks
and outcomes required in a job and the behaviours an individual would need to perform them. He defined competency as: “an underlying characteristic of a person in that it may be a motive, trait, skill, aspect of ones self image or social or a body of knowledge which he or she uses” (Boyatizis 1982, p21). One of the fundamental points of his definition is the focus on behaviours as opposed to task outcomes. He described competencies as underlying characteristics of an individual which are casually related to an effective job performance.

Dubois et al (2004) brings this theory to a different level and maintain that there are two schools of thought in relation to interpretation of competency. One is that competency relates to knowledge and skill and the other refers to any characteristic that supports performance. Their theory focuses on how the job is performed by identifying those elements that contribute to achieving effective performance. As such the level of competence can be assessed against standards. It also allows furthering linking and enhancing its policing policies and training objectives and people management and practises (Cornelius et al 1979).

Research also indicates that competency development is a major tool of endeavour but not a panacea for all ailments (Whiddett et al 2003). Dennis (2004) states leadership, management, facilitators and those receiving the training must be in tune with the evolving processes as the organisation moves forward recognising the evolving society it serves (Dubois et al 2004). Whiddett et al (2003) state that competencies employed must be well designed and developed and must be implemented effectively. Coupled with this recognition is that all within and its users must be involved in its development (Moore et al 2006).
Dubois et al (2004) defines their model as one that provides the adhesive or glue that is necessary among the workings of an organisation HRM system which takes a unified and coordinated approach to designing performance methods, organisational improvement, employee development and the performance appraisals required (Dennis 2004). Organisational leaders must consistently endorse and support the use of a competency drive approach as a key ingredient to the organisational strategic success and outputs from the competency model must be technically reliable and valid and acceptable to the client (Dennis 2004). A competency framework is designed to provide one common set of criteria to cover common themes (Whiddett et al 2003). They provide a common language and a high level of consistency when assessing performance. It also provides a progressive front for individuals for identification and plans their development.

Competencies also provide a set of criteria in the form of behaviour statements and behaviour indicators, experiences, relevant qualifications, training, achievements, development and organisational needs. Whiddett et al (2003) suggest this is important considering the culture of hierarchal leadership, management policies and principles, and their implementation in the organisation. Whiddett et al (2003) also suggest that: “... all behaviours within the competency framework should be consistent with the organisational context, values, mission, cultures etc” (p7).

Taking the above information to a conclusion, it can be seen that competence as a dimension is defined by the situation (Kirschner et al 1997). The influences can range from the mission statement, organisational vision(s), principles, values, the parameters it lays down from the behaviour of its individual members (Whiddett & Hollyforde 2003).
‘To ensure all behaviours within the a competency framework should be consistent with the organisational context, values, mission, cultures etc’ (Whiddett & Hollyforde, 2003, p7). There are many different types of definitions of competency/competence attributed to ‘tasks’ and ‘behaviours’ which are the two main themes to emerge.

The development of recruit/trainee programmes in the Garda Siochana

Introduction

Due to the paucity of academic research relating to the Garda Siochana trainee programmes, the literature review for this section is particularly dependent on two official Irish Government/Garda Siochana publications, to detail and explain the issues at hand.


Figure 2.1 - The development strands of the trainee programmes

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4 Commonly known as the Walsh report (1985)
5 Commonly referred to as the Keating report (1999)
firstly from (1922-1988), consisting of six months of didactic, semi-militaristic/disciplinary training with an emphasis on institutionalisation, fitness and rote learning procedures. Secondly, from 1989-2002 with the implementation of the Walsh Report (1985) an education module was introduced into the programme; this included a number of social sciences, experiential learning diary, technical studies, communications studies, experiential learning. It was trainee centred and the programme was orientated towards producing Gardai versed in many facets of Irish life.

The third and current trainee programme, 2003-present attempted to update various areas of the trainee programme in line with societal changes and developments, new Irish and European legislation, human rights, cultural awareness and equality issues. It recommended a competency based framework, under recommendation six: “That the Generic Professional Competency Model (GPCM) proposed in section four be adopted as a framework to guide the overall education/training/development of all student Gardai” (p4)

Training within the Garda Siochana maintained a continuity of process from its inception in September 1923 until the first major review of training carried out by Dr. Tom Walsh in 1985. In 1999, a second major review was published, the findings and recommendations of which were implemented in 2003. In 2008 the then Garda Commissioner directed a further review of training to be carried out and the report was published in late 2009, and known as the Nolan 2009 Report. Therefore it is true to say that initial recruit training within the Garda Siochana falls into three identifiable periods: 1922 to 1988, 1989 to 2002, and 2003 until the present.
Recruit training: 1923 – 1988

Police training in the new Irish state began with the formation of the Civic Guard (February 1922 – September 1923 (McNiffe 1997). With the disbandment of the Civic Guard and the formation of the Garda Síochána in September 1923, training was to be located at the Phoenix Park Depot, Phoenix Park, Dublin. Police training had been carried out at the Phoenix Park since 1840 (Irish Constabulary and Royal Irish Constabulary - RIC) (McNiffe 1997). In 1964 the Garda Training Centre was opened in Templemore, Co. Tipperary and recruit training was transferred there.

This new centre was a former army barracks which was opened in 1810 as Richmond Barracks and was later renamed McCann Barracks under the control of the Irish Army (Garda College Yearbook, 2003). In the early years of the force the training regime of the Garda Siochana was rigid and militaristic in nature; this was an inheritance from its close connections to the RIC which was a gendarmerie (Walsh, 1998). Training was carried out over a six month period, the new recruits being attested as full members of the force on day one. The syllabus consisted mainly of police duties – criminal law and procedure, drill, physical education, Irish language training and firearms training. At the end of this period the recruits ‘passed out’ and were assigned as operational Gardai to their new stations. At the end of a one year period they would return on Part two training for a period of four weeks. On successful completion of this period their training was complete (Garda Training Centre Recruit Programme 1970-1989).

2nd trainee programme: 1989 – 2002
The first major review of Garda Training for trainees was instigated by the then Garda Commissioner in January 1985. The Commissioner appointed a leading academic and educationalist Dr. Thomas Walsh as chairman of a review committee tasked with reviewing Garda training. The committee received a broad remit for their task: “to examine all training in the Garda Síochána from recruit intake stage up to and including courses at the Garda College, and to make recommendations” (1985 Walsh Report, p15).

The Commissioner accepted the recommendation of the committee encapsulated in the Walsh Report 1985, after a lead-in period the new Garda trainee programme commenced in 1989.

The new programme was to extend over a two year period and would be divided into five separate but interlinked phases. Progression was dependent on the successful completion of each phase. The Garda College was designated an Institute for Higher Education in 1992. The Garda trainee programme was approved by the National Council for Education Awards (NCEA) for the award of National Diploma in Police Studies in September 1993 (Garda College Yearbook, 2003-5).

3rd trainee programme 2003 – present

By 1997 the Walsh (1985) report was now over a decade old and the then Commissioner directed a review of training to be carried out under the chairmanship of Chief Superintendent Eamonn T. Keating. In directing the review the Commissioner gave the terms of reference as follows:” To examine the philosophy, structure, content, processes,

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6 In 2005 the National Diploma in Police Studies was re-designated a Bachelor Degree in Police Studies under the European Framework of Awards (Level 7 – ordinary degree).
The group chaired by Keating carried out an evaluation of the training programme which was then in place. This was a five phase training programme as introduced by the Walsh (1985) report. Keating recommended the retention of the five phase programme of two years’ duration. However, Keating went further and recommended the introduction of a competency-based framework for Garda trainees (Keating 1999, p76). The report was to introduce an integrated competency framework to Garda trainee training.

This new model would be known as the Generic Professional Competency Model (GPCM). It is comprised of three main clusters of competencies: Tasks, Values and Relationships (see Figure 1). Central to the changes introduced by the report was a new system of assessment. During the five phases of the programme Garda trainees would be assessed.

Progression to the next phase was dependent on achieving the learning outcomes specific to the individual phase and the development of in the specific competencies which made up the Generic Professional Competency Model. The assessment process comprises of written assessments while on Phase I, Phase III and Phase V at the Garda College. While attached to operational units on Phase II and Phase IV an assessment interview was introduced. This assessment interview would entail the candidate presenting evidence of progression to a three-person board. The board would comprise of District Officer (Superintendent), direct line manager (Sergeant), and a member of the Divisional Training Staff (Keating 1999, p47).
Chapter conclusion

Traditionally trainee police education and training used to be hands-on-profession. However, a new 21st century world has brought new and often complex methodologies which have created a need for sophisticated tools and techniques as well as keeping education and training in a more systematic, reasoned manner. For internal policing institutions and colleges to advance recruit/trainee education and training and all main line development for the rest of the organisation, all should be closely connected to universities and third level institutions.
In this advancement the police educational institutions regardless of their affiliation, must enjoy the same level of independence and autonomy in their teachings as any other educational facility. Finally police educational institutions open themselves to the influence of all the stakeholders, discussed in the beginning of this chapter, allowing them to indirectly impact the way the police perform their tasks.

Community policing has been presented in contemporary literature as constituting a viable entity for effective change and requires police officers to learn a host of new skills. If policing is to effectively evolve into community-orientated policing, then it becomes paramount to identify the most effective methods to accommodate the changes required.

With the speed of change in both knowledge and technology, it is clear that the Garda Siochana (and all policing organisations) have a choice: to either continue to allow police members learn throughout their lives, or allow policing skills and knowledge to quickly slide into obsolescence. As police organisations are evolving with community-orientated policing strategies to the fore, trainee police education/training becomes a focal point.

The literature review on policing, education and training and strategies readily states that to change an organisation or profession, police trainee training and education and continuous professional development requires critical examination of past methods of doing business to adopt and adapt improved techniques to teach new skills. Moreover, it is important for police colleges and academies that are involved in training trainees and police to have specific knowledge on the most effective teaching and learning methods so that trainees learn and conceptualise new information and tasks more effectively. Police-
training is also recognised as an important tool in the process of facilitating change within police organizations. With the implementation of community-oriented policing strategies in the majority of countries, training becomes a critical centerpiece.

Traditionally in Ireland, the majority of Garda trainees in the Garda-training environment have been taught utilising behavioral approaches: approximately 40% are in this category, with 60% under 10 years service from the competency programme. To continue this effectiveness in a very modern and at times complex Irish society, teaching a Garda trainee curriculum which has been implemented under the axiom of competency development requires community-policing values as one of the core principles.

Education has been described as the learning of general concepts, theories, policies, terms, practises and theories. This thought process is very much in line with the suggested improvements of both Irish reports into Garda trainee training and education. The skills expressed in this context involve analysing different situations, communications both verbally and in writing. It involves gathering information using various methods of research, finding solutions to diverse problems and creating alternative approaches. The goals include teaching people to recognise, categorise, evaluate, understand different phenomena, communication, predict outcomes and compete for solutions.

In crossing the threshold towards ‘training which is regarded at the other end of the spectrum (but only if isolated) has goals which involve teaching in a specific method, performing a task and responding to a given situation. The subject matter is normally practises and procedures and they are practised until they become second nature and
reflective in essence. Training is focussed on how most effectively to accommodate a task wherever a particular situation arises. Training is also experiential with goal orientated steps to be followed, with orders to be followed and their associated actions.

Research conducted into competency development has shown that behaviours whether effective or ineffective at work can be grouped into clusters. These clusters form the basis of competency frameworks and thus encompasses more than skills required for a job. It includes a focus on attributes and behaviours required for effective performance within a training, education and development programme. From an Irish policing perspective, it also offers continuity for the Garda organisation in recruitment, induction and promotion as they progress in their respective careers. Therefore, one can summarise that education and training through a competency development framework is not something that occurs simply by studying theoretical materials, rote learning procedures, passing examinations or carrying out a task or series of tasks.

Experiential learning and situational learning add to this by promoting constructivist learning takes place within unfamiliar and changing situations that do not behave in a stylised fashion. The necessity for an organisation such as the Garda Siochana and the UK police trainee programme to have a competency model is that it sets out for each trainee, teacher, tutor, Garda, Gardai, supervisors and managers, what is important in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours, achievements and outcomes, and good or bad performance can be easily and objectively discerned, described, measured and improvements acted upon.
Experiential learning can be found in many discussions of the theory and practice of adult education. This theory builds on experience and is especially important in adult learning because simply by living, adults bring a wealth of experience to every learning situation they face. It is a holistic learning approach and is most effective when the learning has intrinsic motivation which is a common characteristic in adult learning.

This chapter has presented different views on the relationship between police training and police education, and whether police education and police training is better off when it is located within the police organisation or at universities and research institutions outside the police. Some argue in favour of separating them, claiming that police development can only develop freely when it is carried out in institutions independent from the police.

Others argue in favour of integrating police training and education, developing police academies into accredited academic institutions within the university system in order to maximise the positive impact of police higher education on the police organisation. More and more European countries are moving in the latter direction. It is up to the national police academies and colleges to decide to what extent they will implement their training and education, and up to the national accreditation institutions to evaluate whether the police education fulfils the quality criteria for third level status.

The perspectives presented on education and training in this chapter to an extent and within context can lay out a route map on the values, perspectives and strategies for police trainee programmes. These perspectives inform us what is required today in trainee police education and training. These perspectives/standards would allow the Garda Siochana organisation test their performance against international best practises. For ease
of reference, I have bulleted pointed the main perspectives/standards that can be readily tested for best practises:

- Closely connected to universities and 3rd level institutions
- Integrating police training and education, developing police academies into accredited academic institutions within the university environment
- Experiential learning and situational learning between college periods
- Competency development (generic depending on the police agency and country) to develop, refine and practice appropriate cognitive and practical skills
- Goal orientated steps/ actions in the college and experiential learning environments.
- A level of independence and autonomy in teacher/trainer teachings as any other educational facility
- Police educational institutions open themselves to the influence of all the stakeholders.

International best practice suggests that combining crime and functional policing skills training provide an effective and coherent training structure. The literature review has highlighted the urgent need to invest in advanced training facilities to meet policing operational requirements.