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confronting the profession in this country as it considers strategies and policies

schools who were retarded rather than mentally deficient, and it was hoped that expensive mistakes could be avoided by means of psychological testing. So after some debate the Council finally agreed to appoint a psychologist rather than an additional medical officer.” (Hearnshaw, 1979, pp. 33-34) It is reported that he was left to draw up his own plan of work. When this was finally approved by the Council, it had three parts:

1. “To carry out periodically, with the assistance of the teachers, psychological surveys of the children in the Council's schools;
2. To examine and report  
on individual cases of educational subnormality (chiefly in connection with certification, and training of mental defectives)  
on



object will be the examination of mentally defective candidates; but I propose, if





1980), precursors in London of the professional grouping that later became Education Welfare Officers. With some variations in working practices the number of clinics nationally expanded slowly through to the 1970's. However, the aspirations of the clinics became increasingly undermined by quarrels about management, serious shortfalls in staff training, a lack of evidence for effectiveness and a mismatch with the expectations of referring agencies (DES, 1968; Tizard, 1973; Sampson, 1975; Cline, 1980).

The slow withdrawal of educational psychologists from a substantial commitment to these clinics and their successors is not well documented. It appears to have been accelerated during a period when Educational Psychology Service time had an increasingly tight focus on the school as its primary client. Recent surveys have charted an interest among other statutory agencies such as Social Services and Health in

intervening period. However this is now seen to be of crucial importance across multi-agency teams (Hymans, 2006) and in specific ventures such as work with Youth Offending Teams (Ryrie, 2006).

### **The Educational Psychologist as Scientist-Practitioner**

Perhaps the area in which Burt's thinking impresses as most strikingly contemporary is in his conceptualisation of the essential nature of the EP role: *'...the work of the educational psychologist is essentially that of a scientific investigator; in a word it is research. .... whether we were dealing with*

demands from other quarters' (Miller & Frederickson, 2006, p108). It is not surprising that criticism of such practice mounted through the decade (e.g. Burden 1973; Maliphant, 19

contribution of the EP as being that the hypotheses which drive their work are drawn from psychological theory and research.

The importance of research in EP practice has not enjoyed consistent recognition. Government reviews of the EP role in England have varied greatly in the emphasis afforded it. The first such review, the Summerfield report, did recognise the educational psychologist as a consumer of psychological research applicable to education, '*The particular contribution of psychologists in education services derives from their specialized study of psychological science and its application to education and to other aspects of human development. It should be the main criterion in determining their work*' (DES, 1968, p.xi). However this did not extend to describing the educational psychologists as producers of research: 'the scientific research role of the educational psychologist so strongly advocated and practices by Burt received little mention' (Dessent, 1978, p.31).

Across the intervening 32 years between government reports on the work of educational psychologists, the picture that emerges from various surveys is of very little research being conducted by educational psychology practitioners (Webster & Beveridge, 1997; Wedell & Lambourne, 1980). Indeed one well known advocate of the scientist-practitioner model of educational psychology practice provocatively entitled an article on the subject 'Are educational psychologists serious about research?' (Lindsay, 1998).





in practice, typologies, where appropriateness of study type for answering particular types of questions is assessed, are preferred to hierarchies (Pettigrew & Roberts, 2003). For example, if the issue of concern is about reasons for dropping out of an intervention programme then a qualitative approach, perhaps involving detailed interviews with those involved, is likely to be rated highly.

While it should be expected that educational psychologists will recommend evidence-supported approaches, the collection of practice-based evidence on individual response is also required. For example, even the best available intervention does not work for up to one third of children and adolescents and some deteriorate in response to intervention (Carr, 2000). In addition a theoretical understanding of the mechanisms underlying change is important if psychologists are to appropriately





for employment and training, it has never been the only focus. Assessment, of any kind, however necessary, is in any case just the beginning stage of any investigation as the profession has long emphasised.

To what can we ascribe these impressions of discontinuity? One possibility is that some of the most impassioned and persuasive writing is produced by each emerging generation of professional leaders who, adolescent-like, stereotype the previous generation with the attributed practices from which they are attempting to break free. Burt commented on criticisms of this kind levelled at educational psychologists' use of psychometric tests: *"... in recent years, educational psychologists have come under heavy fire from a number of younger writers, like Dr. Stott, and Dr. Campbell, and Dr. McLeish, for our "naïve reliance," as they call it, our naive reliance on tests. 'The Educational Authorities of those days,' said Dr. Stott, 'were only too glad to hand on their headaches to a pseudo-scientist and meekly accept the findings of a pseudo-test.'..... I find it difficult to avoid the conclusion that these younger critics glean their notions of what went on in those early days from each other rather than from the contemporary reports."* (Burt, 1964, reported in Rushton 1992, p.563). Almost 50 years later Morris reports similar contemporary misunderstanding of practice in the 1970s, *'In my current role in the initial training of EPs at the University of Birmingham, I find myself surprised and, indeed, sometimes irritated to read the accounts of contemporary trainees who, while acknowledging the vision of the 'Reconstructing Movement', position my generation, and indeed even EPs of the recent past, as blinkered determinists, focusing exclusively on 'within child factors', wedded to their psychometric tests, to the exclusion of virtually all else.'* (Morris, 2013, p.74).

However, reluctance by the profession of educational psychology in modern times to trace a legacy to Burt cannot but have been influenced by the scandal created by the allegations of research fraud that erupted in the late 1970s, some years after his death (Hernshaw, 1979). It certainly is in contrast to his



been traced. It should also be noted that the growth of Guild Guidance Clinics began in this period (though with some charitable support) and that the first educational psychologist outside London was appointed in 1931 in Leicester (Dessent, 1978).

Turning to the present, with the UK in the grip of the worst economic recession since the 1930s, what sort of educational psychology service does central and local government wish to develop in these straitened times? How does that match up with services that psychologists are trying to develop? In fact the answer to the first of these questions is probably more positive now than it has been at any point in the last 100 years. After accepting the recommendations of the Roberts Review of EP training (Department for Education, 2011), central and local government are working together to provide funding for doctoral training on a three cohort basis. The review recognises a broad conceptualisation of the EP role, in particular encompassing early intervention. Nationally, a number of LA EP services are expanding in response to the success of traded services initiatives. Meanwhile the draft illustrative special educational needs regulations and the indicative draft Code of Practice associated with the Children and Families Act (2014) outline a continuing role for educational psychologists in special needs assessment and planning.

What of the second question, concerning the match with what psychology services are seeking to develop? The breadth will certainly be welcomed as a positive feature. As we have seen, over the past 100 years EPs have proved very successful in maintaining the vision of a broad role, able to address the psychological needs of the whole child in context. This has involved adaptability in the range of contexts EPs have inhabited, but also assertiveness in defying narrow role definitions others have sought to impose, successively: psychiatrists, medical officers, education advisors and education officers. This important balance is also apparent This im1st ek 4 Tm0 e(a)-3(d)3aenedie , 39-3(ises TQqeW\*nBdn)-3( )-

and done, educational psychology should plainly be the creation of educational psychologists” (Burt, 1969, p.11).

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