

Positioning or positioned: Teachers' perspectives on the leadership of Sixth Form Colleges.

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education

David William Stoten

**Department of Education
Brunel University**

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Abstract:

The aim of this research was to explore the issue of leadership of Sixth Form Colleges (SFCs) from a Critical Theory perspective. SFCs have experienced rapid and wide-ranging change since their removal from the aegis of Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in the early 1990s. SFCs exist as nominally autonomous institutions, funded by Government agencies competing in a marketised environment. It is within this context that Government has sought to propagate a view of leadership as being crucial to organisational effectiveness and responsiveness to local needs.

Much of the literature published worldwide relates to leadership in schools. Although there has been a significant amount of research undertaken into the general Further Education (FE) and university sectors in the United Kingdom (UK), relatively little work has been undertaken in regard to the experiences of teachers in SFCs. The goal of this research was not only to gain a greater insight into the social reality of leadership, but also to arrive at a closer definition of what leadership means for SFCs as organisations.

The research methodology chosen was a social-constructionist multi-site case study. The primary research method involved interviewing 20 teachers from four SFCs, three of which were close neighbours. Interviews were later supplemented by a brief survey of 40 teachers in 8 SFCs. In addition, documentary material produced by SFCs, Government and its executive agencies was analysed.

The principal finding of the research was to challenge the term 'leadership' as has been promoted by Central Government. The data obtained generated discussion on the role of the local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs), the changing nature of educational provision and the position of teachers as professionals. The conclusions drawn from the research suggest that there is a need to reconsider what constitutes 'leadership'. These findings also lead into a wider discussion about the impact of Postmodernism and whether we are witnessing new forms of organisation in the provision of education in the UK. Given the scope and rapidity of change, this work calls for institutional leaders to ensure that they engage in values-based leadership.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The context of the research.

According to a study of four leading 'beacon' Sixth Form colleges (Taylor, 1999: 3):

A great deal, it was acknowledged, had depended on the quality of leadership provided by the principal. It was he who had 'articulated a vision for the college' and 'defined a way forward'. It was he also, who, through the energy and example, operated to translate the vision into practice.

Whereas the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted: 2003: 35-36) reported that:

Surveys by HMI provide detailed evidence of the importance of leadership and management in a variety of contexts.... This evidence confirms the widely held view that the way in which the characteristics of strong leadership and good management are applied in different circumstances is of fundamental importance.... It is no longer true - if it ever was- that leadership and management are the sole responsibility of the headteacher. High quality leadership and management must now be developed throughout a school's organisation.

Such views on leadership reflected the weight ascribed to leadership and management within the education system in recent years. The education system in England and Wales had undergone significant change in the period since 1979, both in terms of structural change and curriculum innovation. For Dimmock this impinged on the purpose of leadership (2003: 3):

The first years of the new millennium have continued the trends of the previous century in being characterised by turbulence in educational policy-making. Continuous and evolving change, it seems, is endemic to policy and practice on an international scale. Leadership lies at the centre of such change in education, both as a key component of educational organisations in its own right and as a catalyst for the successful reorganisation of other activities.

Given the nature and scale of change, leadership is viewed by Government as being a critical agent in the process of change, and it is also expected to be effective. This process of change not only redefined the nature the relationship between students and their teachers in schools, SFCs and the wider Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) sectors, but led to a reappraisal of the goals and impact of educational provision. In doing so, it has raised questions as to how schools and colleges have changed as organisations in response to changing priorities. It has also raised issues relating to how teachers are regarded both within their own institution and by the wider community of stakeholders, including Government.

1.2 Organisational change in a changing environment:

Institutional leadership is not only contingent upon the internal dynamics within an organisation but is also affected by the external environment within which it operates. Goldring (2000: 291) describes leadership behaviours in terms of positioning and interactions with the external environment:

Environmental management strategies require broad-based planning and action. These strategies are tools that aid leaders in adopting to their environment and in modifying themselves to thrive in a given environment.

Prior to the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act, the Local Education Authority (LEA) tended to act as an intermediary that served to buffer colleges from market pressures. Since incorporation, however, colleges have been exposed to the vagaries and uncertainties of the quasi-market. For Goldring (2000: 290) educational institutions have increasingly come to resemble 'open systems' that are vulnerable to environmental pressures, and that:

Through adaptive strategies leaders attempt to increase co-operation and joint action between the organisation and the environment. These strategies generally require that the organisation relinquish some autonomy in order to adjust to the environment.

Hannan and Freeman (1997: 194) describe adaptive approaches in terms of institutional isomorphism, in which leaders respond to competitive pressures through re-structuring of their organisation and setting-out new priorities that will minimise risk.

Adaptive managerial strategies are often described in terms of strategic leadership and management in mainstream management science literature (Bailey and Johnson, 2000; Drooge and Cooper, 2000; Goldring, 2000; Hall, 1998; Huczynski and Buchanan, 2001). Strategic leadership is generally presented as being concerned with the identification of organisational goals and a vision to achieve those outcomes, which are generally communicated in a strategic plan. As Simkins (1998: 65) recognises strategic leadership and management is dominated by this mainstream 'rational perspective' and that rational approaches are advocated widely by official bodies [such as funding councils, the National Audit Office and Ofsted].

However, the consequence of such organisational practices may be that as Goldring (2000: 296) describes:

Environmental leaders link organisations with the environment by using various sources of power. Centrally located within the organisation, they procure and control resources from the environment... acknowledging and developing these power sources are essential tools when planning and implementing environmental management strategies.

For Goldring (2000: 292), this analysis leads onto three possible strategies: independent strategies, co-operative strategies and strategic manoeuvring. Given the nature of the educational institutions, and their vulnerability to the quasi-market, colleges have tended to adopt co-operative strategies via consortia such as the Surrey SFCs' S7 network and comply with Government policy. Importantly for Tristram (1996: 90), there is doubt 'whether colleges have sufficient independence to truly act strategically'.

Changes to the environmental context for schools and colleges have led to internal organisational re-structuring as institutions re-engineer personnel deployment and resources. For postmodernists, such as Clegg (1999), the idealised type of organisation described in the mainstream management science literature is increasingly archaic as a description of organisation life. In an age where information management and organisational responsiveness are viewed as paramount, postmodernists in particular see new forms of organisation evolving. Adapting the typology offered by Huczynski and Buchanan (2001: 55), it is possible to describe these idealised forms of organisation as described in Table 1:

Organisational feature	Classical organisation (1800-1970)	Modern organisation (1970-1990)	Post-modern organisation (1990-)
Conception	Organisation as a machine	Open system organisation	Organisation as a flexible tool
Structure	Rigid, hierarchical	Decentralised	Action matters, not design
Internal processes	Focus on human processes	Focus on human relations	Lean and efficient
Production technique	Mass production	Customisation	Time to market
Nature of work	Routine, repetitive work	Team working	Entrepreneurial

Employee relations	Full time employees	Flexible working patterns	Networks and sub-contracting
Management	Direct supervision	Local problem solving	Rules don't matter
Responsiveness	Emphasised control, predictability	Customer service	Quick decision-making
Approach	Find the one best way	Contingency approach	Response-oriented
Risk management	Avoid uncertainty	Manage uncertainty	Exploit uncertainty

Table 1: Organisational forms, after Clegg (1999).

According to Huczynski and Buchanan (2001: 64) if the post-modern organisation becomes a reality it will lead to traditional bureaucratic organisations being 'replaced by the post-modern organisation, which is flexible, responsive and ignores hierarchy and rules'. Although external pressures have engendered internal change within educational institutions, it remains to be seen the degree to which schools and colleges have changed as organisational entities.

The SFC sector is the product of two historical legacies that continue to affect educational provision. The first legacy can be traced to the role of the Local Education Authority (LEA) prior to the incorporation of the SFC sector. Some LEAs such as Hampshire established a clear demarcation between the 11-16 school sector and the 16-19 SFC sector, other LEAs, such as Cumbria and East Yorkshire, allowed some form of co-existence between the school and SFC sectors whilst the majority preferred not to adopt the SFC model and maintained 16-19 provision in schools and the general 'technical' FE colleges (GFECs). This has meant that SFCs are unevenly distributed throughout the country, with particularly high densities in the South East and Lancashire. A second major historical legacy is the incorporation of SFCs, in 1993 and the creation of the learning and skills sector in 2001- a quasi-market in educational provision. SFCs are a relatively small proportion of the post-16 FE sector in total. In addition to their uneven geographic spread, they tend to be significantly smaller than neighbouring GFECs offering a narrower curriculum that is concentrated on level 3 study. The student body in SFCs 'are relatively advantaged socially and academically' (SFCF, 2004) and although some do progress

into employment directly after their study, the majority aim for university entrance. SFCs can be seen as somewhat strange in the contemporary setting. They present an ethos and curriculum more akin to the schools sector from which they were drawn and yet mimic the practice of the FE sector. This hybrid nature is most apparent in the status and role of teachers in SFCs who are expected to have qualified teacher status, work under conditions of service that are very similar to those of school teachers and tend to hold a view of education that is closer to the ethos of liberal education rather than vocational preparation. SFCs can be viewed as being distinct from other educational organisations as they tend to share a number of common features. For the purposes of this study, a case-study approach will be adopted in order to provide an insight into the organisational context and practice of leadership. Although this investigation will place leadership within a specific context, its findings may inform the wider debate on leadership in educational organisations.

1.3 Contemporary notions of leadership

Some principals see their primary role as an assertive chief executive officer of a complex organisation:

The first job of leadership is to define reality... I think effective leadership has to be quite directive ... there has to be some directive leadership. (Lumby and Tomlinson, 2000: 143)

This position of primacy is one that is indicative of a particular philosophical tradition and style of leadership. It is a view that is based on the ontology of a single will and vision and one that seeks to assert a specific epistemology of what it means to educate in the contemporary setting. This position is one that can be characterised in terms of an institutional orthodoxy, replete with the lingua franca of management science and technical-rational notions of organisational behaviour.

Although this view of leadership has come to encapsulate much of the change that has taken place in the education sector in recent years, it cannot provide a complete insight into the complexities of organisational life. According to Sawbridge (2001: 16):

There is little in the way of published research or evaluated practice to support effective leadership development in FE. Our understanding of what works in educational leadership is drawn largely from research in the schools sector. Therefore... we urgently

need to know more about: the nature and extent of college leadership; the links with improving standards of student achievement; the transferability of schools sector research into FE.

However, for Lumby et al (2005: 8) an attempt to provide an overarching view of leadership within the FE sector is flawed:

In 2001 the launch of the 'learning and skills sector' signalled a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to provision for the 16-19 age rangeThis large and diverse sector remains enormously varied in its aims and approaches to supporting teaching and learning in the post-compulsory provision. Previous research has suggested it is problematic to consider leadership as a generic phenomenon across the sector because of the variety of different types of provider.

This shortfall in our understanding of leadership in the post-16 education system can be linked to Gronn's (2003: 267) thoughts on the inadequacy of contemporary leadership discourse in which he called into question the established orthodoxy of educational leadership. As a result, although references can be made to the experiences of educational professionals in the school and GFEC sectors, it is the unique nature of the SFC sector and the experience of teachers that must be at the centre of this case study.

1.4 Arriving at the key research questions for this investigation.

The shortfall in our understanding of leadership has led to the generation of a number of key research questions. For Foskett and Lumby (2003: 183), the perennial questions which arise in relation to educational leadership are:

- What do we know about the practice of leadership?
- Does leadership in schools and colleges lie primarily with the principal?
- Are ubiquitous western concepts such as transactional, transformational and instructional leadership universally applicable?
- Do leaders make a difference to learners?

In addition to these questions, Sawbridge (2001: 5) asks:

- Do we know what we mean by the term leadership as it applies to Further Education?
- Is leadership different to management?

- Is leadership within Further Education different to leadership in other types of organisations?

At the centre of such questions lie issues about the fundamental nature of leadership in educational organisations and how it is applied in a particular context. For the purposes of this study, the key research questions are:

- How has leadership been described by those engaged in the discourse on leadership?
- How can the leadership of SFCs be described and explained?
- Is it possible to theorise about the nature of SFCs as organisational models?

1.5 The map of the thesis:

A decision was made relatively early in the research that the Institutional Focussed Study (IFS) should be subsumed within the thesis. The intention behind this decision was to devote more to the discussion of leadership through a case study of similar SFCs. Chapter 2 establishes a framework for the empirical research based on critical theory. It discusses the literature related to Government policy, linking this to the wider debate on ideas of teacher professionalism, organisational culture and the ideological direction of the British State and how public policy has impacted on the SFC sector. In chapter 3, the methodological strategy and research methods adopted will be explained and justified. A discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the constructionist methodology will be presented together with an insight into the logistical demands involved in undertaking a multi-site case study. Chapter 4 will present the findings generated from the research and relate these to the ideas on leadership that were introduced in the Literature Review in chapter 2. The issues that emerge from the data will inform the discussion in chapter 5 which will attempt an evaluation of the findings and relate these observations to the original research questions. Finally, chapter 6 will offer some conclusions about the nature of leadership drawn from the evidence and provide some recommendations on how leadership could be re-conceptualised.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 The historical context to the concepts of leadership and teacher professionalism

A discussion of leadership and management should also be contextualised within its historical perspective. In this way, linkage between those goals outlined by Government and its operationalisation can be made, and the role ascribed to institutional leadership. There are a number of issues that can be brought into clearer focus through a historical perspective. Such an approach enables one to trace the changing roles of SFC teachers as professionals, consider the competing claims of local and central Government and its agencies and place an assessment of change within its ideological context. Dale (1989) presents a concise overview of the period since the enactment of the 1944 Education Act divided into three distinct stages: 'educational administration' during 1944-1974, that of 'organisational management' from 1974-1988 and that of 'site-based performance management' post 1988.

The period 1944-1974 has been described by Dale (1989) as one of 'educational administration' in which there was a relatively high degree of consensus over the direction of Government policy and its method of implementation. For Gunter (2002: 22) this was 'the time of the 'modern professional' where the relationship between headteacher and staff was based on 'educational values'. This period can also be viewed as promoting a social democratic model of education, a model for change in which education was part of post-war programme of moving toward greater equality in society through social engineering and the interventionist state.

The period 1974-1988 heralded the decline of the social democratic model of education and the ascendancy of economic instrumentalism with its reappraisal of the purpose and benefits of state education. Although the Ruskin College speech, delivered by Prime Minister James Callaghan in 1976, is usually regarded as the start of this change in policy, it should more properly be interpreted as a culmination of discussions that had taken place within a political elite that comprised the state bureaucracy, influential industrialists and senior politicians. The 'Great Debate'

revolved around the issues of efficiency, productivity and international competitiveness rather than being related to equity and civic democracy. This reappraisal of the economic context to educational policy coincided with the rise of the neo-Liberal New Right. For the New Right, the agenda for change was ideological in nature and this vision was concerned with altering the fundamental relationships that had characterised the post-war social democratic model and that had embedded the teachers' unions within a neo-corporatist form of policy formulation. The principal feature of this process was the reduction in the role of the peripheral bureaucracy outside Whitehall in drafting policy, particularly the LEAs, together with a diminution in the role and influence of the teaching profession over policy goals. The outcome of this core-periphery model of policy-making was a centralisation of decision-making in key policy centres within the state bureaucracy, especially in the Treasury and the various incarnations of the Department of Education. The implications for teachers were clear- their role in policy-formulation was reduced and their status as professionals undermined. One consequence for teachers was that not only were their ideals increasingly constrained by concerns related to value for money, they were being moved into a more tightly controlled environment within their institution through tighter forms of 'organisational management' (Gunter, 2002: 22). In terms of individual institutions, the impact of the New Right's agenda was to strengthen the role of the leader in relation to their subordinates.

The post-war social democratic state was supplanted by a movement towards a 'market state' (Ainley, 2004) during the period 1979-1997. For Ainley (2004), the changing complexion of the British state altered from one regulated by laws and social mores to one driven by market forces and the need to compete in the global economy. This change, according to Ainley (2004), has necessitated a re-evaluation in the role of managers within the public sector. Instead of working in the interests of their institution, leaders were to become disciplined to meet the needs of Government policy and its targets.

During the 1980s, change was relatively incoherent with initiatives being largely confined to the introduction of vocational programmes in General Further Education colleges (GFECs) such as the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative. For most SFCs, such initiatives were somewhat distanced and largely confined to the more vocationally oriented 'technical colleges'. However, a clear trajectory of policy was established; post-compulsory education was to become a tool of Government to address the problem of youth unemployment and a under-qualified workforce. Not only was the curriculum model of post-compulsory education being modified to accommodate economic priorities, the notion of institutional leadership was being changed subtly. It was an agenda that the SFCs would join later.

For Critical Theorists (Beck, 1999; Bonal, 2003; Bottery, 1996), the transformation in the state and its goals represents a crisis in legitimacy. For Beck (1999: 275):

Contemporary late capitalist societies may be witnessing a fundamental rupture in the structuring of the relationships governing educational institutions- a rupture which decisively (and in new ways) subordinates academic communities and priorities to purposes determined elsewhere- notably through the operation of neo-Liberal modes of governability.

The crisis in the capitalist state is reflected by the increased centralisation of control over the education system and the ascendancy of economic instrumentalism at the macro level, as well as at the micro level of individual institutions through the imposition of a new set of values and goals. For Beck (1999: 231) this transformation has produced a corresponding change in the nature of management in the public sector:

The 'New Managerialism' is much more than fashionable jargon. It signifies a systematic operational requirement both for new types of expertise and for functionally necessary managerial autonomy.... Vestiges of institutional democracy are 'squeezed out' of the system as managers hasten to formulate (or even impose) 'strategic' responses.

For Bonal (2003: 164) change is evidenced in 'quasi-market forms of provision, greater accountability, contractualism, decentralisation, etc. that are new forms of public management'. In addition to these changing structural relations between teachers and managers, critical theorists argue that a new cultural hegemony exists

within educational institutions which is indicative of a technical-rationalist (Glatter, 1999: 255) approach to decision-making and a prioritisation of institutional effectiveness and efficiency. Critical theorists argue that such a uniformity of view carries with it profound implications not only for institutional practice but also for how teachers are regarded as autonomous professionals.

According to Gleeson and Shain (2003: 232) a 'managerialist imperative' has been imposed on the post-compulsory sector and which has been characterised by three principal features: the deliberate control of professionals by managers; the introduction of industrial models of performance evaluation and the development of a managerial caste with its own value-system. This phenomenon is described by Gunter (2002) as 'site-based performance' management. For Gunter (2002: 27) the introduction of this model has seen not only the development of a managerialist imperative but 'has changed the structure and practice of employment within... colleges' with a new hierarchy of power being legitimated through the ideology of managerialism.

Critical theorists further argue that this system of site-based managerial control was initiated by the detachment of individual institutions from the protection offered by the LEAs. Colleges are now much more exposed to the uncertainties of the quasi-education market as a result of the 1992 Further Education and Higher Education Act which released them from the aegis of the LEAs. This paints a depressing picture of the effects of this increasingly competitive environment: colleges have been induced into ensuring the quality of provision and raising performance; they have introduced industrial models of evaluation such as Total Quality Management and now through the introduction of Human Resource Management techniques see teachers as an organisational resource; they have also set up internal markets within their own organisation in an effort to encourage competition for limited resources and strive for improvement. For critical theorists, the logic of the market is now dominant in the FE sector. Colleges have also sought to explore areas of weakness within their organisation through the development of Quality Assurance regimes and

Self Assessment Reports that identify areas of strength or weakness and influence managerial decisions on internal investment or redundancy.

In addition to the evaluation of departments within colleges, there has been a move towards the evaluation of teachers as individual components within the organisation. Although the assessment of teachers is far from new, it has been refined through the adoption of a number of performance indicators such as the recruitment of students, retention on courses and success rates in students' achievement, as well as observation of lessons and appraisal. According to Ball (2003: 219) this has led to a 'new management panopticism'. Teachers in SFCs are now exposed to managerial scrutiny which calls into question how they are regarded as professionals. For Gunter (2002: 31) the consequence of change is that:

Educational professionals are being objectified and stratified into leaders and followers. Leadership is being defined as particular tasks and behaviours that enable those who are responsible to be accountable for learning outcomes and measures.... This move is an attempt to structure professional identity through mandating and training the particular social relationships needed to sustain technist job requirements.

Moreover, for Avis (2003: 321):

In the case of legitimated teacher professionalism, the teacher was granted autonomy within the classroom in which they were construed as the curricular and pedagogic expert.
The assault of the New Right... has rendered this form of professionalism untenable.

The redefinition of professional identity has been described by Braverman (1974) as a process of 'proletarianisation' where professionals are effectively de-skilled by the new requirements of their work (Barry et al. 2000; Johnston, 2000; Johnson and Duberley, 2000). However, this challenge to the professional identity of teachers is not simply one that is related to their skills as educationalists, it is also linked to their status, autonomy and personal identity. This move to the evaluation of individual performance that has taken place since incorporation in 1993 is described in terms of 'performativity' (Ball, 2003) and a situation in which we are able 'to think about the values underpinning what we do and how we might want to do it better. The shift to performativity enables the self to be integrated with the national political goals' (Gunter, 2001: 148). According to Ball (2003: 217):

It is a mis-recognition to see these reform processes as simply a strategy of de-regulation, they are processes of re-regulation. Not the abandonment by the State of its controls but the establishment of a new form of control.

Ball (2003: 221) develops this analysis of performativity and the re-creation of professional self-identity into a discussion of a 'values schizophrenia' within teachers as they attempt to reconcile their view of professionalism with the need to conform to the prevailing organisational culture.

Gleeson and Shain (2003) have contributed to the debate over the changing nature of teacher professionalism through their work on compliance within the FE sector. For Gleeson and Shain (2003: 232), 'the process by which professionals can be reconstructed as managers is of strategic importance to the implementation of market and managerial initiatives'. It is within this context that teachers are regarded as being responsible for micro-management and playing 'their part' in running the College. It is a form of rhetoric that invites participation and loyalty but is designed to engineer conformity. In their study of middle management in the sector Gleeson and Shain (2003), proffered a typology of compliance in response to change. The three categories of response encapsulate the reactions of FE teachers to the inculcation of a new set of institutional values and notions of professionalism. The identification of 'willing compliance' (Gleeson and Shain, 2003: 236) amongst some staff recognises the reality that for some teachers 'new professionalism' represents an opportunity for advancement which may chime with their own career goals. For others, there is only 'unwilling compliance' (Gleeson and Shain, 2003: 238) to the new contractual relationship that was imposed as a result of incorporation in 1993. According to Gleeson and Shain (2003: 240), the 'vast majority' of those surveyed reported 'strategic compliance' in that although they implemented change, they rejected the business ethics that lay at its centre. Accounts of teachers' and managers' experiences resonate with the concept of 'positioning' (Davies and Harre, 2003: 261) in which they come to terms with their changing environment and reposition themselves in order to reconcile their work with their personal belief-system. Such research demonstrates that although Government policy has been

preoccupied with positioning teachers by redefining their professional identity, this conditioning process has been not entirely successful.

The ascendancy of performativity and its associated notion of professionalism have, according to critical theorists, important implications for how we view professionals. For Nixon et al (1997) and cited by Gunter (2002: 146):

The shift ... is away from 'professionalism' as the ideology of service and specialist expertise; away from 'professionalism' where the status of the occupation is at stake; and towards 'professionalism' which focuses on the quality of practice in contexts that require radically altered relations of power and control.

Such a shift in the conception of teachers as professionals is mirrored, for example, in the training organised within colleges by management. In-house training- known as Continuous Professional Development (CPD) - tends now to be focused on up-skilling a teacher (Bottery and Wright, 1997). This development of teachers is viewed in terms of ensuring their individual performativity or organisational conformity by managers. There is a clear emphasis in such an approach to developing practitioner skills rather than engaging in any philosophical debate about their work and its relation to wider society. Moreover, it is often senior management that determines what constitutes appropriate CPD through financial control and choice of training.

According to critical theorists, the undermining of teacher professionalism is evident in the subjugation of teachers to management by bureaucracy. This method of bureaucratic organisation has been described by Hales (2001: 75) as:

Dividing administrative work into specific functions and roles which are then co-ordinated and controlled through a combination of rules and procedures and a vertical chain of reporting relationships.

Although such a model of organisation is conceived in terms of technical-rationalist notions of role and function, bureaucratic forms of organisation impart legitimacy and establish norms of behaviour. For Hales (2001: 80) this form of organisation is not simply concerned with matters of efficiency but is ideological in nature since it sets out to control employees, as was recognised by Weber's critique of bureaucracy

as an 'iron cage' (Parker, 2000: 39). Bureaucratic management has become a tool of leadership and conformity to 'the logic of the machine, constructed through a new organisation of power and knowledge... [and] becomes the dominating logic of social organisation' (Bates, 1989: 147). For Avis (2003: 329), teachers are therefore left only with 'conditional trust' to act in such a constrained manner as we would expect from a 'trusted servant rather than an empowered professional'. For some post-modernist organisational theorists, however, this technical-rationalist view of bureaucratic management is inadequate as an explanation of organisational life (Clegg, 1999). If one is to understand the social reality of organisational life, then an analysis of the cultural values of leadership and organisations is also required.

The issues of empowerment and trust are closely tied to the notion of professional practice and lie at the heart of the relationship between leaders and their subordinates. Those authors linked to the literature on 'institutional improvement' describe empowerment in terms of 'a synergistic organisational force with potential for energising individual capacity to achieve' (Dee et al., 2002: 257)- in short, a means of motivating staff to exert more effort. There is, however, an alternative to the 'structural / management' conception of empowerment that merely sees empowerment as transferring authority and power to subordinates. The 'psychological / cognitive' perspective is concerned with the intrinsic motivation that professionals bring to bear in their work and this is perhaps more useful to this research since it 'characterises an employee's relationship with an organisation.... [and] strength of commitment' (Dee et al., 2002: 259).

An appreciation of the distribution and exercise of power within colleges is central to an understanding of organisational climate and the nature of leadership. For Dahl (cited by Johnson and Short, 1998: 147), 'power in organisations is determined by the extent to which the leader can influence subordinates'. For much of the day-to-day work in colleges, this 'power' is implied through compliance to contractual commitments, established work practices and norms of behaviour. In this respect, leaders have a power to enforce conformity to organisational life. However, the debate relating to the power of leadership extends beyond the notion of

contractual conformity, it touches upon changing educational values and perspectives on professional identity.

French and Ravens ((1947) see Hoy and Miskel, 1996: 147; Huczynski and Buchanan, 2001: 807; Mullins, 2002: 781) presented a typology of the sources of institutional power as being: the legitimacy of office; demonstrable expertise and referential respect; coercion and reward. Importantly, as Huczynski and Buchanan (2001: 807) recognise ‘from this perspective, the exercise of power depends on the beliefs, perceptions and desires of the followers’. As a consequence, those who practice leadership can develop bases of power within an institution that ‘potentially affect such psycho-social dimensions for teachers as conflict, compliance, and empowerment, either positively or negatively’ (Johnson and Short, 1998: 147). Ultimately, such a course of action can influence the climate within a college and the relationships that exist between staff. A number of researchers have drawn attention to the deleterious consequences of adopting inappropriate strategies by leaders (see Johnson and Short, 1998). According to Yukl (cited by Johnson and Short, 1998: 147), there is a clear correlation between coercion by leaders, favouritism to some over others, and resistance from staff. For Krausz (cited by Johnson and Short, 1998: 148), ‘the organisational climate with such leadership reflects distrust, low morale, and chronic lack of motivation’.

2.2 The relationship between the State, its agencies and Sixth Form Colleges

The movement towards site-based performance management from the late 1980s has been accompanied by the centralisation of power in the regulatory state. In place of the Local Education Authority, a plethora of Central Government agencies has taken over much of the work of local authorities and driven agendas that are determined from Whitehall. There is under the aegis of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) a network of bodies: the national and county-based Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs), the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA), the Basic Skills Agency (BSA), all working with a variety of quasi autonomous non-government organisations such as the Regional Development

Agencies (RDAs) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA) all seeking to influence what, how and why SFCs operate in the way they do. Indeed for one former civil servant (Nash and Whittaker: TES, 4 March 2005), 'it's like having nine cricket teams on the same pitch at the same time'. As such, this system corresponds to a form of polycracy in which there appears to be an internal competition within Government for control of the educational agenda.

In terms of providing strategic direction, the key Government body is the national LSC, which together with its county-based subordinate LSCs is responsible for the realisation of policy enunciated by the DfES. In its Statement of Priorities for 2005-2006, the LSC described itself as having 'an important leadership role, providing drive and direction to the delivery of world-class learning and skills' and 'our job is to make sure we derive maximum benefit from every pound that is spent'. In this respect, the language used echoes the values and goals of the neo-liberal agenda that has characterised the approach of successive governments in recent decades. Indeed, the prevalence of economic instrumentalism in contemporary policy is reflected in the LSC's Statement of Priorities:

Research by the LSC shows ten of our closest economic competitors are ahead of England in respect of productivity, knowledge and skills. We know that increasing investment in skills improves productivity and is key to closing this gap.

This analysis of educational attainment is permeated with references to the economic relevance of education. Such a position is based on a sophisticated understanding of the economy and the operation of the labour market, as well as containing a clear ideological view of education.

Although much of the work of the LSC relates to the wider FE environment, it does impact directly on SFCs in terms of the funding regime set in place by Government and the type of curriculum offer that is viewed as productive and therefore useful. The clearest manifestation of Government policy is in the emphasis given to the Basic Skills agenda and the development of the vocational curriculum. In its Statement of Priorities, the LSC notes that:

Although the proportion of young people staying on in learning beyond 16 is increasing, 9% of 16-18 year olds were not in education, employment or training. That is 177,000 young people and is a waste of potential talent we can ill afford.... Employers tell us that too many young people leave education without the skills they need.

It is within this context that the LSC has defined its priorities as: make learning truly demand-led so that it meets the needs of employers, young people and adults; ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities; transform FE so that it attracts and stimulates more business investment; strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development; strengthen the LSC's capacity to work effectively at regional level; improve the skills of the workers who are delivering public services. There is no reference in this statement of a philosophical understanding of education or what education is for beyond that of economic instrumentalism; this is merely a functional interpretation of education.

Local LSCs implement Central Government policy within their own particular economic context. In Surrey, the LSC described its mission as 'to raise participation and achievement through high quality education and training, which puts learners first' with a vision that 'by 2010, young people and adults will have knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world' (Surrey LSC Annual Plan, 2003-2004). The plan is based on a detailed analysis of the local labour market and the skills base in the county. Surrey is an affluent county with high levels of employment and a relatively well-qualified workforce. The census of 2001 indicated that 27.2% of the population were qualified to NVQ level 4, in comparison to 21.8% in the South East, and 19.9% in England (Surrey LSC website, March 2005). Despite this high level of educational attainment, 36% of firms reported gaps in the skills of the workforce and those needed by business, particularly in Information Technology skills, and basic skills for those without qualifications. The identified areas for LSC prioritisation and investment are in Information Technology, business and management and administration.

It is within this analysis of the local economy, that the LSC decides what is worthy of support and how to allocate its funding. There is a diverse education

market in Surrey and Hampshire with a relatively wide range of providers compared to much of the country. The range of providers in Surrey includes: 53 secondary schools, 6 pupil referral units, 20 special schools, 7 SFCs, 4 GFE colleges, 23 work-based providers, 2 local universities and the Open University, together with 8,500 work experience placements offered by employers. There are also 41 independent schools, with 25% of the pre-16 school population and 18% of post-16 students attending these institutions (Surrey County Council, Surrey LSC and Connexions Consultation Document, October 2004). In short, there exists a highly diverse, differentiated education system in the county that has a range of stakeholders and different educational, social and indeed political agendas. The range and nature of educational provision in the county has important implications for all three SFCs that were at the centre of this research exercise. Although one of the SFCs is located in Hampshire, it is within 5 miles of Surrey and is part of the commuter conurbation that straddles the Surrey / Hampshire boundary and therefore shares most if not all of the socio-economic characteristics of its Surrey counterparts.

In its 14-19 Strategy, the Surrey LSC outlines its expectations from providers as: sharing in the LSC's vision of the future 14-19 learning, providing high quality teaching and participating in the creation of partnerships which are flexible and accountable. Perhaps the most significant development for SFCs is the movement towards collaboration through partnerships. Not only do collaborative partnerships challenge the logic of marketisation that has driven the SFC sector since incorporation, these involve a reappraisal of their work and worth. The aim is described as (Surrey County Council, Surrey LSC and Connexions Consultation Paper, 2005):

To overcome the competition driven by league tables, local management of schools and incorporation of colleges to develop sustainable learning networks based on collaboration professional relationships based on trust.

Such developments in LSC-driven policy inevitably influence inter and intra-institutional relationships as well as internal policies within SFCs as they respond to new initiatives.

The creation of collaborative groupings are conceived as embryonic networks of interdependent providers that work together in order to respond to those local needs identified by the LSC. Although there is an undoubted emphasis here on co-operation, there still remains a significant amount of competition within the education system. Not only do league tables remain for schools and colleges, together with a relatively high level of student mobility in the post-16 sector. Government funding methodology still encourages the competitive ethic both within and between schools and colleges. This environment of competition and collaboration has become known as ‘collabitation’ within the SFC sector and offers challenges as well as opportunities. So, although GFE colleges now aim to attract A Level students away from SFCs through the marketing of ‘academies’, they are both expected to work with schools in local partnerships. This apparent inconsistency is partly the consequence of the policy of ‘contestability’. According to Gravitt (TES, 25 February, 2005):

Contestability.... Isn't that different from competition except that whereas policymakers dislike competition out on the frontline- between individual schools and colleges- the same does not apply when government making public funding more 'contestable' dictates competition from the top. Governments do this by introducing competitive elements into their funding decisions. Institutions may be invited to submit a bid to explain why they would make the best use of the money.

So, although the nature of competition may have altered, it still exists only to be constrained within the wishes of the state bureaucracy that oversees the pseudo-education market.

The argument contained in this analysis is that bodies such as the LSC drive the education system at national, regional and local levels. This has important ramifications for the autonomy and degree of independent manoeuvre for all educational providers, especially SFCs. As comparatively small institutions, SFCs are perhaps more susceptible to changes in Government policy and funding than other providers such as the larger GFE colleges. SFCs are subject to the LSC's audit of provision and are acutely aware of the importance of its assessment since this may determine their financial position and viability. Although this process is presented as supporting institutions in their drive for better quality of provision, it is also

important in determining which colleges are deemed worthy of additional funding or viewed as inefficient.

This process of auditing and evaluation all feeds into a wider process of strategic planning that impacts on all education providers funded by the LSC and the county council. In its Strategic Area Review (StAR), published in 2005, the Surrey LSC together with the LEA aimed to develop ‘area groups that can be used as vehicles for producing local solutions. This may lead to more students leaving one provider for another for part of their learning’ (Surrey County Council, Surrey LSC and Connexions Consultation Document, October 2004). In short, the vision contains within it the prospect not only of closer institutional ties but also the possibility of a changed curriculum offer being open to students. As a result, SFCs now are confronted with powerful drivers that may lead them towards particular curriculum models and certain forms of delivery that they do not control independently. It is within this changing context, that one could question not only the autonomy of SFCs but also the capacity of senior management in colleges to lead independently.

The SFC sector comprises 105 institutions and represents almost one quarter of all FE colleges (Lumby 2002a: 2). There appears to be relatively little work published on SFCs apart from Lumby (2002a, 2002b, 2003) and Rigby (1995). There are, however, a number of key indicators that can be used to illuminate a discussion on SFCs. The principal themes that can be referred to are: the nature of the SFC ‘market’, the culture and organisational structures within SFCs and the style of leadership and management that has tended to characterise these colleges as different from GFECs.

The SFC sector has been viewed as occupying a small niche share within post-16 education provision. Whereas the GFECs have a diverse provision ranging from commercial and industrial training on a large scale, to variety of short-courses and much broader Adult Education curriculum offer, SFCs have tended to specialise in the traditional 16-19 curriculum of GCSE, GCE A Level and vocational preparation courses, such as GNVQ, AVCE and BTEC at Levels 2 and 3. Overall, there appears

to be greater homogeneity within the SFC sector than between it and the larger GFECs. This perceived market niche has important implications for how SFCs see themselves and their role in their local community, as well as how these institutions are organised and led.

The restricted nature of the curriculum offer within SFCs, as compared to GFECs, is indicative of the historical development of these institutions and points to the profound challenges that confront these colleges in the future. The danger for SFCs is that because of their limited and largely academic curriculum and their relatively small size, they will be disadvantaged in the drive to implement high-volume and vocationally-relevant courses, which have traditionally been the core market of the GFECs. This issue of responsiveness is important because it relates to the future prospects of SFCs and how these institutions re-engineer in order to meet Government policy effectively and efficiently.

2.3 Organisational change and corporate culture

The period since incorporation introduced major changes in the FE sector: marketisation and the movement towards financial autonomy, the development of internal QA systems, and the increasing emphasis given to New Public Management. According to Law and Glover (2000: 108):

The post-1980s push towards 'self-management', 'marketisation' and 'privatisation' has brought about a restructuring of education focussed on 'leaner, flatter hierarchies, delayering and team-based working.

For Beck (1999: 225) this change is indicative of a change in the nature and modalities of power relationships in educational institutions:

Contemporary late-capitalist societies may be witnessing a fundamental rupture in the structuring of the relationships governing A rupture which decisively (and in new ways) subordinates academic communities and priorities to purposes determined elsewhere- notably through the operation of neo-liberal modes of governability.

For Bottery (1996) changes to organisations are not only associated with neo-liberal notions of efficiency but also with a re-definition of professional autonomy.

According to Bottery (1996) such change raises two major questions: how

professionals are managed and how do changes in practice affect professionals' self-conception of themselves and their work.

Contemporary understanding of corporate culture is dominated by technical-rational models of organisational theory and their functionalist approach to work. Organisations are generally presented within the modernist paradigm as rationalist entities that are characterised as being hierarchical in structure with clear lines of responsibility and driven by strategic goals. Such a view originates in the work of the Organisation Development (OD) movement and the ethics of Taylorism. For Parker (2000: 39) this 'modernist project facilitates control- it allows predictive and prescriptive statements about organisations to be made with confidence'. For Postmodernists, such as Clegg (1999), the modernist paradigm of the technical-rational organisational form ensures social control. Given that much of the education system is predicated on the premise of 'expert opinion', 'best practice' and designated role and responsibilities, the postmodern thesis challenges the established *raison d'être* of power distribution within institutions. This critique of differentiated authority structures not only raises questions about the validity of the 'cult of the expert', but also the value of leadership as it is often portrayed.

Heydebrand (1989) has developed the postmodernist critique to suggest that the classical-modernist form of organisation is likely to be replaced by a post-bureaucratic model. For Heydebrand (1989: 345), this post-bureaucratic model would make organisations 'amenable to new forms of indirect and internalised control, including cultural and ideological control'. In Heydebrand's view, control would be exercised both from within and without the organisation and influenced by a greater variety of conditioning factors than currently portrayed in classical Organisational Theory. Indeed, for Clegg (1999: 20) 'postmodern organisations would be ones which... find little resonance in either the modernist theory or practice of organisations'. The postmodern organisation, according to Heydebrand (1989: 327), would have 'its division of labour... informal and flexible: and its managerial structure... functionally decentralised, eclectic, and participative'. Such

a deconstruction of the modernist organisation leads onto a reconceptualisation of work and workers, teaching and teachers, managing and managers, where the concern for greater 'flexible specialisation' (Clegg, 1999: 21) assumes primacy over previous practices. The work of Heydebrand (1989), Clegg (1999), together contributions from Cooper and Burrell (1988) and Boje et al (1996), do provoke reflection and reappraisal of how organisations operate and how we can model their activity.

Clegg (1999: 203) offers a typology of criteria by which to model organisations. This typology, presented below as Table 2 provides a conceptual framework within which it is possible to interpret the data derived from interviews and documentary research and draw closer to an understanding of educational institutions as organisations.

Criteria	Modernity	Postmodernity
Mission goals, strategies and main functions	Specialisation	Diffusion
Functional alignments	Bureaucracy Hierarchy	Democracy Market
Co-ordination and control	Disempowerment within organisations Laissez-faire around organisations	Empowerment within organisations Industry policy around organisations
Accountability and role relationships	Skill formation is extra-organisational and inflexible	Skill formation is intra-organisational and flexible
Planning and communication	Short-term techniques	Long-term techniques
Relation of performance and reward	Individualised	Collectivised
Leadership	Mistrust	Trust

Table 2: A typology of criteria by which to model organisations.

Analysis of the degree to which the research data corresponds to these criteria will inform the wider discussion on the nature of educational institutions, the debate on teacher professionalism and ultimately the locus of control within colleges.

Researchers who work from this understanding of organisational culture not only set out to understand the dynamics of a corporate culture but also aim to investigate whether it is possible to improve organisational efficiency and effectiveness through the manipulation of that culture. A number of writers (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Hofstede, 1991; Schein, 1985) have sought to build on the work of Bennis (1969) and Handy (1976) and develop a 'tool kit' for managers to control corporate culture and improve organisational efficiency. The work of Handy is typical of the approaches taken by such authors. For Handy (1999: 183):

Strong pervasive cultures turn organisations into cohesive tribes with distinctly clannish feelings. The values and traditions of the tribe are re-inforced by its private language, its catch-phrases and its tales of past heroes and dramas.... Experience suggests that a strong culture makes a strong organisation.... Cultures are founded and built over the years by the dominant groups in an organisation

In this respect, not only is effective control of culture a medium for change, it is also the sole creation of those who lead organisations; it is a top-down approach to an understanding of culture within organisations.

Organisational culture, viewed from within this managerialist perspective, exists only to inculcate meaning and institutional orthodoxy through organisational socialisation. For Barry et. al (2000: 104):

Corporate culture became a tool of the New Right. A series of...exhortations to work harder, be more flexible, more responsive and more entrepreneurial.

As a result of the imposition of the policies of the New Right, a plethora of business practices have permeated from industrial practice into the education system. The adoption of QA systems, such as Total Quality Management, External Quality and Internal Quality Review, and the development of Human Resource departments within colleges are indicative of the cultural shift that has taken place within education, which seeks to mimic business practice.

The managerialist perspective typified by Handy (1999) has been described by Brooks (1999: 234) as 'structuralist' in that it seeks to present a clear linkage between the structure of an organisation and its culture. In this respect, there are echoes of Marxian determinism here and allusions to Weber's notions of

bureaucratic control also. In contrast, Brooks (1999: 234) presents the 'interpretive / symbolic' view of culture 'that embraces the complexity and subjectivity of culture while rejecting any simple causal relationships between culture and organisational structure'. Such an approach rejects the ontological and epistemological objectivism contained in much of the technical-rationalist model of organisational life and asserts the alternative of relativistic subjectivity: for those who adhere to the interpretive perspective the idea of a single corporate culture is flawed.

Barry et al (2000: 109) consider that the critique against the managerialist model of organisational culture can be widened beyond the confines of structuralist / interpretive debate. In part, this critique is based on a criticism of the methodological approaches taken by managerialist researchers who had arbitrarily chosen companies described as 'excellent', and yet perform no better than others. In part, critics of the structuralist model also point to the existence of sub-cultures within organisations and the difficulties involved in tracing the impact of a dominant culture on the work of all in an organisation. Furthermore, the idea that culture can be manipulated as a tool of management can be questioned. For Barry et al (2000: 110) 'the imposition of a management-led corporate culture may be difficult in that members of an organisation have allegiances to other groups, and in some cases this may be greater than their allegiance to their employer'. It may be that allegiances within the teaching profession to union solidarity or professional ethics could inhibit the development of a managerialist culture. Alvesson and Willmott (2001: 32) not only question the moral dimension to corporate indoctrination, but they challenge its efficacy:

Employees are not necessarily submissive participants in processes of corporate brainwashing. Unlike the automatons portrayed in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* or Huxley's *Brave New World*... employees bring alternative values and priorities to their work.

A number of researchers have highlighted the importance of sub-cultures and the micro-politics inherent within educational institutions (Ball, 1987; Hoyle, 1986). For Hoyle (1986: 11):

[Teachers] construct a reality out of their interests. If there happens to be a commonality of perspective and hence a construct shared by all members, this arises from the fortuitous fact that their interests are held in common,

or that those with power within the organisation have succeeded in socialising the lower participants into an acceptance of their view.

Instead of importing the structuralist model from the business world, we need to understand the variegated nature of those cultures that exist in SFCs through reference points, such as professional identity and values, which are unique to those teachers.

According to O'Neill (1994: 107), it is possible to identify the prevailing culture within an educational institution through reference to four criteria: purpose, symbolism, networks and integration. On a superficial level, this approach can be used in describing a traditional view of an idealised SFC culture. In terms of purpose, teachers in SFCs have traditionally seen their work as developing students both socially and academically. It was a position that owed more to the ethos of the school sector than the FE sector. In this vein, teachers had promoted their vision of education through a particular curriculum that was relatively autonomous and was focussed on the individual student rather than cost effectiveness. There were also, and continue to be, rituals and ceremonies unique to SFCs which echo their former links with the school sector, such as their relationship with parents. These rituals and symbolic acts are closely tied to professionals' self-identity. In contrast to the more precarious contractual relationships that can exist in GFECs, teachers in SFCs are employed on contracts similar to those of schoolteachers. As a result, the dominant culture of many SFCs has tended to be insulated from rapid change- unlike the experience in GFECs- and many staff have remained integrated into the uniquely SFC culture.

In contrast to the confrontational cultures described by researchers (Elliott and Crossley, 1994; Watson and Crossley, 2001) in many GFECs, SFCs appear to be more collegial and less confrontational. Lumby (2002a: 4) described cultures in SFCs as:

There was little criticism of senior staff and much support for them. Overall, the culture showed a cohesiveness and learn-centredness which was significantly different to the culture of GFECs as indicated in the literature.... Given that SFCs and GFECs have been subject to the same national systems of funding and inspection, those factors assumed by much

of the existing analysis to be the root of the change to a managerialist culture, the reasons why SFCs have nevertheless retained a solidarity and learner-centred culture are likely to be internal and as such, to raise significant issues about leadership and management in the sector.

There still remain, however, limitations in describing these practices as definitive characteristics of a uniform SFC organisational culture since each institution varies in terms of its day-to-day work as well as its own strategic goals.

If the idea of a uniform SFC culture is therefore to be rejected as too simplistic, then perhaps reference should be made to the concept of organisational climate. For Mullins (2002: 809):

Whereas organisational culture describes what the organisation is about, organisational climate is an indication of the employees' feelings and beliefs of what the organisation is about. Climate is based on the perceptions of members towards the organisation.

The utility of adopting organisational climate rather than organisational culture is that it values the insight that can be gained by reference to the views of those who work within an organisation. For Mullins (2002: 809):

Organisational climate can be said to relate to the prevailing atmosphere surrounding the organisation, to the level of morale, and to the strength of feelings or belonging, care and goodwill among members.... relationships are determined by interactions among goals and objectives, formal structure, the process of management, styles of leadership and the behaviour of people.

The concept of an organisational climate, with its emphasis on individual and collective perception of organisational life, is therefore a useful concept to use when investigating teachers' views of leadership and management.

The idea of an organisational climate can be used to conceptualise the role of leadership and analyse its impact on teachers. Hoy and Miskel (1996) describe a typology of organisational climate in which principal-teacher relationships can be modelled. The model uses three different descriptors - supportive, directive and restrictive- to categorise the behaviour of a principal. The model then describes the behaviour of teachers as being either collegial, intimate or disengaged. As a result, Hoy and Miskel (1996: 146) are able to construct a prototypic framework in which the climate of the institution can be described as below in Table 3.

Dimension of climate	Open climate	Engaged climate	Disengaged climate	Closed climate
Supportive	High	Low	High	Low
Directive	Low	High	Low	High
Restrictive	Low	High	Low	High
Collegial	High	High	Low	Low
Intimate	High	High	Low	Low
Disengaged	Low	Low	High	High

Table 3: A prototypic framework of institutional climate.

This prototypic framework can be reduced to a simplified typology of principal-teacher relationship as described below.

Descriptor	Open behaviour by the principal	Closed behaviour by the principal
Open behaviour by teachers	Open climate	Engaged climate
Closed behaviour by teachers	Disengaged climate	Closed climate

Table 4: A framework of institutional climate.

Such a modelling exercise can be criticised as being too simplistic a representation of organisational life and a reduction of the interactions between a principal and staff to one of simplistic convenience. However, this approach has the merit of presenting an accessible framework within which discussion about the experiences and views of teachers can take place.

One of the clearest ways of illustrating the prevailing culture within an organisation and the role of leadership in inculcating that culture is through an examination of language. According to Gronn (1993), leaders play a key role in creating a language of the workplace. For Gronn (1993: 32) an ‘analysis of the rhetoric of persuasion, influence and power... is central to an understanding of administrative talk’. According to Gronn (1993), the language of leaders is increasingly constructed in order to align staff to organisational goals and is indicative of the changing nature of educational provision that has taken place under site-based management. Indeed, one could assert that a new lexicon of the business model has supplanted the idealistic philosophical discussions that once typified teachers’ discourse.

2.4 Leadership as a concept:

According to Richmon and Allison (2003: 31):

Although the study of educational administration has been an established field of academic inquiry since the end of the nineteenth century, the original focus on administration has increasingly become displaced by a growing interest in the concept of leadership.

Such a development reflects the detachment of SFCs from their historical support infrastructure- the LEA and the concomitant imperative to prosper in the post 1993 education quasi-market. The shift in emphasis also is indicative of a view that successful organisations are characterised by effective leaders who are able to facilitate change in response to Government policy. Importantly, however, although 'leadership' has become part of the lingua franca of the educational sector, it remains an elusive concept for many teachers and academics. For Yukl (1994: 4-5):

It is neither feasible nor desirable at this point in the development of the discipline to attempt to resolve the controversies over the appropriate definition of leadership. Like all constructs in the social sciences, the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no correct definition.

According to Sawbridge (2001: 6):

Leadership is defined principally by the models, roles and behaviours which are used to describe it... is a process of influencing... can be exercised by people who do not possess formal authority... implies followers... involves the achievement of goals or objectives.

For Horsfall (2001: 2), it is possible to identify the concept of leadership in everyday life:

Leadership has a start point in the people in the organisation. It is concerned with getting their willing cooperation and contribution towards organisational goals and with meeting their needs as individuals.

These perspectives on leadership are inextricably tied to the idea of organisational behaviour as a science and the conception of a leader as an agent of change.

The view that successful organisations depend on effective leadership is one that has enjoyed widespread support throughout contemporary society. In focussing on the importance of leadership within organisations, a convenient and somewhat artificial distinction from management is made by those who wish to promote the idea of 'leadership as a quality of organisations' (Ogawa and Bossert, 2002: 10).

Fayol (1916) in his classic work on organisations conceived management as a practice that described the entire process of interaction between change agents and their subordinates. For Fayol (1916) management was concerned with: planning, organising, co-ordination, command and control, and as West-Burnham (1994: 12) acknowledges, 'leadership was defined as a subset of management... rather than a separate category of organisational behaviour'. In recent years, however, management science has sought to distinguish leadership in clearer terms. Kotter (1998: 37-38) for example has sought to distinguish between the two terms:

Management is about coping with complexity.
Its practices and procedures are largely the response to the
Emergence of large, complex organisations... .
Leadership, by contrast, is about coping with change....
More change always demands more leadership.

For West-Burnham (1994: 12-13):

Leadership [is] concerned with values, vision and mission,
management, concerned with execution, planning, organising,
deploying, and administration concerned with operational details.....
The relationship between leadership, management and administration
implies significant value judgements about the nature of ...
colleges as organisations.

Such a differentiation between leadership, management and administration is not accidental- it is the outcome from a number of internal and external developments that have impinged on the education system in the post-war period and reflects the ideological values of the British state that can be traced back to the report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate, 'Ten Good Schools' published in 1976, and the rise of economic instrumentalism as a driver of Government policy.

According to Ogawa and Bossert (2002: 11) there are four assumptions upon which the discourse on leadership is predicated:

The first assumption is that leadership functions to influence organisational performance. A second assumption holds that leadership is related to organisational roles. A third assumption indicates that leaders are individuals who possess certain attributes, act in certain ways, or both. A fourth assumption ... is that leaders operate within organisational cultures.

These four assumptions are indicative of a particular view of leadership and the nature of organisations- the technical-rational perspective. This view of

organisational life posits the idea that an ideal form of organisation can be arrived at through the allocation of specific functions to particular roles within the organisation. As a consequence, leadership has been presented as being located in a specific role or individual. In more recent times, a number of authors have sought to integrate these assumptions into a wider model of leadership. Despite these modifications to leadership theory, 'they remain bound to the technical-rational perspective' (Ogawa and Bossert, 2002: 14). In order to arrive at a more sophisticated and realistic understanding of leadership, this discussion must also consider the contribution of institutional theory together with the wider socio-political context within which organisations operate.

For Richmon and Allison the technical-rational perspective is of limited value in an educational context (2003: 32):

Existing theoretical approaches to leadership...
are ill-equipped to inform administrative practices, for there can be
no assurance that the leadership concepts presupposed can have any
practical application within the realities of organisational life.

As a consequence, we will turn to institutional theory which according to Ogawa and Bossert (2002: 19): 'embeds leadership in a cultural context [and that] leadership is not confined to certain roles... it flows through the network of roles'. From this perspective, leadership cannot be explained through reference to organisational structures, functions and lines of responsibility because organisations are composed of people who do not necessarily act in the manner anticipated by technical-rationalist models. Institutional theory focuses on the relational and symbolic nature of organisations and explores how the variety of interaction between people impacts on the institution. It is a view that views organisations as communities of individuals, groups and collectives rather than a machine. Although institutional theory acknowledges the cultural context within which organisations operate, it is primarily concerned with the study of leadership at the institutional level. Such a perspective may be illuminating but cannot highlight external forms of leadership. When we move away from the abstract to consider the education system in detail, we see that colleges are not entirely autonomous and self-contained entities- these

organisations are extensions of a wider body, the British state. It follows that any discussion of leadership within the education system must consider both the idea of internal and external forms of leadership.

2.5 Models of educational leadership:

The purpose of this section is to explore the field of leadership theory in detail and place it into its ideological and cultural context. For those such as Coleman (1994: 58):

The theories relating to leaders in organisations can be categorised into those which emphasise the qualities of an individual leader or even propose an ideal leader, and those which emphasise the importance of the situational variables interacting with the leader.

This observation from Coleman acknowledges the contribution from both the technical-rational and institutional theory traditions, but is also restricted in its presentation of leadership. This exploration will, however, extend beyond the internal realms of organisational theory and consider a wider interpretation of leadership. According to Leithwood, et al (2000: 7), a review of leading journals suggests that there are 20 distinct conceptual approaches to the study of leadership, all of which can be compressed into six broad categories, or models. These models of leadership are variously described as being: instructional, transformational, moral, participative, managerial and contingent. In addition to the typology presented by Leithwood et al (2000), Sawbridge (2001: 10) adds the concept of leadership for organisational learning.

The typology of leadership models presented by Leithwood et al (2000) and Sawbridge (2001) are discussed below in the form of a continuum. At one end of the continuum are those models, such as managerial, instructional and transformational approaches, that emphasise the role of management and the importance of control and draw upon technical-rational conceptions of organisational behaviour and, at the other end, are those models such as participative and moral leadership, that tend to a more democratic conception of leadership practice.

The idea that leadership is one subset of the functions of general management practice pervades much of the literature and is drawn from technical-rational

theories of organisational behaviour. Also known as ‘transactional leadership’, it is an approach that subordinates ‘followers’ to the directives of their superiors. For Adair (1983) this imperative necessitates a form of ‘action leadership’ that is concerned with the formation, co-ordination and motivation of teams that have clear goals. Another managerialist approach is that offered in Blake and Mouton’s (1964) ‘Management Grid’ in which two variables- a concern for people and for production is described (see Appendix 1). Implicit within both these models is a pre-occupation with the maximisation of organisational efficiency through the most effective mobilisation of human resources. For Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) this relation between people and productivity could be represented through a continuum of management styles that ranged from the highly-controlled managerialist approach to a relatively devolved form of autonomy (see Appendix 1). The implication of such approaches is to focus attention on the importance of those skills and the behaviours displayed by leaders. According to Sawbridge (2001: 9):

This model of leadership is predominant in the UK and is strongly evidenced in FE....
The FENTO Management Standards for FE (2000) reinforce the skills approach to leadership inherent in the managerial leadership model.

Whereas managerial or transactional forms of leadership tend to focus on the behavioural styles and traits of leaders, situational or contingency models consider the wider context to leadership and how leaders respond to prevailing circumstances. In this respect, contingent approaches dispense with more prescriptive behaviours in favour of pragmatic responses that match a particular occasion. Fiedler’s (1967) ‘contingency theory’ concentrated on the relationship between a leader and their subordinates, the nature of a given task and the most appropriate approach given a particular scenario. For Fiedler, effective leadership was closely associated with an assertive stance and a clear vision, and this view has coloured much of the subsequent literature on effective management practice in education. Such an approach reinforces the power of principals in colleges, as the position of the leader is paramount and the corporate goals of the institution remain unchallenged. For Brooks (1999: 152):

Although many of the contingency or situational theories take cognisance of many organisational and environmental variables little attention is paid to

organisational culture or organisational politics, both of which may have profound influence over leadership styles and approaches.
Most of the research... implies that leadership is an individualistic concept.

The emphasis on the individual style of a leader is reflected in Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) 'situational leadership', in which four preferred leadership styles are recommended: delegating, supporting, coaching and directing. For Leithwood et al (2000: 16) the approaches of Fiedler and that of Hersey and Blanchard are indicative of the literature on leadership styles that 'focuses on overt leadership practice, attempting to define a relatively small number of coherent, effective patterns of such practice'. This menu-like approach to leadership is also reflected in Vroom and Jago's (1988) contingency model in which 'a series of decision trees can... be used to inform decision making, each offering a rational, prescribed outcome' (Brooks, 1999: 151). It is also indicative of a prescriptive approach to leadership and management that is derived from management science and that has been applied to an educational context.

Instructional leadership emphasises the importance of the principal and 'focuses on the development of behaviours that directly influence teachers in their relationships with students and, in particular, the planning and delivery of teaching and learning' (Sawbridge, 2001: 7). Originating in the USA during the 1980s, instructional leadership is generally associated with changing institutional culture and pedagogic practice in order to raise student achievement. Instructional leadership is predicated on the idea of the principal as the leading professional within the institution, who through a combination of authority and expertise is able to develop teachers' professional competence. Instructional leadership is, however, open to criticism as Sawbridge (2001: 7) recognises:

It overemphasises the role of the headteacher and therefore tends to reinforce a hierarchical structure with a top-down leadership style. Associated with this is the emphasis on the headteacher as the leading professional. This often gives rise to competition and tension between the headteacher's role as a senior manager and as an instructional leader-good managers are not necessarily expert practitioners and vice versa.

In some respects, instructional leadership echoes the naivety of the 'Great Man Theory' of leadership, which focussed almost exclusively on the traits of successful

leaders and minimised the contribution from others within an enterprise. As Leithwood et al (2000: 8) note, this model has been described as too vague and limited in scope to provide a comprehensive insight into the complexities of contemporary leadership. For Sawbridge (2001: 7) instructional leadership has not been transplanted to Britain as it was originally conceived in America:

In further education in the UK, managers tend to move away from direct involvement with the curriculum as they take on more managerial responsibilities.... In colleges, instructional leadership has much to offer at curriculum management level, particularly in terms of embedding new teaching and learning, and student support strategies.

Instructional leadership cannot be used to describe the behaviour of Principals, or most SMTs in colleges. It is, however, a useful model to describe a form of pedagogical mentoring at middle management level where experienced practitioners may impart advice and support to colleagues. In this respect, leadership can be viewed as a form of professional mentoring.

A second model to emerge from America is transformational leadership. According to Leithwood et al (2000: 9) 'this form of leadership assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of organisational members'. In simple terms, transformational leaders aim to energise their followers and inculcate a culture of collective effort. Transformational leadership is also based on the idea of the leader as a charismatic figure who is able to inspire followers through idealised behaviour- the 'four Is': idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Originally developed by Burns (1978), the theory of transformational leadership suggests that because leadership is a behaviour that is not necessarily tied to status, leaders are able emerge from any level within an organisation to drive through change. Given the hierarchical ordering of the educational system and the conventionalised power relationships that exist this may be somewhat naive. However, as Allix (2000: 8) recognises, 'in one form or another, contemporary leadership theory has clearly borrowed from Burns'. As Sawbridge (2001: 8) notes, 'in education, transformational leadership is widely advocated' and is concerned with changing a culture through the establishing of a vision and

collective goals, highlighting best practice, and encouraging participation in decision-making. Indeed, Lumby et al (2005:13) claim that:

The recent history of FE in the post-incorporation period since 1993 suggests that those who were initially responsible for leadership may well have adopted transactional leadership approaches. However, as college leadership teams have become more settled, there is evidence that they have moved to a more transformational stance.

However, transformational leadership has been criticised on a number of points, both in terms of its conception and implementation. Bass and Avolio (1993) have challenged Burns' idea that transformational leadership should be detached from the traditional top-down model of transactional leadership. Instead, Bass and Avolio (1993) advocate a 'two factor theory' of leadership that combines elements from both the functional approach of transactional leadership and the motivational effect of transformational behaviours. Although erstwhile advocates of transformational theory, Leithwood et al (2000: 38) concede that there is 'only modest empirical support for using transformational approaches as a foundation on which to build a model of leadership'. Indeed, Sawbridge (2001: 8) acknowledges that:

The leadership practice which is most frequently written about in FE, often by principals themselves, tends to be of the transformational kind.... However, the extent to which transformational leadership is evident at other levels within colleges is much less clear. The emergence of a variety of 'champion' roles provides some evidence of the intention to bring about change and innovation through the leadership skills of fellow practitioners. However, this kind of leadership role is very much in its infancy in most colleges.

It should also be acknowledged that 'champions' are often recruited and appointed to specific roles by those in authority; it is rare for leaders to emerge independently.

A second major criticism of transformational leadership relates to the issue of professional independence alluded to above. This critique is predicated on an epistemological and moral debate concerning unequal power-relationships within colleges. For Allix (2000: 15) the notion of 'followership' is inherently dangerous in that it aims to create a 'cognitive- affective- behavioural mechanism' that is concerned with engineering behaviour. According to Allix (2000: 15):

The implication here, is that leaders have some sort of monopoly on moral truth, knowledge and wisdom, which they exploit to draw

followers.... Consequently, this analysis of transforming leadership exposes a conception that, in essence, collapses into a transactional process of emotionally charged ideological exchange... structured not for education, but for domination.

Although Owens (1995: 216) claims that 'transforming leadership empowers teachers', it is empowerment to act in line with the wider goals of the organisation. Empowerment is rarely presented as the prerogative to establish an independent stance; it is a form of devolution that is constrained within the sovereignty of the organisation.

Moral leadership is predicated on a rejection of the primacy of the managerialist imperative of organisational efficiency in favour of a belief system based on a moral conception of social organisation. According to Sawbridge (2001: 9), 'moral leadership is based on the assumption that educational and other organisations operate within a framework of absolute values'. Hodgkinson (1983) argued that leaders have responsibilities that extend beyond those issues relating to organisational performance. According to Hodgkinson (1983: 207):

For the leader in the praxis situation there is an obligation, a philosophical obligation, to conduct where necessary a value audit. This is an analysis of the value aspects of the problem....

And also, for Hodgkinson (1991: 164-165):

It is not too much to say that... education can be considered as the long sought after 'moral equivalent for war'. Certainly the conduct of its business and the leadership of its organisation should be more than mere pragmatism, positivism, philistinism and careerism.

The implications of Hodgkinson's argument are clear- that leadership is fundamentally a moral art that often involves value judgments rather than simple operational decisions. In his 'analytical model of the value concept', Hodgkinson offers a conceptualisation of moral decision-making based on three categories of values. According to Lang (1999, 170), all behaviours, which are value-based, can be attributed to only one, or combinations of transrational-based values, rational-based, subrational-based values'. Hodgkinson argued that transrational-based values- which relate to ethical principles, such as equality- were more likely to appeal to a moral community than subrational decisions, which were those based on

personal perspective and emotion. The importance of Hodgkinson's contribution is in its recognition of the subjective interpretation of decisions and the idea that there is a normative dimension to leadership based on morality. According to Sawbridge (2001: 9), 'in FE, features of this kind of leadership can be seen in some denominationally governed sixth form colleges'. Given the impact of economic instrumentalism in recent decades, it would be interesting to ascertain from the research data whether teachers in mainstream SFCs recognise behaviours that approximate to moral leadership.

Democratic or political leadership can be regarded as an extension of moral leadership or as a distinct approach to leadership in its own right. According to Leithwood et al (2000: 11):

A quite different position on leaders' values and how value conflicts are to be resolved is political in origin. In addition to a concern for specific sets of values, this perspective on moral leadership focuses on the nature of the relationships among those within the organisation, and the distribution of power between stakeholders both inside and outside the organisation.

In the democratic conception of leadership, power is dispersed and the process of decision-making much more participative. There are, however, different interpretations of democratic leadership. For those on the political Left, democratic forms of leadership involve engaging and empowering all those who are employed within the organisation. This position is evident in the work of Habermas and his advocacy of open discussion and consultative decision-making. For those of the New Right in the UK, there is a wider stakeholder community to consider- the local population who deserve an efficient and effective education service that will prepare children for the world of work. In the USA, the community-based perspective has been extended to include disadvantaged ethnic minorities in the decision-making process and to include their particular concerns within institutional agendas. These views are mirrored throughout the literature.

In practice, outside the primary sector, democratic forms of leadership are rare in the British educational system. For Sawbridge (2001: 9) 'Elements of participative leadership feature in FE colleges and are often reported in terms of a consultative.

open management style`. The experience within the FE sector of democratising leadership is closely allied to the creation of task-oriented teams that are limited in scope and authority. The nature of team work, or collegiality as it is often described as, is invariably discussed in terms of the interests of the organisation, as Coleman and Bush (1994: 267) note:

Team-work ... is much more than meetings of groups.
It has to involve agreed aims, active commitment and co-operation,
adapt a problem-solving approach and devote time to team-building
If it is to achieve its potential as a vehicle for ... college improvement.

Manz and Sims (1989) see the devolution of responsibility as a new form of management termed 'superleadership', in which the role of the formal leader is to encourage and empower colleagues until they achieve a position of self-leadership. According to Horner (2003: 39):

Self-leadership is described as a set of strategies for leading oneself to higher work performance and effectiveness, taking on increasing amounts of responsibility. [And that self-leadership practises] were related to increased levels of productivity.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) advocate a model of twentieth-first century leadership that is characterised by a 'twin-track approach' in which responsibility is dispersed. Such as view of leadership relocates the locus of the function of leadership to lower levels within the organisation. However, as Huczynski and Buchanan (2001: 730) acknowledge:

Recognition of dispersed leadership does not imply a shift in focus away from formal, senior figures. It may be useful to separate notions of leadership from formal positions and prestige job titles. However, it is also necessary to recognise that senior figures continue to exercise leadership roles and functions as well.

The remit of such leadership roles are invariably constrained by pre-ordained corporate objectives and policy goals issued by senior management. If self-leadership is a form of empowerment, it is often limited in nature.

The previous decade or so has also seen a shift within the literature to emphasise the idea of communities of practice as well as collaborative forms of leadership. For Wenger (2000: 229), 'communities of practice grow out of a convergent interplay of competences and experience that involves mutual agreement'. In this respect, the

concept of organisational learning that underpins the idea of a community of practice has a democratic visage, since it moves the discourse on leadership away from the focus on individuals in favour of an analysis of processes. It is also indicative of an epistemological shift in the literature towards a subjective ontology as Garratt (2000: 12) argues:

It is essential to first break the predominant managerial and directorial mindset that human organisations are rational, emotionless, data-logic driven machines which stay resolutely on carefully planned and predetermined tracks regardless of the changing environment.... Learning organisations are above all complex adaptive systems and need to be understood as such.

Such a view of organisations represents a development of institutional theories of organisational behaviour and a recognition that technical-rational knowledge is insufficient in understanding the dynamics of social life. For Garratt (2000: 12), leadership is concerned with the effective control of the multifarious social processes that occur within organisations as much as institutional structures and lines of authority. Indeed, as hierarchies become flatter within institutions, there is greater pressure to devolve decision-making to those lower down the hierarchy and disperse organisational power. According to Garratt (2000: 34), the process of de-layering is both moral and democratic in nature and underpinned by a set of values that are widely shared and for Horner (2003: 38) this means that 'the command and control models of leadership do not fit these re-engineered and empower organisations'.

The literature on communities of practice is generally presented in terms of the shared work of teams, professional development and devolved responsibility. It is an approach that recognises the importance of human agency in the workplace and challenges traditional notions of organisational leadership. This position has been further developed by work relating to the emotional intelligence of leaders (McBride and Maitland, 2002). Again, however, as in the case with those theories of leadership discussed above, the underlying agenda is one of control within the workplace- albeit more sophisticated in approach. As in the earlier model of transformational leadership, the key to organisational success is the effective mobilisation and motivation of employees. Whether these ideas related communities

of practice do indeed represent a shift in the locus of organisational remains to be seen.

These models presented above not only provide ways of conceptualising leadership but raise fundamental questions about the direction of Government policy and how this may be operationalised in colleges. For Sawbridge (2001: 15):

Although there are exceptions, leadership in FE colleges in the UK largely conforms to a managerial or functional leadership model. The characteristics associated with effective educational leadership in the schools sector are more closely associated with instructional and transformational models. This suggests, therefore, that colleges need to develop leaders who are not just capable of leading on strategy and policy within a managerial leadership model.

For some college leaders, such a development may prove challenging. The post 1993 system has empowered management in colleges with the ideology, exigencies and practice of New Public Management (Bottery, 1996). Although technical-rational forms of managerialism may be viewed by many teachers as alien to the education sector, it appears that institutions have little choice but to conform to Government policy. One of the aims of this research investigation is to explore the degree to which SFC principals adopt behaviours drawn from the models described above.

2.7 An overview of critical perspectives on leadership:

A body of writing has emerged in the UK, USA, Australia, Canada and New Zealand that is critical of many of the policies implemented as part of the agenda of New Public Managerialism and is termed as Critical Leadership Studies (CLS). It is fundamentally a liberal-humanist critique of technical-rationalist forms of leadership and the efforts of numerous national Governments to establish a preferred model of educational leadership. The CLS critique can be traced to the seminal work of Thomas Greenfield, 'The decline and fall of educational administration' published in 1986, and his rejection of administrative science and its value-free approach to research. According to Greenfield (Bates, 1989:136):

Organisations are the nexus of freedom and compulsion. as invented social realities, they cannot only be created but also manipulated. The creation and maintenance of this illusion is the root of what the world understands as leadership.

For Greenfield, the failing of technical-rationalist models of leadership lay in their ignorance of the social complexion to organisational life and the human dimension to leadership. Greenfield posited a critique that saw mainstream management theories as being ‘ahistorical, narrowly technical, mechanistic and unnecessarily boring’ (Grace, 2002: 61). According to Grace (2002, 62):

CLS has been constituted as a new framework for the understanding of educational leadership. It is a framework which not only attempts to move attention from educational management to educational leadership, but which also articulates new and emancipatory notions of what such leadership could be.

Together with this critique of administrative science and mainstream research, Greenfield’s work calls for a recognition of a moral dimension to leadership.

Greenfield’s reference to a moral context to leadership is mirrored in the work of Hodgkinson (1978; 1983; 1991). According to Hodgkinson, this discussion on morality is fundamentally philosophical in nature. Hodgkinson’s work is important in that it sets out to challenge the ontological and epistemological basis of mainstream leadership theory. Starting from the questions of what constitutes reality and how humans arrive at an understanding of reality, Hodgkinson highlights the ‘philosophy of the dirt’ (Lang, 1999: 171). For Hodgkinson, the social world cannot be adequately explained through mainstream technical-rationalist forms of knowledge and theory. Hodgkinson therefore challenges the idea of ‘good’ leadership since notions of good are generally associated with rationalist forms of knowing which determine our values (Lang, 1999: 169). The significance of Hodgkinson’s contribution to CLS is that he has offered a philosophical retort to the assertion that there might exist a value-free phenomenon that could be described as ‘good’ which was independent of the mind and our cultural values. In doing so, Hodgkinson has contributed to the discourse on leadership theory and the idea of leadership as a rhetorical device to mobilise others.

This call by Greenfield and Hodgkinson to view leadership as a form of moral leadership would mean that CLS research should:

Use interpretive and qualitative methods of inquiry; which would focus upon power, conflicts, values and moral dilemmas in educational leadership and which would examine the changing role

of language and discourse in constructing new administrative 'realities'.
(Grace, 2002: 61)

A number of researchers have developed this discourse related to moral positioning further, principally, Foster, Smyth and Bates. According to Foster (1989):

Leadership is not organisational management, and it is of no use to the concept of leadership continually to equate it with position or managerial effectiveness... this conflation of terms persists.... The lack of distinction between management and leadership has become such a feature of our language that we are often hard pressed to recognise that leadership can be unorganised, little concerned with production, uncaring of feelings and still be effective if the power of ideas is commanding.

Such a position not only develops the critical view of leadership but also aims to distinguish the practice of leadership from Managerialism and the idea that leadership is a value-free activity. According to Smyth (1989: 199):

The hierarchically organised and sanction-ridden business management notions of leadership that have to do with efficiency, effectiveness, standardisation and quality control have no place in [educational institutions]. If there is any meaning attaching at all to the notion of educational leadership, then it lies in teachers making sense of what they do through problematising their teaching in the social and political contexts in which it occurs.

For Smyth then, leadership is about empowering others to realise their true context and their potential for action in liberating others.

Although Bates (1989) accepts Greenfield's attack on mainstream approaches to leadership theory, he sees that his work could be usefully extended. For Bates, CLS research should engage in a wider remit, analysing how individuals relate to organisations, placing organisational power and knowledge into a historical context and considering the impact of those powerful social, political and economic structures that condition contemporary society. In short, such an advance would necessitate a discussion on the role of agency and structure in the production of culture and relationships and would involve contributions from a variety of theoretical positions including those of Giddens (1979), Foucault (1980) and Habermas (1976). Even so, Bates (1989: 153) contends that such an approach is fraught with difficulty, not least in attempting to coalesce often incompatible theoretical traditions.

A second critical perspective of mainstream leadership theory is derived from feminist writing. For Hall (2002: 73) much of the writing on women's experience of leadership and management was 'sterile' and 'androcentric'. For Shakeshaft (1987) much of the research into leadership and management was flawed in the sense that it was gender-blind. Such a view was reinforced by Hough's (1986) research into the work published in the leading British journal *Educational Management and Administration*. Hough reported that of the 140 articles surveyed, only 6 showed awareness of gender issues and 10% of authors were exclusively female.

The agenda set out by Shakeshaft (1987) was, however, not to mirror the experience of men as leaders but to approach the issue of leadership from a feminist perspective and delineate a different paradigm for research. According to Shakeshaft, women leaders adhered to an alternative paradigm of leadership in which the focus was not on the control of others but their empowerment. For Shakeshaft then, women leaders tended to subscribe to an alternative feminine culture of leadership and management. Subsequent research has thereafter tended to focus on two principal themes, the issue of career progression for women in managerial positions and whether there exists a distinct style of feminine management, which could complement or replace traditional notions of management practice. Much of the research (e.g. Coleman, 2003) has tended to revolve around discussions of the advantages of an androgynous manager model that combines characteristics from the 'masculine' and 'feminine' idealised forms of management, marrying technical-rationalist forms of control systems based on hierarchy and authority to an awareness for others and an emphasis on co-operative team work.

A third critical perspective of contemporary models of leadership is drawn from post-Marxist critical theory. Critical theory originated during inter-war Germany in response to the rise of Nazism and sought to present a sophisticated critique of mature capitalism. Although the leaders of the 'Frankfurt School', notably Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno (1972), had aimed to provide a revised Marxist analysis of power in capitalist society, Jay (1973) thought that it 'presented a version

of Marxism so substantial that it forfeited the right to be included among its many offshoots' (Crotty, 2003: 126). Although the influence of other analyses, such as Weberian thoughts on bureaucracy, are incorporated into critical theory:

Most analysts of Frankfurt School philosophy and social science are content to accept its broadly Marxist character, while recognising that the Marxism in question is no purest form but a neo-Marxism or post-Marxism containing a strong admixture of elements drawn from other sources (Crotty, 2003: 126).

Although this pragmatic positioning can be seen as a part of the appeal of critical theory- in that it proffers a more developed analysis of capitalism based in the experience of mature capitalism- it also amounted to recipe for internal division within the Frankfurt School, particularly between the positions established by Adorno (1981) and Juergen Habermas (1976). However, if a general description of critical theory can be offered, it is that offered by Alvesson and Willmott (1992: 13):

In opposition to traditional Marxist understandings, critical theory does not assume the primacy of a fundamental contradiction between capital and worker interests, nor is management lumped together with capital. Nonetheless, critical theory does draw attention to contradictions in society and organisations, and to latent social conflicts

In this respect then, critical theory offers the researcher an alternative conceptual overview to those provided by the liberal-humanist and feminist perspectives when examining issues such as organisational culture, power and ideology.

According to Alvesson and Willmott (2001: 13):

The intent of critical theory is to challenge the legitimacy and counter the development of oppressive institutions and practices. ... Promote the potential of human consciousness to reflect critically upon oppressive practices, and thereby facilitate the extension of domains of autonomy and responsibility.

A research approach based on critical theory is, according to Alvesson and Willmott (1992:11-14), characterised by five goals. The first goal is defined as developing a non-objective view of management that challenges the idea of management as a value-free and neutral activity. A second goal is to expose inequalities in the distribution of power within organisations, which can be linked to a third goal that is to counter dominant ideological formations in society and discursive closure on matters of vested interests or exploitation. The fourth and fifth goals of critical

theory are tied to Juergen Habermas' ideas on and the possibility of shared interests existing between different sections of society, and the importance of language not only in communication but also in the exercise of power. These final two goals of critical theory, in particular, highlight the distance away from the Marxist-Structuralist origins of the Frankfurt School.

Fundamentally, critical theory is concerned with the construction, possession and exercise of power in contemporary society. Moreover, for Alvesson and Willmott (1992: 16) critical theory is useful in that it:

Directs attention to the deeper and more pervasive aspects of control.... dimensions of power and ideology are of greater significance in domains where they are not easily recognised as such.

A critical theory approach can therefore not only contribute to existing debates but also open up new avenues to explore. This is particularly relevant when discussing the importance of ideology in creating cultural values societal norms. For Kincheloe and McLaren (2003: 44):

Researchers operating within an awareness of this hegemonic ideology understand that dominant ideological practices and discourses shape our vision of reality.... [and] the constructions people make of the world and their role in it.

As a consequence, reference to the ideas of dominant ideological formations and their possible critique can inform the discussion on organisational climate, sub-cultures and the perspectives of teachers within colleges.

'Criticalist' approaches must acknowledge the conditioning role of established and dominant cultural values in contemporary society. The dominance of technical-rational forms of leadership and management theory over the economic system is also mirrored in the education system where a hegemonic ideology of leadership is extant. For Alvesson and Willmott (1992: 9):

Critical theory... provides a critical-constructive intellectual counterpoint to mainstream management studies. For critical theory has the strength of being sufficiently broad to serve as a source of critical reflection on a large number of central issues in management studies: epistemological issues, notions of rationality and progress, technocracy and social engineering, autonomy and control, communication action, power and ideology.

Leadership and management can be viewed from a ‘criticalist’ perspective as sophisticated forms of authority that are enabled to exercise social control through the use of ‘recognised’ leadership models such as transformational leadership that have been promoted in recent years by the state. For Alvesson and Willmott (2001: 25) a key objective for a ‘criticalist’ researcher is to ‘unpack management’ and challenge the assertions from dominant management ‘gurus’ that ‘no job is more vital to our society than that of the manager. The manager determines whether our social institutions will serve us well’ (Mintzberg: 1998: 27). For the ‘criticalist’ researcher this typical technical-rationalist representation of decision-making and its concomitant de-politicisation are central to the idea of a hegemonic and oppressive ideology.

For Habermas, the technical-rationalist conception of leadership is not only flawed but also indicative of a fundamental legitimation crisis within capitalism. Habermas’ critique is described by Boje et al. (1996: 3-4) as:

Late capitalist society is conceived to be a contradictory, entropic system composed of four sectors or subsystems: the economic subsystem, the political or administrative subsystem, the sociocultural subsystem, and the legitimation subsystem.... Where members of society lack the motivation to uphold societal values and roles, the most significant form of crisis – a legitimation crisis – can arise.

Although Habermas’ analysis of the crisis in late capitalism was undoubtedly influenced by the economic and political crises of the 1970s, it can offer an insight into the transformation of the British state in the decades since. Certainly, the rise of economic instrumentalism as a driving force in Government policy can be traced to this period. For Boje et al. (1996) the policies adopted by the British state since the 1970s have sought to deflect this crisis:

The transfer of state functions to the market economy and the colonisation of nonmarket sectors by market forces problematises the legitimacy of the modern state because the state thereby abandons its role as a mediator of the interests of the various social sectors.

The responsibility for economic and social failure is through this analysis passed onto those most directly involved. In the case of the education sector, this has led to the ‘rise of the organisational imperative (Gephart, 1996: 27) and the idea that educational institutions are autonomous and able to create their own future. It is

within this ‘criticalist’ analysis that one may discern the ascendancy of leadership mythology and New Public Management practices.

For Habermas, the construction of a mythology of leadership is not only central to an understanding of the crisis in late capitalism but also indicative of his effort to ‘reconstitute the whole paradigm of critical theory’ (Pusey, 1987: 33). Habermas, in contrast to the Frankfurt School, rejects the idea of a theory-neutral language which underlies positivism. Whilst Habermas (1974) acknowledges the existence of powerful social structures, he also recognises the role of agency and subjectivity in the creation of knowledge. This constructionist approach is, however, predicated on the assertion that reality is the product of actions mediated by powerful vested interests and, in the case of education, the State. Such a position has implications for researchers. In order to pursue a research exercise in the Habermasian tradition, particular issues pertaining to the researcher-respondent relationship must be addressed as well as the conduct of the wider research process.

For Johnson and Duberley (2000: 123), ‘given the stance of critical theory, it may seem ... it has little to offer management research [and] an insufficient level of concern with empirical research’. However, Habermas’ ideas have been supported by a number of researchers who reject mainstream technical-rational forms of management theory (Alvesson and Willmott, 1992, 2001; Forrester, 1993; Kincheloe and McLaren, 2003). Alvesson and Willmott, in particular, have challenged the functionalism of mainstream management science. As Johnson and Duberley (2000: 129) consider ‘this is not to say that critical theory is always anti-management. Rather, it is concerned with exposing the underlying values associated with knowledge and particular modes of operating’. In their challenge to mainstream management science, Alvesson and Willmott (2001) have offered alternative metaphors to the technical-rational approach presented by mainstream writing. Instead of being value-free, management is described as a form of distorted communication, mystifying and through its practice of cultural doping, a form of

colonising power. Such an approach resonates with the ideas of Habermas discussed above.

2.8 Researching leadership and management:

The literature on leadership and management is dominated by positivist notions of truth and technical-rationalist ideas on organisational behaviour. Moreover, the mainstream of writing tends to focus on how leadership and management are beneficial to organisational effectiveness and improvement. The mainstream tends to view leadership and management as value-free concepts, as neutral and impersonal concepts that describe functional roles. Prominent theorists in this positivist field include Pugh (1997) and Hofstede (1997). For Easterby-Smith et al. (2002: 35), ‘their main significance is the way they highlight the authority structures within organisations as key factors to consider when attempting to change, or understand, organisational behaviour’. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2002: 35), the key features of positivist approaches are:

Focussing on hard data rather than opinions; looking for regularities in the data obtained; and attempting to produce propositions that can generalise from the specific example to the wider population of organisations.

This approach is indicative of the positivist interpretation of truth and the use of standardised forms of research methods, often quantitative, that inform conclusions.

In contrast, social constructionist management research focuses on the opinions of those who work in organisations. Although social constructionism rejects the ontology and epistemology of positivism, ‘it is not necessarily relativist’ (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 149) as it concedes that there can be a transcendental reality beyond our daily social constructions and discourse. Johnson and Duberley (2000: 172) distinguish between ‘methodological reflexivity’ and ‘epistemic reflexivity’ with the former being preoccupied with the accurate representation of reality and the latter concerned with human perceptions of reality. For Johnson and Duberley (2000: 185) this distinction is useful in that we can:

Regard epistemic reflexivity as emancipation by both sanctioning and enabling the investigation and problematisation of the taken-for-granted social constructions of reality which are located in the varying practices, interests and motives which constitute different communities’ sense-making.

So, for Johnson and Duberley, although Critical Theorists such as Habermas may adhere to a general objectivist ontology, their work also possesses the characteristics of a socially rationalist epistemology which is constructionist in nature. It also follows that epistemic knowledge, according to Johnson and Duberley (2000: 186), has a:

Pivotal role in Critical Theory: knowledge cannot and should not be the outcome of privileged access and dissemination by the authoritative few; rather legitimate knowledge must be the outcome of the unconstrained public debate and agreement

This combination of an objectivist ontology with a subjectivist epistemology is presented in Figure 1 below (see Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 180):

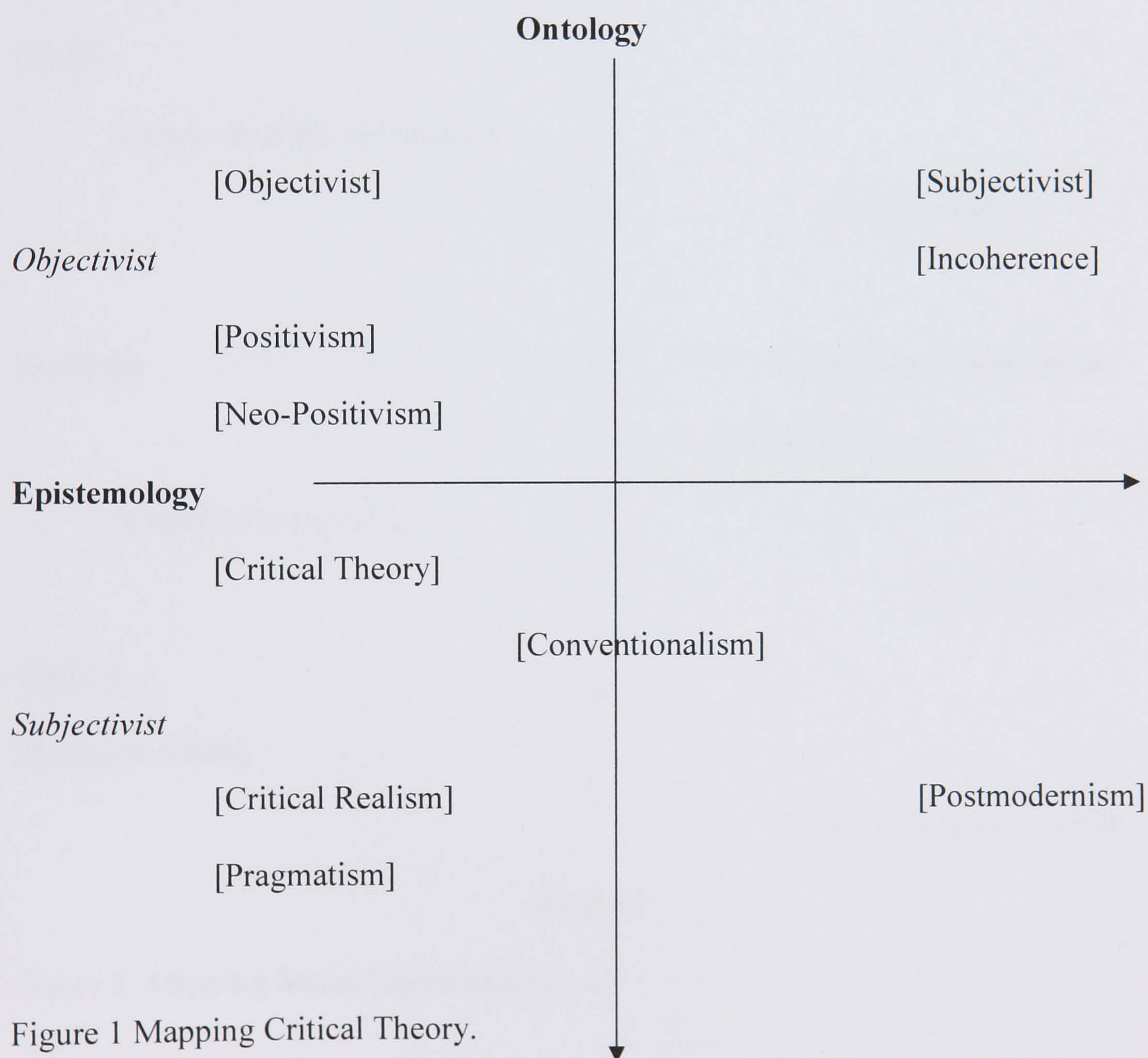


Figure 1 Mapping Critical Theory.

This observation has important implications for the research design of the thesis and the research methods chosen. If one adopts Johnson and Duberley's argument, it follows that social constructionism and Habermasian Critical Theory can be

combined and in doing so, focuses attention on who takes part in the research and how the research is conducted. For Easterby-Smith et al. (2002: 57) these ontological and epistemological considerations can be represented in the following matrix of research designs.

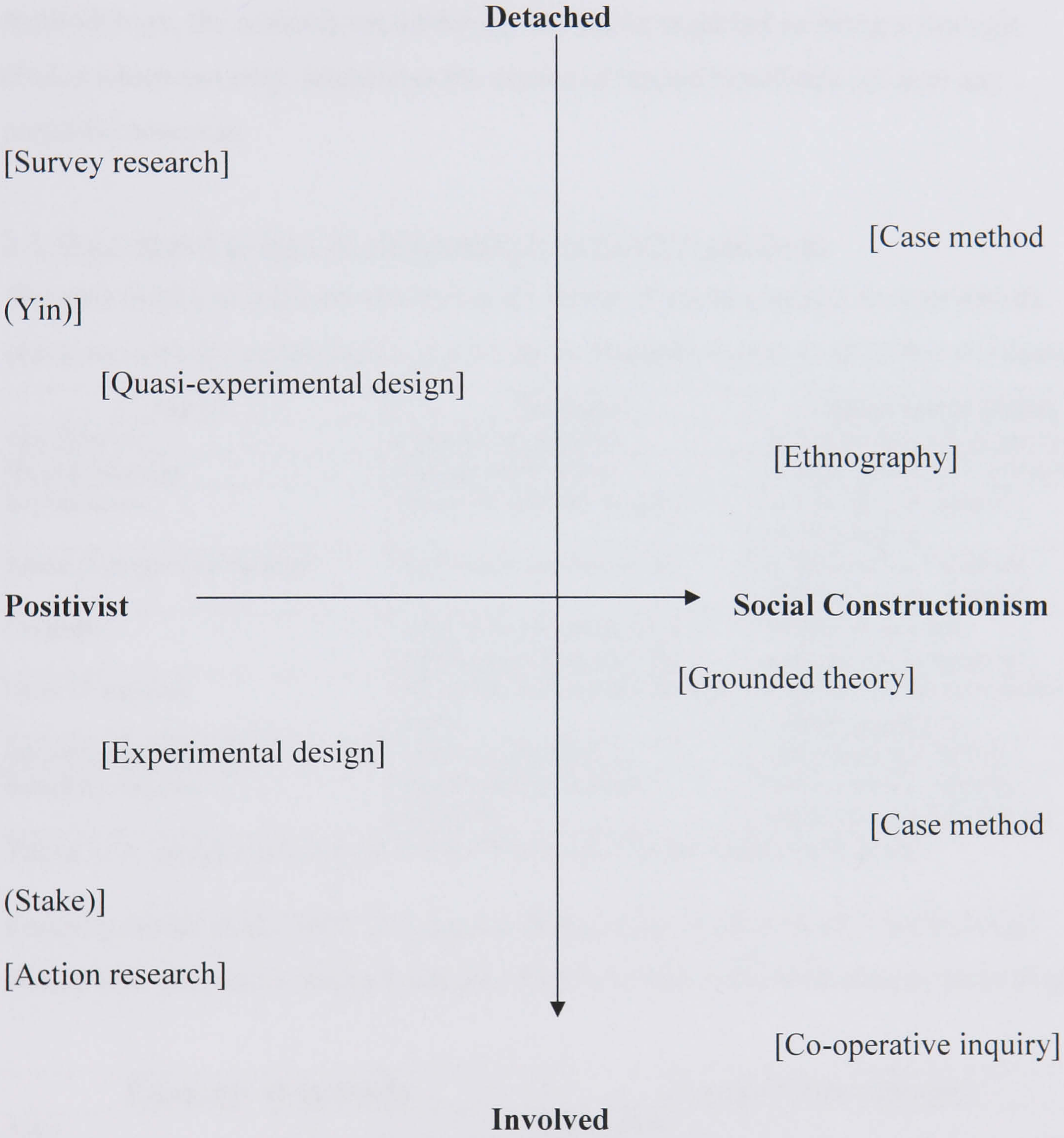


Figure 2: Mapping Social Constructionism.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

The aim of this chapter is to set out a justification for the research methodology, its research methods and form of analysis chosen. As the choice of research methods were directly influenced by the social constructionist position taken in the methodology, the research methodology should be regarded as being a strategic choice which not only determines the choice of research methods but also any possible outcomes.

3.1 The research design: its philosophical justification and focus

The philosophical tradition chosen herein is that of social constructionism and its characteristics are compared to positivism by Easterby-Smith et al (2000: 30) below.

Aspect	Positivism	Social constructionism
The observer	must be independent	part of what is being observed
Human interests	Should be irrelevant	are the main drivers of science
Explanations	must demonstrate causality	aim to increase general understanding
Research progresses through	hypothesis and deductions	gathering rich data from which ideas are induced
Concepts	need to be operationalised so that they can be measured	should incorporate stakeholder perspectives
Units of analysis	Should be reduced to simplest terms	may include the complexity of 'whole' situations
Generalisation through	statistical probability	theoretical abstraction
Sampling requires	large numbers selected randomly	small numbers of cases chosen for specific reasons

Table 5: A comparison between Positivism and Social Constructionism.

Easterby-Smith et al (2000: 34) suggest that a social constructionist methodology should aim to create a research design which will match the following epistemology.

Elements of methods	Social constructionism
Aims	Invention
Starting points	Meanings
Designs	Reflexivity
Techniques	Conversation
Analysis	Sense-making
Outcomes	Understanding

Table 6: The epistemological claims of Social Constructionism.

The work of Habermas (1972; 1974) is important in two principal respects. Firstly, it asserts the importance of the ‘public interest’ whilst recognising that conventionalised knowledge is a site of competing forces in contemporary society. Secondly, the idea of inter-subjectivity emphasises the value of the ‘hermeneutic path’ (Outhwaite, 1996: 263) and the co-construction of knowledge. The research methodology pursued herein follows on from this ‘macro-constructionist’ position of generating knowledge (Burr, 2003: 22). Given this ‘macro’ constructionist approach to the research (Burr, 2003), the particular focus for investigation was influenced by those concepts and theories presented in the Literature Review.

The purpose of the research was to test whether the ideas and debates encountered in the literature were indeed relevant to the SFC. Given that little work appears to have been published by critical researchers into the SFC sector, the focus for the research had to be related to establishing whether there was a link between those approaches articulated by critical theorists and liberal humanists, and the empirical data. In order to test such a link, a relatively strong research framework that was embedded in the literature was required. As a consequence, a series of scenarios incorporating key concepts relating to mainstream managerial concepts were presented alongside a number that were drawn from Critical Theory, as described below in section 3.3. This use of the scenario method was supplemented by interrogation of institutional documents, as described in section 3.6. Taken together, these two research methods were designed to test the validity of Critical Theory to the SFC setting.

3.2. Developing appropriate constructionist research methods

Although Mason (2002: 24) concedes that:

Qualitative research is characteristically exploratory, fluid and flexible, data-driven and context-sensitive. Given that, it would be both inimical and impossible to write an entire advance blueprint’.

in order to anticipate some of the potential problems in data generation, it was decided to draft a research design as an operational framework within which to

undertake the research. This framework was designed to be sufficiently flexible in order to respond to emergent themes and those subsidiary questions that arose during the research and achieve a form of ‘thick description’ (Geertz cited by Miles and Huberman, 1994: 279). As a relatively inexperienced interviewer in the social constructionist tradition, it was often difficult to resist the temptation to push the interview in a particular direction. This was apparent during the pilot phase of the research where all too often the informants were steered into the topic of leadership and management during the interview. During the main phase of the research, however, the temptation was more effectively managed with less overt emphasis given to the issue of leadership and management and more emphasis given to responding to the discussion points raised by informants.

With the goal of the research being to elicit the views of teachers, a variety of research methods within the constructionist traditions were considered (Quong et. al, 1999; Shain and Gleeson, 1999). These approaches ranged from, those of the leading figure within post-Marxist Critical Theory, Juergen Habermas, with his emphasis on the collective and inter-subjective nature of communication, knowledge and discourse to the liberal stance of Thomas Greenfield and his emphasis on the idea of individualised subjective meaning. It was within this broad framework of moving towards an understanding of teachers’ experiences and views that the particular research methods were chosen.

The decision to invest time in narrative analysis was also determined by the constructionist nature of the research in that it enabled participants to determine what they wished to discuss and as such avoided excessive researcher bias and overt agenda setting prior to the interview. In mutually constructed discussions on teachers’ experience of leadership, informants were able to cite a variety of experiences and position themselves in a multitude of roles: a victim, a defender, and a champion. Consequently, when analysing personal accounts, it is important to understand the position taken by the informant as well as any possible positioning of the researcher by that informant. Gergen (2003: 253) has suggested a typology of

narrative forms can be used here to interpret positioning and contextualise personal accounts as being either 'tragic', 'stable' or 'progressive'. Certainly there was the ever-present danger in allowing informants to determine the focus of the follow-up discussion the interviews could degenerate into little more than the tragic account described by Gergen in which the informants portrayed themselves as a victim in a personality-based conflict.

Wragg's (2002: 153) suggestion that the piloting of interviews be undertaken had proved valuable since it identified a number of potential problems that had to be overcome. The principal problems that were uncovered in the pilot were negotiating a mutually convenient time for the 7 interviews and the time taken- sometimes up to 7 hours each- to transcribe all the interviews in full as originally planned. The lesson learnt here was important; if a larger number of interviews were to take place in the main body of the research, then considerably more time needed to be scheduled for the interviewing process, or the conduct of the interviews and their transcription needed to be changed. A second outcome from the post-pilot review was to modify the process of generating data through interviewing. Instead of eliciting narratives directly from personal stories or diaries, a variant on this method was adopted.

3.3: Adopting a tight research framework: the use of scenarios to generate data

For Miles and Huberman (1994: 17) there are a number of distinct advantages in adopting a highly framed research design of the type advocated by Habermas.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994: 17):

Any researcher, no matter how unstructured or inductive, comes to fieldwork with some orienting ideas' and 'tighter designs are a wise choice... for researcher working with well-delineated constructs.... Qualitative research can be outright "confirmatory"- that is, can seek to test or further explicate a conceptualisation.

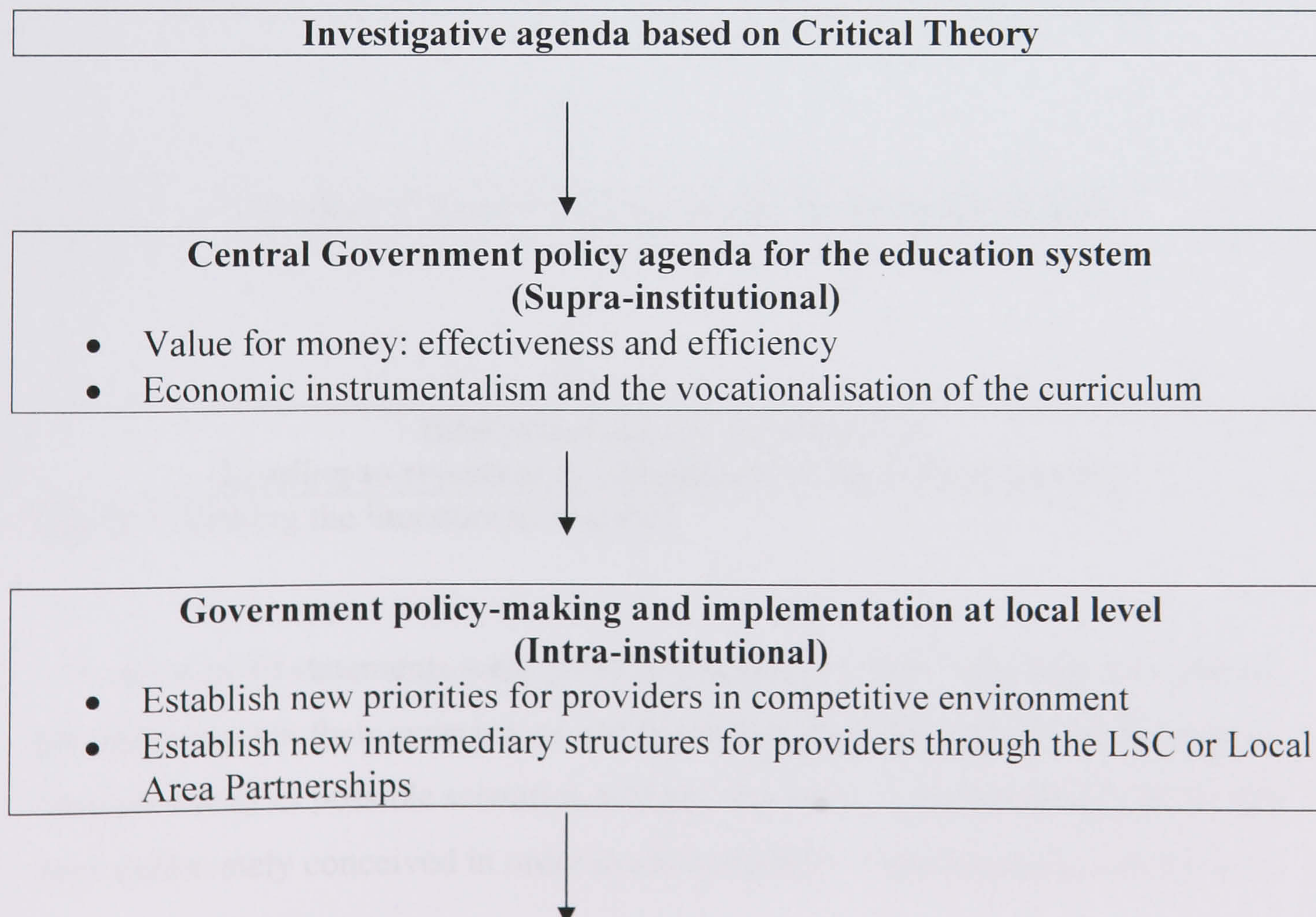
In adopting a relatively tight frame within which to undertake research, it was anticipated there would be a clearer focus than is often evident in other methodological approaches where key concepts emerge from the data and lead onto subsequent theorising. In this respect, the research design, instrumentation and

subsequent analysis was related to the testing of the validity of the conceptual framework established in the literature review.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994: 18):

A conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied- the key factors, constructs or variables- and the presumed relationships among them. Frameworks can be rudimentary or elaborate, theory-driven or commonsensical, descriptive or causal.

Miles and Huberman (1994: 16) also acknowledge that adopting such a tightly framed approach can be ‘analytic- a sort of anticipatory data reduction- because they constrain later analysis by ruling out certain variables and relationships and attending to others’. However, whilst qualifying the merits of a tightly framed research, Miles and Huberman (1994:18) offer one possible model within which to conceptualise the research and its outcomes. The practice of ‘bins’ modelling offers the researcher the opportunity to identify the key participants, relationships and issues for investigation at an early stage in the research process and enable development of the model in light of the data generated. Figure 3 presented below offers an overview of the key participants and the areas for exploration that emerged following the review of the literature.



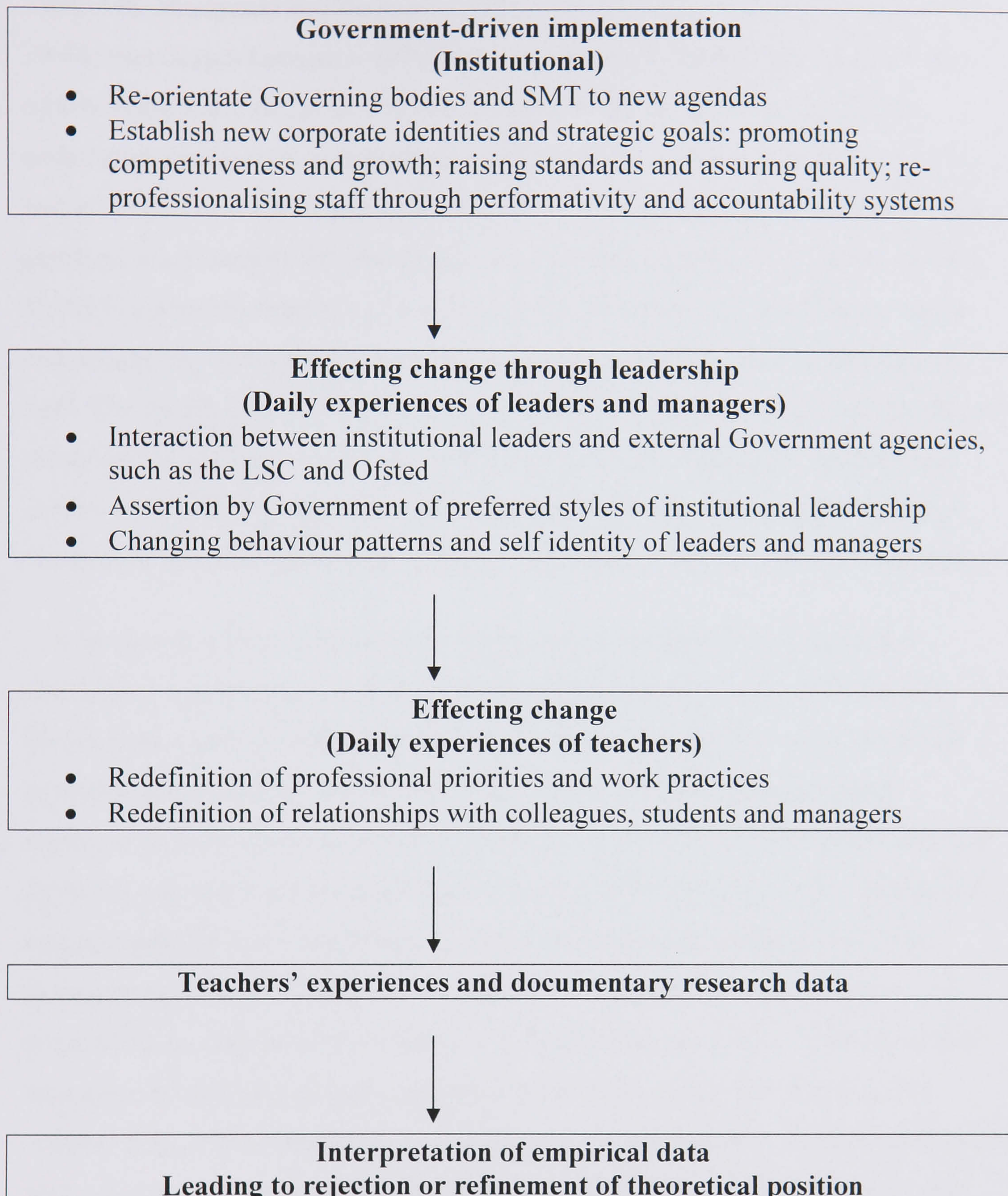


Figure 3: Linking the literature to research.

A series of 10 statements were given to teachers and they were asked a series of questions to elicit their experiences and views (see Appendix 2). These statements were presented as possible scenarios of every day work in contemporary SFCs and were deliberately conceived in order to elicit teachers' experiences and views on

areas of interest. For this, Kotter's typology on leadership and management (Brooks, 1999: 142; Huczynski and Buchanan, 2001: 704; Harvard Business Review, 1998: 39-41) was chosen because it differentiated between leadership and management clearly using every day activities that teachers would be able to relate to and understand themes such as budgeting, staffing and motivation. Statements 1, 5, 6, and 10 related to Kotter's managerial functions of organising staffing, addressing a problem, target-setting and allocating resources. Statements 2, 3, 7, and 9 related to Kotter's leadership functions of motivating and inspiring staff, providing a vision and a corporate strategy, aligning staff to strategy and setting out the direction to staff. The scenarios presented were not, however, labelled as being characteristics of leadership or management but were offered simply for teachers to reflect on and comment. In this way, an insight could be gleaned as to whether teachers made a distinction between these two concepts, or indeed saw them as useful descriptions.

Interviewees were not directed to refer to any scenario in particular, so the discussions that followed were initiated by the participant and the conversation followed on from the comments made by the respondent. In this sense, the list of scenarios acted as a lens through which the issues and theoretical constructs encountered in the literature could be focussed more clearly. As described above, 8 of the 10 statements were derived from Kotter's (1998) typology of leadership and management functions, and the remainder were inserted as examples of issues generated by Critical Theory. In this respect, the research instrument had several purposes as an analytical tool. Firstly, to ascertain whether teachers identified these scenarios as indicative of their experience of working as teachers and secondly, whether they differentiated between leadership and management. A third goal was to find out if the two scenarios derived from Critical Theory would provoke a wider discussion on their views of education and their roles as educationalists. The analysis of this data was not only useful in the sense that it could connect with theoretical approaches discussed in the literature review but also lead onto further analysis of variations between ranks in organisational hierarchies or institutions.

Both statement 2 and statement 7 were useful indicators of how organisational leaders are perceived to interact with colleagues. Statement 2 touches upon the idea of inspiration and motivation as important characteristics of transformational leadership as discussed in the literature (Law and Glover, 2000; Leithwood et al 2000; Riches 1994). Statement 7 relates to how leaders align their staff in order to achieve corporate goals, which again relates to the motivational impact of leaders upon colleagues and can be linked to managerial conceptions of leadership as described by Sawbridge (2001) and Leithwood et al (2000). If, as mainstream management science suggests, motivation and staff alignment are prominent features of effective leadership, we should expect to see positive comments emerging from the data.

Statement 3 and statement 9 touch upon the issues of strategic vision and setting out a direction for the organisation, which are consistent with technical-rational conceptions of leadership as part of the 'initiating structure' (Mullins, 2002: 264) within an organisation. Again, such views of leadership can be linked to managerial and transactional models of leadership described above. All four statements [2, 3, 7 and 9] describe a form of top-down communication within the organisation together with an implicit hierarchy of power. As a consequence, responses to these scenarios could be used to gain insight into not only the incorporation of management terminology into the daily lexicon of educationalists but also the amount of influence such ideas have over teachers.

Statement 1 and statement 10 both relate to established notions of what constitutes management (Fayol, 1916; Kotter 1998; Mullins, 2002). Statement 1 was designed to elicit information not simply about how decisions were made within colleges but also to generate discussion about how effective organisational planning was perceived to be. The importance of planning was also touched upon through statement 10. In addition to statements 1 and 10, statement 5 and statement 6 also sought to elicit discussion relating to how teachers responded to the management of operational issues. Statement 6 was designed to tease out any thoughts on target

setting, which is a key tool of Government policy in its drive to raise performance in the education sector. Statement 6 could also be used to ascertain whether teachers differentiated between it and statement 3, with its emphasis on visionary leadership. In a sense, this was a rather naïve expectation since few teachers appear from the data to have made a clear and formalised distinction between leadership and management. These statements were also intended to generate any variation between colleges on how they responded to mainstream technical-rational forms of management and cultural conditioning.

Both statement 4 and statement 8 were included as ‘wild cards’ to generate wider discussion about teachers’ views on their work. Critical appraisals of dominant leadership styles (Foster, 1998; Grace, 2002; Smyth, 1998) refer to the importance of leadership in challenging societal injustice as well as acknowledging how Government policy has constructed a conventionalised notion of educational leadership. From the perspective of these critiques of Government policy, true leadership can only be realised when existing socio-political and economic relationships are contested by leaders who advocate an alternative moral code based on egalitarian values. Statement 4 was designed to generate discussion about how teachers saw their role. It was anticipated that whereas some data may have been generated relating to promoting equality through the existing educational system, others may have offered a more radical conception of their role as educationalists. Statement 8 was also designed to elicit information on whether there was evidence of a deviant sub-culture within colleges, and indeed what form of response such voices provoked within the organisation. It was also anticipated that there could be variation in responses not only within a college because of an individual’s position or ideological outlook, but also differences between colleges because of cultural variances. Such probing, it was anticipated, would touch upon the implicit priorities of SFCs in the quasi-market economy of post-compulsory education.

3.4 Triangulation using the multi-site case study method

The purpose of the case study approach is ‘to construct a worthwhile argument or story and to convey convincingly to an audience this argument or story’ (Basse,

2002: 111). Although Stake (2003: 156) recognises that 'a few cases are poor representation of a population of cases and questionable grounds for advancing grand generalisation.... The purpose of a case report is not to represent the world, but to represent the case'. In this respect, the case study approach is largely descriptive although it may lead to a wider significance in that it can 'increase both propositional and experiential knowledge' (Stake, 2003: 145).

The decision to expand the case study approach beyond the single SFC in the pilot was deliberate. In the original pilot, a number of critical stories had emerged that painted a negative picture of leadership and management in one SFC. One important objective in the extended study was to see if this pattern of disillusionment was repeated or not, and if not why. Termed 'case triangulation' by Flick (2004: 181), this process of examining the data from different contexts would enable common themes and discontinuities to emerge. Kidder has described this inductive approach as 'negative case analysis' (Robson, 2002: 490) in which the emergent data contributes to the development of theory and conclusions. As Lincoln and Guba argue (1985; and cited by Robson, 2002: 490) such an approach can be used as part of the qualitative researcher's efforts to canvass for greater acceptability for their findings in the largely positivist-dominated social science community.

A second characteristic within the research is that of 'between method triangulation' (Flick, 2004: 180). This method of integrating the research methods into a coherent approach was combined with some limited form of 'within-method triangulation' since all of the original interviewees from the pilot study were re-interviewed. The intention here was to map whether any significant change had taken place in the positions taken by interviewees on the issue of college management when the wider issues, such as professionalism and the role of the State were included in discussions. Although those who were re-interviewed maintained and indeed elaborated on their original position, new themes did emerge that were reflected by new interviewees. This raised the level of confidence in the findings overall.

3.5: Access to the Colleges and research participants

The decision as which colleges to approach was made very easy by two key factors. The Surrey/Hampshire area has a number of SFCs and there are three within 10 miles of the author's own college. In addition to convenient geography, it was also felt that the similarity of the colleges in terms of their ethos, clientele and socio-economic context would provide a purposive sample of SFCs in the region.

The colleges offer a similar curriculum, although one is significantly smaller in terms of student numbers. All three colleges regularly achieve pass rates at Advanced Level around the 98% mark and are regarded as in the top 20 SFCs nationally. The author's own college is relatively small with 600 full-time students aged 16-18 and approximately 500 adult learners on its adult education programme (Ofsted inspection report, March 2004). Located in a small, but prosperous, town in Surrey the college offers 30 Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and Advanced Level (A2) courses, and a small number of GCSE and BTEC courses. In many respects, it is typical of those SFCs that have historically specialised on academic rather than vocational courses. This example of a SFC is reflected, albeit on a larger scale, at the other two colleges. One is in Hampshire and is located in a large urban but prosperous area and the other is situated in semi-rural and affluent Surrey- both tend to attract disproportionately middle-class students compared to the FE sector as a whole. These two colleges also offer a range of GCSE, BTEC and Advanced academic and vocational programmes catering for 1,797 (Ofsted inspection report, November 2001) and 1,329 students (FEFC inspection report, 2000) respectively as well as adult education provision. In short, apart from variation in size, all three colleges are relatively similar as educational institutions. This similarity in provision was reflected in their respective organisational structures and hierarchies, with a clearly delineated line management system in place that was headed by a principal and a senior management team, supported by a middle management stratum with the main body of teachers serving as course leaders or main-scale teachers.

As Johnson (1994: 76) describes gaining access to the field via institutional gatekeepers is a pre-requisite to any meaningful research. As permission from participants had already been obtained at the author's institution during the pilot study, a letter explaining the nature of the author's research interests was sent to the principals of the three nearby SFCs in which permission was sought to approach teaching staff. Two of the colleges responded within a week and the third after three months, by which time it was felt that it would not be possible to pursue interviews there given time constraints. As a result the scope of the field was limited to three SFCs, one of which was the author's own institution. Towards the close of the interviewing phase of the research, a former colleague in another SFC in the north of England offered to be interviewed. This provided an interesting opportunity to triangulate the research slightly differently in that this brought in another geographic and very different socio-economic context into the research.

The responses from the respective principals were interesting and can be interpreted from a number of perspectives. One response was open and inviting, another provided a list of staff to contact, and the third sought delay. Given time constraints, it was decided to interview those who had volunteered as soon as possible from the large Hampshire SFC. Interestingly, all those who had "volunteered" were all either members of senior management, including the principal, or experienced middle managers. Why this should be the case was a matter of concern since, as is described below in the discussion, there was a high degree of conformity in the positioning taken by informants during the interviews. The author was left with the impression that a number of "reliable colleagues" had been asked to participate rather than the request having been put out to a wider field. Informal contacts with staff confirmed this impression. In fact, it was only possible to meet with three of the nominated seven members of staff because of time constraints. This raised an ethical issue of how to respond to the imposed 'filtration'. In order to by-pass this perceived hurdle, and obtain a more representative group of the staff, a number of teachers were approached informally, together with two teachers who had only recently left the college. The resultant interviews were held

outside working hours in a neutral location. This action may, of course, may be viewed as no more representative than the ‘nominated’ list but the researcher felt this had been a balanced, reasoned and sensible decision.

The process of interviewing of staff from the larger Surrey SFC was complicated by a number of factors. Although permission had been obtained from the principal to interview staff, time constraints and an impending Ofsted inspection meant that it was difficult to arrange a mutually convenient time to visit the college and conduct the interviews. In response, a pragmatic approach to this apparent impasse was adopted using a variety of snowball sampling (Robson, 2002: 265). In this respect then, the sampling was as Mason (2002: 127) describes:

Qualitative sampling [is] an organic practice, in the sense that it is something which grows and develops throughout the research process, in ways that are crucially related to the emerging shape of the research project.

A number of those who had worked at the targeted college were able to suggest potential interviewees. Instead of visiting the college during the run-up to inspection, it was decided to delay interviewing until after it had ended and then to conduct interviewing over the telephone.

As this study was conceived as an exploratory qualitative study rather than quantitative, it was felt that statistical sampling, such as quota and dimensional variants (Robson: 2002: 264), and analyses were somewhat inconsistent with a constructionist approach. However, there was a much simpler explanation for the sampling strategy. As Robson (2002: 240) acknowledges, the opportunity to survey opinion is limited by the ‘working universe’ (Marshall, 1997: 56) available, namely those teachers who would make themselves available, or were made available, to participate in the research. In this respect, the sampling strategy could be described as convenience sampling, in that ‘they are more to do with getting a feel for the issues involved’ (Robson, 2002: 265).

The sampling strategy was, moreover, not randomised. Although no effort was made to undertake a statistical sampling and subsequent modelling of SFC teachers’

views- as would be the case in a quantitative study such as that undertaken by the Learning and Skills Development Agency and described below- there was some consideration given to obtaining a representative 'purposive sample' (Robson, 2002: 265) in terms of their position within college hierarchies and their gender. In this fashion, an attempt was made to interview teachers from the three main levels within colleges: senior management, middle management and heads of department, and main scale teachers. So, for example, although members of the management cadre had been made available for interview, the views of main scale teachers at that and other colleges were sought in order to broaden the possible range of profiles, positioning and perspectives of those interviewed. The breakdown of the interviewees' contexts is described below (Appendix 3). In terms of hierarchy and gender distribution, all three levels were represented and contained both males and females. In this respect, a claim to representativeness may be made and in doing so enhance the claim to validity in the research's findings.

Importantly, as Busher (2002: 75) argues, 'making values and ethical frameworks explicit in research does not reduce its validity and reliability'. According to Hopf (2002) an ethical approach to research is predicated upon two principles: informed consent and damage avoidance. This researcher would argue that this is a rather simplistic response to the ethical dilemmas that confront an "insider" or the "visitor" who engages in research into the complexities of organisational life. It is possible to adopt the somewhat detached stance advocated by Taylor and Bogdan (1984: 25) to 'be truthful, but vague and imprecise', or follow the guidance from Easterby-Smith et. al (2002: 76) to 'deceive people as far as it is necessary'. For the positivist researcher, there are advantages in this approach, in that informants are merely viewed as sources of data and managed accordingly. However, this position appeared somewhat inconsistent with a constructionist approach that was undertaken within the context of Critical Theory and an emancipatory research paradigm. As a result, a decision was taken to be as open as possible with all participants and engage with them in any query they had, even to the extent of explaining the theoretical context to the research and their importance within the process.

The advantage of already being “in the field” as a colleague also carried with it an ethical dilemma. Unlike an external researcher who enters the field with no knowledge of potential informants, or indeed they of the researcher, this researcher was known to all as a colleague and to some as a line manager. Throughout the research, participants were free to withdraw from the process without question and it was made clear that their participation was confidential and did not prejudice their professional relationship with the researcher. In this way, the researcher sought to conform to the principle of damage avoidance whether direct or inadvertently indirect. In two instances, participants asked to see transcripts of their interview and these were passed onto them in full. In doing so, such feedback achieved two goals: it reassured participants that the transcription was an honest account of the interview and secondly, it provided for some degree of respondent validation, which it was expected would enhance the trustworthiness of the research and its findings.

The issue of respondent validation is, of course, directly linked to the third ethical issue that is at the heart of this research exercise- representation. The question asked by Denzin and Lincoln (2003c: 419) about ‘how can we use the discourses of qualitative research to help create and imagine a free democratic society?’ is pertinent here since the empowerment of individuals is inextricably tied to the ability of participants to voice their opinions. For Johnson and Duberley (2000: 121) it is possible to resolve this issue using Habermas’ notion of the ideal speech situation:

Here rational consensus occurs when agreement derives from argument and analysis without resort to force, coercion, distortion or duplicity. This is characterised by all participants having an equal chance to initiate and participate in discourse, with all validity claims being open to discursive examination free from the constraints imposed by disparities in power.

For Forrester (cited by Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 122) such an approach has merit since it:

Attends to the historical stage on which actors meet, speak, conflict, listen, or engage with one another. Ontologically it marries subjectivist and objectivist positions. Human actors make sense of daily life subjectively, through communicative interaction but ‘sense’ depends on context or setting- the objective social structure in which those actors work and live.

Habermas' constructionist approach was adopted because it empowered respondents to participate in on an equal basis during the interview and in doing so co-construct the content of the discussion, as well as its outcome, with the researcher.

3.6: Generating data – moving from co-constructed interviewing to documentary research.

The decision to adopt a flexible approach to data generation through semi-structured interviews based on scenarios of professional practice proved productive in that it opened up new avenues to explore. Whereas the scope of the research was focused originally on how teachers viewed leadership and management, and in doing so focused on the individual teacher, interviewing generated several important issues about the context to teaching that were then incorporated into the research. In particular, the repeated references to the importance of the LSC, de-professionalisation of teachers and the demise of a liberal philosophy of education in favour of economic instrumentalism, all generated further lines of enquiry. Although asking teachers to maintain a diary had been used during the pilot stage of the research, it was dispensed with for the main part of the project. Quite apart from the organisational difficulties described above, the diary method did not generate new issues and was replaced by documentary research that sought to explore those issues raised during the interview.

Obtaining access to documentary material was on the face of it less problematic both in terms of ethical issues and logistics than had been the case with the interviewing process. As a result of the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act in January 2005, it was anticipated that material would be accessible from colleges directly or from the Internet without resort to the formal process of negotiating access, as was the case with interviewing. In theory, information produced by colleges on strategic priorities and corporate goals are public documents and therefore accessible to the general public and one college's annual report was downloaded from the its Internet website. However, in general, ease of access to most documentation proved more difficult than anticipated. Indeed, one

college stated that material was freely available to those who visited the principal's office during negotiated times- although not a direct challenge to the letter of the law, this approach does inhibit those who would wish to access sensitive information held by colleges. In a very competitive market environment, colleges appear reluctant to disclose information that relates to their planning for the future. One was made aware of Cortazzi's (2002: 202) advice to read beyond the information contained to consider the embedded meanings and socio-political as well as organisational context of such documentary material.

Although documents are often presented by those in authority as a universally accepted artefact that defines organisational reality, this claim is often misleading and has an agenda of control embedded within. Given that the theoretical approach of the project was based on Critical Theory, it was imperative that the agenda behind documents, such as strategic plans or annual reports, was uncovered. In this respect, documents can be said to possess an exegetic character (Wolff, 2004: 285) that point to other underlying phenomena. As Wolff (2004: 285) describes:

The background against which they were produced are no longer visible in the documents themselves. [They can therefore be seen as having] a rhetorical character....

As examples of institutional display or even as a form of bureaucratic propaganda whose purpose was primarily to engender an appearance of legitimacy, rationality and efficiency in the eyes of relevant organisational environments.

It was within this context that it was decided to apply Discourse Analysis to an examination of documents produced by the Government, Government agencies and SFCs. For Hall (2003: 73), since 'meaning and meaningful practice is... constructed within discourse' it was important to examine the way in which the professional practice of teachers was engineered by the State through its flow of policy directives to SFCs.

Given the proposition that SFCs are obliged to respond to Government policy, it decided that a number of important policy documents should be scrutinised in order to examine the underlying direction of policy. In recent years a number of Government Green and White Papers and directives have heralded change in the

SFC sector. Two of the most important of these documents are the Government's White Paper 'Success for All' (2002) and the report from the Tomlinson Commission on the future of the 14-19 curriculum (2004). Research papers produced by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) on the organisation of the sector (2003) and the attitudes of teachers were supplemented by reports from Ofsted on leadership and management (2003) and inspection reports on those colleges involved in this case study. The findings from this research is discussed in detail below. However, it was clear that there was a deliberate effort to use technical-rational forms of language such as 'for an organisation to function effectively, attention should be paid to technostucture and support' (LSDA, 2003: 5) in Government publications. Furthermore, there was pervasive reference to the language of the 'education market' in Government documentation that reflected the idea of the business model and the hegemonic influence of capitalism behind policy. This was an interesting avenue to explore since a number of teachers had reported that they felt that there was less reference paid to philosophical issues in education than in the past and that SFCs seemed more like "exam factories" intent on churning out students like a production line. In this respect, the findings from documentary research tied in with the findings from interviewing and hence reinforced the validity of the research project.

3.7: Validating the research methods- establishing appropriate criteria of quality

The issue of validity is one that is normally associated with positivist approaches to research in which researchers pursue the 'scientific method' of hypothecation, experiment, observation and conclusion. This methodological approach aims to establish laws of behaviour and proffers a foundationalist perspective on the nature of knowledge based on the idea of an objective reality. Given this ontological and epistemological approach, it is important to be able to justify research findings to the wider scientific community. In doing so, the integrity of the research design and its methods of data collection are open to scrutiny and the researcher is obliged to defend not only the conception but also execution of the research process in its entirety. For the positivist, and their post-positivist successors who have weathered

the post-modernist critique, this issue of validity has been subdivided into subsidiary concerns of internal and external validity and reliability. In simple terms, these concerns relate to whether the research exercise has adopted appropriate techniques and the degree to which the research can be replicated and its findings generalised into general laws about the social world.

Since this investigation rejects the positivist idea of the ‘scientific method’ and its associated research nomenclature, an alternative system of justification is presented that advocates the ontological and epistemological position of constructionism and Habermas’ ideas on criteria of validity. Although in a simplistic manner it is possible to argue ‘that there are no longer any rules or norms to guide inquiry, no overall validity, no universal, unequivocal basis for truth or taste’ (Rosenau, 1992: 133), there are a number of alternative “criteria of quality” that are presented here in a defence of the constructionist position from the critique of positivist rhetoric. Findings from constructionist research seeks to achieve more than simply presenting a set of conclusions because it has a socio-political and ideological dimension. The work of Critical Theory has at its core a commitment to a moral and political enlightenment in that research should be used to change society for the better. In part, this investigation was involved in “risk taking” as it not only sought to empower participants- in an albeit limited parameters- but also sought to pursue the lines of enquiry that they generated. Amongst the most cited criteria used for qualitative research as those variously presented by Lincoln and Guba (Bryman, 2001: 272; Charmaz in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003: 263; Erlandson et al. 1993: 148). For Lincoln and Guba there are three principal “criteria of goodness”: trustworthiness, ethical consideration and authenticity, and these correspond to many of the criteria proffered by those who subscribe to postmodernist or Critical Theory approaches.

For Taylor (2003: 320) the possible range of criteria is wide and can incorporate references to previously published work, its coherence, rigour, authenticity and fruitfulness, as well as its relevance and usefulness. Given that this research

followed on work undertaken by others (Elliott and Crossley, 1994; Lumby, 2002a, 2002b, 2003; Shain and Gleeson, 1999) into the FE sector, it should therefore be viewed as contributing relevant and informed insight to the discourse on post-compulsory education. Habermasian Critical Theory encourages this emphasis on eliciting the views of social actors in an open and free discussion and that this 'ideal speech situation' (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 122) determines the subsequent construction of discourse. For Johnson and Duberley (2000: 121):

These validity claims are: that the sentences speakers utter are comprehensive and their propositions are true; their overtly expressed intentions are honest; and the norms referred to in speech are correct. [and that all participants have] an equal chance to initiate and participate in discourse.

In short, those criteria set out by Taylor (2003) aim to establish whether sufficient consent had been obtained from participants and how their 'voice' was articulated to wider society. In addition to this issue of representation, other critical researchers have advocated the stressed importance of research as a tool for change. Kincheloe and McLaren (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2003; Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 141) describe how that research should have some 'catalytic validity' in that it is used to inform the improvement of the social world.

3.8: The concept of reflexivity and its relevance to this research project:

It is important to recognise that 'the analysis of qualitative data calls for a reflexive account by the researcher concerning the researcher's self and its impact on the research' (Denscombe, 2002: 212). The role of the researcher as the primary research instrument is highlighted in much of the literature on qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln 2003a, 2003b, 2003c; Knoblauch 2004; Mason 2002; Morrison 2002). Indeed, the movement to 'praxeological' or reflexive methodology (Knoblauch, 2004: 357) is increasingly presented as part of the raft of quality criteria advocated by qualitative researchers as they seek to justify their research and its findings in a form of 'methodological accounting' (Mason 2002: 41). It is, however, the aim in this reflexive account to move beyond a rather narrow form of 'methodological reflexivity' in which the impact of the researcher is described to a

more discursive 'epistemic' form of reflexivity and link this to the work of Bourdieu (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 178).

To a number of qualitative researchers (Denscombe 2002; Mason, 2002; Morrison 2002), there are two key principles of reflexive methodology. Firstly, that it is impracticable for researchers to dissociate themselves from the socio-historical and cultural setting within which they undertake their work and to which they bring their own belief system. This observation was evident during this particular research project where profound ideological issues were immanent and where teachers were engaged in a variety of discourses. For the researcher, Bourdieu's ideas on habitus (Koenig 2004: 319) and Gunter's (2002) description of the academic-researcher's habitus were all too immediate, as issues related to representation and legitimation that are discussed elsewhere (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003c) surfaced. As the research progressed, it became increasingly apparent that discourses relating to teacher professionalism and the philosophical bases of education came to the fore. As Lincoln and Guba have recognised (2003:283) the researcher is a complex 'instrument', having several forms: the detached researcher, the historically and socially situated researcher and the situationally created self. It is this notion of positionality that is at the heart of the second principle of reflexivity, namely that one's personal research and political interests should be declared from the outset. Importantly, the critical position taken by the researcher determined much of the methods of data collection and its subsequent analysis- although this was not apparent to informants.

Although a clear theoretical stance had been taken in this research project, at no time during interviewing did the researcher aim to promote an overt agenda or generate a preferred response from informants. In this respect, the researcher was keen to distinguish between a theoretical and methodological positioning and the methods of data collection apparent to informants. The rejection of a positivistic list of questions in favour of a loose collection of discussion points was designed to elicit as individual and wide ranging a response as possible. In order to encourage

free expression from informants, phrases such as: ‘Are there any statements there that are familiar or unfamiliar?’, ‘You seem to be suggesting that....’ ‘How do you feel about that?’ ‘Do you have anything more that you’d like to add?’ were used in a conversational manner. Indeed, the social constructionist methodology was deliberately chosen in order to facilitate listening and responding to informants, and then represent their views effectively and fairly in a variation on the ‘new paradigm of co-operative inquiry’ proposed by Reason and Rowan (1981; cited by Henwood 1996: 27).

The principal reflexive tool adopted was a reflective journal that recorded the main lines of research and emergent issues. For Erlandson et al. (1993: 143) ‘the reflexive journal supports not only the credibility but also the transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study’ and ‘the audit trail leads to dependability and confirmability by allowing an auditor to determine the trustworthiness of the study’ (Erlandson et al., 1993: 151). Although brief, it does correspond to the type of research journal cited in the literature (Silverman, 2002: 15) and can provide some insight into the experience of the researcher. However, the purpose of the journal was not simply to record the research process itself but also to hold a mirror to the researcher himself.

3.9 Generating thematic codes from the data:

Given that the research was framed by an agenda based on Critical Theory, it was not appropriate to adopt the methodological approaches of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Charmaz, 2003b). Although Charmaz’s (2003b) constructionist approach to generating data can be linked to the Habermasian ideal of co-constructing knowledge through discussion, it downplays the wider socio-political and ideological context inherent in interactionist forms of interpretation.

Instead of claiming to generate codes purely from interviews and documentary research, it should be acknowledged that discussions do not take place in a vacuum. Interaction between the researcher and the respondent were conditioned by their

personal and professional context and, of course, by the subject under discussion- leadership of colleges. As Miles and Huberman (1994: 17) recognise the importance of starting analysis with 'some orienting ideas'. Indeed, analysis should not be undertaken once the data has been collected; analysis is an iterative process that is carried on throughout the research as ideas are refined and developed. Silverman (2002: 143) emphasises 'coding... data according to some theoretical scheme should only be the first stage' in the analytical process and that it is important to be able to 'examine how these elements are linked together'. For Miles and Huberman (1994:10) analysis can be defined 'as consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

The original process of coding had identified 341 possible codes from the 20 interviews. There was a variety of initial codes generated in these interviews ranging from 5 to 32, with an average of 17 per interview. Evidentially, some respondents had more to say than others although there was no discernible correlation between role of the respondent with the college hierarchy and the number of generated codes. There was also variety in the subject matter of these initial codes, including references to change, the role of the local LSC, dissemination of good practice and the importance of effective communication. It was recognised that such a large number of initial codes would be problematic to analyse easily and therefore some 'reduction' of the data was undertaken. The process of data reduction is described by Miles and Huberman (1994: 10) as:

The process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes or transcriptions. As data collection proceeds, further episodes of data reduction occur (writing summaries, coding, teasing out themes, making clusters, making partitions, writing memos)... Data reduction is not something separate from the analysis. It is part of analysis. The researcher's decisions – which data chunks to code and which to pull out, which patterns best summarize a number of chunks, which evolving story to tell- are all analytical choices. Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such as way that 'final' conclusions can be drawn and verified.

Fortunately, in addition, a number of these codes were also replicated by a number of participants and, as a result, the initial open coding was reduced to 170 codes.

This initial coding was revisited several times over a period of time in order to reflect on the accuracy of the data generated and to gain further insight into their meaning. As described above, there had during the pilot phase been a temptation to direct the interview. This approach was deliberately minimised during the main phase of the research- albeit at the cost of some tangential and somewhat divergent anecdotes. As a result of this revisiting the data and reflexive self-scrutiny, a higher level of confidence in the validity of the coding was achieved than was the case in the pilot. A sink grouping was also created to compartmentalise the more tangential remarks which did not appear linked to the key research questions.

The process of reducing the data to fewer codes involved identifying codes with thematic links. This process of focussing and thematic development led to the 170 codes being reduced to 25 codes. These codes not only served to compartmentalise the data into categories but also provided an opportunity to develop a hierarchy of themes that could be linked to the literature. The outcome of the coding process is presented below in Table 7.

Coding of the data

Final thematic coding	Initial reduction Coding	In vivo comments / emphasis	Source	Rank in hierarchy	College
Perspectives and issues related to the concept of professionalism	Professionalism	Importance of behaviour; Loyalty	SvW, MKe	3, 2	GS, FH
Perspectives and issues related to the concept of professionalism	Perspectives on professionalism	Changing nature from Old School; Anti-educational work; factory; De-professionalisation; Compliance; De-professionalising effect of Government policy; decreased autonomy; Teachers serving college needs; Deprofessionalisation	MKe, PWi, PWi, TRo, SKe, PSm, DVs, RHu, NPu	2, 3, 3, 2, 3, 2, 3, 2, 2	FH, FH, FH, FS, GS, FS, FS, WI, FH
The role and impact of Government on Colleges	Govt Policy	Critical; Passive acceptance; Disempowerment; Rejection of league tables; Key driver role for colleges; Adherence to Government protocols; Government policy drives work	RHe, SKe, JDy, TRo, SKe, MKe, PSm, JJa, SvW	2, 3, 1, 2, 3, 2, 2, 3, 3	FH, GS, FS, FS, GS, FH, FS, GS, GS

The role and impact of Government on Colleges	Government agencies: LSC and Ofsted	Inspection pressure; Government dictate; Powerless SMT; Conformity to Government; Statement 8 not recognised; Stakeholder role; LSC role and influence; Instrumentalism; Role of Government funding; LSC influence on SMT: Teachers don't fully understand the LSC; Continuity in role of LSC	MKe, TRo, PWi, PWi, TWi, JDy, RHu, DVs, DVs, HCa, RJn, RJn	2, 2, 3, 3, 1, 1, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3	FH, FS, FH, FH, FH, FS, WI, FS, FS, FH, FS, FS
Leadership and management	Managers	Personal criticism; Teacher-managers are not proper managers; Complacency; Positive view of leadership and management; Principal links with Government; Confident and visionary Principal is positive; Discipline role for managers; Need for firm leadership and vision; External profile of the Principal is important; Functional view of HofD role	TRo, TRo, TRo, SvW, SKe, HCa, SvW, HCa, SvW, SvW, RGr	2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 2	FS, FS, FS, FH, GS, FH, GS, FH, GS, GS, GS
Change and its impact	Organisational culture	Conformity; Blame; SMT define role models; Staff alignment; Convincing staff; Cynical; Task-oriented; Dissemination not embedded; Divided staff; Polarised culture; Corporate identity; Heretic; Brow beaten; Negative; Rejection of corporate identity; Lack of idealism	MKe, NPu, MKe, HCa, TWi, PSm, JDy, RGr, HCa, HCa, RHu, RHu, GCr, GCr, PWi, PSm	2, 2, 2, 3, 1, 2, 1, 2, 3, 3, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 2	FH, FH, FH, FH, FH, FS, FS, GS, FH, FH, WI, WI, FS, FS, FH, FS
Change and its impact	Teachers' positioning	Pragmatic self-interest; Parochial staff; Lack of philosophy, Limited view beyond their immediate role; Core role as educators	PSm, PSm, RJn, RGr, JJa,	2, 2, 3, 2, 3	FS, FS, FS, GS, GS
Change and its impact	Change in the education system	Positive view; Needed; Lack of philosophy; Reservations	JDy, SvW, RJn, GCr	1, 3, 3, 3	FS, GS, FS, FS

Change and its impact	Business model of education	Total acceptance; Targets-based; link with language used; Money; language and agenda recognised; Passive compliance with business agenda; Reference to business model	TRo, TRo, SKe, SKe, PSm, PSm, GCr	2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 2, 3	FS, FS, GS, FS, FS, FS, FS
The Colleges as organisations	Organisational context	Flat structure; Flatter structures now; Line management system; SMT role; SMT role; Working party; Diversity of roles between teachers and managers; Functional view of work; Functional view of work; Role within an organisation; Functional view of management; Narrow focus of teachers; Reference to organisation	RHe, NPu, GCr, RJn, GCr, SKe, NWo, SKe, HCa, JJa, JJa, RJn, SKe	2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 3, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3	FH, FH, FS, FS, FS, GS, FH, GS, FH, GS, GS, FS, GS
Strategy and priority in Colleges	Strategic planning	Planning; Strategic planning; Important; Importance	HCa, RHu, BHa, SvW	3, 2, 3, 3	FH, WI, FS, GS
Strategy and priority in Colleges	Decision-making	Consultation; Consultative and democratic; Positive view of staff meetings; arbitrary; lack of clarity; Autocratic HofD; Contrasting styles between Principal and HofD; Undemocratic; dictatorial; Instructional; Exclusive; Exclusive; Exclusive; Imposed; Leadership through fear; Functional view of decision-making	NWo, RGr, HCa, GCr, RJn, JJa, RGr, HCa, RHu, DVs, DVs, RJn, NPu, JJa	2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 2, 3, 2, 3, 3, 3, 2, 3	FH, GS, FH, FS, FS, GS, GS, FH, WI, FS, FS, FS, FH, GS
Operational issues	Policies and procedures	Protective for staff; Reference; Policy statement; Important; De-personalising of processes; DDA/EMA	TWi, NWo, RHu, GCr, PSm, TWi	1, 2, 2, 3, 2, 1	FH, FH, WI, FS, FS, FH
Operational issues	Quality Assurance	SAR; Rejection of target-setting; LSC overseeing the SAR process	RGr, NWo, RJn	2, 2, 3	GS, FH, FS
Work issues	Curriculum 2000	Impact; Impact; more work	SvW, JDy, RHe	3, 1, 2	GS, FS, FH

Work issues	Lack of resources	Insufficient	GCr	3	FS
Work issues	Bureaucracy	Bureaucratic burden	Mke	2	FH
Work issues	Students	Diversity	BHa	3	FS
Communication	Forms of communication	Email; groups; Top-down; top-down; top-down; one-way	JJa, TWi, MKe, TRo, JJa, JJa,	3, 1, 2, 2, 3, 3	GS, FH, FH, FS, GS, GS
Communication	The use of language	Management speak; QA language; Familiarity; Shared and understood; distanced and different; Buzzwords and jargon; Corporate; Barrier; Exclude	TRo, TWi, SKe, HCa, BHa, NPu, GCr; NPu, JJa	2, 1, 3, 3, 3, 2, 3, 2, 3	FS, FH, FS, FH, FS, FH, FS, FH, GS
Affective issues	Praise	Motivational importance; Level 2	BHa, SKe, JJa, NWo, GCr	3, 3, 3, 2, 3	FS, GS, GS, FH, FS
Affective issues	Interpersonal skills of the Principal	Importance, Importance, Imagery used by Principal	SvW, JJa, HCa	3, 3, 3	GS, GS, FH
Affective issues	Emotional context	Changing self identity; Changing self identity; Emotional response to work; Fear of praising staff; Low morale; SMT sensitivity to the staff; SMT tolerance; Passive acceptance of stress and workload; Passive compliance with target-setting; Lack of trust in SMT; Trust is necessary; Post-inspection alienation; Negativity; Negative reaction to corporate goals; Lack of identification; Alienation; Alienation	PSm, JDy, GCr, SKe, PSm, PSm, PSm, NWo, NWo, PSm, JJa, Mke, NWo, DV _s , DV _s , GCr, GCr,	2, 1, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3	FS, FS, FS, GS, FS, FS, FS, FH, FH, FS, GS, FH, FH, FS, FS, FS, FS
Dissemination of professional work	Dissemination of good practice	Sharing; Dissemination; Dissemination of good practice; CPD; Need for professional support; Outside support networks	RHe, RGr, MKe, PSm, GCr, TRo	2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 2	FH, GS, FH, FS, FS, FS

Research method	Difficulty with scenario method	Idealised; Telephone complications; Difficulty; Difficulty	PSm, RGr, JJa, GCr	2, 2, 3, 3	FS, GS, GS, FS
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Table 7: The origins of data codes and their subsequent thematisation.

It was relatively easy to reduce the remaining 25 codes further into a more manageable list of 12 final themes. Since the codes linked quite easily to others, this process of reduction of codes into themes was relatively straight-forward. For example, codes such as praise, emotional context and the interpersonal skills of a principal could be reduced to a theme of 'affective issues', and resources, students and the nature of the examination system could be reduced into a convenient theme relating to 'work issues'. The second and third stages to Miles and Huberman's approach to data analysis (1994), data display and drawing conclusions were implicit within the process described above. Table 7 shows the origins of data codes and their thematisation.

Following the viva voce, a supplementary questionnaire on the nature of leadership and organisational forms was distributed to participants (see Appendix 4). The purpose of this brief survey was to elicit teachers' perceptions of organisational leadership using the models offered by Bottery (2005) and Clegg et al (2005), and to develop those issues generated through co-constructed interviewing. A larger sample of participants (40 compared to 20) was surveyed from a wider cross-section of SFCs (8 compared to 4). The findings from this survey are discussed in the following chapter.

The analysis of documentary material may appear more straightforward than analysing interview transcripts, but there are nevertheless a number of hurdles to overcome. The first obstacle to overcome, as was described above relates to access to useful information. In gaining access to certain documents, it should be acknowledged that others were not obtained. So, although it was possible to download Ofsted inspection reports from the Internet, it was not possible to access the strategic plan or sensitive internal planning documentation from two of the three

colleges surveyed. Such limitations inevitably pre-determined the nature of the analysis. Although colleges are now obliged to adhere to the Freedom of Information Act of 2005, it appeared that they are still able to inhibit access. This problem of access led to greater emphasis being placed on the documentation produced by the local LSC and DfES. This, in itself, was a disguised blessing since it moved the analysis of policy from the micro to the macro level and emphasised the importance of the LSC as a driver of education provision. In particular, the strategic plans published by Surrey LSC proved valuable since these articulated the goals for the LSC and related these to the work of SFCs in the quasi-education market. Instead of examining each SFC in isolation, the move to a macro perspective facilitated a better overview of Government policy and the position of SFCs as providers.

Fundamentally, the main issue that pertained to documentary analysis was very similar to analysing interviews- how to interpret their meaning. In general, internal college publications tended to be aspirational and promotional, whereas Government policy documentation enunciated broad targets and expectations. Both tended to adopt the language of the business school with frequent reference to the jargon of performance and institutional evaluation. As the process progressed, it became clear that the policy directives of Government seemed more important in the development of SFCs than was originally recognised, and that SFCs were actually an extension of Government. The idea of the autonomous SFC seemed increasingly tenuous and, indeed, this raised further questions about the role of college principals. Such an observation fitted neatly into the literature produced by critical theory. Importantly, since much of this documentary research was undertaken prior to the reading on Habermas, the data tended to drive much of the literature research than was initially anticipated.

Chapter 4: Presentation of findings

The purpose of this chapter is to describe what data was obtained from the research process. The interpretation and discussion that follows on from this presentation is contained in the discussion chapter.

4.1 Presenting the data generated from the interview transcripts:

There were twelve themes derived from the coding process, described above in the data analysis section. These twelve core codes are listed below:

- Change and its impact
- Affective issues
- Strategy and priority in colleges
- The role and impact of Government on colleges
- Communication
- The colleges as organisations
- Perspectives and issues related to the concept of professionalism
- Leadership and management
- Operational issues
- Work issues
- Dissemination of professional work
- Research method

Table 8 displays the data relating to the number of references made to particular thematic codes, the number of interviewees who raised related issues and the number of colleges that interviewees represented.

Theme	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
References	33	22	20	19	15	14	11	11	9	6	6	4
Respondents	16	11	12	16	9	9	9	6	8	6	6	4
Colleges	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	2

Table 8: The distribution of responses to the scenario method.

The extracts from interview transcripts presented below provide an insight into the discussions. Responding to the list of scenarios, the interview extracts record the following.

Theme 1: Change and its impact

The nature of change within the education system and its impact on SFCs was identified either directly or indirectly by another theme 33 times by 16 interviewees. This was theme produced the largest number of comments. Some respondents preferred to take a balanced view about the process of change. One participant and a member of SMT saw benefits arising from change:

You know, I think that a lot of changes have had to be made, and I think that for the common good of all, often we have to follow these things because otherwise everyone would be worse off. So, I still think that it, you know, that it's probably right that we have to move forward.

Another respondent also saw advantages arising from change, but also saw disadvantages:

Because ((er)) education historically, in recent history, say for the last 15-20 years, has by necessity had to get more business-like and therefore it has learned from the wider business sphere. It has looked to business and how they operate and has borrowed business practice.... Yes, ((erm)) something needed to be done. Education was floundering and it was inefficient and ineffective in terms of administration, clarity and focus, and it was shaken up to the extent that I think that it has gone too far and I think that's ok. I think that's a normal part of a process of change and, with a bit of luck and a following wind, it might redress to a place of good balance whereas at the moment, I think it is over bureaucratic and therefore education, as I understand it, is being compromised for ((er)) business outcomes.

However, a number of participants appeared to emphasise the impact of change as they saw it, and its implicit disadvantages. One respondent commented:

Because the Government effectively determines every bloody thing we do. ((erm)) And basically we go with the policies and rise with the policies.

Theme 2: Affective issues

The second most prominent theme after change. There were 22 references made to emotional issues by 11 participants. These references referred to affective issues such as emotional well-being, self-identity as well as stress and alienation. In general, there were only negative comments in this category. A number of

participants thought that their own self-image and outlook had changed as a result of their work:

Well, sometimes I long to be back in where I was ((laughter)), so ((erm)) the problem is there's no going back. You know it's difficult to reverse, to go back, so I'd have to in a professional way, you know in a loyal way, ((erm)) follow the guidelines. I'm not necessarily saying that I don't always agree. You know, I think that a lot of changes have had to be made, and I think that for the common good of all, often we have to follow these things because otherwise everyone would be worse off

And another participant thought that:

I feel my work has changed me, and I think so far as that I'm redefining myself somehow makes the process seem far more deliberate than it is. Yes, there are things that I accept for myself now that would have horrified me 25 years ago.... ((erm)) I have mixed feelings about working here.

For other respondents, there was a general disillusionment with senior management and the policies introduced as a result of Government policy:

The glass was half empty rather than half full. ((erm)) I suppose what comes into my mind there is the staff meeting at the start of the year once, when we came in we found that everybody's residuals were projected up onto the OHP in rank order. It wasn't just their classes. When we went to the next step into the next year, the start of the new year, the people with the two lowest on that list weren't in the place.... That was a S[enior]M[anagement]T[eam] start of the year meeting. So that was reviewing the progress from last year, in the sense of these are your residuals, this is what you've got, this is the rank order. It was also done for tutor groups as well so that tutor groups were put into rank order by residual. ((erm)) With that, you know, just represented in that way, there's never any chance to, you know, explain or reflect on that- it's just about blame I think.... Yeah, I think to some extent it's leadership through fear, isn't it? It's about motivation by threat rather than motivation by encouragement or reflection on good practice.

Another participant thought:

I think because I'm old fashioned and I look back to the old days when education had a philosophy and a vision, which was based on something other than market forces.

Importantly, several teachers at one college referred to alienation from the idea of a corporate identity:

I find the idea of corporate very negative, I don't like that one at all. And, but, I do agree that you have to have some sort of strategy for the future and things like that, but I think it's gone way over the top.

Theme 3: Strategy and priority in colleges

Strategic planning and the prioritisation of certain tasks above others as part of New Public Management was identified either directly or indirectly 22 times by 12 interviewees. This was the third most commented on theme and was closely tied to the issue of change. A number of respondents regarded strategic planning as

essential to the smooth workings of a SFC, especially given the competitive environment within which colleges now operate:

Well, I happen to think they're really important and without strategy, without a vision, strategies that ((erm)) that are set up to reach the vision, I think nobody is going anyway without them so they're vital both in the corporate world and ((erm)) the individual. ((erm)) So, I think they're really good.

And, one saw strategic choices influencing the internal procedures of college operations:

Documents and policies are arrived at in terms of the senior Management Team ((erm)) obviously within their meetings looking at Government policy and choosing the method by which they will be adapted and the way they will be delivered within the college, through the college.

However, one respondent seemed to sum up many of the comments made by respondents in this extract from the interview transcript:

Researcher: And is it the sort of language you'd encounter in such meetings?

Respondent: Yep, things like vision and strategy and corporate and moving forward, yep.

Researcher: ((erm)) And what's your response to these sort of statements, and the language used?

Respondent: ((erm)) Probably not as user friendly for those in the main body of the room but I think the whole notion of vision is a Senior Management sort of owned concept, I not sure the average members of staff have the same outlook on it.

Theme 4: The role and impact of Government on colleges

This was an important theme that emerged from interviewing. There were 19 direct or indirect references to the role or impact of Government made by 16 interviewees and many of these references were extended. A number of participants made a connection between Government policy and the changing nature of their work and its context.

One respondent, a member of a college SMT sought to balance the influence of the LSC with its constraints:

Respondent: Well, its role is fulfil a mission set out by the LSC. You know, it's sort of stakeholders and its funders- you know the people who fund us- the Governors and the Trustees, and a lot of them.

Researcher: How do you think the relationship between our funders, the LSC, and the college has changed in say the last ten years, since incorporation?

Respondent: Well, I still think we have a certain amount of freedom. I think that ((erm)) funding has become more ratcheted-up the agenda ((erm)), that we're more aware of it so we're driven in a more business-like way. Whether that increases efficiency, performance, what we do for students, I'm not quite so sure.

Other participants who were not members of the SMT remarked:

Government has got far more involvement in it than it used to have possibly, and so, and there's a lot more discussion education and the quality of education in papers, there's league tables that come out, the Ofsted inspections as well so there's more following Government policy, so we have to work in line with Government policy.

And, another respondent who was not on the SMT thought that:

It's very prescribed; it's ((erm)) being directed by Government really. ((erm)) And the people that are running the college are actually just being- what's the right word- toadies, if you like, for the Government.

Another respondent thought that funding was an important factor in how colleges related to Government:

It's changed enormously. ((erm)) Mainly because of the way that, the way that change is now run by Government is on funding and therefore you don't have the luxury that you had in the past when you could actually go against Government policy because you thought you had a degree of autonomy and you thought a particular view was right. Nowadays, as everything is governed by the financial aspects, you cannot afford to. Clever stuff.

One interviewee highlighted the importance of the relationship between a college and the LSC:

The ((erm)) college as an organisation is driven by putting forward a corporate identity and has a business vision in terms it has targets to meet which are set fundamentally at Governmental level and then are passed down through the LSC at the national, local and regional level. So ((erm)), vision, strategy and corporate are terms that are frequently used.... I think it's fundamental that ((erm)) especially at the local LSC level, ((erm)) that it's fundamental for a college to have the same vision as its local LSC, and if a college management is in dispute with the local LSC, this can have major implications for the college ((erm)). I would say that local LSCs are actually probably more important than the national LSC for college managers.

Another respondent elaborated and seemed to encapsulate the general feedback that related to the impact of Government on teachers:

Respondent: ((erm)) Probably not as user friendly for those in the main body of the room but I think the whole notion of vision is a Senior Management sort of owned concept, I not sure the average members of staff have the same outlook on it.

Researcher: Could you elaborate on that?

Respondent: Well, senior management, I think, have to logistically plan and look forward but they're also looking to working with Government policy- there's very little evidence of change in Government policy and the LSC in Woking. They'll use the LSC as allies. I see by definition the Senior Management Team need to be working with that, an important move for the college, but I don't all members of staff are fully engaged in that. They're preoccupied with their Areas and doing

the best for their students year in year out, possibly developing their course, but under pressure to respond to achievement and retention targets.

Researcher: You refer to the LSC as allies of Senior Management, does that such that there's a conflict between Senior Management and teachers?

Respondent: It could be because I don't think the relationship is fully explained or understood by members of staff between the LSC. So, our own previous experiences, the main person based at Woking would be brought into college events where Senior Management are leading, so they'd be brought in for S[elf] A[ssessment] R[eport] validation as a year ago, if there's a financial hardship problem to do with deficit budget the LSC would be brought in. But if you're working with the LSC you're also working with Government, so the opportunities to explore educational philosophy are certainly very limited.

Researcher: How do you feel about that?

Respondent: Personally, I'm intellectually frustrated by that. It's though management, their running of the college as an organisation, the smooth running of the college and success, in terms of pass rates, and budgeting override the philosophical bit which still distances teachers who are out of line, it distances them from all their training probably- in particular, teachers who are coming out of training college. Most graduate trainees have a sense of education and something of a vision, which then get's bashed on the head by money and Government policy.

Theme 5: Communication

Communication and the use of language were identified on 15 occasions by 9 interviewees as important. In general, respondents identified the specific use of language in their daily work, particularly in terms of a general management vocabulary:

Yeah, Yeah, I think so, we use things like strategic plan, corporate, yeah definitely.

And:

It's what I call management speak. ... Management speak, I feel, something is something you try to impress on the workers- what's required to keep you afloat. And these terms are not always appreciated by the workers.

One respondent expanded on the use of language to offer a critical insight into how language is used by teachers as a device to protect their professional status:

Yeah, I mean there's some buzzwords there, isn't there? Some that you would expect to find there are missing ((erm)) so there's queue of educational kind of buzz words like, you know, like teaching and learning- it's not teaching and learning- its learning and teaching and those kind of things. ((erm)) Performance indicators, assessment objectives, those are the kind of stock phrases that you find in your plan.... I think education is one of the very few professions where, where the jargon is encouraged, and is seen as a kind of mystique building instrument. So, in medicine, law and in all the other professions people are actively trying to remove jargon, remove language which is deliberately opaque and in education were bringing in more and more of it. In my current school, we have a

system where we send out documentation for parents to look at in advance of one of our tutoring sessions, and we have to have a two page sheet which goes with it to explain what the language means rather than just write that sheet that we produce ourselves in language that everybody can understand.... It's because of the de-professionalisation of the job, isn't it? I mean by making language opaque, we can try to raise our profile as a profession that requires a great deal of inside knowledge and a great deal of ((erm)) professional expertise that just can't be done by anybody. Of course, you know, Government policy is doing in education making it a job that anybody can do now, you don't have to have a degree now. You can be a teaching LSA, you can be a classroom assistant teacher without any kind of professional experience really, and teachers can be sitting in a room and have no contact with students at all and prepare lessons, mark work and never actually come into contact any pupil at all.

Theme 6: Colleges as organisations

There were 14 direct references to organisational aspects of teachers' work, such as structure and functional roles made by 9 interviewees. This was the sixth most frequent theme identified by participants. There was a recognition that organisational structures had 'de-layered' in recent years, as well as tacit acceptance of lines of responsibility and the benefits of designated roles and accountability- all of which could be linked to technical-rational conceptions of management and organisational behaviour.

I have got various roles... (inaudible) within each of those sort of promotions my roles have changed obviously the first is more personal rather than pastoral. I've been a tutor for goodness knows how and I'd always taken it very seriously- doing more than.... I suppose the only difference is, I was surprised how little there was in terms of difference between roles.

Another respondent focussed on organisational structure:

There's actually a very flat structure so far as qualifications is concerned- for the most part and so it's very sensible for managers to actually listen to their colleagues because they're just as likely to have good ideas as they are and the directorate at [name of college] are not averse to asking the person in charge of that particular area.

And another participant thought that:

Well, yeah I mean think probably what's happening is a structure that has become flatter and flatter over a long time is going to become more and more hierarchical. ((erm)) You know, you want to be, you're going to have a great tranche of effectively, kind of, drone teachers with no degree, no professional expertise who receive lesson plans and do as they're told and then you're going to have teaching administrators who are going to be having contact with kids but they're going to set work according to SATs and CATs, and previous experience in the streaming of the children into groups and hopefully sort the qualification all by group and not really know the classes and then you'll get, the managers who deal with the budget implications of that and provide resources and deal with plant and that kind of thing.

Theme 7: Perspectives and issues related to the concept of professionalism

The issue of professional identity generated 11 references from 9 interviewees. The following extracts from the interview transcripts illustrate the concerns relating to the changing status and autonomy of teachers and an increasingly instrumentalist approach to education. Some comments can be directly linked to the debate on proletarianisation and de-skilling which appears in the literature review.

It is, if you want the terminology, de-professionalising teachers. ... I feel it's sad. As an individual, I won't be here much longer. I feel sad for people coming into it and I feel it's probably one of the greatest factors in people leaving teaching.

And, another respondent thought that:

Professionalism in its true sense- yes. We've become to a great degree ((erm)) people who are serving the examination system.... Disappointed at myself. ... Disappointed in my profession.

Whilst another focussed on the de-professionalising nature of work:

I am being directed to do things that ((erm)) I feel are not education and so I'm not now being a professional person, in that way I think. That's probably how it's impacted.... Well, only that at [name of college] I haven't heard anybody say that Government policy should be resisted. It tends to take Government policy and try to act on, you know, try and get it in place as it were in the college. ... ((erm)) It's very ((erm)) very much like a factory. And since, thirty years ago I worked in a factory and I know what it's like there, and ((erm)) it's, it's now, you know, it's become get the product in an one end, increase the value on that product and get rid of it at the other end. I don't think there's very much ((erm)) what I would call education.

A younger entrant to teaching thought that the idea of professionalism had been defined in recent years:

Well, it's got to be unhealthy as an educationalist but as a realist, it's just necessary isn't it.... In my understanding of it, yeah. I think, well no, a realist, well, I guess that would depend on whether in terms of the way the education is set up that are maybe beyond my control but then maybe there is a formula for it where you can be both a realist and an educationalist. I don't think we've got that.... Yes, definitely.... Because there are so many limitations on, so as an educationalist it would be good to offer, perhaps you know, subjects no matter what demand is and you know and just because educationally they're good or to be able to say that right we're going to give as much time as students need for this and, you know, but obviously you can't do that because of the limitations so yeah, of course, it's going to put a limit on that.... I think we've all got a very different idea of professionalism, from what we, well, perhaps what's then has been in the past in education. I think professionalism is a lot more about ((erm)) business, more of a business ((erm)) background and, yeah, sorry can't think of any. But yeah.

Another thought that professionalism was primarily associated with norms of behaviour more than autonomy in the classroom:

All managers are expected to be extremely professional and to work very hard. There's a very strong, high work ethic in this place. ... Seems very professional.

However, this extract seemed to sum up the feelings of the respondents as a whole:

Compromised very often. ((erm)) I try to run, trying to manage to teach to an examination system, which is far too all enveloping ((erm)) so that a lot of the time I am teaching to an exam and not teaching to actually educate.

Theme 8: Leadership and management

Leadership and management generated 11 references from 6 respondents during interviewing. Some of the reference codes shared similarities with those initial codes subsumed within the strategy and priority and change and its impact core codes.

A number of participants complimented the principal on their leadership style and viewed their management in a positive manner. A status outside the institution and good interpersonal skills appear to be a valued characteristic of effective principalship:

Both of the principals that I've worked with here have got a very high profile, not only within the college, but within the community and they've also got a very high ((erm)) good reputation both locally and nationally and I think they almost -they gain respect because of the work they've done elsewhere- as well as within the college actually.... It's very, very strong, leads from example, works very hard, but is approachable. Makes it his business to spend a break time with every member of staff on the staff, including me, and I couldn't believe that somebody worked there four and a half hours a week, would be included as somebody that he would spend time with. So that spoke of volumes to me, including the cleaners, including the groundsmen, he spent one break time with everybody during in his first term.

Another respondent highlighted the difference as she saw it between one principal and another and the importance of links with Whitehall.

I don't know if I can say this but in colleges that I've been at before, or involved with before, the Principal seems to have more of an input into, you know, going up to various working groups and things that are much closer to Government and Government policy and here, if she is, I don't think there's much of a dialogue about it. So nobody says, [name of Principal] can you raise that next time.

In addition to these comments on the external prominence of the principal and their interpersonal skills, strength of will also appeared to be regarded as an asset:

What I mean by strong is a useful thing because ((erm)) decisions have to be made and you can't shilly-shally about, you have to be prepared to make decisions and I think that sometimes when there's difficult decisions to make, which there certainly will be in that position of responsibility, you have to be clear sighted and sometimes strong to be able to make them- even if they're the wrong ones, they've just got to be made.

A larger number focussed on the work of line managers and management more generally:

I suppose there's that sense of having managerial responsibility... and in terms of making sure that everybody else is doing the right sort of things in terms of recruitment, retention, achievement. Trying to keep others on track.

One respondent chose to distinguish between the leadership qualities of his principal and his former line manager:

On the whole, [the principal] he's an encourager and he looks for the positives, as opposed to getting bogged down in the negatives. But at a departmental level, it was the reverse. The Head of Department was very negative and was not an encourager and would always look for faults rather than praising good practice and initiative.

Another interviewee saw managers as relatively ineffectual compared to the commercial sector:

I see that as a criticism of individual managers of colleges. They go totally hand in hand but the people who manage businesses are far more professional because they've been trained to manage businesses, we'll say, whereas the people I see generally- but improving- ((erm)) managing in education are not true business people.

Theme 9: Operational issues

There were relatively few comments made by respondents relating to college-wide operational issues. Only 9 references were made about operational concerns by 8 participants. In general, these comments related to internal policies or procedures relating to, for example, student support or quality assurance systems.

So, if I think of what's created extra work for my area, really connections has been huge thing, EMA has been a huge thing, it depends on what comes together, the DDA, now got child protection coming on board that's all, you know, support for students ((erm)) set by the Government. You've then got increasing numbers and supporting students in an environment where people are very conscious of retention and achievement and you're trying to balance that against the individual needs- and sometimes there are conflicts ((erm)) just got bigger and more, and probably more, diverse I would have said.... ((erm)) I think ((erm)) in the context of leadership, I think those in teams and working with teams and ((erm)) setting clear targets for people all of that is very important, and making people aware of the relevance of, I suppose, what you're doing 'cos a lot of the things we do seem to be a long way from being in front of the class, you know, trying to get over your subject- although that can be a subject. But, in fact, all those policies and procedures, it's sort of convincing people really that they are there to protect them. Yeah, systems are there to protect people no matter how good they are, as well as get in the way.

Other interviewees saw some operational tasks as unrewarding and counterproductive. These views tended to be related to quality assurance systems rather than to student support:

It's lip service only. I really like working here; I've loads of respect for loads of people at this institution including senior management but I can't say this about this process necessarily, you know, our opinions are really valued but in this one it's lip service. You know targets, we're invited to come up with targets for retention, achievement and then if there not quite what they should have been, then they just get us for consultation, so makes you a little bit cynical about targets that you drew up. And, I'll be honest, I don't really pay them much attention.

And, another thought that:

We've come across setting out targets for the next year in terms of recruitment, retention and achievement but I've never seen anyone ever asked what resources what resources we would be using in order to meet these targets.

Theme 10: Work issues

There were 6 references to work issues made by 6 teachers. Those codes categorised into this thematic code were quite similar to the previous theme. The distinction drawn between the two categories tended to reflect whether an initial code related more to college policy and procedures rather than day-to-day issues that were more pertinent to individuals. There were two dominant initial codes within this category: increasing workload and the limited amount of resources made available to meet targets:

I would say the amount of that paper work and activities that we do that aren't actually involved in education are detrimental, I'd say. I think that students had a better deal although league tables might not think this when people spent all their time on their teaching rather than all the other bits. Well we're certainly given targets but in terms of the latter part of that, I'm not sure we get that much we're asked to best to achieve the targets and what resources we'd need to meet the targets. That's less likely.

Theme 11: Dissemination of professional work

It was decided to differentiate the dissemination of professional work from issues relating to professional status because the data relating to theme 7 seemed to question the changing nature of professionalism, whereas theme 9 is primarily concerned with the improvement of existing practice. There were 6 references made to the importance of sharing good practice and mutual support. The interview data suggests that some teachers see a need for more professional support as they come under greater pressure to produce results:

Where somebody has done good work and it is then going to be a model for the college in the future, it could be something like good practice in S[elf] A[ssessment] R[eport]s or something.

Another participant thought in terms of changing the culture of the college through training:

Statement 7 is a bit like the guy we had in the training, I forgot who it was, (inaudible) yes that where that comes from, it was the section where the Principal and the managers need to pull together.

Theme 12: Research method

The conduct of the interview itself caused four participants to pass comments. In general, comments related to some questions where they found it difficult to respond. One interview was conducted over the telephone which caused problems. Reference is made to the difficulty of conducting interviews because it highlights the practical issues that confront the reflexive researcher:

They struck me as rather idealised.... They struck me as scenarios that were much simpler than what happens in practice.

And another remarked:

It's all right if you're educated.... Well, your average person in the street wouldn't understand it. ...Well, I understand it because I'm educated.

4.2 Arriving at a clearer perspective of the data:

It is possible to categorise these 12 themes into three coalesced areas of debate: system-wide issues, organisational issues and personal issues. The first area of debate related to the nature of the education system was linked to the themes of change (1), the role of Government (4) and perspectives on professionalism (7). The second area of debate related to the nature of colleges as organisations and encapsulated the following themes: the relevance of strategy and prioritisation (3), communication (5), colleges as organisations (6), and, leadership and management (8). The third area of debate concerned personal (2) and pedagogical issues (9, 10, 11 and 12). Displaying these categories as in table 9 provides greater insight into the scale of responses and in doing so, facilitates an overview of the key issues of debate.

System-wide issues:

Theme	1	4	7	Total:
References	33	19	11	63
Respondents	16	16	9	41
Colleges	4	4	4	All

Organisational issues:

Theme	3	5	6	8	Total:
References	20	15	14	11	60
Respondents	12	9	9	6	36
Colleges	4	3	3	3	All

Personal and pedagogical issues:

Theme	2	9	10	11	12	Total:
References	22	9	6	6	4	47
Respondents	11	8	6	6	4	35
Colleges	3	4	3	3	2	All

Table 9: The scope and distribution of issues generated from the scenario method.

This process of categorisation into three distinct areas highlights the emphasis placed by interviewees on the impact of change in recent years. This data would suggest that teachers are not only aware of the process of change but also recognise that change has implications for colleges as organisations- and are also conscious of the role of Government in effecting change.

4.3 Analysing specific responses to scenarios:

Another way of presenting the data obtained is to consider the frequency of responses to specific scenarios. Table 10 shows the distribution of responses to all ten scenarios. The list of scenarios, and what these were related to, are described below. The table indicates the theme of the scenario and how often it was likely to have occurred at college.

Scenario number	Focus of scenario	Responsibility	Most recognised
1	Organising staffing	Management	Equal 5 th
2	Motivation	Leadership	7 th
3	Setting out direction	Leadership	3 rd
4	Critical Theory		8 th
5	Controlling	Management	2 nd
6	Target-setting	Management	1 st
7	Aligning staff	Leadership	Equal 5 th
8	Critical Theory		8 th
9	Setting out direction	Leadership	4 th
10	Planning and budgeting	Management	6 th

Table 10: The distribution and ranking of responses to all ten scenarios.

Given the differing institutional cultures that exist in colleges, it was anticipated that there should be some areas of divergence as well as convergence in the data. In terms of divergence, FS and FH showed the greatest variance in terms of statements 4 and 8. Whereas in statement 4, 7 from 8 respondents in FS did not recognise such a scenario, there were only 3 from 8 in FH who did not recognise this type of occurrence. In contrast, in statement 8, whereas there were 3 respondents from FS who did not recognise this event, all 7 of the participants from FH did. This suggests a possible variance on a theme: although the manifestation of criticism within colleges varies, it does not occur overtly. Indeed, 19 of the 20 participants did not identify either statement 4 or 8 as a common occurrence at their institution. What is more common to teachers is the use of managerial language, all those participants who were described as members of SMT recognised statements 3, 5, 6 and 7 as regular events. These four scenarios were identified across colleges and by all ranks as being important. It is clear from this data that college managers are conscious of their corporate goals and organise their staff as they see fit. The data associated with these scenarios would suggest that there is a tendency towards transactional forms of leadership and management in these colleges, together with a top-down mode of communication. Although there was a relatively high level of recognition from those teachers in FS and FH for most statements, there was a lower level of recognition of scenarios from those teachers employed in GS. Why this should be the case, remains uncertain although the relatively small sample from GS may be a factor. Figure 4 shows the overall frequency of responses from all the interviews.

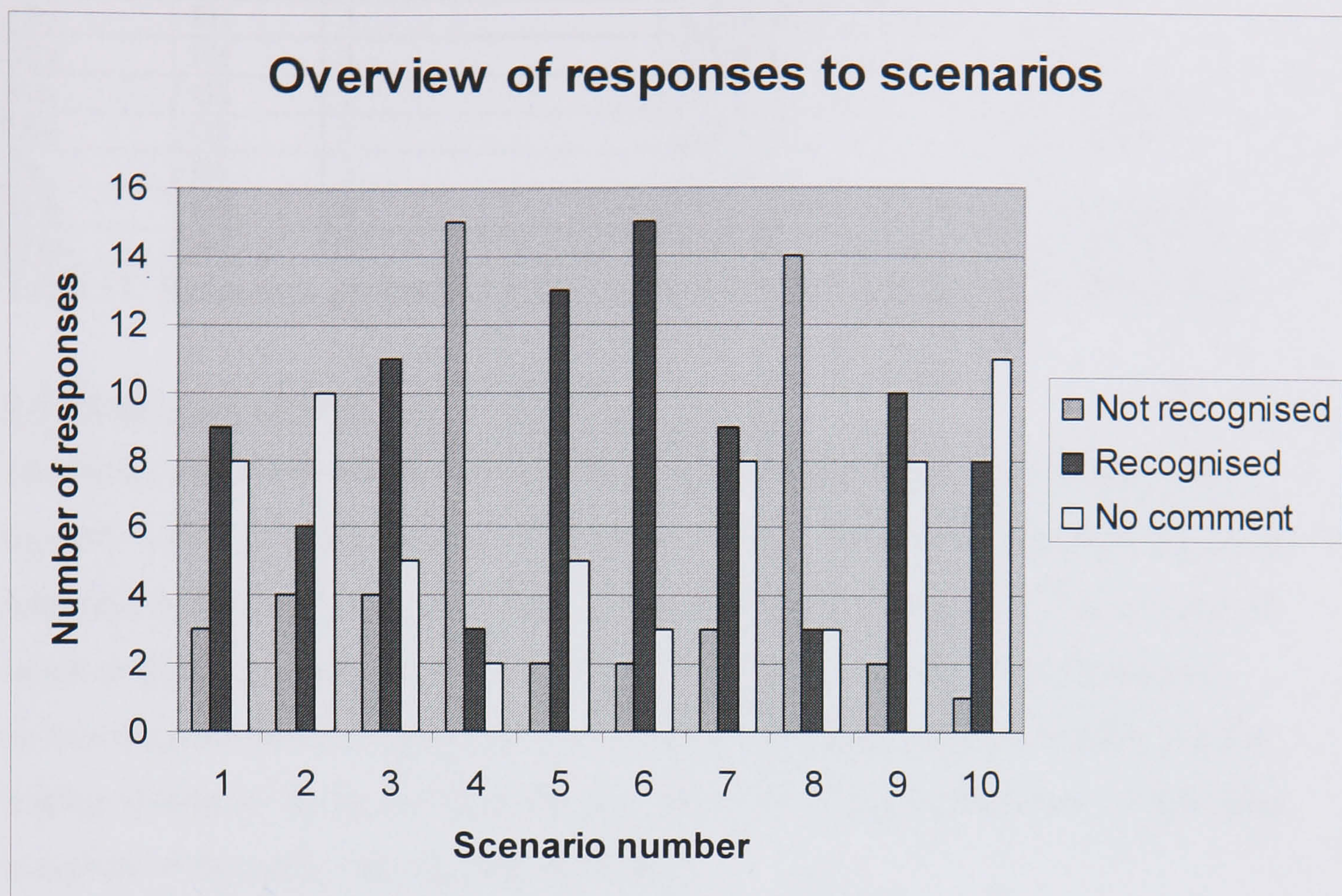


Figure 4: The overall frequency of responses from all scenario interviews.

Although Figure 4 displays the overall distribution of responses to the list of scenarios, it cannot show any difference between colleges or between strata in the colleges' hierarchies. For a detailed breakdown of the data according to rank and college, reference should be made to Table 11.

Participant	College	Status in hierarchy 1= SMT 2= Middle Manager 3= main scale teacher / course leader	Scenario identified as familiar	Scenario identified as unfamiliar
RCo	FS	1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	2 & 4
JDy	FS	1	3, 5, 6, 7, 10	4 & 8
PSm	FS	2	1, 5, 6, 7, 9	4 & 8
TRo	FS	2	4 & 6	
DVs	FS	3	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	4
GCr	FS	3	1, 5, 6, 9, 10	4 & 7
RJn	FS	3	3, 6 & 10	4 & 8
BHa	FS	3	2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9	4
TWi	FH	1	5, 6, 7, 8, 9	4, 8
NPu	FH	2	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10	2, 4 & 8
RHe	FH	2	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	8
MKe	FH	2	2, 3, 9 & 10	8
NWo	FH	2	1, 2, 4, 5, 6	3 & 8

PWi	FH	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10	8
HCa	FH	3	3, 5 & 9	4 & 8
RGr	GS	2		1-9 inclusive
SKe	GS	3	1, 2, 5, 6	3, 4 & 8
JJa	GS	3	1, 6 & 9	4
SVw	GS	3		1-10 inclusive
RHu	WI	2	3, 5, 10	1, 4 & 8

Table 11: Responses generated by the scenario method sorted by rank and college.

4.4 Information derived from documentary research:

The information derived from policy documents of the DfES and the Surrey LSC, together with those internal papers from the colleges themselves, highlight the close relationship that exists between SFCs, Government and its agencies. The content of much of the documentation produced by the LSC related to the identification of economic priorities, an exploration of the capacity of educational providers and the setting of targets. An extract from the national LSC's Annual Statement of Priorities is typical of the policy documentation found:

The LSC has an important leadership role, providing drive and direction to the delivery of world-class learning and skills. Our priorities are:

1. Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults.
2. Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant Learning opportunities.
3. Transform Further Education so that it attracts and stimulates more business investment in training and skills development.
4. Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we Provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs.
5. Strengthen the LSC's capacity to work effectively at a regional level- Particularly with Regional Development Agencies and Regional Skills Partnerships.
6. Improve the skills of the workers who are delivering public services.

Those documents obtained from the colleges were primarily concerned with how they are to meet the targets set out by Government, as is discussed in the literature review. For example, an Annual Report from one SFC reflected on its recent progress, whereas another sought to establish its strategy for the next five years. It is clear from examination of internal documentation and organisational charts that SFCs are changing in order to respond to those pressures placed upon them by Government policy and the demands of local LSCs. For example, at FS the organisational structure was altered in 2005-06 to reduce the number of managers

concerned with the traditional A Level curriculum and increase the emphasis placed on adult education, skills for life and vocational provision.

All the colleges had been inspected by Ofsted in recent years. Those reports produced by Ofsted are pre-occupied with an evaluation of the position of colleges and the amount of progress made by leadership and management in reaching these targets. Leadership and management are graded by Ofsted and references within inspection reports highlight their pivotal role in effecting organisational change. At FH and GS, for example, leadership and management were described as 'outstanding'. It was evident from the inspection reports that inspectors were concerned with issues such as strategic direction, staff involvement, the rigour of quality assurance systems and value for money. A number of extracts from these reports provide insights into internal decision-making and communication systems within these SFCs:

The principal and governors have set a clear and appropriate direction for the college which staff fully understand and support. Staff value leadership which is motivating, open and consultative. (GS Ofsted inspection report, 2005)

Communication within the college is excellent. Staff are consulted regularly and contribute to the development of policy.... Strategic aims are clear, simply stated and all staff are provided with a clear summary of the strategic plan. (FH Ofsted inspection report, 2001)

Indeed in 'Why Colleges succeed' (November 2004), Ofsted state that the most successful colleges:

Are characterised by an open and consultative style.
Without exception, communication in the colleges surveyed is a strength.
Communication with staff help to create a culture in which staff morale is high, staff feel valued and share a common purpose with their managers.
This shared vision is a critical prerequisite for success.
Staff are consulted regularly and contribute to the development of policy.

Although references are made to consultation and the involvement of staff in the development of policy, this invariably takes place within the parameters established by the strategic plan and the discourse initiated by senior managers. It is not a process that sets out to challenge corporate goals or Government policy; rather, it should be viewed as being a process of institutional legitimation. These reports also suggest that leadership is primarily conceived in terms of transactional processes.

There are no references in the general commentaries about dispersed, moral or pedagogical forms of leadership that would be evident in democratic institutions. Interestingly, the prominence of affective issues in the data suggests that a significant number of teachers, especially in FS, are alienated from the practice of leadership in their institution.

It is therefore clear from these documents that these organisations are tied together in a complex relationship with Government agencies and that these bodies affect the evolution of colleges in terms of their goals, provision and form. Given these conditioning constraints, it is difficult to see how much manoeuvre the leaders of SFCs actually possess.

4.5 Developing the analysis beyond the first phase of research:

The picture painted by the data generated by through the scenario method of interviewing was one in which the concept of teacher professionalism was being redefined in terms of performativity and the exigencies of the practice of New Public Management (Bottery, 1996). In order to elicit the views of teachers in a variety of settings, a leadership questionnaire survey was distributed to a number of teachers in a range of SFCs. The questionnaire was designed to elicit participants' responses to those descriptors generated by Bottery (2005) and Clegg et al (2005). Participants could choose between four options from Bottery (2005) that described leadership behaviours: entrepreneurship, pragmatism, public sector advocacy and welfare state advocacy, and between three alternatives from Clegg et al (2005) describing Pre-modern, Modern and Postmodern organisational forms. A total of 40 participants were surveyed from 8 SFCs, although the core sample from FS, FH and GS were retained. As several participants had experience of more than one SFC, they were asked to compare Principals. The data obtained from the leadership survey questionnaire produced a number of interesting findings. Although there was some variation in the data, there were some clear conclusions that could be drawn from the research.

Participant	College	Entrepreneur	Pragmatist	Public sector advocate	Welfare state advocate
JDy	FS		/		
SGi	FS	/			
BHa	FS		/		
PSm	FS		/		
TRo	FS		/		
SDw	FS		/		
ARo	FS		/		
ISt	FS		/		
DSt	FS		/		
AWi2	FS		/		
DVs	FS	/			
JYe1	FS		/		
MKe2	FS		/		
SWe1	FS		/		
JJa1	FS		/		
ESk3	FS		/		
GCr	FS		/		
JTh	FS		/		
	18	2	16	0	0
MKe	FH	/			
HCa	FH		/		
NPu	FH	/			
PWi	FH		/		
AWi1	FH	/			
Esk1	FH	/			
BDu	FH		/		
CSl2	FH	/			
	8	5	3	0	0
SWe2	QM	/			
ESk2	QM		/		
SGi2	AL			/	
KAg	ES		/		
JJa3	RE	/			
RHu	WI		/		
	6	2	3	1	0
JAn	GS		/		
CCh	GS		/		
SVw	GS	/			
JJa2	GS	/			
SKe	GS		/		
RGr	GS		/		
JYe2	GS	/			
CSl	GS		/		
	8	3	5	0	0
Total	40	12	27	1	0

Table 12: A table of principal behaviour using the categories suggested by Bottery (2005)

Participant	College	Pre-modern	Modern	Postmodern
JDy	FS	/		
SGi	FS		/	
BHa	FS		/	
PSm	FS		/	
TRo	FS	/		
SDw	FS		/	
ARo	FS		/	
ISt	FS	/		
DSt	FS	/		
AWi2	FS	/		
DVs	FS	/		
JYe1	FS	/		
MKe2	FS	/		
SWe1	FS	/		
JJa1	FS	/		
ESk3	FS		/	
GCr	FS		/	
JTh	FS	/		
	18	11	7	0
MKe	FH	/		
HCa	FH	/		
NPu	FH		/	
PWi	FH	/		
AWi1	FH	/		
ESk1	FH			/
BDu	FH	/		
CSl2	FH		/	
	8	5	2	1
SWe2	QM		/	
ESk2	QM			/
SGi2	AL			/
KAg	ES	/		
JJa3	RE			/
RHu	WI	/		
	6	2	1	3
JAn	GS	/		
CCh	GS		/	
SVw	GS			/
JJa2	GS			/
SKe	GS			/
RGr	GS			/
JYe2	GS			/
CSl	GS			/
	8	1	1	6
Total	40	19	11	10

Table 13: A table of organisational forms using the criteria modelled on Clegg et al (2005)

Modelling the behaviour of a Principal and the context within which a college operates in an important step in understanding the reality of leadership. Bottery (2005) has offered a typology of Principal leadership behaviour. For Bottery (2005) there are four ways of conceptualising Principal leadership: the entrepreneurial, the pragmatist, the public sector advocate and the welfare state advocate. Given the movement towards site-based management and the pressures engendered through New Public Management (Bottery, 1996), this modelling of behaviour could provide a useful insight into how Principals respond to their context and how they envisage the future strategy of their organisation. If it were the case that teachers thought that Principals objected or opposed Government policy, then it could be expected that the data would point to the existence of public sector or welfare state conceptions of leadership. If, however, the data suggested that Principals tended towards co-operation and conformity, then it could be anticipated that behaviours identified with entrepreneurship or pragmatism would be generated.

Interpreting the data generated by the survey of leadership and organisational forms, suggests that a clear majority of those questioned (27 out of 40) saw pragmatism as the defining characteristic of SFC Principals. Indeed, at FS there was an overwhelming majority (16 out of 18) who identified the Principal as being pragmatic. The exception to this observation is FH where a slight majority (5 out of 8) saw their Principal as being entrepreneurial. This response is understandable since that individual is regarded throughout the SFC sector as being a national figure with close links with the Government. However, in general, it is clear that Principals are not perceived by their staff as working towards those values normally associated with working in the public sector and enshrined in the idea of a welfare state. The data obtained suggests that Principals are obliged to work within the parameters defined by the State and, that to a degree, they do engage in experimental forms of leadership.

Using the typology presented by Clegg et al (2005), it was apparent that the largest number of teachers surveyed perceived principals as displaying behaviours

associated with pre-modern forms of organisational leadership, totalling 19 out of the 40 participants. This was surprising as the modernist conception of leadership had been anticipated to be the more likely to be identified by teachers, especially given the context of an organisational life that has been conditioned by the ethos and practices of New Public Management (Bottery, 1996). This suggests that leadership is still associated with the office of Principal and the manner in which that role is conducted.

Interestingly, the data generated by one SFC [GS] did again suggest some variety of experience, especially from those who had worked at more than one SFC. A clear majority at this college saw the principal as sharing the characteristics normally associated with postmodernist ideas on leadership and organisational work. Why this should be the case is intriguing. Comments from GS respondents suggested that: 'The Principal is open, reflective and consults', 'trusting of his staff... respectful of their efforts... supportive' and 'the Principal is keen to recognise the success of teachers.... The Principal effectively devolves control of operational matters and empowers teachers to deliver their education in any way which improves performance'. Responses such as these points to a relatively high level of trust in the ability of teachers to deliver continuous improvement without the need to intervene and 'micro-manage' on behalf of the principal and a culture of empowerment. Such a situation would suggest that ideas on transformational leadership (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, 2000) are being implemented in some form in a number of SFCs. It is also instructive to note that GS enjoys an excellent reputation scoring very highly in its key performance measures of recruitment, retention and achievement, and achieving an almost perfect range of 'outstanding' grades from Ofsted. Whether this level of performance is the result of this particular form of leadership or other factors, such as organisational culture, is unclear. This college is fortunate in the sense that it is able to choose the most able applicants in south west Surrey and enjoys a healthy financial balance.

In contrast to GS, the majority of respondents from other SFCs thought that their Principals adopted leadership behaviours that approximated more closely to pre-modern (19 respondents) and modernist (11 respondents) conceptions of organisational leadership. Again, the personal characteristics of the Principal and organisational context may be important in understanding why teachers respond as they have. Respondents from both FH and FS reported that how they felt subordinated to the principal. At FH one respondent commented that: 'the will of the Principal generally wins over teachers acting as they see fit'. Respondents in FS were particularly critical of their Principal: 'the Principal pays lip-service to responding to staff wishes, all projects are either led or have to be authorised by the Principal' and that 'values managers over teachers- has created a toadying management group- isn't fair or clear sighted... no real contact with staff'. Such responses suggest the alienation of at least a proportion of the staff, and an opposing conception of leadership compared to that practised at GS. Importantly, organisational context may be just as relevant here since in contrast to GS, FS was confronting a financial crisis and declaring redundancies during the period of research. For one senior manager at FS, there was 'too much change of a small college... [which it] doesn't welcome it just has to comply'. Such findings would suggest that the financial health of a college may be a critical factor in the organisational climate of the organisation and that the responses to this context may influence the dominant culture and sub-cultures of an organisation. However, it is also the degree to which staff are trusted and brought into the decision-making process that determines the nature and health of an organisational climate.

Perhaps it is easier to embark on a policy of empowerment when the context is favourable, as in the case of GS? Alternatively, this data may indicate that leaders' behaviours are indicative of more fundamental differences in the practice of leadership. This data suggests that leadership is often perceived to be largely personal in nature. For many teachers, it is the people-management skills of a Principal that is the defining characteristic of leadership.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how the data generated relates to those key research questions that were presented in the Introduction, and to see if any further issues arose as a result of the research undertaken. The three key research questions were:

- How has leadership been described by those engaged in the discourse on leadership?
- How can the leadership of SFCs be described and explained?
- Is it possible to theorise about the nature of SFCs as organisational models?

There were several issues that emerged during the research that should also be discussed; these additional questions are:

- Are SFCs merely conduits for the LSC?
- How do teachers view their professional identity?

5.1: How has leadership been described by those engaged in the discourse on leadership?

The discourse on educational leadership is a contested arena. It is, however, an arena not dominated by teachers but by academics and Government policy-makers. In this sense, teachers are consumers of knowledge, a knowledge that is created and imposed for their apparent benefit. Critical theory, feminist and neo-Marxian interpretations of knowledge and power can usefully inform a discussion on how and why an orthodoxy of knowledge is constructed by the State in order to effect a political imperative. The data appears to suggest that teachers accepted leadership as a reality of college organisation; their primary concerns related to whether it was effective and sensitive to the needs of colleagues.

The concept of educational leadership is dynamic and determined as much by the ideological outlook of Government as by educational professionals. The idea of educational leadership is a relatively recent construct. As Dale (1989) recognises, it is the descendent of earlier forms of organisational control such as 'Educational Administration' or 'Organisational Management' and a response to the imperative to

control those who serve the State. Habermas' reference to the crisis in the legitimation of the State and its education system is an important conceptual framework within which to trace the changing complexion of public policy in recent decades. It is possible to discern an evolution in the practice of college leadership since 1993. During the initial post-incorporation phase in the 1990s, leadership appears to have been concerned primarily with grappling with the exigencies of institutional autonomy in a quasi-market. However, since the creation of the Learning and Skills Sector in 2001, colleges appear to be more preoccupied with serving the policy goals of Government. Although colleges have always been concerned with co-operating with Government, there is now a greater emphasis placed on the importance of conforming to the State because of the more stringent financial penalties and the Ofsted inspection regime that now exist.

5.2 How can the leadership of SFCs be described and explained?

As Lumby (2002b:1) has pointed out:

Studies of college leaders have generally been small scale and largely dependent upon self-reported data.... The overall picture which emerges is one of leadership and management roles strongly differentiated by hierarchy, those at different levels not only undertaking different activities but impelled by different values.

However, Lumby (2002a) contends that much of the literature produced in respect to the FE sector has been generated by studies (Elliott and Hall, 1994; Gleeson and Shain, 1999) of GFECs, not SFCs. For Lumby there are significant differences in the organisational mission of SFCs and their culture which distinguishes SFCs from the larger GFECs.

According to Lumby (2002a) SFCs have followed a different evolutionary path compared to GFECs since incorporation in 1993. Lumby (2002a) offers a number of possible reasons for the development of SFCs. SFCs tend to be more stable organisations with less turn-over of staff, fewer transient part-time staff, and fewer episodes of restructuring as well as being a profession-based culture. SFCs have also tended to face less competition than GFECs, since they hold a niche market in post-

16 education. Importantly, Lumby (2002a) argues that the nature of managerial activity has developed differently in SFCs compared to GFECs.

The data generated by Lumby (2002a) suggests that SFCs were less pre-occupied with the financial vagaries of the education quasi-market than GFECs were. For Lumby (2002a: 5) 'it would seem that SFCs have largely avoided the gulf which has opened between staff at different levels in GFECs and have maintained a professionally-based learner-centred culture'. For Lumby (2002b:7) this different evolutionary path has important consequences for the practice of leadership in SFCs:

In SFCs, the tasks are divided by levels, with middle managers in practice focused on teaching and learning and senior managers more closely involved with financial and systems management. One might therefore argue that leadership appears to be systemic in GFECs and distributed by hierarchy in SFCs....

The leadership experience of SFCs seems to show that the traditional hierarchical division in management responsibility results in greater focus on leadership for learning.

The implications of Lumby's research (2002a, 2002b) are that not only do SFCs operate differently but also the delineation of responsibility differs. There is contained within this division of roles a commentary on how managers and teachers see their role and competencies in SFCs and GFECs. In SFCs there is a clear demarcation of role into different forms of leadership: professional-based and organisational-focused. Whereas in SFCs, financial and strategic planning has been restricted largely to senior managers, in GFECs financial accountability and planning is more devolved and assigned to lower levels within the organisational hierarchy. This has had advantages for SFC teachers in the sense that they have enjoyed greater empowerment to design their provision as they saw fit. However, it has also tended to isolate many teachers from decision-making. For many SFC teachers, decision-making has been limited to developing the quality of their work or sharing ideas: they have therefore tended to think in terms of how they deliver the curriculum rather than why. Although this model of leadership and management has preserved teachers' conceptions of their professional role and identity, it has meant that leadership has been a restricted concept in many SFCs. For many SFC teachers then, organisational leadership has been perceived to be exercised by senior

managers: it has not been as distributed forms of leadership would suggest a devolved activity.

5.3 Redefining SFCs' organisational leadership in light of Government policy and the restructuring of educational provision:

Recent developments in the Learning and Skills sector do bring the conclusions drawn from Lumby (2002a; 2002b) into question. SFCs are engaged in a process of organisational change that involves internal and external restructuring. Between 1993-2002 only 14 per cent of SFCs had been restructured following incorporation, 40 per cent of GFECs had been restructured at least three times since 1993 (Lumby 2002a). However, in recent years there has been greater pressure within SFCs to restructure as they respond to Government policy. Indeed, at FS there had been two restructuring phases between 2002-2006; one involving the reorganisation of pastoral support and another that has signalled a move to a greater emphasis on vocational programmes. Whereas events at FS had followed on from a drop in student enrolments and a financial crisis, at the other SFCs surveyed, restructuring was engendered as a result of rapid growth and the need to accommodate increasing demands within the organisation. The data generated from GS, and to a lesser degree some of the other SFCs, suggests that dispersed forms of leadership follow on from rapid growth where there are pressures to 'get things done' and a preparedness to empower middle managers or clearly identified 'champions' to lead a project. It also infers that there is a degree of trust in the competence of staff to operationalise those goals established by senior management.

Clegg et al (2005) have sought to contextualise leadership behaviours into an understanding of how organisations have developed and may continue to evolve. For Clegg et al (2005) the history of organisations is one that has developed through three stages: the pre-modern, the modern and the postmodern. The model offered by Clegg et al (2005) has been modified for the College sector and is presented in table 13. This model can be used to interpret how teachers perceive organisational

leadership and how it is manifested through the characteristics of their organisational life.

Pre-modern	Modern	Postmodern
The principal expects to be regarded as the master of the institution. People work for the principal.	The principal oversees everyone's work.	The principal serves teachers rather than bosses them.
The principal is charismatic / authoritarian, issuing orders and oversees teachers closely.	The principal is authoritarian, issuing orders and oversees teachers closely.	The principal actively empowers teachers to act as they see fit.
The principal generally values managers over teachers.	The principal talks in terms of the organisation and people's roles.	The principal is visionary and inspires teachers.
Following rules is always very important for the principal.	The principal ensures that there is a quality Assurance system in place and that he/she receives reports on performance.	The principal encourages teachers to work together on problems in teams.
The College reflects the will of the principal.	Discipline is viewed as part of the principal's role.	The principal builds the College culture through story-telling and celebrating teachers' work

Table 14. Pre-modern, modern and Postmodern forms of leadership, after Clegg et al (2005).

If it were the case that the data generated indicated that a college was characterised by a culture of empowerment and trust, team work and dispersal of responsibility, then the evidence would tend to point to the adoption of postmodernist forms of management and organisational activity, as advocated in the literature (Peters and Waterman, 1982). If, however, the data suggested that these characteristics were comparatively rare and colleges were more commonly characterised by the existence of strong principals or organisational strictures and hierarchies, then the postmodernist modelling of colleges could be challenged as being unsustainable and somewhat idealistic.

The changes to funding methodologies and the increasing inducement from Government agencies to collaborate signal the end of 'splendid isolation' for many

SFCs, and their leaders. It is no longer possible for SFCs to remain aloof from those changes that are now restructuring the provision of post-14 education. The plethora of Government initiatives on the 14-19 agenda for change has brought SFCs into a web of networking that will redefine how SFCs see their role and how they are perceived. Whereas SFCs had focused on the needs of their learners in a niche market, they are now confronted with pressures to comply with the incoming 14 lines of learning contained within the Diploma system introduced from 2006. SFCs are now required to contribute to the collective curriculum offer available in their locality, matching their delivery to the perceived education and training needs identified by the local LSC, and to work with other providers such as schools, the careers service and the county council. Although the general direction of Government policy is generally understood by SFC leaders, the precise process of operationalisation is often fraught with difficulty because of experimental decision-making on behalf of the various stakeholders. In the Farnham and Ash area of South West Surrey a pioneering network, 'The Farnham Network' (TFN) has been established as a registered company drawing local stakeholders into partnership. Although the Principal at FS recognised that 'the local LSC had urged, enticed and dangled capital' and had 'chosen to back this horse at the behest of Government', it was also acknowledged that 'there were the non congruent drivers of competition and contestability to deal with' (personal correspondence, July 2006). The picture that emerges is that local area learning networks are characterised by a degree of risk and uncertainty, the under-development of communication and decision-making between schools and SFCs, and the preservation of implicit vested interests.

This redefinition of educational provision in terms of a locally available 'collective resource' instead of individual 'stand alone' institutions inevitably changes how we should view SFCs as organisations, and leads us onto a reconceptualisation of leadership. Such an observation suggests a move away from modernist notions of organisation and leadership and towards alternative models of organisational form. The data generated through co-constructed interviews and a leadership survey suggests that many teachers view SFCs as dominated by a strong

leader figure. A clear majority of those surveyed thought that SFCs possessed the characteristics associated with pre-modern or modern forms of organisational leadership. This would correspond to the work by Lumby (2002a; 2002b), which reported that SFC teachers tended to differentiate between organisational and professional leadership. Examination of internal policy documentation and Ofsted reports points to a formalised delineation of responsibility and accountability in SFCs, which one would normally associate with modernist forms of organisation.

Although in many respects, SFCs appear to be wedded to pre-modern and modernist forms of internal organisation and institutional leadership, there is evidence to suggest that this is a somewhat limited perspective. Instead of viewing a SFC as an isolated entity, we should move to consider colleges as part of an increasingly complex network of education providers, as in the case of TFN described above. If we do move to consider SFCs as part of a new form of collaborative and confederal organisation, then it is possible to revisit the relevance of postmodernist thought. The decision-making process of TFN corresponds to a 'garbage can' model (March and Olsen, 1976) in which outcomes are arrived at through discussion and bargaining. There is no 'road map' as such for projects such as TFN, as resources and outcomes remain uncertain. Ultimately, of course, such initiatives are dependent on those drivers generated by the local LSC. In this respect, may be possible to place local area learning networks, such as TFN, into a postmodernist framework. As a result, we may move to an emergent view of SFCs and how they interact with their environment. Such a reconceptualisation leads us onto a wider discussion of leadership.

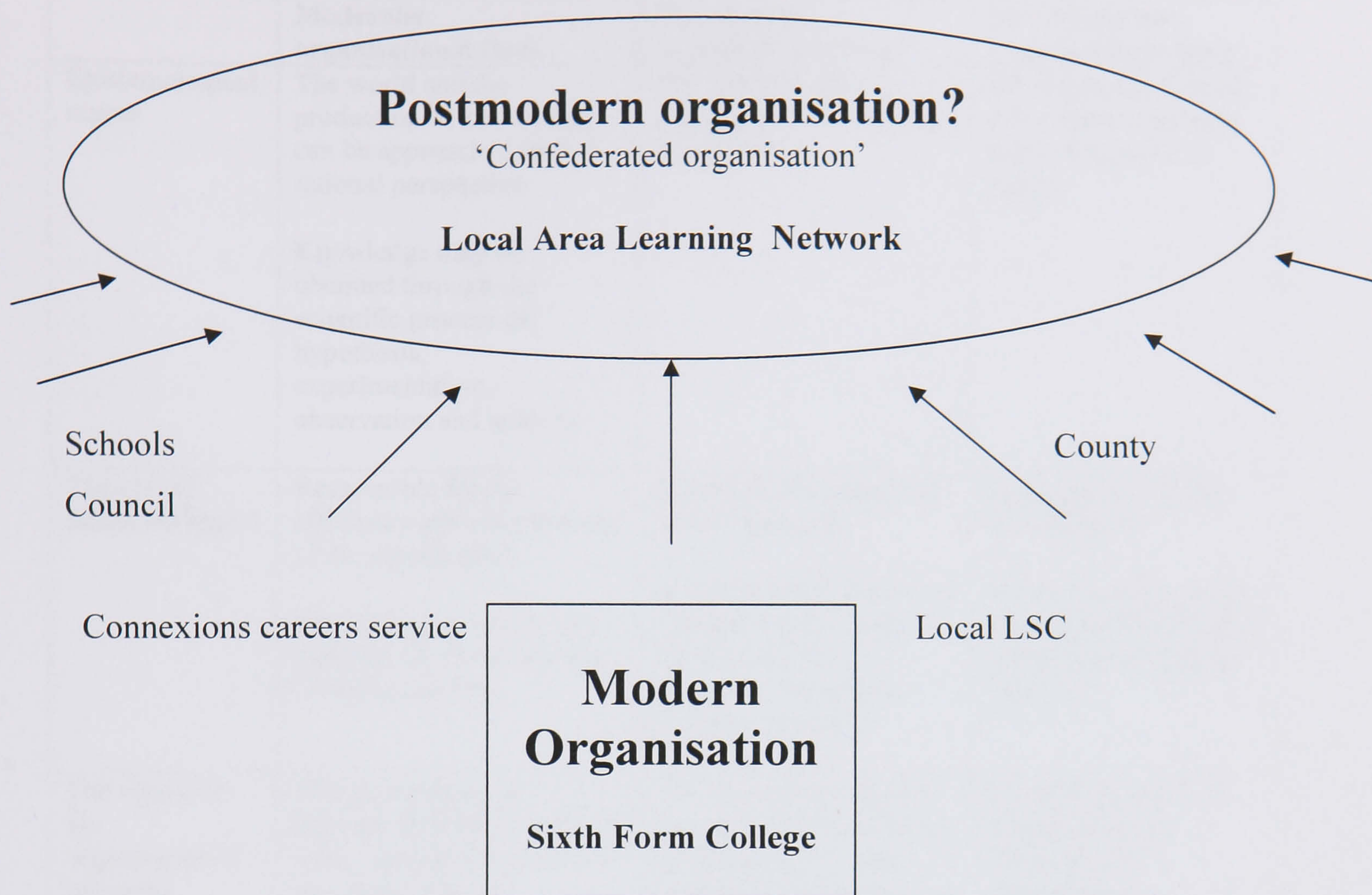


Figure 5: A representation of a confederal organisation, such as TFN.

Although the evidence from TFN suggests that decision-making is evolutionary and often tentative, it is not chaotic as there is an underlying strategic plan. Moreover, as the established personnel retain their role as strategic planners, there is no sense of de-differentiation of responsibility to subordinates in the supporting organisations. In practice, decision-making is restricted to an elitist cabal within the network. If postmodernist thought is useful it is in the sense that it provides an insight into the context of such confederated organisations rather than their leadership. For Woods and Joyce (2002) although postmodernist thought may shed some light on the complexities of confederated organisational forms, its value is limited. The operation of TFN appears to correspond more closely to a form of New Modernist organisation (Woods and Joyce, 2002) in which decisions are taken by a clearly-defined elite albeit pragmatically.

	Modernist organisational form	Postmodern organisational form	New Modernist organisational form
Epistemological stance	The world and the production of knowledge can be approached from a rational perspective. Knowledge may be obtained through the scientific process of hypothesis, experimentation, observation and analysis	The world and the production of knowledge is uncertain.	Knowledge is derived from experimentation and is pragmatic in nature.
The role of senior managers	Responsible for the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation. Senior managers oversee a bureaucratic order and are viewed as experts.	Questions the impact of senior managers. As the world is uncertain, managers must focus more on intuitive responses rather than complex planning.	Leadership is moral and reflexive. Recognises that senior managers do perform a useful role as strategic planners.
The nature of the organisational hierarchy	The organisation is characterised by functional roles, a hierarchy of power and clear lines of responsibility.	The organisation should become de-differentiated with roles and status minimised and initiative emphasised.	Hierarchy exists but stakeholders are consulted and consensus is encouraged.
The relevance of strategic planning	Regarded as fundamental to anticipating change and planning for the future. Planning takes a long-term view of the future.	The future remains uncertain and therefore there is a lack of faith in the value of strategic planning. Postmodernism emphasises intuitive and creative responses from all not an elite.	Strategic managers interact with other stakeholders and experiment through strategic projects. Planning is a pluralistic process that involves staff.

Table 15: A typology of perspectives on organisations, adapted from Woods and Joyce (2002).

5.4 How do teachers in SFCs interpret and respond to the practice of leadership in their own institution?

The data generated in this multi-site case study would appear to suggest that there is a variety of experience of leaders and leadership in the SFC sector. It should be acknowledged, however, that teachers' perceptions of leadership are conditioned by a multitude of factors.

One of the most important factors that conditions perception is organisational culture. In part, this is determined by the climate within which the college exists. For example, a college that is growing and has financial security is likely to have less internal conflict compared to one where resources are limited and difficult choices are required. Leaders can claim to engineer a particular culture but this is often a convenient generalisation of the numerous sub-cultures that exist in any institution. The research data would suggest that teachers are aware of the lexicon of management: vision, strategy and target setting are all familiar, if not universally welcomed. Although teachers do welcome leadership behaviours that are designed to support colleagues on a professional and personal level, they do respond pragmatically to the demands placed on them by their leaders. This position of pragmatic compliance seems to be the consequence of limited choice.

Pragmatic compliance has implications for teachers' self-identity and their conception of professionalism. This finding led to a second subsidiary research question: How do teachers view their professional identity? The research data would suggest that a number of teachers acknowledge that their professional autonomy has been reduced in the last decade and express concern not only about their status but also their relationship with their students, given the burdens of Curriculum 2000. For some teachers, this loss of autonomy is resented. For others, however, professionalism is now defined by the norms of professionalism: target setting, success rates, and the Professional Standards Payment framework.

The research data would also suggest that teachers' perceptions of leadership are largely determined by individual concerns rather than their status within the organisation. The variety of opinion generated from interviews does not suggest that there is a tightly defined conception of leadership or an ideal form of leadership. Indeed, few teachers differentiated between leadership and managerial functions when presented with a list of scenarios based on Kotter's typology. The research data would therefore suggest that most teachers regard leadership as a subset of general management. Importantly, there was very little awareness of different models of leadership, which would suggest that many teachers are more concerned

with the effectiveness of their leaders than any particular mode of leadership. Ultimately, leadership was viewed by the majority as the function of the principal or the SMT; few teachers thought beyond the traditional conception of leadership.

The research data generated would suggest that most teachers have a limited understanding of what leadership could be. References to inter-personal skills, an ability to motivate and the preparedness to trust others emerged during interviews as important characteristics of leaders. Again, such views reflected a personalised view of leadership. So long as teachers continue to identify leadership as being a personal rather than an organisation quality, then pressure for more egalitarian models of distributed leadership are unlikely to emerge from the chalk face. This may be because some teachers are wary of the additional workload associated with teamwork and dispersed forms of micro-leadership or it may be because many teachers still see their role as being educators not managers. If there is any pressure to distribute responsibility downwards within institutional hierarchies, it is more likely to originate from within SMT, as they attempt to rationalise organisational processes and reduce costs.

The striking response to scenarios 4 and 8 in the interview prompt sheet highlights the apparently limited scope for change that exists within SFCs. The view that colleges are little more than qualification 'factories' that was mentioned by a number of interviewees suggests that SFCs have a very clear *raison d'être*. Understandably, teachers take pride in the success of their students and institutions, as their self-image is often closely tied to their work. Indeed, teachers are induced by the Professional Standards Payment framework to conform to the ideology of the education quasi-market. There can be little doubt that technical-rational forms of language are increasingly part of the lingua franca of the professional practice of teachers in SFCs. The relatively high level of recognition of terms such as vision, budgets, target-setting and strategy would suggest that teachers are used to interacting with these terms on a regular basis. Given the decision by many teachers to comply with the system, albeit with reservation, we should not expect demands for radical change- especially from successful SFCs.

Although SFC teachers are concerned about the issues of social inclusion and societal inequality, they do not see these as being among their immediate concerns. As teachers are judged according to specific performance measures such as success rates and value added, their focus is increasingly constrained. This finding led to a subsidiary issue: To what extent can SFCs be seen as vehicles for social change? If social change is to be measured in terms of progression into Higher Education or employability, then SFCs score relatively highly compared to GFECs. However, if social change is to be measured in terms of a wider remit, then SFCs are of limited value in their present form. SFCs tend to have weaker links with their local community than do many local schools, community colleges or GFECs. It would be difficult to see SFCs developing along the lines of American community colleges given their particular ethos, curriculum and relatively narrow social intake. The inclusion of SFCs in the Learning and Skills Sector, however, represents an attempt by Government to move colleges into a more diverse market. Although SFCs have diversified particularly into Adult Education and Basic Skills provision, the effectiveness of this strategy remains to be seen.

5.5 What do these findings tell us about leadership in SFCs?

Investigation into the leadership of SFCs suggests that there are some general issues that can be drawn from the research data. Firstly, leadership is associated with the office of Principal and not with teachers in their daily work: leadership is something that they experience from above, they do not think that they practice it. In this sense, they adhere to the idea of 'followership' and identify leadership in terms of the personal charisma and standing of the Principal. For some teachers, such as those at GS, this may be evident in some form of transformational leadership where they are encouraged to work independently with initiative and enthusiasm. For the majority, however, and especially those at FS, the Principal is perceived to display those behaviours normally associated with transactional leadership. Secondly, this data raises questions as to not only how Principals see their role but also that of their

staff. Closely associated with this issue of role-definition are the issues of empowerment and motivation.

Thirdly, the findings raise questions as to how we should define the organisation of educational provision at local level, and implicitly its leadership. As a result of the establishment of the Learning and Skills sector and the movement toward models of co-operation, educational providers now appear to be increasingly drawn together in a new form of organisation- the confederated network. Whereas in the past, observers thought that: 'much of organisational theory posits a diverse and differentiated world of organisations and seeks to explain variation among organisations in structure and behaviour' (DiMaggio and Powell, 1997: 436), we may now move onto consider what DiMaggio and Powell coined 'coercive isomorphism', in which organisations increasingly exhibit common characteristics and are obliged to conform to the wishes of the State. Within these confederated networks, once independent institutions are brought together through the pressures of funding under the aegis of local State agencies and set collective goals. These confederated networks do possess some of the characteristics of postmodernist organisational forms. Although directed by the State, these networks are loosely organised and evolutionary, and focus more on experimental responses than long-term planning. Albeit attractive as an explanation of the interaction within these networks, postmodernist organisational theory cannot describe the entirety of such developments. The pivotal role of institutional leaders and the retention of organisational hierarchies and identities suggest that what we see is a modification of modernist organisation to fit to an uncertain and changing context. In this respect, the model of 'New Modernism' proffered by Woods and Joyce (2002) may be used to reconceptualise the relationship of SFCs with their environment. In part such perspectives may be reflective of changes within society and how leaders interact with others. In part, such revisions of modernism may also be the consequence of how organisation theory has accommodated postmodernist thought.

5.6 Leadership under 'New Modernism': What can be done?

There are a number of issues that follow from this research. Firstly, SFCs should revisit their organisational structure and the effectiveness of their division of labour. A majority of SFCs appear to be characterised by a core-periphery model of labour, in which a core of senior managers control the strategic, operational and curricular direction of the college, and where teachers are required to follow. Teachers do appear to resent this infringement on their professional autonomy and interpret the imposition of a corporate identity in negative terms and as part of a process of de-professionalisation. Such developments are the consequence of the introduction of the practices of New Public Management (Bottery, 1996), performativity and the drive to remain competitive in the education quasi-market. This sense of disenchantment should be tackled by those in positions of authority both within SFCs and Government. Failure to address those concerns raised by teachers will lead to a de-motivated profession, who are increasingly driven by the need to conform to a corporate orthodoxy rather than individual vocation and personal commitment. It is imperative that senior managers reflect on how the commitment and professionalism of colleagues may be developed. The key to developing this commitment is through individual empowerment and the recognition of each person's contribution.

All too often, the primary cause of alienation is not the intransigence of teachers but the perceived position taken by their leaders, with teachers reporting that Principals saw themselves as omnipotent. This perceived practice of leadership appears increasingly incompatible with changing societal values and notions of employee empowerment. Although Postmodernist thinking has challenged antiquated models of organisational leadership, it has not provided a menu of convenient solutions. If Postmodernism has a legacy, it has been to pose questions about the validity of established wisdom. Its successor, New Modernism has proffered a revised view of organisational leadership which is based on consensus-building rather than fiefdom, and it offers up the prospect that leaders will look to the micro-political nature of organisational life. In this sense, New Modernism has sought to synthesise elements of Postmodernism with Modernist organisational

theory. Although New Modernism may offer up the hope for greater consultation in the daily dealings of organisational life, it is limited in its scope.

The work generated by Critical Management Theory (CMT) do offer ways in which greater consensus may be achieved. Influenced by Habermasian Critical Theory, CMT aims to ‘encourage critical reflection along a broad scale’ (Alvesson and Willmott, 2001: 191). For Alvesson and Willmott (2001: 186):

Emancipation does not have to be conceptualised or realised only in terms of ‘grand’ projects. Instead, it may be partially and imperfectly fulfilled in everyday management and organisational practice.

For adherents of CMT then, those reflective leadership practices that seek to engage in a dialogue with colleagues should be encouraged. This process is a form of ‘micro-emancipation’ (Alvesson and Willmott, 2001: 1971) which empowers organisational subordinates to express their views in a tolerant and non-threatening forum. It is also a process that celebrates individual identity over that of the corporate figure. Although there are opportunities for teachers to express their views, through staff questionnaires or staff meetings, these are generally tightly controlled and there is no freedom to divert from the implicit agenda set in the questionnaires or the staff meeting. All too often, staff meetings appear to be ritual events designed to communicate information to subordinates.

There are, however, examples where reflexive and democratic leadership have been introduced abroad. Johansson (2004: 698) reports that in Sweden, Principals are seen as ‘a key resource for building and maintaining teams of educational professionals as well as for achieving change and reform in an effective and efficient way’. The school leader programme introduced into Sweden during 2002 focuses on developing leaders who espouse a values-driven approach. For Johansson (2004: 702) future leaders ‘must be a person who understands that governing power is not power over money, buildings and personnel; it is an authority based on discursive power’. Ultimately, the role of ‘the democratic reflective school leader’s task [is to act] as a supporter and producer of interactive professionalism’ (Johansson, 2004:

701). Whether the Swedish model of school leadership can be transplanted into the United Kingdom remains uncertain. In contrast to Sweden, where there is a strong social democratic tradition and a key role for the decentralised municipalities, in the United Kingdom economic instrumentalism and centralised control appears to drive public policy.

The second major issue that emerges from this research is how we should conceptualise SFCs and their interaction with their environment, and how this affects the practice of leadership. Collinson and Collinson (2006a:10-12) report that:

[Those] in leadership positions feel extremely constrained.
They are accountable to multiple stakeholders and in numerous ways....
This intensive 'audit culture' often produces counter-productive effects [and] can erode the potential for effective leadership.

Indeed from their conversations with Principals, Collinson and Collinson (2006a: 12) report that:

Many respondents express deep frustration about the inconsistent and frequently shifting policies and practices of the LSC which can have significant effects on colleges. Principals ... have claimed that they sometimes feel compelled to adopt a more directive, controlling and detached leadership style, even though this is not their preferred approach.

The implications of this 'constrained leadership' are significant. Instead of viewing Principals as omnipotent, as the data would seem to suggest many teachers do, we should acknowledge the pressures that impinge on institutional leaders. Instead of presenting Principals as engineers of the organisational machine, we need to think of them as being more mechanistic and limited in their sovereignty. The extensive research programme undertaken by Collinson and Collinson (2006b: 34) for the Centre for Excellence in Leadership appears to verify this perspective on the complexities of college leadership:

Research suggests that leadership may be much more about collaboration, co-operation and facilitation, about brokering and co-ordination, enhancing interdependence and developing reciprocity within and between communities. This much broader view of FE leadership emphasises the importance of engaging strategically and skilfully with multiple communities. It focuses on leaders as facilitators of continuous improvement, on their ability to act with others, share power and responsibility through 'moral purpose' and by creating 'a community of learners'.

Certainly, the data derived from the leadership survey would suggest that strategic and operational pragmatism is central to contemporary institutional leadership. The starting point for a rapprochement for teachers and their leaders must be to acknowledge their subordination to the State, the immanent pragmatism that characterises everyday life, and the need to work together on the basis of shared values. It is within this context that some differentiation between operational and ethical pragmatism should be acknowledged. Whereas few would reject a need for operational pragmatism, it is important that leaders do not exhibit ethical pragmatism. The centrality of values-based leadership is fundamental to this vision of the leadership of educational professionals.

5.8 The goals for future leadership:

If leadership is to respond to the demands of its contemporary environment, action must be taken on several levels: the systemic, the institutional and the personal.

On the systemic level, the interaction between Government, its agencies and Principals must be reformed. As Collinson and Collinson (2006a: 17) conclude from their major study of Principals, 'the roles and leadership of the LSC in relation to FE are in need of urgent review. In some areas the current role of the LSC appears to be eroding the potential for effective leadership'. In order to engage with professionals, Principals need to present themselves as principled and values-driven. The danger with the current *modus operandi* is that Principals are perceived by many teachers as mere conduits for Government bureaucracy. In order to inspire confidence and trust within the profession, Principals should engage more robustly and publicly with Government. They must also retain a community-focus and work with all stakeholders to provide for the needs in their area.

On the institutional level, Principals should search for a common ground of professional values and practise a philosophy of management. Implicit within such an approach is the recognition that professionals should be allowed a degree of autonomy to practise their vocation without excessive bureaucracy or diktat. There

must also be an acknowledgement that the distribution of tasks must be accompanied by a dispersal of power and self-direction. Future leadership should mean that empowerment is not simply the delegation of work, it must involve trust.

On the personal level, Principals must be recruited and trained to lead and espouse a values-driven agenda that recognises the importance of engaging with teachers as professionals. They must, as in the case of Sweden, work to a new definition of professionalism that is based on consensus and reflective and informed learning. Such a development will require a major investment in leadership and management training. Although a start has begun with leadership training programmes, these should develop a critical insight into the current practice of leadership. Leadership without reflexivity is essentially leading without learning.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Reflecting on the aims of the research and the significance of its findings:

The key research questions that informed this research exercise were:

- How has leadership been described by those engaged in the discourse on leadership?
- How can the leadership of SFCs be described and explained?
- Is it possible to theorise about the nature of SFCs as organisational models?

The discourse on educational leadership has been dominated by technical-rationalist notions of what it is, and what it should be (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, 2000; Bush and West-Burnham, 1994). At times, this conventionalised view of leadership has approximated to an orthodoxy of New Public Management, in which leadership is discussed largely in terms of institutional effectiveness and productivity. It is also a view of leadership that is inherently ideological in nature and makes presumptions about the nature of teacher professionalism. Indeed, this conception of leadership is one that is propagated by Central Government and its executive agencies. In contrast to this dominant discourse on leadership, a number of critical perspectives have offered alternative views. In addition to liberal and feminist writing, Critical Theory has sought to challenge this mainstream conception of leadership. Instead of focussing on issues related to efficiency, Critical Theory approaches have chosen to focus on issues relating to social injustice and the exploitative nature of current practice. Although Critical Theory can be criticised as being too abstract, it does offer a theoretical framework within which to explore Government policy. Moreover, in the work of Alvesson and Willmott (2001), Bottery (2005) and Gunter (2002), we can discern practical suggestions on how to challenge the orthodoxy of New Public Management in an ethical manner.

It is, however, possible to offer an overview of leadership theory as presented below in Figure 6.

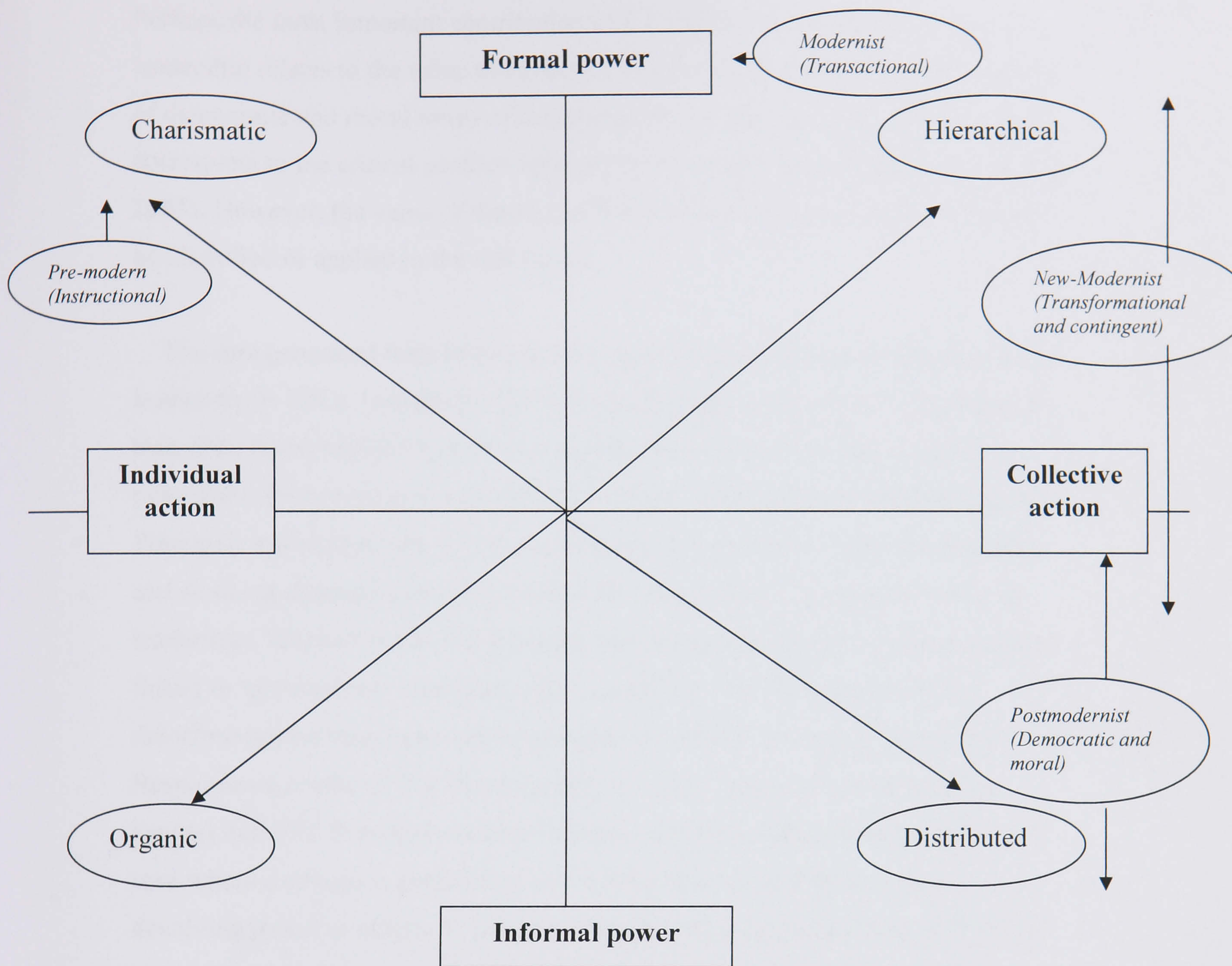


Figure 6: Applying organisational forms to models and manifestations of leadership practice.

From a theoretical perspective, it is possible to link models of leadership to wider conceptions of organisational life. For example, Pre-modern forms of organisational leadership style that accentuate the role of a charismatic figure may be discerned in instructional leadership where teachers are persuaded to adopt particular pedagogical approach. However, in the instance where influence is a primarily a consequence of institutional status, such as the case in of transactional or contingent leadership, Modernist or New Modernist forms of leadership practice may be more evident.

Perhaps the most important contribution of Postmodernist thought to the debate on leadership relates to the value of collective and dispersed power. Certainly, notions of democratic and moral forms of leadership that espouse an ethical dimension do correspond to the critical position inherent within much postmodernist work (Clegg, 2005). However, the value of theoretical abstraction is limited if such work cannot be identified or applied in the real world.

The data generated from this research suggests that there is no standard model of leadership in SFCs. Instead of offering a standardised model of SFC leadership, it should be acknowledged that there is a great deal of diversity in practice and perception. Even within three similar SFCs there was significant variation in how Principals were perceived. At FS, the Principal was viewed as being over-bearing and showing characteristics associated with a 'pre-modern / pragmatist' style of leadership. Whereas at FH, the Principal was regarded as displaying those qualities linked to 'pre-modern / entrepreneurial' leadership. The Principal at GS was described approximating to 'postmodernist / pragmatist' notions of leadership. Respondents at other SFCs also pointed to a variety in practice. Such findings suggest that SFC Principals exhibit a variety of tactics in different settings. In the case where a college is performing well a Principal may feel more secure in devolving power to others. In the case where a college faces problems, a Principal may wish to retain power in order to drive through change. Ultimately, the devolution of power within an organisation may reflect the level of confidence the Principal has in their colleagues.

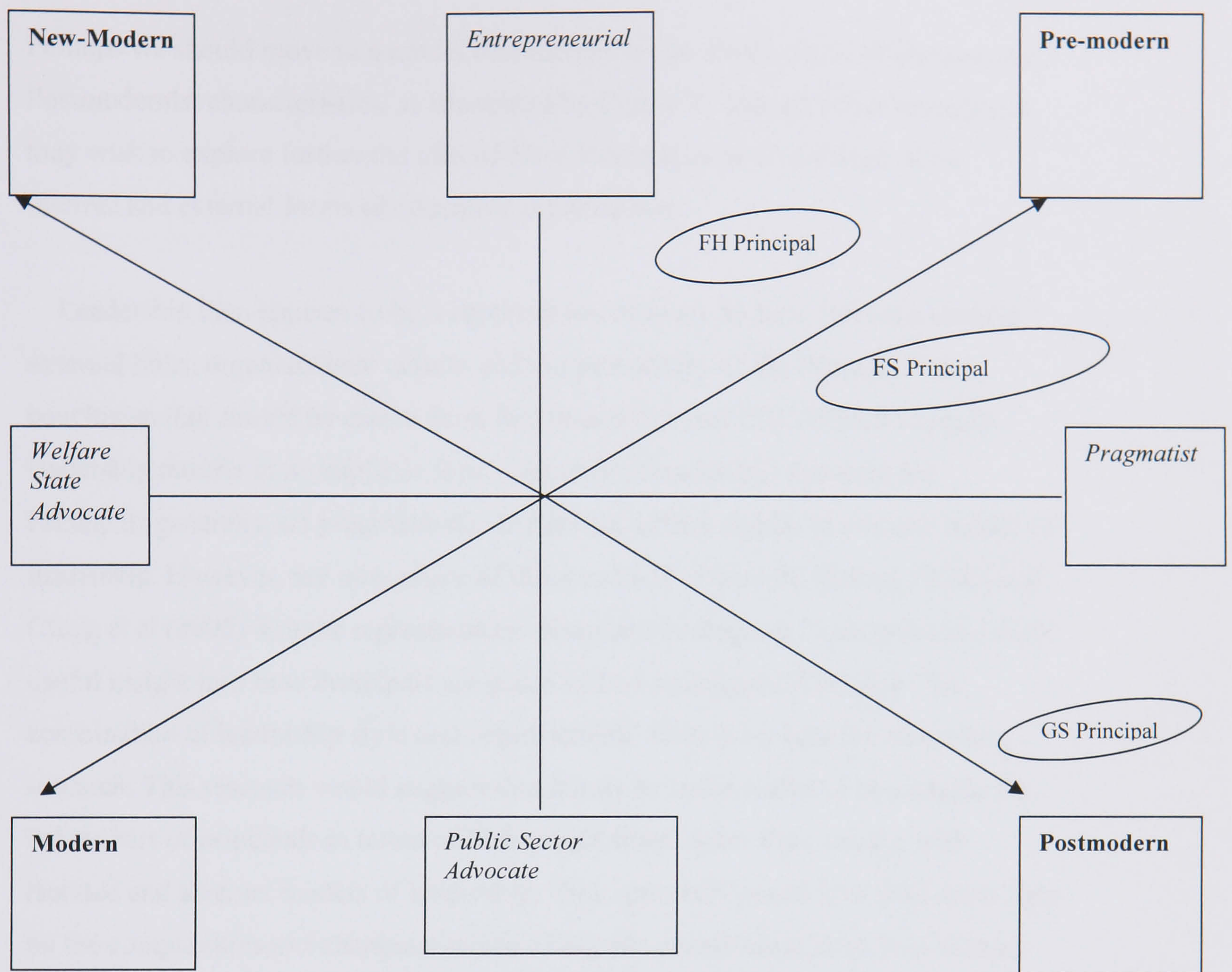


Figure 7: A representation of how Principals were perceived using the leadership and organisational models offered by Bottery (2005) and Clegg et al (2005)

Another conclusion to be drawn from this research is that we should revise how educational provision is viewed. Instead of regarding schools, colleges and other providers as separate entities, we should recognise that the planning, delivery and development of education is increasingly inter-institutional and interdependent. In some respects, such a view mirrors Postmodernist theory on uncertainty and the restructuring of organisational forms. However, given the exigencies of adhering to Government policy, it appears that networks such as TFN are still led by dominant leaders who rely on conventional hierarchical structures to implement their plans.

Perhaps we should move to a model that recognises an inter-mix of Modernist and Postmodernist characteristics, as illustrated by Figure 7? Indeed, other researchers may wish to explore further the idea of New Modernism as a synthesis of the internal and external forms of education organisation.

Leadership then appears to be a combination of many factors- not least context, external links, organisational culture and the personality of the Principal. One conclusion that should be drawn from this research is that it is difficult to apply leadership models in a simplistic form. Not only is leadership dynamic but Principals generally act pragmatically and do not adhere rigidly to any one model of leadership. However, the integration of those models offered by Bottery (2005) and Clegg et al (2005) into the representation described in diagram 7 can provide a more useful insight into how Principals are perceived by colleagues. Certainly, the combination of leadership style and organisational form is an area for interesting research. This research would suggest that it may be more useful to investigate the behaviours of principals in terms of their pragmatism rather than engage with isolated and abstract models of leadership. This approach would also shed more light on the complexities and changing nature of organisational leadership. It is evident from the findings that Principals are no longer independent actors, as was the case during the period 1944-1974. In practice, Principals are constrained and now serve as conduits for Central Government policy and are obliged to interact with executive agencies on a regular, and indeed regulated basis. Instead of conceptualising educational leadership in terms of institutional processes, we now need to view leadership as a multi-dimensional activity that involves Government, its agencies and other local stakeholders as well as teachers. Such a conclusion carries with it profound implications for how Principals view their role and how they are viewed by others.

Another finding derived from the research relates to the notion of teacher professionalism. It is evident that many teachers resent the introduction of New Public Management, with its perceived elevation of value for money over that of

professional ethics. For these teachers, their status as professionals has been undermined and their relationship with students altered. In particular, the data pointed to a feeling of disempowerment and subjugation to the needs to meet pre-set targets. An interesting finding that emerged was how few teachers recognised scenarios 4 and 8 that related to the wider societal goals of education. For many teachers, the present system represents a relatively narrow view of education and its benefits. There also appears to be a significant corpus of opinion within those surveyed who reject much of the lexicon of management science and view its imperatives as incompatible with the wider goals of public service. Given these issues, it is apparent that most teachers adopt a position of ‘strategic compliance’. This conclusion reflects the research findings by Gleeson and Shain (2003) in which the majority of educational professionals saw little alternative to complying with the status quo. Such a conclusion suggests that pragmatic compliance to Government policy is a characteristic common to both the supposed leaders and led.

6.2 Reflections on the suitability of research methods:

The adoption of a social constructionist research methodology was deliberate and, on reflection, broadly effective in eliciting the views of teachers in an ethical and informative way. This philosophical stance reflected a ‘macro-constructionist’ (Burr, 2003: 22) conception of how knowledge is created within contemporary society. For Burr (2003: 22):

Macro social constructionism acknowledges the constructive power of language but sees this as derived from, or at least related to, material or social structures, social relations and institutionalised practices.

The concept of power is therefore at the heart of this form of social constructionism.

Given this position that the use of language and its meaning is conditioned by existing power relations, the decision was taken to eschew a standardised questionnaire methodology in the early phase of the research. This decision reflected two primary concerns: the possible scope of the data generated and the issue of the representation. Firstly, there was a recognition that in producing a standardised questionnaire in the early phase of the research process the researcher was pre-determining the nature of the data generated. This would inevitably lead to some

issues being excluded from the subsequent discussion. Secondly, the researcher was conscious not to deny participants the opportunity to raise issues that they felt important. It is within this context that this approach can be seen to differ from the more traditional positivist research in which interviewees were sometimes regarded as units of measurement rather than participants in the co-construction of knowledge and understanding. Although the principles of social constructionism may be criticised as relativist, macro social constructionism counters this critique by placing the co-construction of meaning within the wider reality of contemporary society. For Burr (2003: 24), social constructionist research simply makes different assumptions about its aims and about the nature and status of the data collected. For those critical theorists who subscribe to macro social constructionist approaches, such as Habermas (1976), there are legitimate and defensible benefits in the combination of an objectivist ontology with a subjectivist epistemology in generating insight into contemporary society. The scenario method reflected this aim to arrive at co-construction of knowledge. On reflection, this approach did allow participants to take the initiative within the discussion and yet remain focussed on the issue of leadership and management.

The extension of the research to a larger number of colleges was designed to provide more vantage points from which to view the terrain of leadership, although positivist researchers may wish to view this as a triangulation of the data. The use of a brief tick box survey (see Appendix 4) was a variant on the scenario method and supplemented earlier discussions. It also enabled participants to express their views on leadership within a theoretical framework. The criteria by which this research project can be evaluated are stated in the research methodology; those methods chosen were intended to conform to Charmaz's (2003a, 2003b) and Burr's (2003: 159) ideas on constructivist case study approaches, such as trustworthiness and usefulness. The decision to move from the diary method to documentary analysis was made following the pilot phase of the research, where such an approach proved difficult to implement in a consistent and useful manner. Although informative, documentary research should be regarded as being secondary to the interview

method and used primarily to supplement the leads that are generated through one-to-one discussion. Although a social constructionist approach may inhibit the transferability of this research to other contexts, it does provide an in-depth and rich understanding of the positioning taken by teachers in a particular context.

6.3 The limitations of this research project:

A significant limitation of this type of research project is the possible distortion effect caused by a relatively narrow and volunteer survey population. This would undoubtedly pose problems for a positivist researcher. However, for a researcher who engages with a social constructionist methodology, positivist notions of internal and external validity are often seen as being secondary to obtaining an in-depth insight into the experiences and views of participants. Those issues related to the privileged position of the researcher are reflected upon in the research methodology. Notwithstanding the debate on validity, there were also other possible limitations that could be levelled against this type of research strategy.

The scope of the research could have been widened given more time. Indeed following the viva voce, the research was extended from 20 to 40 teachers in 8 SFCs. Although there was a participation level of one third of teachers in the author's college, this rate fell away in other colleges. At both FS and FH a representative sample of staff was achieved which reflected all levels within the colleges' hierarchy. Although there was an attempt to survey as broad a range of teachers and managers as possible at GS, this was not possible and there was no interrogation of members of the SMT at GS. Investigation of the experiences and views of the senior management at GS would have been useful, especially as the Principal appears to display a different leadership style from those in situ at FS and FH. Quite apart from the issue of representation, the geographical context of the research should be acknowledged. Apart from one participant, all those surveyed taught in SFCs located in Hampshire and Surrey. Perhaps a more effective method of eliciting participation could have been to canvass interest in the research via the existing networks that link the SFCs, such as the Surrey 7 consortium or the

southern SFCs' External Review Quality network? This would have, however, also encountered problems of communication and commitment, and it was rejected as being too cumbersome given time constraints.

It is therefore difficult to extrapolate these findings nationally. Nevertheless, there were clear patterns that emerged, and from which conclusions could be drawn. One important finding generated by interviews was the role of the local LSC in driving institutional policy. Extending the research to interview a representative from the local LSC or another Government agency would have provided an insight into how Government viewed their relationship with colleges and the role of principals. Although brief conversations were held with one principal, there was no intention to interrogate Principals on their conception of leadership. This, of course, was deliberate since the primary focus of the research was to elicit teachers' perceptions of leadership. Other important players in the field of educational leadership could also have been approached: the Association of Colleges, the newly established Centre for College Leadership, the LSDA and the DfES. Given the discussion on the evolving nature of educational provision, it would also have been interesting to engage with those other stakeholders involved within the emerging confederal learning networks, such as TFN. Such a line of investigation would shed further light on the debate relating to postmodernist / New Modernist forms of decision-making and provision.

At the supra-institutional level, the issue of leadership is likely to grow in importance. SFCs in Surrey have combined to form a consortium- the Surrey 7- which it is anticipated will project a united and influential voice to the local community and Government. As Principals become conspicuous to a variety of audiences, their work and the idea of effective leadership both of their institutions and their collective 'brand' will come under the spotlight of public scrutiny. In addition to this emerging 'branding' within the SFC sector, the possibility of a re-branding of local education provision in local confederations of providers such as SFCs, GFECs and schools is likely to grow. Research into college leadership, albeit

often in the form of small-scale projects, can inform those who wish to gain greater insight into the operation of SFCs and how they interact with their environment. Certainly, compared to the work published on schools and GFECs, there is relatively little work undertaken on leadership in SFCs, and this research may serve to highlight important areas for further research.

6.4 The implications of this research for professional practice and future policy:

The findings derived from this research project would suggest that those who claim to lead organisations would benefit from some reflection on their current practice of leadership, as well as projecting forward and anticipating likely developments in the future. For those who view leadership as ‘doing the right things rather than doing things right’, there is a moral dimension to their work. Doing the ‘right thing’ may mean more than simply implementing a successful corporate strategy, it also can mean envisaging a better way of doing things. This moral dimension to leadership is important and leaders do well to recognise the benefits that follow from adopting a leadership style that values colleagues and is inclusive. Certainly, the recognition of ‘Emotional Intelligence’ within the sector in recent years and the introduction of ‘well being’ events in continuous professional development suggests that leaders now acknowledge the wider responsibilities of leadership. The imperative of moving to a much more explicit form of ‘values-driven’ leadership based on professional ethics and practice, is necessary in order to maintain staff morale and unity of purpose. Whether it is possible to promote moral and values-driven leadership in an age when conformity to Government policy takes primacy in the minds of most college leaders remains to be seen. Certainly, the recruitment, training and promotion of our future leaders are important concerns for those who value leadership in its widest sense. The professional development of potential leaders must extend beyond the existing in house developmental programmes and postgraduate courses that focus solely on technical-rational forms of management. If we wish to inculcate a culture of critical self-reflection in our future leaders, then we must start with their training and stimulate a wide-ranging debate about the nature of leadership and management. Although a Centre for Excellence in Leadership has

been established at Lancaster University to research leadership in the FE sector as a whole. there is still a need for much more extensive research into the impact of Government policy on the SFC sector. All too often, research has been extrapolated from the schools or the GFEC sectors and applied to an analysis of SFCs.

It is also important to recognise that although SFCs share many of the features of the schools and GFEC sectors, they are different and face their own challenges. It is imperative that future policy is drafted with the unique nature of SFCs borne in mind, as intimated in the Foster Report of 2005:

We believe that they should be treated as a distinctive institutional model
We also feel that this distinctiveness should be reflected in the way policy is applied and operational changes are implemented.

In part, the future development of SFCs will be dependent on how they are regarded as a unique 'brand', and their value to the post-compulsory sector. If we are to maintain the SFC sector as a unique 'brand', then its specialism in 16-19 provision should be maintained through appropriate funding methodologies that take account of the size and scope of this niche market. All too often, changes in the SFC sector have been driven by agendas that pertain to the GFEC sector. In addition, if SFCs are to develop their links with local area networks, then Government policy should aim to balance the benefits of such initiatives with the possible danger of undermining the ethos and uniqueness of SFCs.

If we are to develop leadership within SFCs, it is imperative that Principals explore the opportunities to engage with their staff as fully as possible. It is also important that Principals think beyond existing institutional structures, empower colleagues and encourage professional autonomy. The suggestion that critical reflective practice Alvesson and Willmott (2001) be incorporated into the mind-set of college managers is fundamental to this agenda of change. Ultimately, the real test for leaders will be how far they will experiment in consultative decision-making and liberating colleagues from the burdens of an essentially bureaucratic regime.

6.5 Possible avenues for future research:

The amount of research undertaken into the leadership of SFCs is sparse compared to that produced in relation to the schools and GFEC sector (Lumby 2002a: 2002b: 2003). Furthermore, there has been little published work that aims to appraise the position of SFCs from a Critical Theory perspective using a macro social constructionist methodology. This thesis calls for these failings to be addressed both within academia and the SFC sector itself. There is also scope for researchers from other paradigms to participate in the discourse on leadership within the SFC sector. Such methodological approaches could range from the mass surveys used in conventional positivist research to the publication of personal accounts as life histories. Although the Learning and Skills Development Agency has sought to gain an insight into issues such as job satisfaction through standardised questionnaires and some SFCs generate staff surveys, most of the research undertaken has been limited in scope and generally uncritical. This thesis calls for researchers not only to reappraise the position of SFCs in the education quasi-market, but also to adopt a variety of methodological approaches and share their findings.

The increasing importance of Government agencies, such as the local LSC, is a key finding from this study which deserves further attention and on a much larger scale. Research could explore the interaction of the LSC, other executive agencies and educational providers in terms of a post-corporatist policy community. Although the British State has moved towards the marketisation of the public sector since 1979, it still appears to rely on a bureaucratic infrastructure to draft and oversee policy. It would be interesting to compare developments within the education system with that of other areas within the public sector, such as the National Health Service.

The degree of convergence over policy formulation and its underpinning ideological rationale that exists between Government and nominally autonomous SFCs is an important area to investigate. As is suggested above, interesting research could, for example, explore the development of particular curricular models or co-

operation between institutions in local area networks, such as TFN. This research into the organisational evolution of educational provision would contribute to the debate on Postmodernist / New Modernist organisational development. This reappraisal of what constitutes leadership of educational provision at local level not only suggests that we may need to reflect on how we view leadership but also how Principals are recruited, trained and articulate their vision. Indeed, the data would suggest that useful research could be undertaken into how leadership is practised at the personal level, and indeed whether Principals consciously apply leadership theory. Certainly, an investigation of how Principals respond to their changing environment is warranted. Given the pivotal role for Principals in SFCs, it would be interesting to investigate the inter-mix of pragmatism and values that seem to characterise college leadership. Research into the social construction of professional identities is also an important area for research. At the institutional level, the position of teachers and their work in SFCs will continue to generate interest but this should be contextualised within a wider framework of professionalism, purpose and power. Beyond the teaching profession, much useful research could be undertaken into how professionals interact within the wider public sector. Interesting research could not only tease out differences within the public sector professions but also between the public sector and those employed in the private sector.

6.6 Conclusion:

This study was originally conceived in terms of identifying which leadership styles were best suited to SFCs and which elicited most favour amongst teachers. This was a somewhat myopic view and led to the evolution of the research into a wider discussion on the nature of professional identity, educational organisations and the power of the State. This change in perspective reflected a realisation on the part of the researcher that leadership was not simply a two-dimensional phenomenon that involved a leadership and their followers as some writers would ask us to believe. This work represents a call for institutional leaders to reflect on their current practice and engage with their fellow professionals in a way that values their contribution. The data generated suggests that Principals approach leadership from different

perspectives and are perceived differently. Although the discourse on leadership is replete with theoretical models, their value is sometimes limited. This thesis has suggested that viewing Principals in terms of both their response to context and their perceived leadership style is key to understanding the unique responses of individual SFC leaders. We should also aim to move beyond a narrow interpretation of what constitutes leadership. Leadership of the SFC sector is not solely undertaken by principals, their SMT or in diverse teams. Leadership is conducted on many levels: at the macro level, by the State and its agencies, at the meso level by the Principal and at the micro-level by committed teachers. The most important conclusion to draw from this research is that the leadership of SFCs is usually defined by its context and it is often the State that defines that form of reality.

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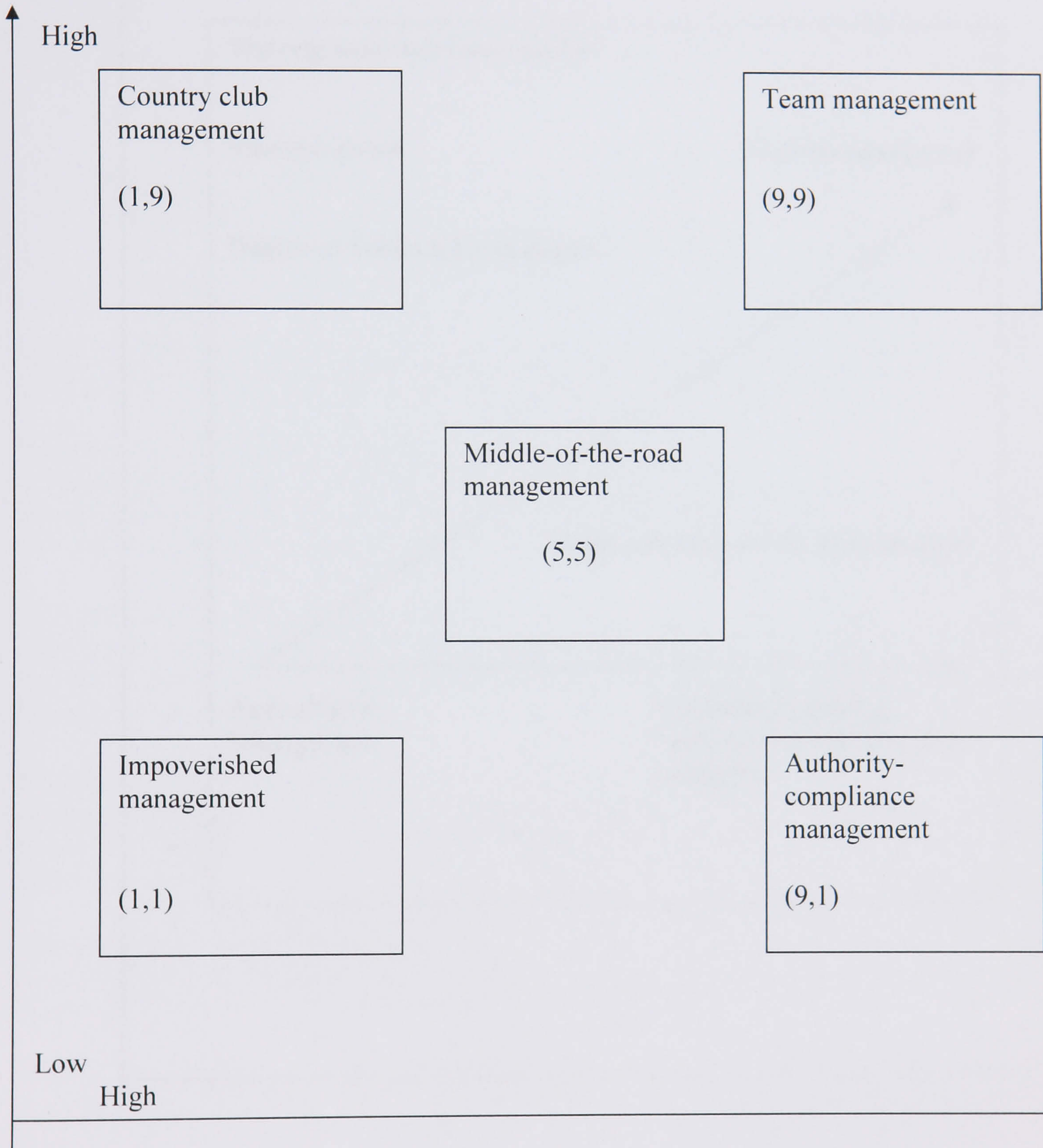
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Appendix 1:
Models of leadership and Management:

The Blake and Mouton Leadership Grid

(From Huczynski and Buchanan, 2001: 572)

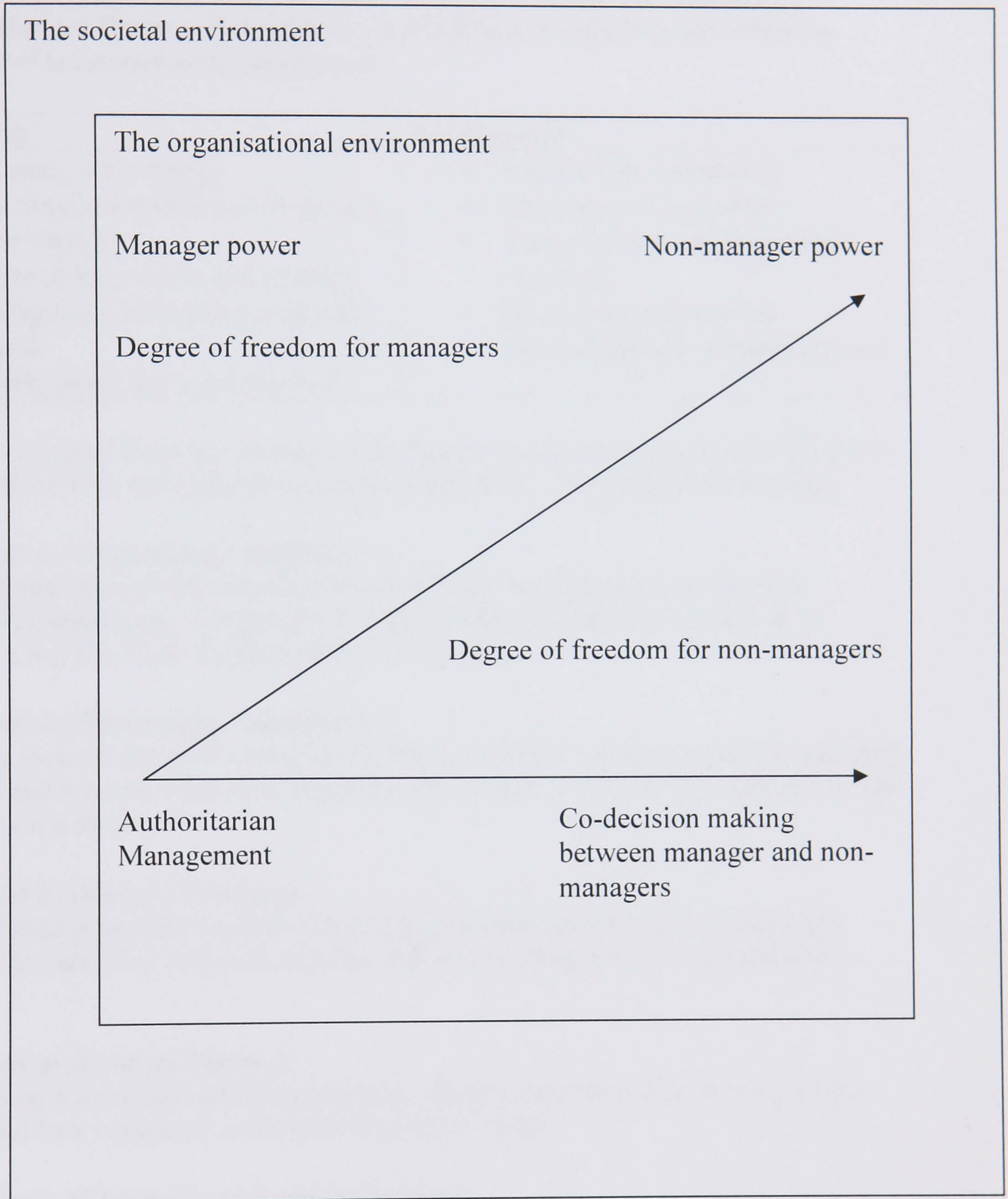
Concern for People (scale 1-9)



Concern for production (scale 1-9)

The Continuum of manager- non-manager behaviour

(From Mullins, 2002: 269)



Appendix 2

The scenario research interview

The conceptual framework for this research interview is provided by Kotter J.P (1998) 'What leaders really do', in *Harvard Business Review on Leadership*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press in which Kotter identifies the following functions of leadership and management:

Leadership	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coping with change• Setting a direction and an agenda for change• Providing a vision and strategy• Aligning staff to meet corporate goals• Motivating and inspiring staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coping with complexity• Planning and budgeting• Target-setting and allocating resources• Organising and staffing• Controlling and problem solving

I have not ordered them but aimed to mix these up so interviewees do not pick out a pattern of say four management functions followed by four leadership functions.

Statement 1: (Organising / Staffing)

An individual presented a document that had been received from the Human Resources Department, to a group and asked for their considered opinion as to whether it met the likely staffing needs for the term.

Statement 2: (Motivating / Inspiring)

A person spoke to the staff about the excellent work that had been done last year and how this had not only been disseminated to others but would serve as a model for the College in the future.

Statement 3: (Vision / Strategy)

An individual presented a vision of the next five years and how the College was moving forward. The corporate strategy that was envisaged was then explained to all.

Statement 4: (Critical Theory)

A person spoke to others about oppression, injustice and inequality in society and questioned how education could challenge these issues.

Statement 5: (Controlling / Problem Solving)

A person spoke to others about the need to maintain the existing procedures in order to deal with students in a consistent manner.

Statement 6: (Target-Setting / Allocate Resources)

An individual set out the targets for the next year in terms of recruitment, retention and achievement. Those listening were asked on how best these targets could be achieved and what resources would be needed in order to meet these targets.

Statement 7: (Aligning People)

A person spoke to a group of people about how it was important for them to identify with the corporate goals set out in the Strategic Plan and act accordingly.

Statement 8: (Critical Theory)

A person called into question the direction of Government policy and suggested that it should be resisted.

Statement 9: (Setting a direction)

An individual produced a document in which the main priorities of the College were set out and how these coincided with Government policy.

Statement 10: (Planning / Budgeting)

An individual met with others to plan and allocate what funds should be given to different parts of the College for the next academic year.

Thinking about your own professional experience, can you tell me if you can remember any incidents like this?

Appendix 3:

An overview of the research participants described in terms of institution, level and gender.

Level	FS*	GS, ES, RE	FH, QM and AL	Wil
Type of SFC	Small Surrey SFC	Large Surrey SFCs	Large Hampshire SFCs	Large Northern SFC
Senior Management Team	JDy (m) RCo (f)		TWi (f)	
Middle Management and Senior Heads of Department	RJn (m) PSm (m) DSt (m) JYe (m)# HCa #	RGr (m)# JYe (m)#	RHe (f) NWo (m)# MKe (f)# NPu (f)#	RHu (m)#
Main Scale Teachers or Junior Heads of Department	DVs (m) BHa (f) TRo (m) GCr (f) SGi (f)# SDw (m) ARo (m) ISt (m) AWi (f)# SVw (f)# ESk (f)# JTh (m) MKe (f)#	JJa (m)# # Ske (f)# # SVw (f)# # JAn (f) CCh (f)# CSl (f) # # KAg (m)	PWi (m)# HCa (f)# AWi (f)# ESk (f)# BDu (m) CSl (f)# # SGi (f)#	

- * Note: Researcher's own institution.
- # Note: Have taught at one or more SFC

Appendix 4:

Leadership survey

Name:

College:

Please indicate below (tick) which of the following options: **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** most closely resembles the approach of your College Principal to change. You may wish to add comments in the box if you wish.

Option	Behaviour	Tick ONE option only	Comments
A	The principal welcomes change and aims to exploit the education market. / The principal is generally effective in responding to change in Government policy.		
B	The principal realises how the education system operates and aims to work with it. / The principal is conscious of funding methodologies and works to promote the College's interests.		
C	The principal appears concerned that the education system is becoming too commercial and this could undermine the ethos of the public sector. / The principal appears concerned that the traditional professional status of teachers is changing and this may not be in the interests of learners.		
D	The principal is committed to education as a means of social change and a democratic society. / The principal rejects the idea of an education market.		

Please indicate below in the box which of the following models most closely resembles the style of leadership of your principal. You may wish to expand on your thoughts in the box.

Model X	Model Y	Model Z
The principal expects to be regarded as the master of the institution. People work for the principal.	The principal oversees everyone's work.	The principal serves teachers rather than bosses them.
The principal is charismatic / authoritarian, issuing orders and oversees teachers closely.	The principal is authoritarian, issuing orders and oversees teachers closely.	The principal actively empowers teachers to act as they see fit.
The principal generally values managers over teachers.	The principal talks in terms of the organisation and people's roles.	The principal is visionary and inspires teachers.
Following rules is always very important for the principal.	The principal ensures that there is a quality Assurance system in place and that he/she receives reports on performance.	The principal encourages teachers to work together on problems in teams.
The College reflects the will of the principal.	Discipline is viewed as part of the principal's role.	The principal builds the College culture through story-telling and celebrating teachers' work

Closest model to the style of the principal	Model
Comments:	