

**“I need to be myself”: authenticity and performance
in the everyday and mundane practice of trustworthy
leadership – a paradox?**

January 2010

Andrew Coleman MSc

Thesis submission for PhD,

Management Learning and Leadership,

Lancaster University Management School



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Declaration

I declare that this work is my own and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

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2. Abstract

“I need to be myself”: authenticity and performance in the everyday and mundane practice of trustworthy leadership – a paradox?

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While existing literature identifies a range of factors that support trustworthy leadership, it often does so in an abstract, generalised and unproblematic way. Consequently, such evidence is frequently unable to adequately account for the enactment of leadership on a daily basis. This thesis seeks to address the lack of evidence by exploring in depth the specific and mundane ways in which trustworthy leadership is manifest in an everyday context.

This work builds upon Alvesson & Sveningsson’s (2003b) concept of the *extra-ordinarization of the mundane*, which highlights the significance of everyday and routine behaviours in informing the quality of leader-follower relations. However Alvesson & Sveningsson’s focus on the ways in which followers attribute qualities to leaders according to their perceived behaviours is seen to distract attention from the role leaders play in this process, potentially portraying them as passive agents whose identity is forged by those they seek to lead.

In contrast to this position, this study, which explored trustworthy leadership within school based collaborations, found that leaders play a highly active role in defining the concept of trustworthy leadership within their organisational context. Indeed understandings of trustworthy leadership both inform the nature of leaders' routine, day to day performances and evolve in response to the subsequent leader-follower interactions that occur. Thus trustworthy leadership is viewed as promoted by the exemplary reflexive performance of this role, the nature of which is constructed and reconstructed within the context of daily practice. In this way trustworthy leadership is at once scripted and improvised, structured and agentic.

Furthermore, this study found that these leaders demonstrated considerable awareness of their ability to influence the broader climate of their organisation in accordance with the principles of *Social Learning Theory* (Bandura, 1977). Aspects of their performance therefore reflected varying degrees of stylisation and were symbolically undertaken to reinforce their key values through the process of *dramatic realisation* (Goffman, 1959). However such contrivances were potentially counter to leaders' commonly espoused values of honesty, openness and integrity, and thus posed potential ethical dilemmas for these leaders. Thus the performance of trustworthy leadership requires the ability to reconcile potential contradictions between principles and practice, whilst maintaining a high degree of authenticity for both self and audience. Recourse to the notion of *professionalism* may represent a positive coping strategy for leaders in such circumstances, by providing a means through which potentially negative aspects of their performance may be recast as essential [and therefore desirable] elements of their role.

3. Introduction

Research focus

My thesis comprises an ostensibly inductive exploration of collaborative and trustworthy leadership within the context of school-based partnerships. As part of this I address three research questions.

1. What is the nature of collaborative leadership within school-based contexts?
2. What role does trust play in the practice of collaborative leadership in these settings? What are the potential tensions between collaborative leadership and trustworthiness?
3. What mechanisms are important in helping leaders to reconcile the potential paradox between authentic leadership and the mundane, day to day performance of trustworthy, collaborative leadership?

My thesis was undertaken in three stages and combines three themes. Firstly I explored issues of partnership working in schools and, more broadly, examining the importance of collaboration and the various factors which promote it. I drew attention to the widespread belief that collaboration drives efficiency, promotes learning, increases access to resources and supports the sharing of risk. However I also reflected on the difficulties associated with partnership work, thereby avoiding a potentially overly-romantic assessment of this issue. I also considered the specific role government policy has played in promoting such approaches within schools and the implications of these issues for relationships with other potential partners.

My second major theme centres on the leadership of school-based partnership work, which I identified as one of two key factors in effective collaborations [the second – trust formed my third area of interest]. This sees me build on Collinson and Collinson's (2006) concept of *blended leadership* to describe a model that supports such partnership work, by combining elements of more well established leadership theories such as relational, constitutive, distributed, political and authentic leadership. I also consider this model within the context of masculine and feminine leadership, and transactional and transformational leadership, potentially transcending such perceived dichotomies by highlighting the importance of each in this process.

My final theme concerns the essential role trust plays in supporting school-based collaborative working, leadership and their intersection of collaborative leadership. I consider the attitudinal and performative elements of trust and establish explanatory frameworks for both its generalised development and contextual manifestations.

My work concludes with an exploration of the implications of my ideas for the day to day practice of trustworthy, collaborative leadership, drawing particular attention to the potential synergies and tensions within this.

Significance of this study

In my literature review, I outline the reasons why I believe my study is significant.

Firstly I note that schools are implicitly collaborative in nature, with the effective care and education of pupils based on an alliance between teachers and parents (Wang et

al., 1993). However I also highlight how during the last decade, government policy has increasingly placed partnership activity at the heart of efforts to promote the effectiveness of schools, such that each of the major initiatives introduced during this century has been essentially collaborative in nature (Kennedy, 2008). As a result of this, the essence of school leadership itself has been transformed, from uni- to cross-organisational, from mono- to multi-discipline and from exclusive to inclusive in nature.

This increased focus on collaboration is premised on the belief that in general, partnership working creates added value, raises efficiency and enhances the overall levels of performance (Hudson et al., 1999, Burt, 2001, Huxham and Vangen, 2005). More specifically, within schools, partnership working is essential to the delivery of extended services (Hill, 2007, Cummings et al., 2007), the benefits of which have been found to include improved student attendance and punctuality, improved attitudes to learning and greater participation in extra-curricula activities. Evaluations of a range of initiatives have also found that school to school partnerships have led to demonstrable improvements in student outcomes (Chapman et al., 2009, Berwick, 2007). Similarly early evaluations of Children's Trusts indicate that integrated and collaborative working has had a beneficial impact on these services in a majority of instances (O'Brien et al., 2009).

However while collaboration is now an unavoidable element of school leadership, it remains an ill-defined and misunderstood concept (Lank, 2006). Furthermore it is frequently portrayed in exclusively positive terms, when in reality, it can be highly problematic (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002b). Indeed, collaboration can be considered

an implicit challenge to an organisation's autonomy and as such a threat to its very survival (Crawford and Jones in Barton and Quinn, 2001). Therefore collaborative working is an area which is both highly relevant and requires further exploration.

Secondly, literature on facilitators of collaboration coalesces around six key themes.

These comprise:

- a context which is conducive to partnership working, for instance in terms of history, local capacity, demographics and politics
- clearly defined and widely shared aims and objectives for the partnership, supported by a set of common values
- sufficient planning, resources and supporting structures
- positive member relations, a supportive culture and a common language
- the presence of trusting relationships
- effective leadership.

Of these, the final two, trusting relationships and effective leadership, emerge as the most significant factors. Furthermore there is considerable synergy between these elements, with trust fundamentally important to both collaborative working per se and its effective leadership. However ironically these themes and the intersection between them are underexplored and therefore a legitimate and important area for further research.

Thirdly, collaborative leadership itself is a relatively new phenomenon, with the first texts on this issue emerging as recently as the late 1970s and 1980s (e.g. Finch, 1977, St John, 1980). Furthermore reflections on collaborative leadership can be broadly

differentiated into two main schools. The first of these portrays collaborative leadership as a *style*, adopted in pursuit of organisational goals and characterised by its open, inclusive and empowering approach and as such is closely associated with discussions on distributed leadership (Avery, 1999). The second is concerned with the leadership of collaborations as a means of achieving collaborative advantage and is essentially trans-organisational in nature. The two are often confused and may be conflated, yet in truth they remain distinct. While it is the latter of these viewpoints – *collaboration as a focus for leadership* that forms the main focus for my study, the notion of a collaborative leadership *style* is observed to play a major role in its pursuit. As I demonstrate in this thesis, while it is possible and indeed at times necessary and desirable to lead a collaboration in a highly directive manner, adopting a collaborative approach is itself fundamentally important in maximising the potential of such partnership working. As I demonstrate later in this thesis, the presence of a high trust environment is critical in maximising this process.

Furthermore evidence indicates that it is more appropriate to view collaborative leadership as a composite blended leadership model (Collinson and Collinson, 2006, Collinson, 2007), rather than a distinct entity in its own right. In this way, my model for collaborative leadership within school based contexts draws upon a number of alternative leadership perspectives, the relative blend of which depends upon a successful diagnosis of the context. These elements comprise:

- relational leadership – the connection between leader and follower
- distributed leadership – leadership as a pluralistic endeavour
- political leadership – understanding and navigating the macro, meso and micro political climate

- constitutive leadership – constructing the contextual meaning for followers
- authentic leadership – the values based performance of leadership

Thus we may view my original theory on collaborative leadership within schools as drawing upon elements of a range leadership perspectives, aspects of which have synergy with both masculine and feminine, and transactional and transformational leadership models. However such a process is far from unproblematic for while aspects of these may appear complementary, others are less sympathetic. For instance, elements of political leadership require highly manipulative approaches, which are not readily reconciled with the principles of relational leadership. Similarly some of the more directive leadership approaches employed as part of constitutive and political leadership are potentially incompatible with principles underpinning authentic leadership. However conventional literature on collaborative leadership frequently treats this notion in a largely unproblematic way. Thus my study makes an original and important contribution to this existing evidence by exploring further the potential complementarities and conflicts implicit in the concept of collaborative leadership within the context of school-based partnerships and the implications of seemingly mundane actions in its day to day performance.

Finally, my focus on trust draws attention to this fundamental yet all too often taken for granted phenomenon, which in turn, forms the basis for “every kind of peaceful cooperation amongst men” (Einstein in Jacobs, 2005:1). Indeed while trust is critical to the very functioning of society itself (e.g. Bryk and Schneider, 2002, Meyerson et al., 1996, Zucker, 1986, Seashore Louis, 2003), it has received relatively little consideration within the context of schools or partnership working. Furthermore, and

as I demonstrate in my thesis, I believe the attention it has received has been relatively superficial in nature and has given scant consideration to the ways in which potential tensions within the leadership role are resolved on a day to day basis to promote trustworthy relationships more broadly. Thus my study is highly significant as it develops a potential framework for considering this issue.

In summary, my study is relevant because:

[a] collaboration is an increasingly critical and unavoidable aspect of school leadership

[b] it offers clarification and elaboration on the nature of collaboration within such contexts and potentially more broadly

[c] it highlights and evidences the fundamentally important role trust plays in this process

[d] it provides evidence on the ways in which competing and conflicting aspects of collaborative leadership may be reconciled on a day to day basis and offers insight into the importance of the mundane in the daily practice of trustworthy, collaborative leadership.

Audience

My study is of potential interest for several audiences. Firstly in my focus on leadership practice, I identify implications from my work for serving school leaders and providers of continued professional development for these individuals. These can be summarised as follows:

1. Leaders need to have greater awareness of the importance of collaborative working

2. Leaders need to have greater awareness of the importance of trust and leadership in the success of collaborations
3. Effective leadership of collaborations demands the ability to build synergy and overcome conflict within the nature of leadership itself
4. Leaders need to have more awareness of how trust develops
5. Leaders can take practical steps to inform the development of trust beyond hierarchical boundaries
6. Placing a high regard on social learning can promote trust
7. There is a need for professional support to raise awareness of issues of collaborative working.

My study is also relevant to policy makers, concerned with school effectiveness and the provision of children's services. The main implications from my work for this audience centre on:

1. Judging the effectiveness of schools on their own is problematic
2. Taking a more measured approach to policy development and the introduction of change is helpful in increasing the sustainability of school leadership.

The third significant audience for my study are theorists, researchers and writers on school leadership, collaboration and trust. For these individuals, the main implications of my work relate to:

1. Collaborative leadership as a composite, blended leadership approach, with a clearly distinguishable identity of its own
2. The significance of professionalism as a means of reconciling anti-collaborative behaviour and authentic leadership

3. The need for a multi-dimensional framework for understanding trust both in theory and practice
4. The importance of social learning and its practical application in schools
5. The socially constructed nature of trust and the significance of expectations, attribution and role playing in its development
6. The presentation of a grounded consideration of the practical implications of partnership work and trustworthy leadership.

Connection with the literature

My thesis connects with existing literature on collaboration, leadership and trust, utilising the available evidence base and drawing strongly upon a range of established theories.

In my literature review, I utilise Chrislip and Larson (1994), definition of collaboration as meaning “to work together”, noting how this is frequently taken to be an implicitly positive endeavour (Huxham, 1996a). However I note Lank’s (2006) point that as a term, collaboration is used imprecisely and interchangeably with a range of other labels, including alliance, partnership and collective. My study then draws upon the work of a range of authors to consider the identified benefits and challenges associated with partnership work, most notably Huxham and Vangen (2000, 2004, 2005) and Sullivan and Skelcher (2002b). In doing so I conclude that while much has been written on the positives of such approaches, the potential difficulties associated with partnership work remain underexplored. This initial

section of my thesis concludes with a review of the potential inhibitors and facilitators of collaborative working.

My second main theme explores the specific nature of leadership demanded by collaborative working. as part of this, I highlight how leadership itself is a burgeoning field for literature, noting Grint's (2002) estimate that ten papers *a day* are now published on this area. However despite this, the field of *collaborative* leadership remains relatively under-explored, having received no significant attention prior to the early 1980s (Finch, 1977, St John, 1980). I then describe my view that rather than representing a single unified concept, it is more accurate to view collaborative leadership within school based partnerships as a composite model, consistent with Collinson and Collinson's (2006) concept of *blended leadership*. In doing so, I identify five significant themes in the leadership literature which are essential to this overarching concept.

The first of these, *authentic leadership* offers a framework for connecting leaders' behaviours with their underpinning values (Avolio et al., 2005). It also highlights the performative nature of leadership and the ways in which leaders may seek to create meaning through their effective day to day, routine portrayal of the leadership role (Fry and Whittington, 2005). Thus there are strong parallels between authentic leadership and Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2003b) emphasis on the mundane and everyday elements of leadership. Furthermore, this focus on the performance of leadership connects strongly with well established theories on dramaturgy (Goffman, 1959) and social learning (Bandura, 1977). Authentic leadership also highlights the active role followers' expectations play in this process and how it is essential for

leaders to offer a convincing [veritable] performance to establish the confidence and trust of followers (Chan et al., 2005). Meanwhile throughout my thesis I describe how *professionalism* (Wilson and Pirrie, 2000b, Evetts, 2003) offers a means through which this may be achieved and the mundane and routine elements of the role embedded within it.

Relational leadership concentrates on the interaction between leader and subordinates, thereby building on style and behaviourist views of leadership which emphasize the significance of interpersonal exchange and the potentially mundane day to day practice of the leader, rather than their innate characteristics (Stogdill, 1948). In my thesis, I argue there are particularly strong connections between the notions of leadership I describe in my study and dyadic models of leadership, outlined by writers such as Graen and Uhl Bien (1995) and Dionne (2000) I also describe how relationships are essential to all leadership models (Grint, 2005a) but are particularly critical in contexts with fewer leadership structures. In my consideration of relational leadership, I also describe identified differences in masculine and feminine leadership approaches (e.g. Ford et al., 2008, Robinson and Lipman-Blumen, 2003, Huey, 1994) and highlight the role a blended form of such gendered leadership approaches plays in the effective pursuit of partnership working.

The third main theme in my model of collaborative leadership in school based partnerships concerns *distributed leadership*, which is an increasingly well documented phenomenon. Distributed leadership is central to the notion of collaborative leadership because of its practical focus on sharing power and responsibility and encouraging leadership in a shared and collaborative way

(Southworth, 2004). Philosophical this approach is intended to utilise the skills and expertise of a range of individuals, thereby seeking to maximise the human capacity available to the collaboration (Harris, 2002). Distributed leadership has also been found to be particularly beneficial in supporting change, which as I note in my thesis, represents an underlying feature of many collaborations (Daft, 2002).

Political leadership represents the fourth theme in my model, and centres on the need for the leader to understand the macro, meso and micro political climate which the collaboration operates in. Political leadership has received little attention in the literature, but forms a central element of Vangen and Huxham's notion of *collaborative thuggery* (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). At the heart of political leadership is the willingness and ability to manipulate and utilise the political climate to pursue the leader's agenda [and that of the collaboration more broadly when these coincide], and understanding wider government policy is particularly significant within the schools-based context explored in this thesis.

There are strong connections between political leadership and *constitutive leadership*, which forms the final element of my blended model. Constitutive leadership is concerned with the role the leader plays in helping to define the context within which the organisation operates and the implications of this for the actions and strategies it adopts. Constitutive leadership is heavily influenced by constructivism (Yukl, 2002, Grint and Woolgar, 1997) and draws attention to the uncertain nature of leadership and organisational life, whilst highlighting the role the leader may play in manipulating other's understanding of their context to enable them to pursue their preferred agenda. The term 'constitutive leadership' does not feature within the main

theories on collaborative leadership offered by writers such as Huxham and Vangen (2005), Chrislip and Larson (1994), Sullivan and Skelcher (2002b) and Atkinson et al (Atkinson et al., 2002), although each of these highlights the need for strong communications. In my discussion on constitutive leadership, I describe the importance of non-verbal communications in this process of meaning making, again connecting strongly with Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), as well as notions of emotional intelligence (Gardner, 1983, Salovey and Mayer, 1990, Goleman, 1996, George, 2000) and emotional labour (Sachs and Blackmore, 1998, Bolton and Boyd, 2003, Robson and Bailey, 2009).

In outlining my model for school-based collaborative leadership, I highlight the central role that trust plays within this concept, thereby connecting with literature on this issue. As part of this I note how a leader's ability to trust their followers is a foundation for distributed leadership, while constitutive and authentic leadership are both predicated on followers' willingness to trust the leader's integrity. Trust also plays an essential part in resolving the implicit tensions within my framework for collaboration, most notable the need to work relationally with others while on occasions utilising less positive and potentially anti-collaborative approaches. I also highlight how published work on collaborations describes the essential role trust plays in collaborative working more broadly. My subsequent consideration of the antecedents of trust critiques what I consider to be the seven most prominent and interesting theories of trust¹. These are:

1. Bryk and Schneider's (2002) – 'relational trust'

¹ These theories are drawn from both within and without education, from the UK and US and from academic and non-academic writers.

2. Tschannan Moran's (2004)- "trustworthy leadership matrix"
3. Lewicki and Bunker's (1996) "stages of trust development"
4. Bottery's (2003, 2005) "micro, meso and macro stages of trust"
5. Covey's (2006) "five waves of trust"
6. Reina and Reina's (2006) "trust and betrayal model"
7. Vangen and Huxham's (2000, 2003a, 2003b) "trust building loop"

I conclude that each of these approaches contains weaknesses in terms of understanding trust within the context of school-based collaborations. Furthermore they collectively offer little detail on the mundane, day to day actions leaders undertake as part of the collaborative process or in order to promote trust. However as a canon they offer insight which supports the various elements I outlined as part of my model for collaborative leadership in schools. Furthermore, these and other theories form the basis for my *integrated model of trust* which I outline by way of explanation for the development of trust within any given context.

In the final part of my thesis I account for the ways in which leaders may potentially reconcile the tensions between the various aspects of collaborative leadership and the paradox between personal authenticity and the performance of leadership role. In doing so, I return to Goffman's (1959) notions of dramaturgy and the social construction of role (Grint and Woolgar, 1997), to describe a process through which the notion of leadership is negotiated through an interactive and ongoing discussion between leader and follower. I also highlight the role that professionalism plays within this process, both in terms of developing expectations and enabling these leaders to recast potentially negative elements of their role in a more positive light, thereby

building on the work of writers such as Evetts (2003), Doyal and Cameron (2000) and Barton and Quinn (2001). Finally I utilise Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) to describe how these leaders employed the process of dramatic realisation to personify their underpinning values and beliefs, and thereby inform the broader organisational climate.

In summary my work connects with the following themes in the literature:

- Collaboration and partnership working
- Collaborative leadership
- Blended and gendered leadership
- Transformational and transactional leadership
- Authentic, relational, constitutive, political and distributed leadership
- Trust
- Dramaturgy
- Social learning theory, and
- Professionalism

Original contribution

My thesis contributes to existing knowledge in three main ways. These are:

1. It provides a blended model for collaborative leadership within school based settings
2. It offers theoretical models for considering the development of trust at both generalised and contextual levels

3. It draws on empirical evidence to account for the practical performance of trustworthy leadership in collaborative settings on a day to day basis, through recourse to the notion of professionalism.

I explore these themes further in the remainder of this sub-section.

[a] *A blended model for collaborative leadership*

As I have noted throughout my thesis, the concept of collaborative leadership is underexplored within existing literature (Archer and Came, 2009). Furthermore [and with the notable exception of work by Huxham and Vangen (2003a)] such considerations have often been relatively simplistic, considering collaborative leadership in broadly unproblematic ways. In addition, they are generally concerned with partnership working within non-educational contexts, for instance in relation to civic engagement (e.g. Chrislip and Larson, 1994) or the broader delivery of public service (e.g. Hudson, 1987, Jameson, 2007, van Zwanenberg, 2009) and have therefore lacked relevance to school leadership.

My work offers an original contribution to knowledge by building upon Collinson and Collinson's (2006) concept of *blended leadership*, thereby providing a multi-dimensional basis for considering school-based collaborative leadership which extends understanding of this phenomenon beyond more simplistic assessments currently offered. Thus my blended model considers the notion of collaborative leadership from five different perspectives, highlighting the role that these alternative features play in this overarching concept. At a relatively simplistic level, I believe this approach provides a more nuanced assessment of collaborative leadership. For

instance, I highlight the implicitly relational nature of this phenomenon and the importance of engaging others in the ‘delivery’ of leadership necessary for its performance. Similarly I describe the need for leaders to understand and engage in the political dimensions of collaborative working and highlight the role leaders play in establishing a context which explains the need for such partnership activity. Finally I describe the significance of authenticity in providing the authority for leadership to occur in such contexts.

However my blended conceptualisation of school-based collaborative leadership also offers scope for a far more sophisticated consideration of this phenomenon, by promoting connections and conflicts which may otherwise have remained unobserved. For instance, my description of political leadership considers both positive and negative aspects of the political environment, highlighting the need for leaders to understand the political and policy arena, the organisation of institutional relationships and the practical day to day demands of collaboration at officer level. Implicit within this though is the willingness and ability to undertake less ethical elements of leadership practice necessary to pursue the overarching vision. While a mono-theoretical account of collaborative leadership may also explore this specific issue, it would be unable to reflect on the various interactions between political leadership and alternative aspects of collaborative leadership more broadly and would therefore miss the implicit synergies and tensions involved. Thus in this instance, it would fail to highlight the potential complementarity between political and constitutive leadership, and the ways in which understanding the broader policy environment for the collaboration supports leaders’ efforts to establish a supportive context for partnership working. Conversely, such mono-theoretical considerations would also ignore the

potential tensions between these elements and the notion of authentic leadership, which itself is fundamentally important in offering a basis for the leader's motivations and actions. In the same way, my model highlights the potential synergies between distributed and relational leadership within school-based collaborations, the latter of which offers a foundation for strategies which pursue the former. At the same time it also juxtaposes the potentially directive aspects of political leadership with the more disengaged and empowering philosophy of distributed leadership. Again such nuances would be missed through a more conventional mono-theoretical approach.

A further innovative feature of my blended approach is its ability to combine aspects of transactional and transformation leadership theory - indeed this potential dilemma is at the heart of tensions between the directive and empowering leadership strategies offered in my previous example of collaborative leadership. In this and other instances, we may observe the ways in which transactional leadership offers a practical means of delivering the espoused values and principles which frequently underpin such partnership activity. In other instances however, transformational leadership strategies are paramount in securing the engagement of potential followers, through recourse to a values based commitment to increasing the life chances of children. This attempt at reconciling these alternative aspects of leadership is relatively novel within both general literature on leadership within school-based and that more specifically focused on collaboration, and as such it offers an innovative and original take on this issue. Furthermore I offer a similar take on gendered considerations of leadership, highlighting how effective collaborative leadership demands that both masculine and feminine approaches are utilised, depending upon context. Thus my work encourages a more holistic, multi-dimensional and rounded

consideration of collaborative leadership which stretches this concept beyond simplistic viewpoints which may be reliant upon transformational leadership principles.

The final noteworthy aspect of my model is the way in which it positions trust as fundamental to the day to day practice of collaborative leadership. As already noted, this view of collaborative leadership contains many complementary aspects, but is also essentially contradictory and conflicting in nature. Thus trust is viewed as essential in offering authority for the leader's actions and as a guarantee for both their motivation and capability in instances when the behaviours observed are incommensurate with their espoused values. Indeed as I argue in this model, trust acts as both the basis for assuring leaders' behaviours with followers through its relationship with professionalism and as a basis for retaining their sense of personal integrity. This is critical to the pursuit of authentic leadership and to reconciling the personal strains experienced by the leader, through their enactment of the collaborative leadership role. This consideration of leadership as performance is a further underexplored area within the literature on collaborative leadership and described further subsequently in this section.

[b] A model for considering the development of trust

As noted above, my thesis establishes trust as the most fundamental aspect of collaborative leadership, which itself is viewed as the most critical element of effective collaborations per se. However while some consideration has been given to the issue of trust in general, it has effectively been ignored within the context of

school based collaborations. Thus my study offers a unique insight into trust within such circumstances.

Furthermore throughout my thesis I have been clear as to how my thinking is influenced and informed by a broadly social constructionist philosophy, and as such my theoretical considerations of trust are explicitly developed from this perspective, assuming that trust is ideal in nature. Such a clear philosophical stance is in contrast with the main theories reviewed in my literature review, which are largely silent on this issue of philosophy. This belief in the principles of social constructionism is central to my two original contributions in relation to the development of trust.

The first of these comes from my literature review and relates to the range of factors that inform the generalised development of trust. As part of this, I explicitly reviewed the eight most significant considerations of trust, in order to identify consistent themes and establish common antecedents. As a result of this I describe four broad domains which influence trust between followers and leaders. The first two of these, *leader-centric* and *follower-centric*, highlight the fundamentally relational nature of trust and concern those factors which specifically relate to the two parties involved and the interaction between them. I identify a number of similarities between these domains, not least of which is expectations as to the nature of the other's role, which I consider in more depth subsequently in this subsection. The remaining two domains highlight the situated nature of these relationships however, and how they occur within a broader organisational and societal context. In this way, I offer a means of accounting for the emergence of trust which at once views it as specific, relational and localised, while still situating it within the broader environment in which it is manifest.

In my second model, I consider the inter-relational aspects of trust in more depth. In doing so, I explore further the connections between the leader's values and behaviours, and thereby make explicit the linkages between authentic and transformational leadership and day to day leadership practice. Again I believe this combination of elements in my model is unique, for as I describe in my consideration of the main theories of trust, none of these existing perspectives offer such a grounded yet abstracted perspective. My model therefore offers a means through which leadership practice may be actively managed to have a beneficial effect on levels of leader-follower trust. At the same time, it highlights the fundamental importance of follower expectations within this process and notes how such expectations are formed by a variety of factors which are ostensibly beyond the leader's control. However I temper this with the recognition that the *ongoing* nature of expectation is continuously informed by interaction and how as a result, leaders *do* indeed have *some* degree of input into this process. This finding is important for two main reasons. Firstly it is in keeping with my social constructionist perspective and is therefore supportive of a broader constructivist explanatory framework. Secondly it views leadership as empowered and capable of positively influencing followers' perceptions as to the trustworthiness of leaders. Such a conclusion thereby steers a cautious path between presenting the emergence of trust as determined in part by the interplay of a complex range of antecedents, which promote trust and limit the leader's influence in this process, and the potentially overly-simplistic considerations of trust as emerging entirely as the result of a somewhat formulaic adoption of articulated practice by a leader. In this way I therefore seek to balance the issues of structure and agency.

[c] An account for the practical performance of trustworthy leadership in collaborative settings on a day to day basis

My third major contribution to the literature centres on my attempt to account for the performance of trustworthy leadership in collaborative settings on a day to day basis. More specifically, I explore the means through which the various tensions and contradictions highlighted within my explanatory frameworks may be resolved.

My starting point for this is to consider the importance of authenticity in this work and the promotion of trusting relationships. At the same time however, I connect with principles of *dramaturgy* and describe the significance placed by followers on the leader's performance of their role. In doing so I highlight the potential paradox between these two elements - indeed the notion of an 'authentic performance' may potentially be viewed as an oxymoron. However it is my contention that the concept of authenticity is opaque and definitions as to its nature in any given context are somewhat problematic. Instead I start from a view of authenticity as both innate to the individual and imposed and attributed to them by the outside world. In this way, and in the context of collaborative leadership, the authentic performance of the leadership role is informed by the leader's personality and both leader's and follower's expectations of what collaborative leadership itself comprises. Furthermore and as described above, these expectations are negotiated and evolve in response to the actions and reactions of leader and follower, such that they are fluid, reflexive and dynamic. At once then the nature of authenticity must be viewed as both agentic and structural, and its performance both spontaneously created and yet constrained by pre-existed boundaries.

Dermatological studies commonly employ acting metaphors to describe notions of role performance. However I argue that such notions are incompatible with the principles of authenticity and as such I believe that a further area of originality in my work is that I eschew this approach and instead employ ideas of musicianship to illustrate the nature of this performance. In this way I dismiss the notion that a leader adopts a part for a fixed and temporary period of time and instead view the performance of leadership as essentially the utilisation of specific approaches and techniques undertaken to make manifest the values and principles which underpin it. Thus like a musician, the individual remains an essential part of the leadership performance: they do not ‘become’ the leader as they walk on stage, but rather perform the *specific aspects* associated with their role. This may require a degree of affectation or accentuation on the part of the performer, undertaken to elicit a specific effect from the audience, but to achieve an authentic performance, they nevertheless retain their fundamental integrity and remain true to self. However, and as noted above, ‘collaborative leadership’ may be viewed in part as paradoxical in nature and on occasion require the performance of anti-collaborative behaviours which may not be commensurate with a leader’s underpinning values. In such instances, these demands threaten the individual’s personal and perceived authenticity, and as such may have a detrimental effect on followers’ views as to their trustworthiness. However I argue that the concept of *professionalism* offers a means through which these potential tensions may be reconciled by effectively depersonalising negative elements of role and divorcing them from the innate characteristics of the leader themselves. In this way professionalism therefore offers a means by which leaders may potentially cope with such negative aspects of their job and my view of

professionalism as a potential mechanism for achieving this balance represents a further original contribution to the literature in this field. Moreover I view professionalism as a socially constructed concept which is relative to the circumstances in which it is found. As such professionalism is negotiated and contextualised, at once bounded by societal structures and expectations, and yet responsive to individual agency. Thus my thesis offers an explanatory framework for considering the authentic performance of trustworthy, collaborative leadership within schools which is truly blended in nature - coherent yet complex, structured and agentic, constructed and constructing.

In summary, the original contribution of my thesis is:

1. It describes a blended model for collaborative leadership within school based settings, which draws on existing leadership models as well as potentially dichotomous notions of masculine and feminine leadership, and transactional and transformational leadership
2. It considers existing literature to develop theoretical models which account for the development of trust at both generalised and contextual levels
3. It draws on empirical evidence to account for the practical and mundane performance of trustworthy leadership in collaborative settings on a day to day basis, using the notion of professionalism as a means of reconciling the tensions which are implicit within this.

4. Literature review

Introduction

Classically a literature review is undertaken at the commencement of a study to test if the answer to the question being researched already exists. As Baker notes: "*only when we have searched all the possible sources of recorded information without finding an answer should we consider undertaking new or primary research to collect new facts or intelligence*" (Baker, 2003a:149). However in this study I adopted an alternative strategy, consistent with the principles of Grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). As such I used literature to support the exploratory phases of my fieldwork, but avoided an exhaustive consideration of such materials in advance of my original data collection, as this may have potentially skewed the focus for my subsequent work. Thus I sought to avoid imposing an existing theoretical framework for my study at the expense of one which may emerge, opting instead to interrogate the literature throughout my data collection activities. A fuller description of how I approached my literature review is offered in chapter 5 of this thesis.

In this chapter I set out to demonstrate why the issues explored in my thesis are important, the main areas of knowledge that exist in relation to each field and the gaps in understanding that remain to be addressed. To this end, my review comprises three subsections. In the first of these, I explore *the nature of leadership within school-based collaboration*, first defining notions of collaboration, exploring the reasons for its growth in significance to schools and then considering the elements which characterise its effectiveness. In my second subsection, I focus on *leader-follower trust within collaborative working*, a factor consistently identified as fundamental to

the quality of such relationships within collaborative, and indeed all, contexts. In doing so, I consider the evidence as to the facilitators and inhibitors of trust in leaders and collaborations more broadly. My concluding section explores *the performance of trustworthy leadership in practice*, describing the main principles which underpin considerations of leadership in these terms.

Within my literature review I describe how a considerable amount has been published in relation to collaboration and trust and how while different opinions remain, some consensus appears to be emerging on a number of key elements of both. However I note how considerations of leadership within each area have been limited and describe how collaboration and trust have both generally been described in simplistic and unproblematic terms, with little regard given to the complexities associated with either concept. Indeed I highlight how collaborative working and the promotion of trust are frequently described in ways which assume an idealised conceptualisation of cause and effect, such that a leader's display of behaviours type *a*, *b* and *c* for instance, will always produce response *d* from followers. In this way I argue for a more sensitive consideration of the interplay between leader and follower, and highlight how existing descriptions fail to consider the potentially contradictory and conflicting nature of facilitators of collaborative working and trust, and the significance of context in both respects. This line of argument is commensurate with the constructivist philosophy which underpins my study and which is described in more depth in chapter 5. I conclude that new research is most likely to contribute to these debates by exploring the daily practice of leaders, and the ways in which leaders define and evidence notions of trust and leadership through their day to day activities.

[a] The nature of leadership within school-based collaborations

Defining collaboration

The word collaboration comes from the Latin *com* and *laborare*, meaning “to work together” (Chrislip and Larson, 1994). While collaboration has negative connotations in some societies, most notably in relation to foreign powers during times of occupation (Bottery, 2005), it is more frequently portrayed in positive terms within published literature, as Huxham notes (1996a:7):

“Collaboration is taken to imply a very positive form of working in association with others for some form of mutual benefit.”

Thus collaboration is at once both relational and purposive, comprising conjoined action undertaken to achieve mutual benefit.

A wide range of alternative terms are frequently used in addition to collaboration to describe various forms of inter-organisational relationships. Huxham (1996a) for instance identifies a range of both positive and negative alternatives to this. The former include co-operation, co-ordination, coalition, network, alliance, partnership and bridge; with the latter comprising conflict, competition, co-operation and collusion. Lank (2006) similarly identifies a variety of different labels for this term which are summarized in Figure 1. In doing so Lank highlights how some terms are more clearly delimited, while others are effectively used interchangeably, with the boundaries between partnership, coalition, alliance and collaboration are often particularly blurred. Further confusion stems from the various ways in which terms are used, as Lank notes:

“different organizations define these terms differently – one organisation’s ‘consortium’ may be another’s ‘network’. Some of these arrangements will be established as formal legal entities; others will be much more informal processes of meeting, talking and taking action together. Some will involve only two organizations; others may involve dozens of organizations. Some are created to deliver one specific outcome; others have a long term focus and tackle many different projects as relationships and ideas evolve. Some are coordinated by one or more of the partner organizations; others are supported by a formal coordination mechanism, with its own staff and budget (2006:6).”

Alternative labels for collaborative working

- Alliance
- Partnership
- Network
- Coalition
- Co-operative
- Consortium
- Group
- Virtual corporation
- Constellation
- Extended enterprise
- Association
- Community
- Joint venture
- Collaborative
- Federation
- Forum
- Collective

Source: Lank [2006]

Figure 1 Alternative labels for collaborative working [source: Lank 2006]

Such observations are helpful in forcing us to question the extent to which we are able to talk meaningfully about the notion of collaboration, given the wide variety of permutations this notion covers. Nevertheless I believe that partnership working

involves a generic focus on co-operation, undertaken to realise some degree of mutual gain. This principle underpins my subsequent discussions on school-based collaboration throughout this report.

The importance of collaborations to school leadership

Arguably collaboration is so fundamental to a school's activity that its significance is often missed. At its most basic level, the effective education and schooling of children is essentially collaborative in nature, at the heart of which is the relationship between the family and the school (Wang et al., 1993, HM Government, 2008). A British child spends only around 14%² of his time in school each year and considerable formal and informal learning occurs in his home. More broadly the provision of a child's education within school is essentially a team effort, as she passes from class to class, and school to school during her formative years.

Historically the picture of partnership working between schools and other agencies has been patchy, however. Hill (2007) for instance notes how changes in government policy resulted in a range of perspectives on collaboration during the last forty years, ranging from a context of prescribed co-operation and mutual reliance during the 1970s, to one of competition and mutual suspicion during the 1980s and 1990s. Further complexity is added by the patchwork of local initiatives, such as the notions of community school in Leicestershire and the Village College in Cambridgeshire (Smith, 1996b, 1998, 2004), each of which was premised upon an ideological

² Based on an average day of 6.5 hours, and attending school for 195 days a year.

commitment to promoting increased cooperation between the school and the communities it serves. However more recent years have witnessed a greater and more consistent commitment to partnership working in schools and collaboration has formed *the* central strategy in each of the Labour government's flagship initiatives introduced during this time [Figure 2]. Indeed partnership working represented the defining theme in the 2009 education white paper (Department for Children, 2009), which identifies collaboration as critical to improving the quality of student learning and promoting their overall wellbeing, as well as increasing the efficiency of schools' operations in general. Examples of such partnership activities include an enhanced role for School Improvement Partners, greater scope for schools to connect as federations, the development of Children's Trusts to integrated school and social services and a greater emphasis on co-ordinated, multi-agency early intervention in cases of concern.



Figure 2 Major school improvement initiatives of the 21st century (source: Kennedy, 2008)

Benefits of collaborative working

A key driver in promoting collaborations is the belief that partnership working can create added value, improve efficiency and enhance the overall level of achievement (Hudson et al., 1999, Burt, 2001). To this end, literature offers insights into how collaboration promotes improved effectiveness in a range of contexts and cultures, for instance: in automotive production (Evans and Wolf, 2005) and textiles (Bachmann, 1999) in private industry; in health provision (van Eyk and Baum, 2002) and the provision of domestic services (Findlater and Kelly, 1999) in the public sector; and among not for profit organisations in general (Sturm, 2000). More recently Plettinx (2009) has argued that collaborative leadership promotes responsibility and accountability which in turn, may have helped prevent recent difficulties in the financial sector.

Williamson (2001) notes that collaboration may bring improvements in service provision and in benefits for staff, including enhancement of professional skills and opportunities to develop links with colleagues in other companies and agencies. Power (2001) sees a failure to collaborate as having a disproportionately severe effect on the most marginalised members of society, while Burt (2001) has noted how external connections are necessary to add value to the work of individual organisations. It is for these reasons that a variety of writers have highlighted the growing importance of working in partnership in a range of contexts (e.g. Archer and Came, 2009, Brookes, 2006, Godfrey et al., 2004, Hill, 2007, Himmelman, 1996, Milbourne et al., 2003, Warner, 2000), thus making issues relating to the leadership of partnerships central to the key challenges for leaders in the 21st century (Pedler et al., 2004).

From a schools perspective, writers such as Connolly and James (2006) propose that increased openness to collaboration within and between schools is a correlate of improved practice, while Hill (2007) states collaboration can add value in terms of:

- building knowledge
- adding capacity and supports efficiency
- widening curriculum choice and options for students
- promoting the broader welfare of students
- supporting school improvement.

Collaboration is essential to the delivery of extended services in schools (Hill, 2007, Cummings et al., 2007), the benefits of which have been found to include improved student attendance and punctuality, improved attitudes to learning and greater participation in extra-curricula activities. This may stem in part from increased efforts to engage end users in the design and delivery of services (Lang and Hornburg, 1998, Farrar and Bond, 2005). Meanwhile evaluations of initiatives such as federations and the London Leadership Strategy have found that partnerships between schools can lead to demonstrable improvements in student outcomes (Chapman et al., 2009, Berwick, 2007). Similarly early evaluations of Children's Trusts indicate that such integrated and collaborative working has had a beneficial impact in a majority of instances (O'Brien et al., 2009).

Huxham and Vangen (2000, 2005) use the concept of *collaborative advantage* to describe the range of benefits that can be secured through partnership working.

Concerned with creating synergies between collaborating organisations, collaborative advantage focuses on instances where joint working is essential to achieve an outcome

which represents more than the sum of its parts. The potential benefits which can be achieved through collaborative advantage are summarized in Figure 3.

Benefits of “Collaborative Advantage”

Increased access to resources

- eg financial, human, technological

Shared risk

- eg investment, research & development

Efficiency

- eg via public/private partnership, outsourcing, supply chain integration, reduced duplication

Co-ordinated and seamless services

- eg reduced repetition, avoidance of omission

Learning

- eg sharing of good practice

Moral imperative

- eg no other way

Source: Huxham & Vangen [2005]

Figure 3 Benefits of ‘collaborative advantage’ [source: Vangen & Huxham 2005]

The negative side of collaboration

While considerable literature describes the benefits of engaging in collaboration, less has been written on the potential downsides of partnership working. I believe this may be indicative of a wider romanticised view of joint working, based upon an underpinning naivety as to just how problematic such approaches are in practice.

One notable exception is Huxham and Vangen (2005) who described how collaborations may represent “a world filled with frustrations” as those charged with making collaborative working a reality often find progress slow and painful – a phenomenon they describe as *collaborative inertia*. Thus they highlight the reality gap

which can exist between policy makers who may view collaborative working as a logical and universal panacea to the myriad of challenges faced and the reality of partnerships on a day to day. Tellingly they offer their overwhelming conclusion that collaboration is a far from easy option stating that:

“the overwhelming conclusion from our research is that seeking collaborative advantage is a seriously resource-consuming activity so is only to be considered when the stakes are really worth pursuing. Our message to practitioners and policy makers alike is don’t do it unless you have to.” (Huxham and Vangen, 2005:13)

Sullivan and Skelcher (2002b) similarly describe how while collaborative activity is commonplace, *“so too are the expressions of frustration by those involved”* (2002b:7). In doing so, they draw particular attention to the political, operational and financial obstacles to making partnerships work. Further considerations highlighted involve the insufficient resources often invested in collaborative working, slow progress towards goals, lack of inclusiveness and domination by some partners.

Crawford and Jones (in Barton and Quinn, 2001) describe how organisations implicitly strive to retain their autonomy and shared or collaborative working is inevitably therefore seen as a potential threat. Weiss (2002) builds on this by noting that mandating collaboration is no guarantee of its success, and how individuals work around imposed structures to maintain their independence. As already highlighted, collaboration is a highly imprecise term and Lank (2006) notes that it is frequently used to describe relationships which are more akin to those of customer-supplier rather than true partnership. Thus Lank hints at a broader point concerning the potential power inequality that may exist in any partnership and which can lead to

similarly one-sided relationships. For example one potential rationale for the government's interest in promoting collaborative working may be to reduce the power of any one organisation to act autonomously, a scenario which may apply to academies and specialist schools. In such instances collaborative working is driven by compulsion rather than a need which is clearly identified and owned by the parties involved.

In some instances partnership working can also be viewed as a mechanism for increased surveillance, as partners act as a check for other's activity and further scrutinise their actions (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002b). On occasion this may serve to preserve or enhance a specific party's power, enabling them to exert additional influence over others, potentially for their personal gain. Sullivan and Skelcher (2002b) describe how this forms a core part of resource-dependency theory, which sees parties develop ties of mutual dependency in order to maximise the potential resources available to them, rather than achieve the greatest level of mutual benefit. In such a scenario therefore, collaboration is an inter-organisational game played to protect one's own interests, rather than something undertaken to pursue a more moralistic cause.

Thus the issue of power is an implicit yet under-explored issue within collaborative working and fundamental to the relative success or failure of partnership working. Furthermore, and as already noted, school based collaboration is a particularly under-explored area – a situation I seek in part to address through this study.

Inhibitors and facilitators of collaborative working

Research into effective collaborations in a range of contexts highlight a number of factors which have been significant in their success. However while different studies may focus on different elements, my review of published studies on collaboration found a relatively high degree of consistency as to the most important factors, which coalesced around eight themes, these being:

- Context
- Values, aims and objectives
- Planning, resources and structures
- Member relations, culture and language
- Trust and
- Leadership

The remainder of this subsection explores these themes in more depth.

Context

Context relates to the specific conditions within which partnership working occurs.

Key contextual considerations which may support partnership working include:

- History – having a track record of joint working offers capacity, trust and social capital (Coleman, 1988, Gillinson et al., 2007)
- Local capacity for collaborative working – while this may stem from experience, it may also include support offered from local groups or advisors (Woods et al., 2006)

- Local demographics – concerned principally with understanding the needs of the local population and [co-] developing solutions which promote ownership (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002a)
- Politics – understanding the dynamics of local groups, utilising local government initiatives and aligning collaborative efforts with national policy to take maximum advantage of the support offered (Chrislip and Larson, 1994, Riddell and Tett, 2001, Yerbury, 1997)

Values, aims and objectives

These issues centre on clearly understanding the purpose of the collaboration and the different interests of partners, i.e.:

- Having clearly articulated aims and a shared purpose (Barton and Quinn, 2001, Sturm, 2000, Williamson, 2001)
- Being clear about partners' agendas and how the collaboration can support each others' work (Atkinson et al., 2002, Kanter, 1994, Sloper, 2004)
- Ensuring that the aims are shared by any end user of the collaboration; i.e. that the partnership addresses the needs of the consumer and not of itself (Strauss and Harris, 2002, Zwarenstein and Reeves, 2000)
- Building on common values, mutual interests and shared priorities between collaborating parties (van Zwanenberg, 2009).

Planning, resources and structures

Planning and resources concerns ensuring clarity over the practical delivery of the collaboration's goals. Central to this are issues of:

- Time – ensuring an appropriately challenging yet realistic chronology for partnership working (Alexander and Macdonald, 2005, Tett et al., 2001, DfES, 2005)
- Synergy – ensuring that partners’ resources are utilised to maximum effect and complement rather than duplicate those offered elsewhere (Stone, 2001)
- Skills – ensuring that sufficient expertise is available in the partnership, developing this where needed through training or utilising capacity available elsewhere, for instance in the local community (Das and Teng, 1998, Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002a)
- Willingness to contribute – i.e. all partners contribute their share to the collaboration and resources are pooled (Sloper, 2004, Yerbury, 1997)
- Entrepreneurship – partners are willing to demonstrate sufficient creativity to make the most of resources available (Cummings et al., 2007)
- Structures - establishing the working processes required to embed collaboration while avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy, for instance in relation to communications and monitoring and evaluating success (Edwards, 2007, Lloyd et al., 2001, Sloper, 2004).

Member relations, culture and language

Member relations, culture and language is largely concerned with the ways in which collaborative working is supported on a day to day basis. It connects strongly with *planning, resources and structures*. Factors which relate to this centre on:

- Language – avoiding the unnecessary use of highly technical language and clarifying areas of potential confusion (Kasama and Tett, 2001)

- Sensitivity to other professional cultures – for instance in relation to the values of other professional groups and ethical concerns, focusing on areas of commonality and valuing difference (Lloyd et al., 2001, Jackson, 2007, Gillinson et al., 2007)
- Inclusiveness – adopting an open approach to partnership beyond traditional confines (Mordaunt, 2001)
- Effective day to day communications – i.e. ensuring a general culture of openness with regular exchanges of information and avoiding unnecessary confidentiality (Atkinson et al., 2002, Huxham and Vangen, 2005, Kanter, 1994)
- Flexible working – i.e. a willingness to adopt different approaches to support the collaboration (Maher, 2007, Barton and Quinn, 2001)
- Compromise - being willing to negotiate for the common good (Huxham and Vangen, 2004) and being able to overcome perceived differences in status and influence (Williamson, 2001).

Trust

Trust is a fundamental part of collaboration and covers all aspects of the partnership process. Indeed I argue that along with leadership it is *the* most significant factor in effective collaborative working. Trust is critical in:

- Leadership – establishing the credibility of leaders and enhancing their influence (Hannah et al., 2005)
- Operational relationships – promoting effective communications, supporting the development of a shared culture and language (e.g. Kanter, 1994, Woods et al., 2006, Hudson et al., 1999, Stone, 2001, Amistead, 2007).

- Efficiency – increasing the speed of interaction and reducing transaction costs (Lane, 1998, and Granovetter, 1973, Covey, 2006)
- Change – supporting the delivery of change (Kotter, 1995)
- Promoting shared learning and improving school effectiveness (Chapman et al., 2009)

Leadership

Along with trust, leadership cuts across all areas of collaborative working and is especially important in terms of:

- Sense making – helping to promote a common vision and inspiring others to follow (Barton and Quinn, 2001, Gillinson et al., 2007)
- Empowerment – encouraging ownership and participation in the collaborative process (Huxham and Vangen, 2000)
- Conflict – resolving disputes between partners at a strategic and operational level (Briggs et al., 2007)
- Commitment and effectiveness – helping to secure the benefits and added value of joint working (Huxham and Vangen, 2000, Briggs et al., 2007)

The nature of leadership required within collaborative contexts is explored further in the next subsection of my literature review.

The key aspects of leadership in collaborative settings

So far in my literature review, I have described how the emphasis on school-based partnership has increased, with every major policy initiative of the 21st century containing an expectation of shared working. At the same time though, I have highlighted the relative lack of research on such activities within schools - a shortfall which my study seeks to address. I have also described the various benefits that effective collaboration is expected to yield, including increased efficiency, enhanced access to resources and greater ability to tackle the most persistent and complex challenges facing society.

I have also highlighted the potentially negative aspects of collaboration, describing how this can be driven by a selfish desire to protect one's own interests rather than more altruistic motivations, and the significant role that power plays within this. In doing so I have noted the relative lack of consideration which has been given to more negative perspectives on partnership, which I argue may reflect something of a romanticised view of joint working, based upon a wider, underpinning naivety as to just how problematic such approaches are in practice.

In the preceding subsection, I identified and explored the six factors which promote efficient partnership working, these being: Context; Values, aims and objectives; Planning, resources and structures; Member relations, culture and language; Leadership and Trust. In doing so I expressed my belief that it is these final two drivers that are most significant to partnership working. In the next two sections of my literature review, I consider the notions of collaborative leadership and trust in more depth.

I begin by considering published literature on collaborative leadership, noting how studies to date may be characterised as either *focused* on collaboration or concerned with leading in a more collaborative *style*. I then offer a potential blended leadership model for collaborative leadership, which I develop from existing published work. In doing so however I draw attention to the limited nature of this literature and seek to address these weaknesses by drawing upon a broader range of leadership theory. As a result I offer a model for collaborative leadership in schools which I believe is more rounded and intellectually satisfying than those in the current canon of knowledge, and which may offer insight in collaboration more broadly. At the same time though I draw attention to the various limitations of this framework and highlight a number of potential contradictions and tensions which embedded within it and which form part of the focus for my subsequent fieldwork.

Defining collaborative leadership

Defining leadership

While studies of leadership in general can be traced back to Ancient Greece (Soderberg, 2005), interest in this field has grown exponentially in recent years. Grint (2002) for instance notes that the number of leadership papers doubled between the 1980s and 1990s with ten papers *a day* being published on it. However despite this huge increase in research and writing, we remain no nearer to a definitive definition of what leadership actually is than at any point in the past. Thus Bennis' iconic quote from 1959 is as true now as it was half a century ago:

“Always it seems, the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again and again with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have invented an endless proliferation of terms to deal with it...and still the concept is not sufficiently defined” (Bennis quoted in Yukl, 2002:2)

As I note elsewhere in this thesis, I believe that leadership is essentially socially constructed in nature and that this is the fundamental reason for the lack of consensus as to its precise nature (Grint, 1997). Ford et al (2008) for instance describe it as an ‘empty signifier’ insofar as it is unattached to any element and as such its ‘true’ meaning only emerges through its operationalisation. As each instance of leadership is therefore specific to its contexts this makes broader cross cutting definitions problematic. However despite these caveats there some areas of consensus within the various conceptualisations, which centre on the desire to influence others to achieve a pre-existing vision (Bush and Glover, 2003, Yukl, 2002, Bryman, 1996, Kouzes and Posner, 2002). Therefore I believe the following definition is a helpful summary of these various viewpoints [emphasis added]:

*“leadership is an **influence relationship** among **leaders and followers** who intend real **changes** and outcomes that reflect their **shared purposes**” Daft (2002:5).*

Arguably leadership, like collaboration, is a values-loaded term which has been primarily considered from a positive perspective. Indeed many values based, post transactional leadership theorists have offered visions of leadership which have actively precluded negative conceptualisations. Examples of such definitions include those relating to ethical (e.g. Brown, 2007, Ciulla, 1998), authentic (e.g. Avolio and Gardner, 2005, Gardner et al., 2005) and transformational leadership (Bass, 1998,

Bono and Judge, 2004, MacGregor Burns, 2003). However there is a growing body of work which emphasises the negative, *destructive* side of leadership, undertaken for personal gain, and/ or against the interests of the organisation and/or subordinates (Einarsen et al., 2007). One specific subset of this work involves instances when leaders demonstrate behaviours which are destructive for the subordinate but generate positive outcomes for the organisation³. For instance Ferris et al (2007) have discussed the ways in which bullying may be used as a strategic leadership approach, undertaken to achieve specific and potentially positive outcomes. Such considerations are helpful in informing discussions on the ethics of leadership and I will return this tension between ‘positive’ aims and ‘negative’ means later in my thesis.

Understanding collaborative leadership

The *notion* of collaborative leadership is a relatively new phenomenon, although of course its practice is in reality considerably older⁴. The earliest writers on this issue included Finch (1977) and St John (1980), with Pink and Leibert (1986) among the first to apply it to the context of schools. It was not until the 1990s though that the term became more widely used. Indeed in a search of published literature on this issue I found that of the 63 items which contained the term “collaborative leadership” in their title, nearly 90% had been published after 1995, and three quarters were post 1999, suggesting that interest in this issue is growing.

³ Writers such as Grint [2005b] have highlighted the contextually specific nature of values and how judgements as to what is or is not appropriate for both organisation and leader are contingent and socially constructed. As I demonstrate in my thesis, the leader plays a particularly influential role in defining the values which apply to the context both in word and deed.

⁴ For instance Grint [2005] describes the performance of ostensibly collaborative leadership by the Romans and Spartans. Similarly the organisation of allied forces in world war 2 offers a particularly good example of collaborative leadership, as the Supreme Allied Commanders oversaw the deployment of forces from sixty different states in the pursuit of a collective endeavour. Meanwhile 20th century institutions such as the United Nations and NATO are also good examples of collaborative leadership in action.

Much of this literature is American in origin and focuses on collaborative relationships between agencies and individuals in promoting community regeneration. Such texts frequently adopt a somewhat advocacy stance. However in recent years, this theme has become increasingly popular within schools with their strong tradition of collegiality. For instance in her study of female secondary school headteachers, Coleman (2000:15) concludes that “*the single most popular style of management was that termed ‘collaborative’*”⁵. A consideration of these and texts on collaborative leadership more broadly, identifies two main ways in which the term is used. Firstly it represents an alternative means of describing practice commonly associated with distributed leadership (e.g. Jameson et al., 2006). In such instances, collaboration is ostensibly concerned with sharing leadership with followers to promote learning and enhanced organizational effectiveness. In this instance collaboration relates almost exclusively to a *style of leadership*, which is characterised as open, inclusive and empowering⁶. An alternative consideration of collaborative leadership conceptualises it as concerned with promoting joint working, potentially within but more common beyond the confines of a single organizational structure (Avery, 1999, Chrislip and Larson, 1994). In these instances, collaboration relates to a *focus for leadership*, which is concerned with realising the benefits of collaborative advantage described earlier in this section. The two notions are often confused and potentially conflated, as the latter conception of leadership transcends ‘traditional’ and hierarchical sources of leadership

⁵ Coleman [2000:13] goes on to note that “it appears that the majority of the headteachers adopting this style of management reserve the right to make the final decision” suggesting that collaborative styles may work most effectively when combined with more directive approaches when circumstances dictate. This point is consistent with the findings from my own work and this broader theme is returned to throughout in my thesis.

⁶ Of course distributed leadership may also occur in the absence of effective leadership as followers react to fill a vacuum which may arise.

power and as such commonly utilise the collaborative style of leadership as means of delivery⁷.

Furthermore, while it is the latter of these viewpoints – *collaboration as a focus for leadership* that forms the main focus for my study, the notion of a collaborative leadership style is observed to play a major role in its pursuit.

The elements of collaborative leadership

There are considerable similarities between the definition of collaborative leadership offered above and those more broadly applied to leadership in general. Indeed it may be argued that the notion of “non-collaborative leadership” is in fact an oxymoron and more accurately conceived as dictatorship. Nevertheless I believe that the defining features of style and focus are sufficiently clear as to constitute a legitimate and distinct form of leadership. To this end, in this section I describe my belief, based upon a review of available literature, that collaborative leadership is best viewed as a composite model, which draws together a range of themes and ideas on leadership more broadly to form a coherent model for partnership working [Figure 4]. In doing so I should highlight that this model comprises my viewpoint and does not reflect any existing work. Thus it may be viewed as both an original contribution and critique of the failure of any existing model to adequately address the multi-dimensional nature of collaborative leadership.

⁷ The adoption of a collaborative leadership is clearly not a pre-requisite to partnership working however and I will describe in both my literature review and original empirical evidence the role than more directive approaches may play in this process.

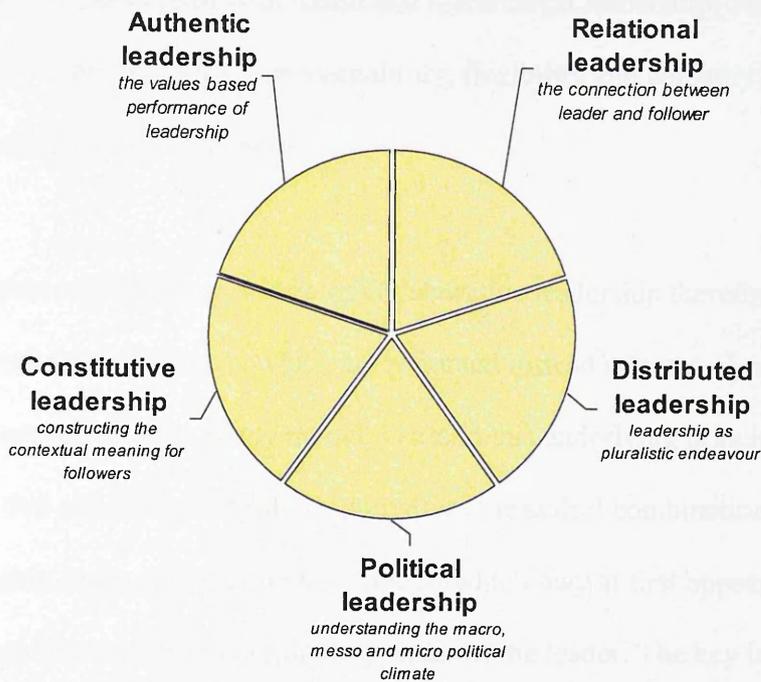


Figure 4 Elements of collaborative leadership

My conceptualisation of collaborative leadership draws inspiration from Collinson and Collinson's (2006) notion of 'blended leadership'. This offers a potential framework for exploring how the operationalisation of collaborative leadership requires the skilful blending of alternative elements of leadership to ensure the partnership's overarching goals are achieved. In their work on the role of values in the Further Education [FE], Collinson and Collinson describe how a values based desire to increase the distribution of leadership opportunities, thereby empowering followers and promoting a post-heroic, post transactional vision of leader-follower relations, could not in practice be implemented in a simplistic and unproblematic way. Rather than effective leadership in that context demanded that this broad commitment to collaborative approaches be married to more traditional, hierarchical leadership strategies which offer structure, clarity and organisation, to achieve best effect. They

conclude that blended leadership involves the prioritisation of clarity, structure and consistency [associated with traditional hierarchical leadership] with teamworking, two way communication, approachability, flexibility and empathy [associated with distributed, shared leadership].

Collinson and Collinson's view of collaborative leadership therefore rejects a number of perceived dichotomies, which are reframed instead as areas of potential synergy and complementarity. In my model, I extend this underlying principle to describe my belief that collaborative leadership involves the skilful combination of a cocktail of leadership styles and behaviours, some of which may at first appearance seem to be incompatible with the underpinning values of the leader. The key issue within this is therefore no longer which of these options is preferable, but rather what is *the most appropriate mix of these elements* for the specific context within which they are to be manifest? One example of such a tension in my model involves leaders' ability to demonstrate openness and honesty to develop trusting relationships with followers, yet also be able to manipulate political agendas at varying levels to secure their will.

I believe there is considerable merit in my idea that seemingly dichotomous and contradictory notions of leadership should be combined to develop a more rounded and satisfying explanation of how the underlying values of collaborative leadership are operationalised in practice and draw the reader's attention once again to how this has not been addressed to date within published theories of collaborative leadership.

In the following passages I explore each of these aspects in more depth. In doing so I initially outline the principles of each element and its potential limitations, while

considering the ways in which it supports understanding of collaborative leadership as a whole. I begin my examination of this model by focusing on the issue of authenticity, which I believe forms the basis for leadership in all contexts.

1. Authentic leadership

The current focus on authentic leadership is relatively new and part of a broader trend towards values driven leadership models⁸ (Northouse, 2007). However as Avolio et al (2005) highlight, interest in authenticity goes back centuries, thus making the concept of authentic leadership “*perhaps the oldest, oldest, oldest wine in the traditional leadership bottle!*” (Avolio et al., 2005:xxii).

Authentic leadership focuses on self awareness and promoting understanding amongst leaders of who they are and what they believe in (Gardner et al., 2005). This focus on the underpinning beliefs of the leader connects strongly with the values driven basis for many school based partnerships, which form the focus for this project. In keeping with other values based models, authentic leadership espouses a commitment to ‘positive’ psychological states such as confidence, optimism, hope and resilience, and a desire to promote these features in others. Furthermore it emphasises the importance of demonstrating transparency and consistency between values, ethical reasoning and actions (Avolio et al., 2005), such that followers come to recognise the values which underpin the leader’s actions and associate the leader with them. I return to the issue of ethics subsequently in this sub-section.

⁸ Other values-based leadership models include ethical, moral, transformational and servant leadership.

Exponents of authentic leadership describe how a consistent commitment to authentic leadership promotes a range of positive emotional reactions amongst followers, including respect, empowerment, mutual identification and most notably for this study, trust (Fry and Whittington, 2005). Chan et al (2005) note that it also reduces dissonance for the leader and promotes a healthy mental outlook. Thus we may argue that within collaborative settings, authentic behaviours are likely to promote commitment and buy-in amongst followers. Conversely, instances when leaders are viewed as displaying manipulative and self-serving behaviours are expected to result in a negative emotional reaction from followers and a withdrawal of discretionary effort (Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2005).

Chan (2005) connects authentic leadership with the principles of dramaturgy and the effective performance of this role. Initially developed by Goffman (1959), dramaturgy focuses attention on the appropriate performance of role. According to this concept, our understanding of self is essentially socially produced as it:

1. results from the performances we offer in social situations and
2. stems from those part of our personal conceptualisations of our role which is socially supported.

While the concept of an “authentic performance” is arguably counter-intuitive, its basis lies in the recognition that all behaviour is informed by the role we fulfil at any given point and as such resides within the context of their construction. Thus a leader’s conduct at home will vary from her conduct at work as it is based upon her understanding of the different roles she fulfils in each context. Furthermore, authenticity acknowledges that our totality comprises a range of different roles and the interactions which exist between them. For this reason we cannot entirely switch off

our work or home selves when in a different context, and nor are either persona unrecognisable from the other. Thus who we are is the sum of all our parts. Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b) provide further insight into this idea by highlighting the fundamental significance of mundane behaviours in the performance of role. Thus they argue that it is a consistent focus on the minutiae of day to day action which is critical, as it such mundane behaviour which forms the basis for followers' expectations. Thus we may view much leadership performance as more akin to the kitchen-sink drama than the Hollywood blockbuster, more *Coronation Street* than the *Sopranos*, but more resonant and of more relevance to followers as a result.

To add to this complexity and as noted above, our personal understanding of each role is unique, informed by our values, experiences and expectations, but our performances of it is a social construction produced with a specific audience in mind (Brannaman, 1997). So while our conceptualisations of a role may vary, they are likely to contain a number of core aspects and associated activities. Thus while one leader's style and approach will likely vary from another, there is an expectation that there will be some areas of common ground in terms of the functions they fulfil. Any rendition of leadership must therefore be an authentic reflection of ourselves but also seen to be authentic by the audience who witness it.

One potential explanation for this relates to the notion of *professionalism* and the ways in which we define the nature of the role we inhabit. Professionalism centres on the definition of common values, practices and approaches, which form the basis of a collective identity, associated with a specific organisation or circumstance (Evetts, 2003, Wilson and Pirrie, 2000a). As such it is distinct from the notion of *profession*

which seeks to promote the interest of a small number of specific occupational groups [most notably legal and medical] (MacDonald, 2005). Professionalism is socially constructed in nature and indeed has changed considerably over time (Evetts, 2003). Its specific nature will vary depending upon context and as such there is no universal consensus on what constitutes professional behaviour. Rather than the precise nature of professionalism is defined in the specific circumstance within which it occurs, and as such is described by Hanlon (1999:3) as *"the product of a dialectical relationship with its environment"*. Professionalism must therefore be viewed as a flexible concept which evolves in response to the context of its operationalisation. Thus Riddell and Tett (2001) note how increases in partnership working have stretched the concept of headship beyond the confines of the individual school and introduced a broader responsibility to support other schools and communities more broadly.

Evetts (2003) notes the role the leader plays in defining the notion of professionalism within the organisation, for instance through the development of systems and structures, and the day to day modelling of desirable behaviours. I believe this is critical for when operationalised, professionalism [and the broader organisational culture] inevitably comes to reflect the leader's values and personality. A potential implication of this is that professionalism may subsequently serve as a means of control, as it promotes a culture which is endorsed by the leader. However I argue that it also axiomatic that professionalism is conducive to the performance of authentic leadership, as it inevitably populates the professional role with aspects of the personal, thus blurring the boundaries between the two.

Chan et al (2005) uses the concepts of *veritable* and *pseudo* authentic leadership to differentiate between leadership performances which remain within the tolerances of leader /follower perceptions of this professional role and those which are seen to breach these boundaries. As already noted, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b) develop this idea further, by focussing on the significance of mundane, day to day behaviours within this. Other writers such as Gardner et al (2005) prefer to view authenticity as a continuum. However in either case, I believe this differentiation between authentic and inauthentic behaviour is helpful in highlighting the potential scope for performance within authentic leadership and by inference, the potential for leaders to manipulate notions of authenticity to their own ends. I return to this theme again in my discussion on political leadership.

A further aspect of authentic leadership considers the ways in which leaders may inform the organisation's culture by modelling behaviour which is authentic and commensurate with the values they espouse [Brannamen (1997) terms this 'dramatic realisation']. Chan et al (2005) state that this occurs directly through the demonstration of *idealised behaviour*, which promotes positive responses on the part of its recipients:

"Authentic leaders positively influence a culture of authenticity directly. This culture is indirectly reinforced through the beneficial impacts of veritable outcomes of leader-led interventions as perceived by followers. Ultimately, both the culture and the veritable outcomes serve as self-verifying reinforcement for the leader to continue to be authentic, thereby perpetuating the virtuous cycle."
(Chan et al., 2005:25).

This point connects strongly with the concept of *constitutive leadership* and the ways in which leadership is concerned with making meaning. As such it draws strongly upon notions of *Social Learning Theory* (Bandura, 1977). Initially formulated by Tarde and developed by Rotter (Ferrencia, 2001), Social Learning Theory was popularised by Bandura (1977) who described how individuals learn new behaviours by observing responses to others' actions. More specifically behaviours which are seen to be positive and result in reward are more likely to be imitated and adopted by the individual. In the context of leader-follower relationships, the leader's higher profile and status means that the behaviour they display are more likely to be noticed and reflected upon than those evidenced by peers. It therefore follows that a leader's responsibility for setting an example for others to follow is greater than that of a subordinate (Greenleaf, 2002) and considerable attention needs to be given to the mundane, day to day behaviours performed as part of this role. I return to this issue subsequently in my consideration of *constitutive leadership*.

As noted above, authentic leadership is seen by many to be underpinned strongly by values and a commitment to ethical principles (e.g. Avolio et al., 2005, Fry and Whittington, 2005). While no common set of values has been identified, writers such as Spangenberg and Theron (2005), Erickson (2006) and Fry & Whittington (2005) have focused on the following as common ethical themes⁹:

- Promoting fairness and justice
- Displaying personal responsibility
- Respecting others

⁹ Fry and Whittington [2005] argue for a broader universal value of altruistic love, which combines trust with loyalty, forgiveness/ acceptance/ gratitude, integrity, honesty, courage, humility, kindness, empathy/ compassion, patience/ meekness/ endurance.

- Encouraging inclusion and empowerment
- Demanding openness and honesty
- Modelling personal integrity

This failure to find a common set of values is one area of potential criticism for authentic leadership (Ferris et al., 2007). A number of others are also identified in the literature. Perhaps foremost for this study is that it fails to account for instances when a leader's authentic behaviour runs counter to the interests of others (Einarsen et al., 2007). This is a particular concern within the context of partnership working for as I describe later in this section, leaders periodically adopt more directive, anti-collaborative approaches to achieve the aims of the partnership [Kugelmass and Ainscow (2004) make a similar point in relation to the approaches school leaders may use a values based commitment to inclusion]. In such instances we must therefore consider the ethical dilemmas implicit within such scenarios and how the needs of one can be balanced against those of the many. Furthermore while discussions of authentic leadership are helpful in making connections with social learning theory, they nevertheless fail to offer significant insight into the practical ways in which leaders model desired behaviours on a mundane and everyday basis [particularly in terms of some of the more aspiration values espoused]. They also fail to adequately account for why some performances may be seen as veritable and others as pseudo. Thus more detail is needed as to the specific and every day actions that leaders perform to bring meaning to followers. Each of these elements is explored further in my findings section and form a key part of my original contribution to existing knowledge in this field of school based partnership working.

In summary, authentic leadership offers a framework for connecting leaders' behaviours with their underpinning values. It also highlights the performative nature of leadership and the ways in which leaders may seek to create meaning through their effective portrayal of the leadership role. It emphasises the active role of followers in this process and how it is essential for leaders to offer a convincing performance. Its main limitations are that it offers little detail as to the precise nature that this performance should take and little insight into the basis for the values which are so significant in this process.

2. Relational leadership

Fundamental to the principles of authentic leadership is the view that leadership is essentially relational in nature - a feature which writers such as Grint (2005a) argue is the one non-negotiable element of all leadership models:

"leadership is necessarily a relational not a possessive phenomenon for the individual 'leader' without followers is demonstrably not a leader at all." (Grint, 2005a:2)

Relational leadership concentrates on the interaction between leader and subordinates, thereby building on style and behaviourist views of leadership which emphasize the significance of interpersonal exchange and the day to day practice of the leader rather than their innate characteristics (Stogdill, 1948). Classic studies undertaken at Ohio State University (Stogdill, 1948, 1950), Michigan State University (Likert, 1961) and by Blake and Mouton's (1964) all identified some notion of *relationship oriented behaviour*, which along with a focus on task, forms one of two fundamental leadership concerns. Examples of relational behaviours include addressing followers' needs,

demonstrating trust and confidence, and being helpful and friendly, each of which emerged as significant in this study.

Relational leadership can be conceived as being concerned with promoting the overall well-being of followers, thereby ensuring their commitment to achieving the overarching organisational vision via personal buy-in rather than through structures or transactional means. When described in such terms, relational leadership may be viewed as the central concern of post transactional leadership theories in general, and transformational leadership in particular (Bass, 1998). Indeed writers such as Avery (1999) and Himmelmann (1996) have specifically highlighted the role transformational leadership approach may play within the context of collaborative working.

Dyadic leadership approaches, such as Vertical Dyad Linkage model [VDLM] and Leader-Member Exchange [LMX] theory (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995, Dionne, 2000, Brower et al., 2000), build upon such studies by supporting a more sophisticated consideration of leader-follower relationships, which enables greater variation in the leaders' approach and moves away from assumptions of an 'Average Leadership Style (Dienesch and Liden, 1986)¹⁰'. Dyadic approaches identify three leadership domains of leader, follower and the relationship between them. Differences in relationship are informed by both formal and informal dimensions of leadership, including inter-personal relationships and organisational structures, thus highlighting the significance of both transformational and transactional aspects of leadership.

¹⁰ Prior to the emergence of LMX, leadership theories had generally assumed leaders display consistent behaviours towards all subordinates in their work units, the so-called *Average Leadership Style*.

Furthermore [and of particular significance for this study], LMX presumes that demands on time and other resources will necessitate the emergence of a trusted cadre of followers [the *in-group*], who work particularly closely with the leader (Dionne, 2000). This group enjoys higher quality leader-member exchanges than their *out-group* peers with whom the leader may have minimal contact, receiving benefits such as increased job satisfaction, commitment, support and attention (Schriesheim et al., 1999). Higher levels of mutual trust, respect and loyalty are further features of such leader/ in-group relationships (van Breukelen et al., 2006). Scandura (1999) has stressed the importance of viewing such relationships within the organisation's broader context, thereby highlighting the variety of factors which may inform such relationships and the need for leaders to demonstrate fairness in establishing such groups by basing their development on legitimate considerations of performance. Thus this connects relational leadership with the ethical considerations of authentic leadership.

Relational leadership can be viewed as critical throughout the life of a collaborative, as the development of effective relationships is fundamental to its establishment, its move into delivery and its longer term sustainability (Hudson, 1987, Hudson et al., 1999, Kanter, 1994). Gobillot's (2006) notion of the connected leader for instance is based on the importance of establishing strong relationships as a basis for collaborative working, and he highlights integrity, warmth, utility [i.e. that the relationship is functional and worthwhile] and reciprocity as important in this process, again drawing parallels with the ethical focus of authentic leadership, discussed earlier. Meanwhile Woods (2006) and Avery (1999) have described the specific role

played by ‘boundary spanners’ in promoting relationships between partners, i.e. individuals who are seen to have a foot in either camp. These individuals support the development of relationships by acting as a bridge between different parties, which they assure to a greater or lesser degree through their personal integrity and reputation, and can play a particularly vital role in the initiation of partnerships (Strauss and Harris, 2002).

More broadly, relational leadership can also be conceived as supporting a move away from hierarchical, autocratic organisational structures towards more open democratic and inclusive ones, highlighted by writers such as Ford et al (2008) as a feature of modern times¹¹. Luke (1997) makes a similar point, describing how such leadership supports broader cross-organisational collaborative working which characterises the ‘post modern’ organisational environment. As such relational leadership plays a significant role in models of post-heroic leadership which are viewed as important in leading such organisations. In these instances, the reliance on a single, dominant, [generally male] leader, who operates in a command and control fashion has increasingly been replaced by approaches which nurture the ability of others to lead, and demonstrate a willingness to share opportunities for them to do so. I return to this theme subsequently in my consideration of *distributed leadership*, which I describe as a core feature in my model collaborative leadership.

There are clear parallels between this discussion on heroic and anti-heroic models of leadership, and considerations of masculine and feminine leadership styles, encapsulated in gendered leadership style (Huey, 1994). Such gendered approaches

¹¹ This trend is particularly apparent within the schools sector.

are based on the principle that substantive differences exist in the manifest leadership approaches adopted by men and women (Fondas, 1997), with factors such as gender stereotyping and socialisation (Money and Ehrhardt, 1972), differences in the respective roles of male and female managers (Kanter, 1977) and role spillover (Gutek and Morasch, 1982) identified as potential sources of these differences.

Writers such as Ford et al (2000) and Huey (Huey, 1994) have used gendered approaches to leadership and management as an alternative means of differentiating between heroic and non-heroic leadership¹². In this instance, heroic leadership is characterised as ostensibly masculine in nature, and based upon scientific values such as rationality and control. In contrast, post-heroic leadership is premised on feminine values of caring and nurturing, and viewed as more at ease with issues of emotion than its masculine counterpart. Robinson and Lipman-Blumen (2003) have similarly differentiated between masculine and feminine approaches according to their predilection for power and control and emphasis on collaboration respectively. A summary of the main features of masculine and feminine leadership is offered in Figure 5.

¹² Evetts [2003] notes that the concept of *professionalism* has also been criticised as a means of pursuing this goal.

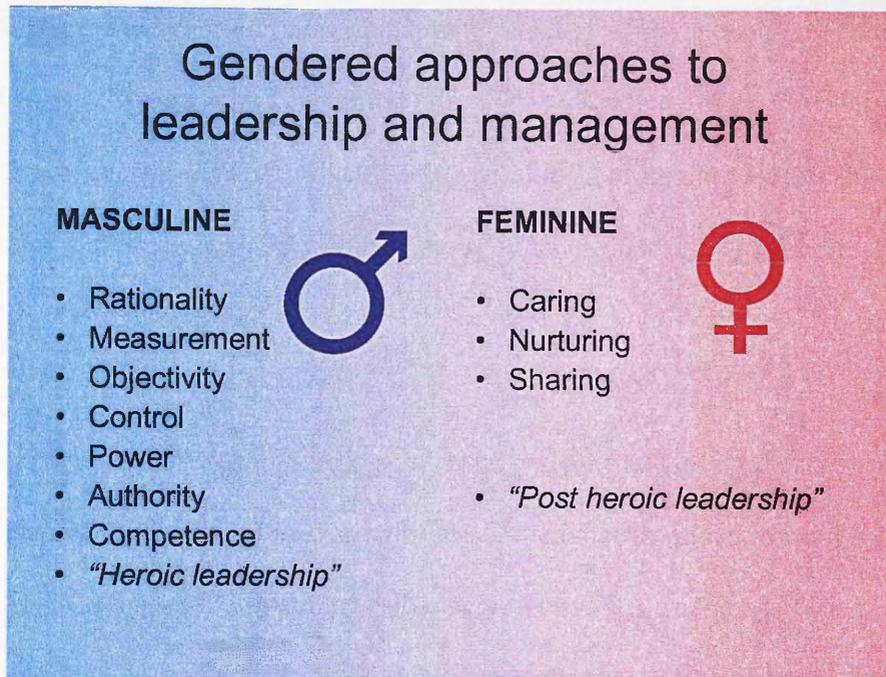


Figure 5 Gendered approaches to leadership and management [source; author]

Notions of gendered leadership remain contentious, with many writers dismissive of claims that distinct differences exist in the approaches adopted by men and women [e.g. Dobbins and Platz (1996) and Bartol and Martin (1986)]. However the findings from Eagley and Johnson's (Eagly and Blair, 1990) meta-analysis was more equivocal, and concluded that there was evidence to support a view of female leaders as more likely to adopt democratic and participative approaches than male leaders¹³. Similarly Robinson and Lipman-Blumen (2003) found male leaders to be more competitive than their female counterparts.

On balance I believe it is therefore important to draw a distinction between notions of masculine leadership and male leaders, thereby avoiding the potential trap of

¹³ Eagly and Johnson [1990] propose that this may stem in part from organisational expectations as to the behaviours and relative competency of male and female managers.

assuming a dichotomy of leadership approaches which mirror the gender of the leader. Instead I concur with Chusmir et al's (2001) view that effective leadership is dependent upon a skill utilisation of masculine and feminine leadership styles, based upon a skilled diagnosis of the organisational climate and the underpinning values of the leader him/herself.

Furthermore I believe there is a potential danger that current debates on gendered leadership styles may lead to an excessive reliance upon feminised approaches as a basis for leadership in collaborative settings and a premature rejection of masculine models¹⁴. Indeed the notion of heroic leadership, so closely related to masculine leadership, is increasingly portrayed as outmoded and unsuited to modern organisations. Yet as Grint (2008) notes, it remains likely to emerge and indeed be welcomed in times of crises, during which directive, decisive and non-consultative leadership is at a premium. Meanwhile other writers have described an alternative notion of heroism, based upon the quiet but resolute pursuit of a values based goal (e.g. Sugrue, 2009), evidence of which was found within this study. As I describe later in my thesis, the evidence from this study indicates that effective collaborative leadership requires a blending of gendered approaches, such as sharing and empowerment associated with feminine leadership, with more masculine traits such as a directiveness and control, displayed in accordance with the specific demands of the context and as such, requires the utilisation of both heroic and post-heroic forms of leadership. Thus the adoption of the most appropriate style is dependent upon leaders' possessing highly developed

¹⁴ Furthermore it should also be noted that notions of heroic leadership have persisted for two millennia and it is worth reflecting on how while its popularity has dwindled periodically, its principles and practice have remained remarkable persistent ¹⁴ Furthermore it should also be noted that notions of heroic leadership have persisted for two millennia and it is worth reflecting on how while its popularity has dwindled periodically, its principles and practice have remained remarkable persistent – see Grint [2008]

diagnostic skills and a willingness and ability to perform leadership in ways which are demanded by context, rather than simply reverting to their preferred personal style. Being able to reconcile the potential inner-conflict this creates is a further key element of collaborative leadership and an underpinning theme through this thesis.

A number of other limitations can be highlighted in relation to the theories drawn upon for this subsection. Firstly, a common criticism of transformational leadership is that it potentially places an excessive emphasis on the extent to which leadership is dependent upon relationships alone and writers such as Kanter (1994) have argued for collaborations to be institutionalised and placed on a more formal footing, thereby promoting their resistance to fluctuations in staff. Feyerherm (1994), Lloyd (2001) and Day (2004) have made similar points as to the significance of governance structures and formal systems and processes in supporting collaborations over the longer term in some instances. Similarly it should be recognised that models of relational leadership usually balance concern for followers with concern for task, emphasising how promoting good relationships is a means to end rather than the end in itself¹⁵.

There is also some potential conflict between perspectives on relational leadership, most notably between feminised leadership styles and the principles of transformational leadership. While the former emphasises values such as empowerment and sharing, transformational leadership may be viewed as a form of heroic leadership, particularly in instances when it is viewed as being based upon charisma (e.g. Bono and Judge, 2004, Flynn and Staw, 2004, Popper, 2000)

¹⁵ This represents further evidence of the essentially blended nature of collaborative leadership.

It is particularly important to note that older models of relational leadership fail to adequately account for the relationship's context and the expectations leaders and followers have of each other. Thus on their own, relational models are insufficiently sophisticated to account for the myriad of potential interactions which may occur within the collaboration's setting. As I demonstrate subsequently in my thesis, I believe that leaders play a major role in informing both of these aspects, and the underpinning values and behaviours associated with them. In my model of collaborative leadership, I address this issue through the concept of *constitutive leadership*, which considers the role leaders play in helping followers to understand the *meaning* of their context. In doing so however, I highlight the potential danger this introduces for such actions to be misinterpreted as an attempt on the leader's part to 'spin' a particular scenario for their own ends. Meaning making activities therefore require considerable expertise if such negative charges are to be avoided and leader-follower relationships are to be viewed as authentic.

Finally I believe descriptions of relational leadership give insufficient consideration to the potentially manipulative approaches which may be adopted by leaders to achieve their overarching goals. I address this point within my discussion of political leadership.

In summary relational leadership is central to all leadership theory and particularly important in contexts where fewer structures are in place, such as across-organisational boundaries. Collaborative working is more likely to be supported by post-heroic, feminine leadership styles, while dyadic leadership theories are

potentially helpful in focusing away from broad brush ‘average leadership style’ approaches which offer little insight and onto individual leader-follower relationships. Relational leadership theory can however understate the importance of formal structures in supporting leadership, and a blended approach is essential in ensuring that leaders are focused on both task and follower wellbeing. Finally relational leadership alone offers insufficient explanation for contexts which demand more political, ethically questionable or potentially destructive leadership.

3. Distributed leadership

As noted above, a key feature of collaborative leadership centres on encouraging partnership working in order to increase organisational efficiency and the achievement of collaborative advantage (Huxham and Vangen, 2000). This emphasis on joint endeavour is reflected in the literature on distributed leadership, which views leadership as a pluralistic rather than individualistic activity (Southworth, 2004). Distributed leadership conceives leadership as a functional rather than positional phenomenon, thereby proposing that leadership should reside within professional capacity rather than hierarchical position. Indeed writers such as Gastil (1997) argue that leader and follower should alternate roles depending upon the context – a view which is undoubtedly threatening for many senior leaders.

Distributed leadership is intended to utilise the skills and expertise of a range of individuals, thereby seeking to maximise the human capacity available to the collaboration (Harris, 2002). It has been found to be particularly beneficial in supporting change, which represents an underlying feature of school-based collaborations more generally (Daft, 2002).

Gronn (2003) identifies a range of skills and competencies required to lead in a distributed way. These include:

- a greater willingness to trust others
- the ability to make explicit previous implicit elements of individual's roles
- a higher tolerance of impermanence
- openness to change and different ways of working
- tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty
- strong negotiation skills.

The adoption of distributed leadership approaches can be ideologically motivated (Yukl, 2002) and indeed my literature review found that this normative aspect of distributed leadership has grown enormously in recent years. This appears to be especially the case within schools where principles of empowerment, inclusion and learning are consistent with the underpinning values of education (Bush, 1995).

Distributed leadership may also arise as a means of addressing issues of overload or perceived gaps in expertise (Gronn, 2003).

A final consideration involves the role the formal leader plays in establishing the context for distributed leadership to occur. For while I have highlighted already how such approaches are becoming increasingly common in schools, they are yet to become the norm in all organisational contexts. Thus the leader makes a major contribution to establishing expectations and readiness for shared leadership to occur through their initial articulation of their values and principles and their subsequent performance of the leadership role. Gronn (2003) for instance has questioned whether distributed leadership constitutes a form of either de- or even re-professionalisation, as

it calls into question fundamental aspects of leader-follower relationships. Clearly then this point connects strongly with the notions of performative, constitutive and ethical leadership, which feature within my model of collaborative leadership, but which are seemingly absent from existing published literature on distributed leadership.

However distributed leadership has been criticised on a number of grounds. Firstly the term is used imprecisely and variously adopted to describe a wide range of shared leadership approaches, ranging from highly structured forms of limited delegation to almost complete autonomy. There is also little attention given as to how ideologically driven distributed leadership may be differentiated from that which is practically-led, or on the unresolved ethical challenges for leaders an ideological commitment presents in instances when distributed approaches are unsuited to the specific context in hand. For instance Bush (1995) notes that writers on distributed leadership often understate the degree of conflict that can occur during decision making activities. Indeed, and as I highlight in my subsection on relational leadership, I believe such instances highlight the need for leaders to adopt blended leadership approaches, where more directive strategies may be utilised to support distributed leadership, as and when required. Thus in addition to Gronn's (2003) list of skills and competencies demanded by distributed leadership, I add the ability to identify and utilise alternative, more directive leadership approaches as the situation demands.

A further key limitation is that much of the writing on distributed leadership fails to adequately differentiate between instances when leader's give authority to others to lead and when this permission is effectively appropriated by followers in order to fill a

void in leadership which may exist (Harris, 2002). Bolden et al (2008) suggest that one potential mechanism for doing so is by considering the extent to which reward structures and development opportunities reflect an interest in such devolved leadership activity.

In summary, distributed leadership is central to the notion of collaborative leadership because of its practical focus on sharing power and responsibility and encouraging leadership in a shared and collaborative way. However the term remains vague and misunderstood, and may be equally based on an ideologically commitment to empowering others or emerge as a practical response to a lack of capacity or void in formal leadership. Finally little attention has been given to the practical approaches leaders adopt to drive distributed leadership on a day to day basis.

4. Political leadership

From one [albeit it a rather simplistic] perspective, my consideration of collaborative leadership to this point may be characterised as focused largely on ‘positive’ elements. Thus I have considered the leader’s values and ethics as the underpinning driver for their actions, their relationship with subordinates and the increased significance placed on caring for followers, and the use of distributed leadership as a means of addressing the aims of the partnership by empowering others.

At this point however I turn my attention to the more controversial issue of *political leadership*, which I believe has been insufficiently explored in the literature on

collaborations¹⁶. Indeed while a number of writers have made reference to the need for leaders in collaborations to be able to resolve potential conflicts between partners (e.g. Amistead, 2007, Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002b), the more thorny issues of how leaders proactively use politics as a means of pursuing their aims has received little attention. One notable exception to this is the work of Huxham and Vangen (2005) whose concept of *collaborative thuggery* pays particular regard to the importance of leaders displaying expertise in two distinctly political areas [Figure 6]. The first, *manipulating the collaborative agenda* involves stealthily steering the focus for partnership working to match their specific agenda, as well as ensuring subsequent discussions focus on these priorities. The second, *playing the politics game*, is concerned with forging alliances with those who can help ensure these priorities are addressed, while also seeking to exclude those who are unable or unwilling to contribute towards this overarching ambition. Huxham and Vangen describe collaborative thuggery as part of the “pragmatic leadership role” required to overcome resistance to partnership working (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). Arguably a closer inspection of this concept reveals that much of its focus is in fact on the practical transactional leadership actions (Bass and Avolio, 1990) required to progress the partnership agenda further. However much of the language used to describe these elements carries a distinctly unethical or even sinister under-current, for instance ‘*imposing*’, ‘*stealthy*’, *excluding* and *manoeuvring* can all be viewed as rather pejorative terminology. For instance, many contexts require the leader to both manage relationships between individuals who may not choose to work together, and identify ways to work around followers who do not fully support the agenda being pursued. Similarly networking, horse trading and

¹⁶ Indeed I believe it may be argued that when taken as an entirety, literature on collaborative working pays remarkably little attention to the various challenges it poses to leaders and presents an overly optimistic picture of partnerships as a whole.

finding areas of flexibility as a basis for compromise are strategies utilised in many areas of leadership activity and not de facto indicators of ‘thuggery’.

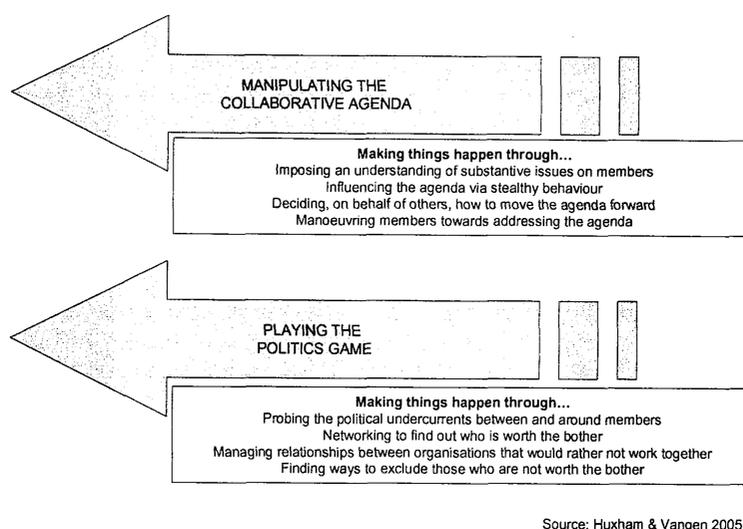


Figure 6 Elements of 'collaborative thuggery' [source: Huxham & Vangen 2005]

Nevertheless we may identify connections between the concept of political leadership and notions of destructive leadership in that both involve a willingness to adopt potentially ‘negative’ approaches and strategies to realise the goals of the leader. For instance Einarsen et al (2007:212) describe how destructive leaders may manipulate others and the context in order to “*get the job done*”, with such leaders behaving “*in accordance with the goals, tasks, missions and strategies of the organisation, but they typically obtain results not through, but at the cost of subordinates*”. Ferris et al (2007) go further in describing how political leadership may involve the use of bullying as a means of ensuring positive outcomes for the organisation and/or partnership. There are clear links between such perspectives and Machiavelli’s (1968) view that leaders should be prepared to adopt both negative and positive strategies to pursue their overarching goals.

While the notion of destructive leadership is highly controversial and runs counter to the values based assumptions of post-transactional leadership theory, I believe it is helpful in demonstrating how some leaders may adopt questionable approaches and techniques to secure their aims. As such it highlights yet further tensions and potential contradictions in the demands of collaborative leadership which remain under-explored in published literature but demand resolution on a day to day basis.

Furthermore I believe considerations of political leadership within the context of collaboration give insufficient regard to the different levels at which it occurs, failing to differentiate between the macro, meso and micro political levels. These can be summarized as follows:

- Macro – i.e. the broader national policy agenda.
- Meso – i.e. operational and strategic relationships between local partners
- Micro – i.e. the minutiae of operational working at the individual, interpersonal level

For instance, within the context of multi-agency working in schools, macro dimensions of political leadership include understanding developments relating to policy on *Every Child Matters*, Children's Trusts and the legislative requirements relating to these. It would also include keeping abreast of alternative parties' views on these issues and potential changes in policy that may occur. At the meso level this may involve understanding the machinations of the local authority, the practical workings of the local Children's Trust and the connections between the various roles such as the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director for Children's Services. It will also involve understanding how local and national initiatives facilitate

partnership working between agencies and the various roles they play within these. At the micro level, political leadership includes developing expertise in the minutiae of organisational and individual relationships, and building awareness of the local historical context for co-operation. It will also involve establishing meaningful relationships with key parties within the local area who may be able to support the delivery of the school's agenda. These may include the Director of Children's Services as well as other professionals and organisations which may potentially support this work.

Demonstrating political savvy and astuteness in each regard is therefore an important element of collaborative leadership for three main reasons. Firstly it supports collaboration by promoting effective working relationships between the individuals and organizations involved, retaining the bigger picture while focusing on the day to day practicalities of working relationships at the officer level. Secondly it encourages entrepreneurship by keeping the leader alive to potentially unforeseen opportunities which may otherwise have been lost. Thirdly by developing connections with others, it provides a means of establishing support for this by raising awareness, promoting good practice and potentially leveraging additional resources (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, Crosby and Bryson, 2005).

As I shall subsequently explore, there is a clear connection between *constitutive leadership* and the types of political activities required to promote the overall aims of the collaboration. Indeed such activities are essential in promoting the positive environment that supports both the leader's and partnership's ambition¹⁷. As already

¹⁷ Of course these often, but not always, coincide.

noted, both constitutive and political leadership may utilise a degree of Machiavellianism to achieve this. However this in turn creates a tension with the various ethical considerations which underpin the leader's self image and approach and which provide the basis for meaningful leader-follower relationships, highlighted elsewhere in this chapter as critical to collaborative working in this section. As I will describe subsequently, the ability to offer a convincing *performance* of leadership, commensurate with follower expectations, is a critical part of both relational and collaborative leadership. Implicit within this is the capacity to reconcile such potential conflicts and contradictions, which I position in my original model as fundamental to effective collaborative leadership, but largely absent from existing considerations. I return to this issue again throughout this chapter.

In summary, political leadership is critical to collaboration. However it is under-explored in the literature and in some instances potentially creates moral and ethical dilemmas. Political leadership addresses issues at a number of dimensions [macro, micro and meso] and as such is complex and difficult to understand. Elements of political leadership requires the convincing performance of leadership which in turn demands leaders are able to reconcile an ethical commitment to principles such as openness and integrity with such performative demands.

4. Constitutive leadership

Constitutive leadership is concerned with the role the leader plays in helping to define the context within which the organisation operates and the implications of this for the actions and strategies it adopts. Constitutive leadership is heavily influenced by

constructivism and the ways in which we assess competing versions of the 'truth' (Yukl, 2002, Grint and Woolgar, 1997). Thus it highlights the relative and uncertain nature of leadership and organisational life, highlighting the role the leader may play in manipulating other's understanding of their context to enable them to pursue their preferred agenda.

I have already described in my subsection on political leadership the contribution that policy makers may play in establishing the context for collaboration, by passing legislation or promoting discourse which emphasises the need for partnership working. In such instances it is their elevated position of authority and power which ensures that their version of the 'truth' comes to dominate and assume supremacy rather than the cogency of their argument which may or may not be intellectually superior to that of their opponents. Thus the nature of context is not self evident but rather is defined in a number of competing ways. It is this definition that plays a major role in determining the course of action which is subsequently adopted.

There is an important interplay between constitutive and values based leadership models, insofar as how the situation is defined not only determines the course of action required but also the rules which apply to this engagement. At the practical level, constitutive leadership involves 'giving a clear message' to staff, students, parents and others as to what is expected of them and what they may expect of others (Kelly et al., 2004). This can involve the very clear articulation of values, rights and responsibilities, and the utilisation of social learning based approaches such as modelling (Bandura, 1977) to demonstrate personally what these elements entail [a

fuller discussion on this and Social Learning Theory is provided in my subsection on authentic leadership].

The term 'constitutive leadership' does not feature within the main theories on collaborative leadership offered by writers such as Huxham and Vangen (2005), Chrislip and Larson (1994), Sullivan and Skelcher (2002b) and Atkinson et al (Atkinson et al., 2002). However these theorists nevertheless highlight the importance of effective communication in establishing common aims for joint working and promoting a sense of shared purpose. A particular premium is placed on such constitutive leadership during the initiation of collaborative working, when establishing the need for partnership working is essential to ensure the engagement of potential partners (Paton and Vangen, 2004, Sturm, 2000). Writers such as Cummings (2007) and Avery (1999) have described how in some instances this common purpose may benefit from having a strong values basis, while others such as Sloper (2004) and Williamson (2001) place more emphasis on a general clarity in this respect.

Constitutive leadership demands strong communication skills and a willingness to listen and absorb the views of partners is especially important in both shaping the collaboration's agenda and developing trust with the other parties involved (Connolly and James, 2006, Gillinson et al., 2007). Being willing to compromise [or at least appear to compromise] and establish areas of common ground are important in either instance however (Stone, 2001, Das and Teng, 1997). Crosby and Bryson (2005) have also emphasised the significance of listening within the notion of 'relational dialogue', where a common understanding emerges through a process of shared learning, based upon open discussion [a view shared by Feyerherm (1994)]. It is partly for this reason

that writers such as Huxham and Vangen (2005) and Ferrin et al (2008) have emphasized the value of face to face communication in the early days of collaborative working. An alternative explanation is that such personal dialogue evidences a valuing of the other and commitment to ensure that all parties are effectively engaged. In such instances it is the leader's preparedness to engage in *emotional labour* that is critical. Emotional labour involves the management of feelings to create an observable display which promotes a desired and appropriate state of mind in others (Robson and Bailey, 2009). For instance, air crew are taught the importance of displaying calmness during emergency situations in order to ensure that panic amongst passengers is kept to a minimum. In the case of constitutive leadership, displays of emotional labour may be used to create specific feelings amongst the audience, for instance of feeling involved, respected or in this instance, valued. Hochschild originally identified emotional labour as concerned with promoting commercial value and as such, equivalent to physical labour (Bolton and Boyd, 2003). However it may be argued that this represents just one form of such labour and fails to paint a sufficiently nuanced picture of the *emotional dexterity* (Bolton and Boyd, 2003) demanded of leaders¹⁸ and the fact that such displays of emotional labour may not be solely motivated by a desire to achieve capital gain. Furthermore it fails to give sufficient regard to the implications of potentially frequent and significant changes to the leaders' overarching emotional state.

The notion of emotional labour is helpful in highlighting once again the specific actions that leaders undertake to promote a desired response from another, in pursuit

¹⁸ Emotional dexterity relates to an individual's ability to change between emotional states dependent upon the rules which apply and their intended outcome from any given interaction.

of their overall aims. Indeed, effective displays of emotional labour demand considerable attention is given to the minutiae of day to day leadership practice, as it requires a connection at an almost instinctive level. Indeed failure to adequately address the mundane elements of behaviour is likely to be instinctively felt as wrong by the audience. As already noted, this recognition of the importance of mundane elements of leadership is core to my work and part of my original contribution to knowledge. In this way, emotional labour may be viewed as connecting with both political and relational leadership as it involves the effective manipulation of feelings to achieve an identified goal. Emotional labour is also clearly linked with notions of authentic leadership, which highlight the need for leaders to offer displays of leadership which are viewed as genuine. Thus attempts at emotional labour which appear to be insincere, for instance as a result of a lack of attention to the minutiae of daily practice, are likely to be highly counter-productive.

Concluding comments

In my model for collaborative leadership within schools described above, I have drawn together a range of themes present in the literature to establish what I believe is a coherent account of collaborative leadership. In doing so I have taken inspiration from existing models but expanded and developed these to offer a more detailed and rounded consideration. Thus my work both meets and stretches the traditional notion of a literature review as I have sought to outline the descriptions of collaborative leadership which currently exist, but also developed these further to offer a genuinely new and original model for leadership of school-based partnerships. In doing so I have explored notions of leadership which I believe have been under-utilised in the context

of partnership working, most notably in relation to political, constitutive and authentic leadership.

In this section, I have outlined my belief that existing models offer some helpful insight into collaborative leadership. For instance, current writings are clear in their emphasis on the importance of areas such as strong communications, establishing a clear vision and developing relationships to name but a few. Such theories also contain a strong theme on the need to promote trust, which implicitly connects with the notion of authenticity and the importance of values in this context.

However in describing my model I also highlight a number of gaps in the current evidence base. Most notably I believe that with the exception of work by Huxham (1996a), literature on the need for political leadership within partnership working is generally weak. A particular theme within this relates to the potential implications for leaders' sense of self in light of possible contradictions between the positive values they espouse and the need to display negative behaviours in order to get things done. For example, leaders may highlight a belief in openness but be 'forced' to behave in a somewhat underhand way in order to manage the broader partnership agenda. In such instances, leaders may require a range of potential coping strategies which support them in this meaning-making process. One such mechanism centres on the way in which the nature of the collaborative leadership is defined and expectations for the behaviours associated with it are established. I will return to this theme again subsequently in my thesis.

There is also a marked lack of detail within existing frameworks of the implications of collaborative leadership for daily practice – the ‘how’ as opposed to the ‘what’ that supports the promotion of partnerships. Indeed as I have highlighted throughout this chapter, my model for collaborative leadership in schools sees a consistent and unremitting focus on mundane, day to day leadership action as critical to the overall success of leaders in such contexts. Finally I note how the notion of distributed leadership, which is central to most definitions of collaborative working, is ill-defined and used in a wide variety of contexts. These range from instances where leadership is shared as a result of a conscious values based decision, to those where it is assumed as a result of a vacuum in leadership. Again though, little is written on the precise ways in which this occurs.

Furthermore we may criticise existing considerations of collaborative leadership for their disconnection from the broader canon of leadership theory. Indeed there is little attempt to explicitly connect such theories with the wider body of literature and established leadership models, and where this has occurred it has largely been limited to discussions on transformational leadership. I have sought to rectify this shortfall in my account by explicitly drawing on a range of different leadership models which underpin the various facets of collaboration, described as important by existing writers. In this way I believe that my model makes a genuine and original contribution by offering a robust theoretical basis from which we may explore the daily practice of collaborative leadership in schools. In doing so, I have highlighted a variety of tensions which are implicit within the leadership of collaborations. Core to these is the issue of how to most effectively perform the leadership role while retaining one’s authenticity. Implicit within this are a range of issues relating to:

- the need to exercise political leadership [which is at once both productive but potentially highly destructive in nature],
- how to manage the tensions between the desire to promote empowerment while reserving the right to adopt a highly directive approach and
- how to effectively define the context for collaboration while avoiding accusations of spin and Machiavellianism.

At the heart of these issues are the processes through which the nature of collaborative leadership is negotiated and expectations concerning its performance managed. As noted, little detail is offered within existing accounts as to how the daily performance of collaborative leadership is manifest and it is possible to criticise such descriptions that are offered as somewhat superficial, as they fail to adequately account for the minutiae of day to day practice. As I demonstrate subsequently, this criticism is especially true in relation to the development of trust, which I believe is the fundamental driver of effective collaborative working. Potentially the notion of authentic leadership offers the most helpful entry into this exploration, highlighting as it does the need to connect values with practice and for leaders to establish a bespoke construction of the leadership role which is commensurate with who they are and the context within which they lead.

In the next subsection of this literature review I describe the nature of trust in collaborative leadership in schools in more depth and build upon a range of ideas present within the literature to develop a more coherent and comprehensive overview of this phenomenon. In doing so I conclude that trust is the most fundamental facilitator of collaborative working and its leadership, yet the mechanisms through

which it is developed remain under-explored and have only been considered superficially in the past.

Leader-follower trust within collaborative working

In the last subsection of my literature review I described how the leadership of school-based collaborations may be viewed as a performance undertaken in line with followers and leaders expectations of the role. At the same time, I described how the leadership of collaborations may require leaders to undertake ‘negative’ actions to ensure that the partnership’s aims are met and its objectives delivered. In such instances, it is imperative that these actions are viewed by leader and followers alike as commensurate with the leader’s role and part of an authentic leadership performance if they are to be viewed positively and produce the desired responses from followers. Conversely on occasions when such behaviours are viewed as pseudo-authentic, they are likely to produce negative reactions from followers and have a detrimental effect on their overall performance. Paying attention to the minutiae of mundane daily practice plays an important role in this.

I also described the major role that leaders play in helping followers to make sense of the collaborative process and the respective parts they play within this process. Finally I highlighted how both relational leadership and distributed leadership are viewed as essential elements of leadership of school based collaborations.

Underpinning each of these themes is the issue of trust which, as I outlined earlier in my literature review, I believe represents the fundamental driver of collaborative working. In this section I explore the notion of trust more fully, defining this

overarching concept before considering its key elements. I then explore the most high profile theories of trust, describing their key findings on the factors which support its development, before combining these to form my own original and unique model for accounting for its emergence. Thus again my literature review is somewhat more ambitious than may normally be expected, as I seek to move beyond simply describing that which has gone before, and rather attempt to establish a genuinely new and innovative framework which builds upon existing theories to make an original contribution to this field.

The performance of trustworthy leadership in practice

Trust cuts across a number of disciplinary areas¹⁹ (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002b, Worchel, 1979) and has no universal definition (Connell et al., 2003, Coulson, 1998, Creed and Miles, 1996). For instance, Rus and Iglie's (2005:373) definition focuses on the issue of uncertainty, while Gambetta (1988a) concentrates on trust's role in relation to protecting one's own interests. Meanwhile Rushton et al (2007) highlight its highly normative aspect:

"Broadly speaking, trust is 'confidence in and reliance upon others, whether individuals, professionals or organisations, to act in accord with accepted social, ethical and legal norm. Trust is the degree of probability that individuals will act in a particular way in a context that affects him, without concrete knowledge" (Gambetta, 1988a:217).

¹⁹ Sullivan and Skelcher [2002] identify relevant literature in the fields of sociology, political science, organisational behaviour and philosophy, while Worchel [1979] describes it as relevant for personality theorists, sociologists, economists and social psychologists.

This multi-dimensional quality is highlighted by Ferrin et al (2008:174) who describe trust as “a family of related concepts”. However it is possible to identify a number of recurring themes in the wider literature on trust, which centre on the following elements:

- trust as a means of managing uncertainty, risk and vulnerability (Rus and Iglic, 2005, Humphrey, 1998, Hudson et al., 1999, Doney et al., 1998, Powell, 1996)
- trust as a basis for increasing inter-dependency and reducing independence (Powell, 1996, Putnam, 2000)
- trust as confidence that the other party will not behave opportunistically (Cummings and Bromily, 1996)
- trust as a belief that another’s actions will not be detrimental to one’s own interests (Gambetta, 1988b, Lane, 1998)
- trust as a belief that the other is both benevolent in attitude and competent in deed (Mishra, 1996) (Mishra and Spreitzer, 1998, Doney et al., 1998, Mishra, 1996, Covey, 2006)
- trust as a belief in the authenticity of the other (Covey, 2006, Greenberg et al., 2002)

With these themes in mind, my definition of trust is as follows:

“Trust is confidence in the integrity and abilities of another which serves as a basis for discretionary individual or collective action.”

Within this definition, confidence is critical as it highlights both the cognitive and affective elements of trust²⁰ (Greenberg et al., 2002). Meanwhile I believe my definition combines the two themes described above and also addresses a number of the main criticisms identified in the literature on this issue²¹. Firstly, my focus on discretionary action answers Putnam's (2000) concern that some studies overstate the extent to which individuals genuinely have a choice over who they may trust, particularly when considering their relationships with the state. Secondly my inclusion of both integrity and competency seeks to address confusion as to whether both are required as a basis for trust²². Finally I fully accept Mayer's (1995) view that trust is not necessarily reciprocal and it is quite possible [and indeed probable] for instance that subordinates may not trust leaders even through they themselves are trusted. In this respect, trust, like love, can be unrequited. However equally I see trust as implicitly relational in nature and in all instances involving *someone* or *something* else. Whether this trust is returned or justified is quite another matter and as I demonstrate in my review, decisions as to whether or not to trust another are not necessarily based upon evidence but are essentially perceptual in nature. Furthermore, the influence of such factors is both temporally and spatially located (Rahn et al., 2009), meaning that trust is both contextually specific and socially constructed. Indeed as I discuss further in my *Methodology and philosophy* chapter, I believe that trust is implicitly ideal in nature and possesses no objective or concrete elements beyond the mind of trustor themselves. However this is not to deny its significance in influencing

²⁰ Chen and Chen [2009] state that traditionally little consideration has been given to affective aspects of trust within organisational contexts.

²¹ There is also an appealing synchronicity between this definition of trust and the notion of professionalism described earlier in this chapter.

²² Thus I disagree with Gambetta's [1988b] view that a consistently ruthless response to challenge is sufficient to promote trust in the Sicilian mafia.

our behaviours in interpersonal / inter-organisational relationships, and I will describe further its power in both of these elements in the remainder of this sub-section.

Why is trust significant in school based collaborations?

Early in this chapter I described the elements of collaborative leadership and highlighted the significance of trust in supporting leader-follower relationships in terms of:

- Sharing leadership responsibilities
- Establishing a collective view of the need for partnership working
- Ensuring leadership has currency and authority within the context of the partnership
- Encouraging others to adopt approaches and behaviours which are supportive of collaboration.

There is also considerable literature to evidence its importance to collaboration more generally. For instance and at its broadest level, many writers have described how trust is fundamental to the very functioning of society (e.g. Bryk and Schneider, 2002, Meyerson et al., 1996, Zucker, 1986, Seashore Louis, 2003). As Meyerson note:

“There is no shortage of claims that trust is indispensable to social life: without the general trust that people have in each other, society itself would disintegrate, for very few relationships are based entirely upon what is known with certainty about another person and very few relationships would endure if trust were not as strong as, or stronger than, rational proof or personal observation” (Meyerson et al., 1996:180).

Similarly widespread trust has been identified as necessary for improved economic performance (Zak and Knack, 2001), reduced crime (Rosenfeld et al., 2001) and enhanced personal welling (Helliwell, 2002, Kawachi et al., 1997). There is also a strong theme in the literature on the significance of trust and demonstrating trustworthiness to organizational and collaborative performance in general, although it should be noted that a few writers such as Williamson (1983) claim that it makes no difference at all. Einstein for instance recognised the fundamental importance of trust to partnership working when he stated that: “Every kind of peaceful cooperation among men is primarily based on mutual trust” (Einstein in Jacobs, 2005:1). Similarly Hudson notes that:

“Trust is often identified as a sine qua non of successful collaboration and conversely mistrust as a primary barrier” (Hudson et al., 1999:709).

On page 51, I outlined four areas of collaboration where trust is particular significance. The first of these, leadership, I explored in some depth in the last section of this chapter and revisited briefly above. In this subsection I consider the remaining three areas of *operational relationships*, *efficiency* and *change* in more depth.

Operational relationships

The importance of trust to collaboration at the operational level is summed up by Child (1998) who notes that:

“Although research has identified many determinants of cooperation, virtually all scholars have agreed that one especially immediate antecedent is trust” (Child, 1998:242).

In my consideration of leadership I have already described some of the reasons why trust is so significant for relationships. Sullivan and Skelcher (2002b) and Brookes (2006) build on this theme, by describing the critical role trust plays in supporting informal interpersonal networks which underpin formal inter-organisational partnerships. van Eyk and Baum (2002) have also noted the role that trust plays in promoting mutual respect and credibility, which supports working relationships in both formal and informal settings. Similarly Woods et al (2006) found that trust played a major role in the social integration of the partnership and the development of functional intra-group relationships while Bowles et al (2005) note how trust supports the development of personal relationships between school staff and police officers which were essential to the effectiveness of the Safer Schools initiative. Chen and Chen (2009) also highlight the importance of trust in promoting effective operational relationships, describing its uniquely contextualised nature, and how it evolves in response to every interpersonal interaction. I return to this dynamic and fluid consideration of trust later in my thesis.

Trust is a particularly important factor in partnership communications. April (1999) for instance has noted how trust plays an important part in supporting dialogue at all levels in organisations and the degree to which non-essential information is shared, while Kuo and Yu (2009) describe effective communication as both an antecedent and outcome of trust. A large number of writers have described its significance in the interpretation of 'official' messages and in broader informal communication (e.g. Kanter, 1994, Hudson et al., 1999, Cummings et al., 2007), a view which connects strongly with the notion of constitutive leadership described in the previous subsection. Trust similarly plays a major role in areas of potential misunderstanding at

the operational level, where confusion may arise as a result of differences in professional culture or language (Stone, 2001). Here it may act as a form of relational capital to be utilised as a type of good will in such instance where individuals may require “the benefit of the doubt.” Darley (2004) picks up on this theme in relation to worker/ manager relations in knowledge organisations, noting that while extrinsic rewards are often motivation enough for effective employees contributions in ‘production organisations’, ‘knowledge organisations’ [which include schools] depend upon additional discretionary effort which is often unlocked through recourse to intrinsic rewards. In such instances, workers must trust that managers have both the ability and inclination to open up potential pathways to satisfaction, for instance through involvement in new projects [Tschannen-Moran (2004) makes a similar point in her differentiation between professional and bureaucratic organizations]. Bijlsma and Koopman (2003) have also described how trust can promote goodwill amongst employees which in turn increases discretionary effort²³.

Improving efficiency

Trust is seen to play a valuable role in increasing the efficiency of partnership working in a number of ways. Firstly Covey (2006) describes the benefits high trust relationships can bring in reducing transaction costs and increasing the speed with which exchanges occur (a point also made by Lane, 1998, Granovetter, 1973, and Sako, 1998)²⁴. Elsewhere writers such as Chen and Chen (2009) have described how trust is essential to the effectiveness of dynamic project teams which emerge to deliver

²³ Such perspectives connect strongly with aspects of transformational leadership.

²⁴ Covey terms this the ‘trust dividend’.

the priorities of the partnership, and which may be cross or pan organisation and discipline in nature.

More specifically from a schools' perspective, Bryk and Schneider (2002) highlighted the connection between high levels of trust and improved performance in schools. Here trust helps foster the conditions [structural and social-psychological] for individuals to initiate and sustain the activities necessary to improve learning and productivity. Bryk and Schneider (2002) identify four broad mechanisms through which this occurs, stating that trust:

1. reduces individuals' sense of vulnerability when asked to take on new and uncertain tasks related to school reform
2. facilitates public problem-solving within an organisation, again by reducing uncertainty and managing
3. promotes autonomy and mutual support while underpinning social norms which are widely shared within schools
4. creates a moral resource for school improvement.

Tschannen-Moran (2004) echoes Bryk and Schneider's view and summarise the role trust plays in school effectiveness thus:

"without trust, schools are likely to flounder in their attempts to provide constructive educational environments and meet the lofty goals that our society has set for them because energy needed to solve the complex problem of educating a diverse group of students is diverted into self protection"
(Tschannen-Moran, 2004:13).

Similarly the evaluation of London Challenge concluded that trust was critical to school improvement and a key ingredient in the provision of targeted support to leaders of schools in challenging circumstances (Matthews et al., 2006). More broadly Costa (2003) identifies positive outcomes for 'trustful' organisations, relating to improved performance from enhanced social interaction, increased employee satisfaction and raised levels of employee commitment.

From a more negative viewpoint, writers such as Thomson (2007) have noted how a lack of trust in 'external' offers of support can adversely affect potential partnership work. This point is echoed by Das and Teng (1998) and Huxham and Vangen (2004, 2005) who describe how suspicion can be a contributory factor in *collaborative inertia*. Meanwhile Creed and Miles (1996) note how a lack of trust is a barrier to the release of discretionary effort.

Supporting change

As I have already noted, in most instances, collaborative working can be viewed as implicitly change-centred. In my earlier subsection, for instance, I described how changes in the policy context in recent years have vastly increased the degree of collaborative activity schools are undertaking. Similarly I highlighted how for many schools, partnership working represents a major shift in culture away from notions of isolationism and competition which had previously dominated and writers such as April (1999) have described the role trust plays in managing the vulnerability

associated with this. Similarly Putnam (2003) has described how bridging social capital²⁵ promotes an openness to partnership working.

Trust is especially important in times of change (Bryk and Schneider, 2002) and underpins almost all aspects of the change process. Dirks and Ferrin (2001) for instance note how trust acts as a critical form of self-governance in instance where organisational control is lacking, such as times of change, while Snavely and Tracy (2002) note its role in supporting risk taking which is similarly critical to change. Meanwhile an examination of models of change highlights its significance throughout the whole process. For example in Kotter's (1995) model of organisational transformation [Figure 7], each of the eight steps identified relies upon trust for its successful completion. In many instances this centres on the leader securing followers' trust in the truthfulness of their communications, a point which resonates strongly with notions of constitutive leadership. For example, effective communication is critical in gaining followers' confidence in the case for change, given the personal discomfort and sacrifice this often precipitates²⁶. Similarly it is critical that followers trust the leader's motives and capabilities in establishing the new vision for the organisation²⁷ and essential that leaders demonstrate personal commitment to the vision and change process. Most obviously this comes through their active modelling of the values they espouse (Meyerson et al., 1996), a point which connects with my earlier comments on performative leadership and the role social learning plays within this.

²⁵ Bridging social capital is effectively trust between rather than within organisations

²⁶ This connects strongly with the principles of transformational leadership.

The notion of trust as *confidence in the integrity and abilities of another which serves as a basis for discretionary individual or collective action* is critical in several other areas of change. *Empowering others to act on the vision* depends upon leaders' abilities to both communicate the vision and remove potential obstacles which impede action. Of particular interest is the fact that Kotter highlights the importance of leaders demonstrating an ethical approach to dealing with 'blockers' (Kotter, 1995) further highlighting the need for both integrity and practical capabilities in effective change leadership, thereby connecting with my earlier points on the role of ethics in collaborative leadership. However again little detail is offered as to how this is achieved in practice or the ways in which leaders may manage the potential tensions this creates. Thus once again, existing literature may be seen to pay insufficient regard to the nature of mundane, day to day practice in this process. This theme of integrity is returned to later in this chapter.

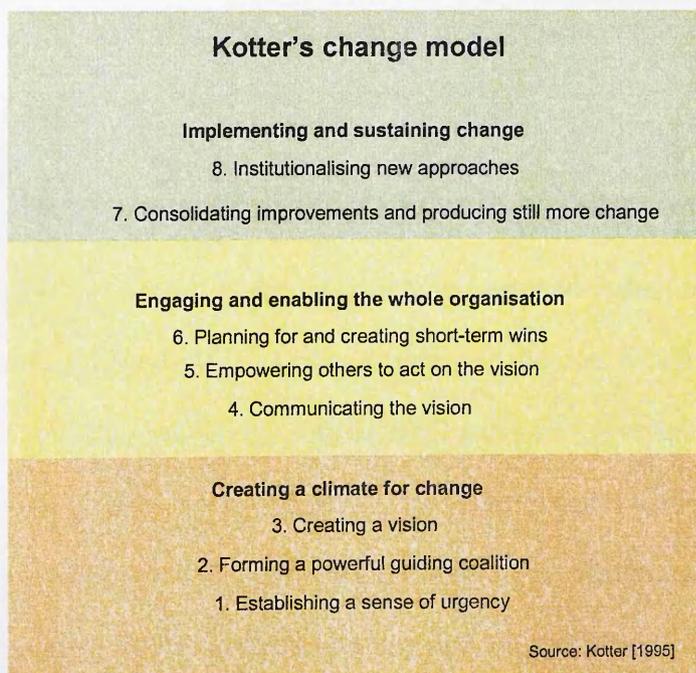


Figure 7 Kotter's eight steps to organisational transformation [source: Kotter 1995]

²⁷ This process may be made easier in instances when the espoused vision is viewed as morally focused.

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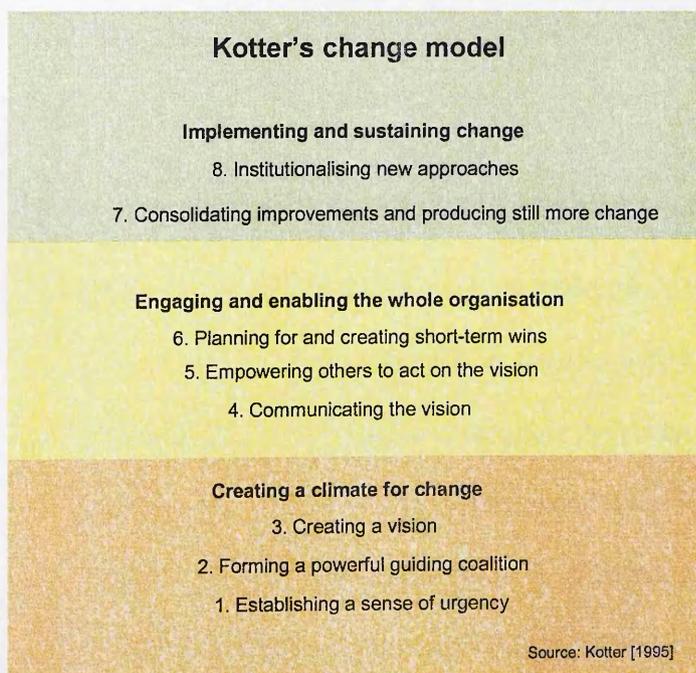


Figure 7 Kotter's eight steps to organisational transformation [source: Kotter 1995]

²⁷ This process may be made easier in instances when the espoused vision is viewed as morally focused.

More generally trust is critical in developing strategic relationships between organisations and managing issues of power, control and risk (Vangen and Huxham, 2003b). It also supports changes in the ways of working necessary to undertake collaboration, such as moving into autonomous and self managing teams to facilitate distributed leadership (Tyler, 2003, Rousseau et al., 1998, Tyler and Kramer, 1996). Meanwhile Sydow's (1998) work on different organisational types highlights the importance of trust in supporting cross agency work by:

- supporting the formation of 'collective strategies'
- facilitating the co-ordination of economic activities
- promoting open exchange of information
- reducing transaction costs
- promoting stability but facilitating change
- reducing levels of negative management conflict

The antecedents of trust in collaboration and leadership

As noted earlier, studies of trust have been undertaken from a number of perspectives and as a result, there is some variation in theories which explain its development and main characteristics. In this section I examine the seven most high profile theories of trust in the literature, describing their nature and considering their relative strengths and weaknesses. I then look to identify areas of commonality between these theories, which I combine to develop a new and original framework on the emergence and development of trust. In doing so I conclude that while this framework represents a helpful organising structure, it offers little insight into the day to day actions required to promote trust in practice. Similarly it is of limited assistance in understanding the

potential tensions between the various drivers of trust and the ways in which these may be addressed. Each area is therefore explored further in my original fieldwork, described later in my findings section.

However, before commencing on this discussion, it is important to give a brief consideration to the nature of causality itself, upon which the notion of an antecedent is based, such that we may have a fuller appreciation of the scope and applicability of these theories. In broad terms, perspectives on causality differ according to variations in one's underpinning philosophical viewpoint on the issues of structure and agency, and the universal and the particular (Johnson and Duberley, 2000b). This is summarised in Figure 8.

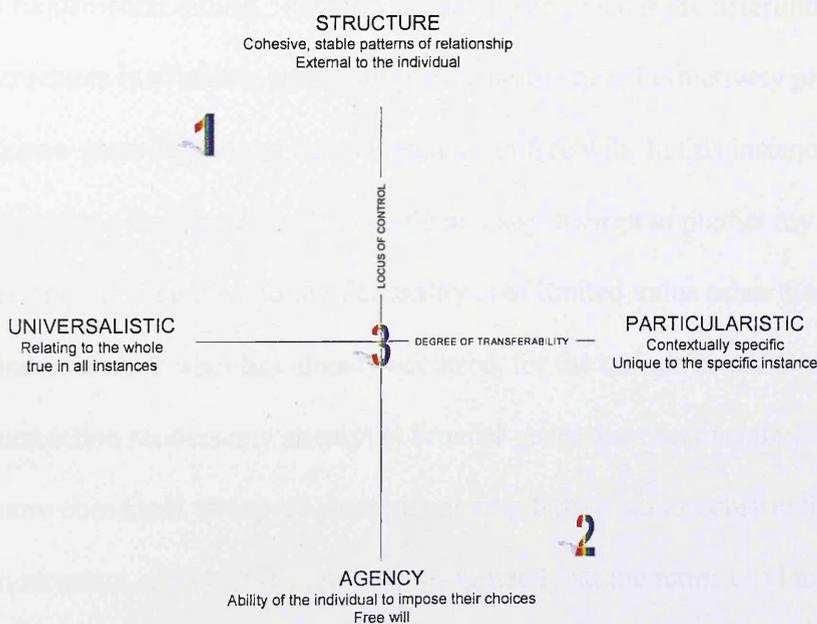


Figure 8 Structure and agency; universalistic and particularistic [source: author]

Figure 8 shows how structure and agency are concerned with the extent to which external and actual forces restrain and determine our behaviours and actions, or

whether these are the result of our internal drives and our freedom to choose. Figure 8 offers three philosophical extremes in relation to these. 'Position 1' combines a high degree of structure with the universalistic, thereby supporting the view that findings from one instance can be transferred to another in a broadly unproblematic way. Thus it offers a degree of certainty reminiscent of the Positivist principle of the 'universal law', with cause preceding effect in a stable and linear fashion (Pring, 2000). This perspective permits prediction with a high degree of certainty and positions causality as a fundamental focus for research. Such a position is widely accepted in many areas of natural science but remains highly contentious within the social sciences. Indeed while recognising its suitability in areas such as physics and chemistry, I believe it to be overly-deterministic in relation to human behaviour and its denial of free-will to be a fundamental failing. 'Position 2' sees agency render the determining forces of social structures ineffective, envisioning a scenario where I effectively plough my own furrow according to my natural talents and free will. In this instance all relationships are unique and contextually specific and any attempt to predict my responses is irrelevant. Here the notion of causality is of limited value other than as a means of understanding what has already occurred, for the unique construction of each interaction renders any attempt at broader generalisation meaningless. Such a view is more consistent with post-positivist perspectives such as constructivism and post-modernism, although it should be recognized that the terms used to describe such perspectives are often sufficiently confused as to bewilder all but the most determined student of philosophy. While I sympathise with aspects of position 2 and see many elements of each circumstance are unique, I also believe their underpinning features may be shared across alternative contexts. Therefore while care is needed in the degree to which understandings from one context may be transferred to another, it is

nevertheless possible in some instances. For these reasons I have outlined ‘position 3’, which is most reflective of my personal perspective. In this instance causality results from an interplay between structure and agency, with the former conditioning the latter in ways which are far from unique but not wholly predictable either. As such factors like culture, tradition and legal requirements will influence the outcome of any social interaction, but at the same time, the individual agent retains the freedom to respond counter to expectations. This view has some similarities to Evans’ (2007) notions of ‘structured agency’ and the more popular concept of ‘structuration’, initially conceived by Giddens (1984) and developed by writers such as Stones (2005). It is also fundamental to notions of performative leadership, which sees an individual’s role develop through an iterative interplay between their own conceptions of their role and those of the audience for their performance. Both structuration and dramaturgy emphasise the socially constructed nature of role [and indeed reality more broadly] which I see as central to the emergence of collaborative leadership. In this respect I see leadership as collaborative in its creation, focus and execution. I return to the issue of causality elsewhere in this thesis.

The main theories of trust

A number of alternative models have been proposed to explain the nature and development of trust. In this sub-section I outline seven of the most prominent and interesting of these, comparing and contrasting their main features. In selecting these theories, I have attempted to present work from a range of perspectives which offers a more rounded view of trust in various contexts. These studies therefore come from both inside and outside of the schools sector, from the UK and US, and from academic and non-academic writers. Similarly their evidence base varies from formal research

to wisdom accumulated through the provision of consultancy services to business. In each instance I describe their key features and appraise their relative strengths and weaknesses. I conclude this section by offering my own conceptualization of trust, which seeks to combine the key elements of these models to offer a new and original integrated model of the antecedents of trust. In doing so, I highlight that this model is not portrayed as the ‘answer’ to the ‘trust problem’. Instead I propose that this model demonstrates how trust is informed by a range of factors, but little consideration has been given to either the implications of this for leadership practice or the potential tensions that exist between these different elements. Thus it is my intention to avoid the trap of oversimplifying the processes which underpin trust which I feel other writers have potentially fallen foul of.

Model #1: Bryk and Schneider – ‘relational trust’

Overview

Bryk and Schneider (2002) studied the effects of the Chicago School Reform Act 1988 for three years during the early 1990s, in twelve different elementary school communities. Their work involved observation and in-depth interviews with staff and a range of other stakeholder groups. The work was supplemented by a number of large scale quantitative surveys undertaken between 1994 and 1997.

Bryk and Schneider’s notion of ‘relational trust’ builds upon theories of social capital, initially formulated by Coleman (1988) and subsequently developed by Putnam (2000, 2003, 2005) and Fukuyama (2000). According to their work, ‘relational trust’ is key to advancing improvements in urban public school communities and centres on the

willingness of citizens to associate voluntarily with one another to redress collective concerns. Trust therefore plays an essential role in encouraging individuals to move beyond specific contractual expectations and instead offer the additional contribution required to make a significant difference in areas where their involvement is more discretionary.

Relational trust starts with the premise that individuals' decisions to trust are informed by their assessments of the perceived levels of risk and potential benefits associated with them. Calculations of risk are informed by past experience and reputation and, on a practical day to day level, designated role plays a major part in underpinning our viewpoints on both of these factors. Thus relational trust views trust-centred social exchanges as based around a distinct set of role relationships, comprising specific expectations and responsibilities. Maintenance and growth of relational trust occurs when roles are discharged in accordance with these obligations, thereby reinforcing positive experiences and enhancing reputation.

Figure 9 shows how relational trust combines elements of two other forms of trust.

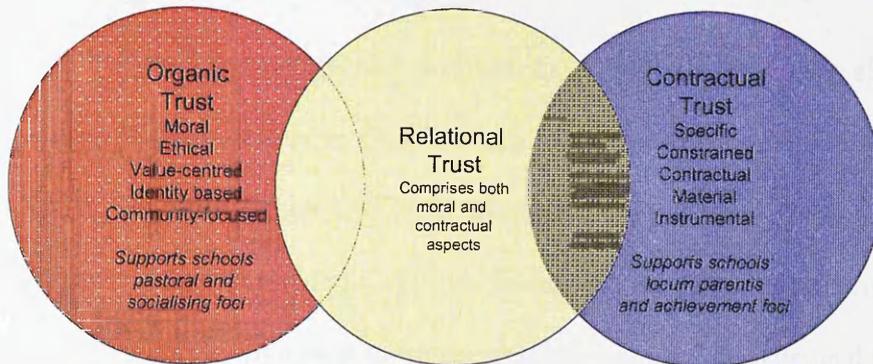


Figure 9 'Relational trust' [based on Bryk and Schneider 2006]

The first of these, *organic trust*, is predicated on an almost unquestioning belief in the 'moral' authority of a particular social institution and characterized by close, small scale communities with strong social bonds based on a common identity, such as religious groups. Organic trust is an extremely powerful form of social understanding and a strong basis for action in some contexts. However Bryk and Schneider view it as insufficient explanation for inter-organisational relationships in most instances as it is amorphous and ethereal. The second form of trust, *contractual trust*, is based on more material and instrumental connections. It is more specific than organic trust, clearly delineated and transactional in its nature, with expectations reinforced through an explicit or implicit contractual agreement. Contractual trust therefore sits well with the legal responsibilities schools discharge in their role as *loco parentis* or in the expectation that they will support the academic achievement of students in terms of

examination results. However it is less suitable as a means of considering a school's role as a socializing agent and developer of moral and social values within children.

So while organic and contractual trust both have their strengths, they also have significant limitations and on their own are unable to account for trust within schools. However, Bryk and Schneider (2002) combine these two elements to create relational trust, which offers to provide a stronger framework for such explanations. In this way relational trust offers a means for understanding the multi-dimensional nature of schools as it comprises both the instrumental, specific and measurable elements of contractual trust [its guardianship and achievement foci] with the more ethereal and moral aspects of organic trust [its socializing and pastoral foci].

At the micro level, relational trust involves 'discerning' the intentions of others via four 'lenses', summarized in Figure 10, and which comprise respect, competence, personal regard for others and integrity.

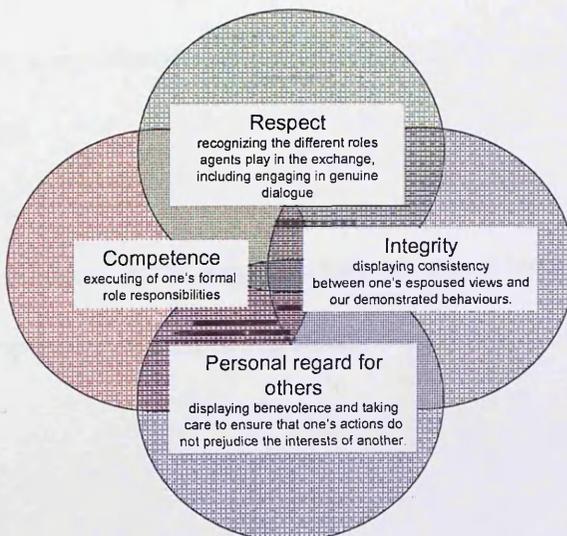


Figure 10 'Lenses of discernment' [based on Bryk and Schneider 2006]

These lenses are informed by a set of relationships [messo] that occur within an individual school community. Each contains a specific set of obligations, expectations, dependencies and vulnerabilities, and is based around the rights and responsibilities associated with each role. Bryk and Schneider identify four such relationships which are informed by the community's culture, history and local understandings [macro], and comprise:

- *school professional-parent relations*: characterised by strong asymmetry in terms of understanding of learning but mutually dependent in terms of overall achievement
- *teacher-principal*: characterized by asymmetry in terms of power and vulnerability
- *teacher-teacher*: characterized by norms of social interdependency
- *teacher-student*: characterized by high levels of mutual dependency and power inequalities.

Each of these relationships is improved as a result of high levels of relational trust, which plays a significant part in mediating areas of inequality, dependency and vulnerability.

Figure 11 summarises the ways in which increased levels of relational trust has a positive impact on the school organisation and student outcomes (Robinson, 2007).

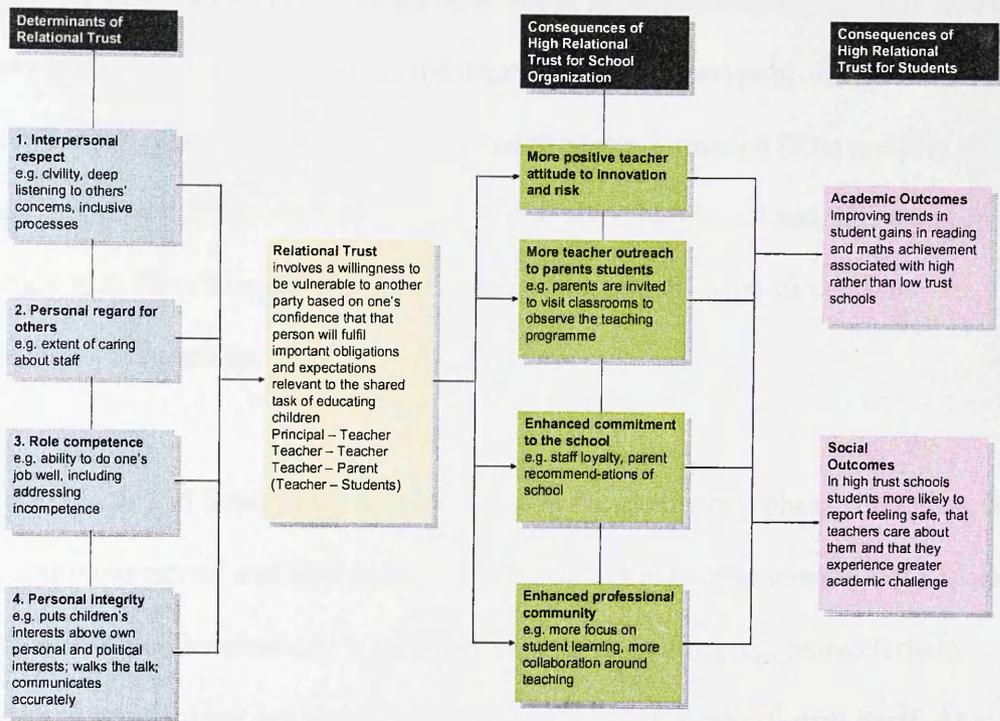


Figure 11 Outputs from relational trust [source: Robinson 2007]

Assessment

Methodologically, Bryk and Schneider's work is amongst the most comprehensive and robust to date. It is also relevant to this work because of its school based focus, although in this instance this is restricted to intra- and inter-school collaboration rather than across broader social agencies. A key strength of the model is its consideration of trust at a range of levels, including the individual [perception], interpersonal [relational] and institutional [cultural]. As such it offers evidence to support my conceptualisation of collaborative leadership, which is also described as fundamentally relational in nature. Furthermore there are strong connections between Bryk and Schneider's work and my own interest in performative leadership, for expectations around roles are fundamental to the effectiveness of these relationships.

As such, their work connects strongly with Social Identification and De-individuation theory [SIDE]²⁸, which emphasises the importance of stereotyping and generalised perceptions of others in the early stages of relationship formation (Kuo and Yu, 2009). Finally, Bryk and Schneider's work is also strongly values based and thus connects strongly with the principles of authentic leadership, which I view as central to collaborative leadership.

However Bryk and Schneider's concentration on the elementary phase and failure to consider cross-school and inter-agency collaboration limits its relevance to my work. Furthermore their terminology is potentially vague and confusing; particularly in relation to organic trust but also in terms of the notion of relational trust itself. At a more practical level, they offer little insight into the practical implications of this model for leaders on a day to day basis, such as the mundane activities this should involve. Furthermore while their discussion of relationships is helpful in highlighting the various constituent audiences for leadership and the role of expectations within this, it would benefit from a fuller consideration of [a] how these roles emerge and [b] how leaders may address the potential issues of role strain which may be associated with the performance of these roles on a daily basis. Finally Bryk and Schneider can be seen to treat the notion of morality in a broadly unproblematic way, failing to take account of its contextually specific and relative nature.

²⁸ SIDE theory describes how in temporary groups, individuals utilise category driven information to develop understandings and expectations of others in the absence of first hand knowledge about the other parties. Thus such generalised viewpoints provide a means of reducing risk and uncertainty until more specific information is available.

Model #2: Tschannan Moran - “trustworthy leadership matrix”

Overview

Tschannan-Moran’s (2004) work centred on case studies of three US elementary schools in challenging circumstances. From it she identifies five facets of trust which inform its development in all contexts. These comprise:

- Benevolence – confidence that one’s interests will not be harmed by the trustee
- Honesty – the integrity and authenticity of the trustee’s character
- Openness – sharing information, influence and control
- Reliability – consistently displaying a benevolent approach
- Competence – the ability to perform a task as expected.

Tschannan-Moran also notes the significance of expectations in relation to these in determining how trustworthy behaviour ‘looks’ in practice. For Tschannan-Moran, the principal plays the pivotal role in setting the tone of trust in the school by initiating trusting relationships through their own actions, one aspect of which involves trusting others. As relationships mature, trust become more embedded and differentiated between groups, rather than homogenous and superficial – thus it evolves and changes over time and becomes more *authentic*²⁹ in nature. Formal mechanisms support the development of trust in its early stages but become less significant with time and positive experiences of trust help to reinforce its growth.

²⁹ Authentic trust emerges when people have grown to have a deep and abiding trust in one another and involves high levels of interdependence and vulnerability but low levels of anxiety. Authentic trust is not unconditional but seen to develop to optimal levels where trust is high but measures and conditional.

Tschannen-Moran offers practical guidance on developing trust and addressing perceived or actual betrayal based upon the five facets of trust outlined above. She also offers a three dimensional *Leadership Matrix* for promoting trustworthy leadership, which is summarized in Figure 12. According to this matrix, leaders must perform the key functions of leadership for each of their constituent groups in a way which embodies the various facets of trustworthiness.

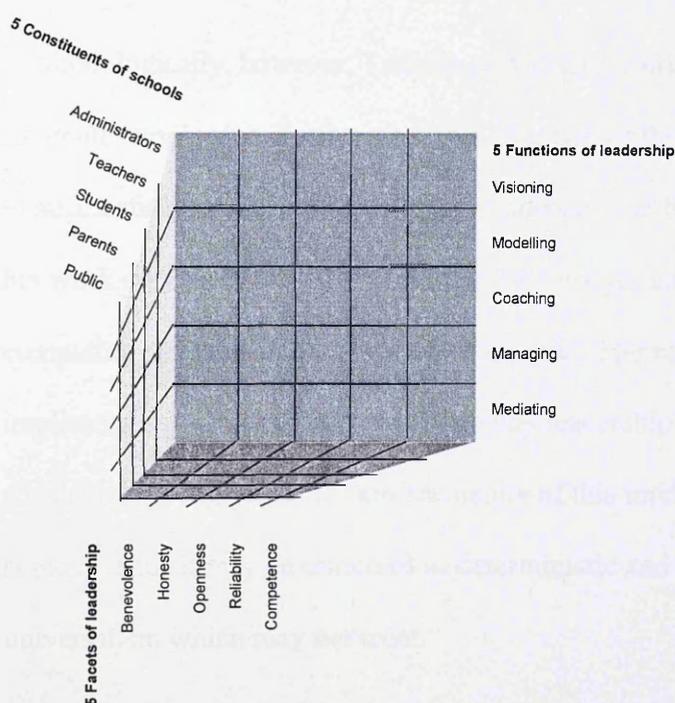


Figure 12 Trustworthy leadership matrix [source: Tschannen-Moran 2004]

Assessment

Tschannen-Moran’s consideration of trust has a refreshing simplicity to it which provides an elegant and attractive model of leadership. The postulation of five universal elements of trust avoids unnecessary complexity and the inclusion of a similar number of leadership functions and constituent audiences within the

trustworthy leadership matrix offers an appealing degree of symmetry. This matrix also offers a potentially straightforward model for informing leadership practice, although the absence of partner organizations and other stakeholder groups makes this model too school-centric for the English schools context. There are strong connections between Tschannen-Moran's ideas and my own model for collaborative leadership in schools, particularly in relation to the need for leaders to utilise social learning based approaches for creating meaning and influencing the behaviours of others.

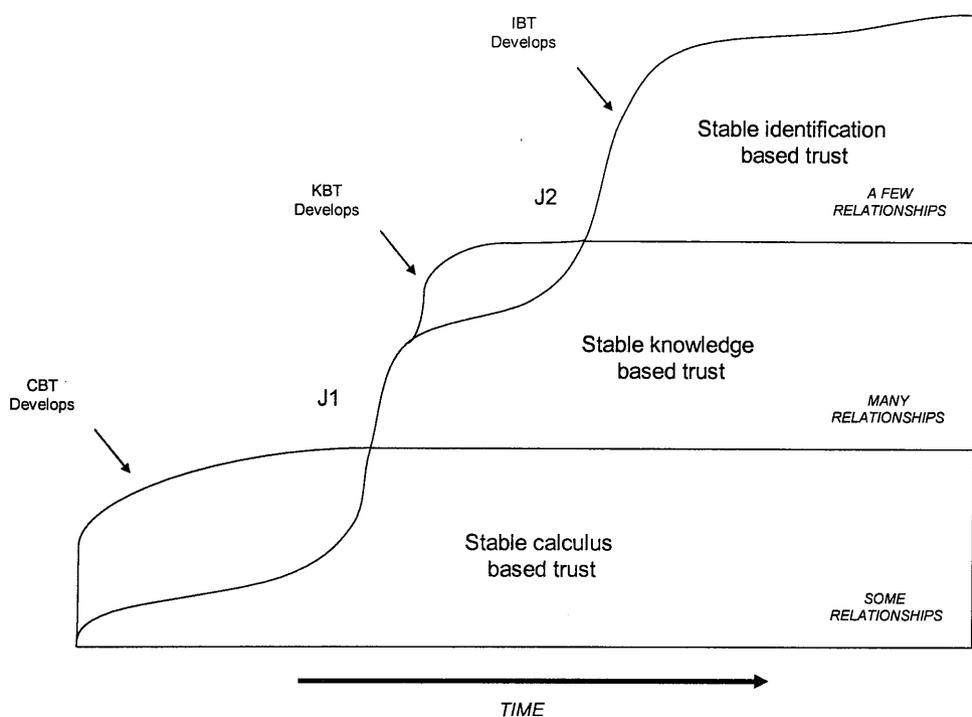
Methodologically, however, Tschannen-Moran's work is open to criticism because of its small sample size. Furthermore that only two of three schools involved were seen to successfully produce trust calls this evidence base further into question. Elsewhere her work may be criticised for offering little insight into how leaders may address the competing demands of these various audiences. Her model also lacks detail as to the implications of these aspects for day to day leadership practice. Finally little consideration is given as to how the nature of this model may vary depending upon context. Thus it may be criticised as deterministic and assuming a degree of universalism which may not exist.

Model #3: Lewicki and Bunker's "stages of trust development"

Overview

Lewicki and Bunker's (1996) work explores the ways in which trust develops between professionals within collaborative working. Their work is largely theoretical rather than empirical in nature and therefore potentially applicable to a range of contexts.

Lewicki and Bunker identify three types of trust, which “are linked in a sequential iteration in which achievement of trust at one level enables the development of trust at the next level” (Lewicki and Bunker, 1996:119). The relationship between these stages is summarized in Figure 13.



J1 At this point, some calculus based trust relationships become knowledge based trust relationships

J2 At this juncture, a few knowledge based trust relationships where positive affect is present go on to become identification based trust relationships

Source: Lewicki and Bunker 1996

Figure 13 The stages of trust development [source: Lewicki and Bunker 1996]

The first of these stages is *calculus-based trust*, which is grounded in a fear of punishment and a consideration of the potential benefits which may be accrued as a result of partnership working. In a business context, calculus trust is informed in part by the reputation of the trustee and the truster’s perspective towards risk. Such trust builds slowly and is quickly lost, being both partial and fragile at this point.

The second stage of their model is *knowledge based trust*, which is grounded in information obtained from previous interactions. Thus it is based upon the predictability of the trustee's behaviour, even if that predictability involves an expectation of untrustworthy action. In knowledge based trust, regular communication and courtship are viewed as key processes, as both parties experiment to better understand the other. At this level, trust is not necessarily broken by inconsistent behaviour but rather may result in the development of a new perception, which if proven to be accurate will form the basis for a new relationship. Reparation of knowledge based trust is more problematic given the damage that it causes to the victim's self image and self esteem.

Lewicki and Bunker's third stage is *identification-based trust*. This is based on a high degree of understanding and empathy for the other's values and beliefs and can effectively result in either party acting on the other's behalf. Identification based trust is integral to a collective group identity, and has a reflexive relationship with joint objectives and commonly shared values. Many of the activities which support calculus based and knowledge based trust also serve to develop identification based trust, most notably developing a collective identity, co-location, creating joint products or goals and committing to commonly shared values. As a metaphor, Lewicki and Bunker describe this as harmony singing where voices complement rather than imitate each other, recognising the value of difference. Breaches of identification based trust are the most serious of all as they affect our underlying values and cause a sense of moral violation. Indeed the emotional investment involved in identification based trust is such that breakdowns can result in a genuine sense of betrayal and lead to self recrimination. While these three stages are seen as hierarchical in that they lead to a

deeper and stronger form of trust, it is not necessarily the case that relationships will pass through each stage. Indeed in many instances achieving the first stage is sufficient.

Assessment

Lewicki and Bunker's model is helpful in highlighting the importance of time in potentially deepening trusting relationships. It also draws a useful distinction between the nature and basis of trust at different points in relationships, which is informed in part by changes in understanding as to the nature of different roles. The fact that some relationships do not reach the 'full maturity' of identification based trust is also accounted for.

However in highlighting the significance of time, their model underplays the importance of meaningful experience in deepening relationships, whereby deep trusting relationships can be formed quite quickly in some potentially intense instances but never occur in others. Another area of concern relates to their lack of clarity as to what prompts some relationships to progress from one stage to another, and at what point this occurs³⁰. On perhaps a lower but still important level, the terminology they employ is potentially unclear in relation to each of the three stages. Elsewhere the theoretical nature of their work means that they inevitably offer little concrete insight into the daily practice which informs the development of trust.

³⁰ Kuo and Yu [2009] offer a more fundamental view as to the relevance of *identification based trust* within the context of temporary project based teams.

Model #4: Bottery's "micro, messo and macro stages of trust"

Overview

Bottery (2003, 2005) has written on issues of trust in the English school system and builds on the work of Lewicki and Bunker by describing an alternative view of the stages of trust development. He describes his stages as *"both developmental and normative in nature, becoming more complex and valuable as one moves from an essentially cognitive platform of trust to incorporate motivational, affective and principled elements"*(Bottery, 2005:5). Thus Bottery shares Lewicki and Bunker's hierarchy, but differs in that he adds a value judgment as to the worth of trust in each stage.

Bottery identifies seven stages, which are summarised in Figure 14.

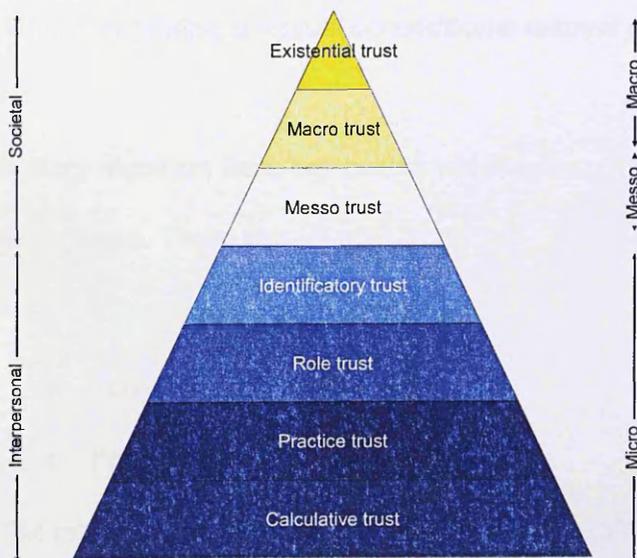


Figure 14 'Micro, messo and macro' stages of trust [based on Bottery, 2003, 2005]

The first four stages of Bottery's model focus on micro-dynamics of trust and have some notable similarities with Lewicki and Bunker's model. He starts with the notion of *calculative trust* which is based on assessments of potential risks and gains in a way which is reminiscent of Lewicki and Bunker's calculus trust. He then identifies two stages which effectively replace their notion of knowledge trust. The first of these is *role trust* which relates to the values and norms associated with different occupational groups, and is grounded in their professional training. The ways in which these principles are operationalised and manifest in day to day transactions is the focus of the second stage, *practice trust*. Practice trust provides a more localised consideration of role trust – it is the difference for instance between trusting police officers in general and a specific trust for an individual police officer. His fourth and final stage *identificatory trust* bears many similarities with Lewicki and Bunker's identification-based trust, in that it is established over time and represents a “*level of trust where individuals come to know that there is an almost intuitive knowledge of what the other will do, generating a mutual unconditional respect and trust*” (Bottery, 2005:7).

Bottery identifies three key factors which inform the development of trust in each of these stages. These are:

- Values and value priorities
- Perceptions of integrity and
- Perceptions of job competence

The extent to which the first of these is shared within a community informs whether the nature of trust present is either ‘thick’ [if extensively and convincing shared] or ‘thin’ [more superficial and exclusive in nature]. The effective presence of sanctions and rewards to enforce these is the focus of *meso trust*, which emphasises the

importance of trust in an institution, based in its overarching ethos and culture. Values are also critical to the concept of *macro trust*, which Bottery describes as existing at the societal level. His description of *macro trust* is very brief but can be taken to relate to individual's trust in society's larger institutions and organisations, including politics, the media and the major blue chip companies. A seventh and final stage relates to *existential trust*. Part of a long term and an almost intuitive process that is more felt than reasoned, existential trust determines the degree of confidence an individual has in their broader surroundings. Bottery cites Webster (2002) extensively in relation to this, who in turn discusses the importance of having "confidence in the worth of things" and "the assurance that in living, things hang together", both of which provide clues as to the nature of existential trust.

Assessment

Bottery's work focuses on teaching in English schools and is therefore highly relevant to this study. The first four stages of his theory add value to Lewicki and Bunker's work, clarifying elements of the knowledge based trust stage by dividing it into two. Furthermore his re-labelling of *calculative* trust is intuitively appealing. The three drivers of trust development are helpfully clear and emphasise the role of both truster and trustee in this process, thereby reiterating the significance of relationships in trust development. Including the notion of thin and thick trust is helpful in emphasising further the importance of values and connecting his work with broader writing on social capital (e.g. Baron et al., 2000, Borgatti and Jones, 1998, Coleman, 1988, Rousseau et al., 1998). There are some connections between his conception of meso and macro trust with political leadership, but these are vague and in general these ideas murky.

However it is unclear from Bottery's writing what his evidence base is and the degree to which his theories are empirically based or ostensibly theoretical. Meanwhile his notion of existential trust is particularly ill-defined and somewhat speculative in nature, while the differences between macro and existential trust are woolly and assume much on the part of the reader. However Bottery should be given some credit for highlighting the fact that micro trust does not develop within a vacuum. Similarly Bottery's focus on practice trust is helpful in drawing attention to the part day to day activities play in promoting trust, but this lacks detail and would benefit from further development.

Model #5: Covey's "five waves of trust"

Overview

Like Bottery, Covey (2006) identifies trust as existing at a range of levels, or 'waves', which are differentiated by their relative degree of proximity to the truster. His five waves are summarised in Figure 15 and act as ripples, moving out from the centre. In this way, Covey sees each wave as building on the last, such that the fifth cannot be achieved without realising the other four.

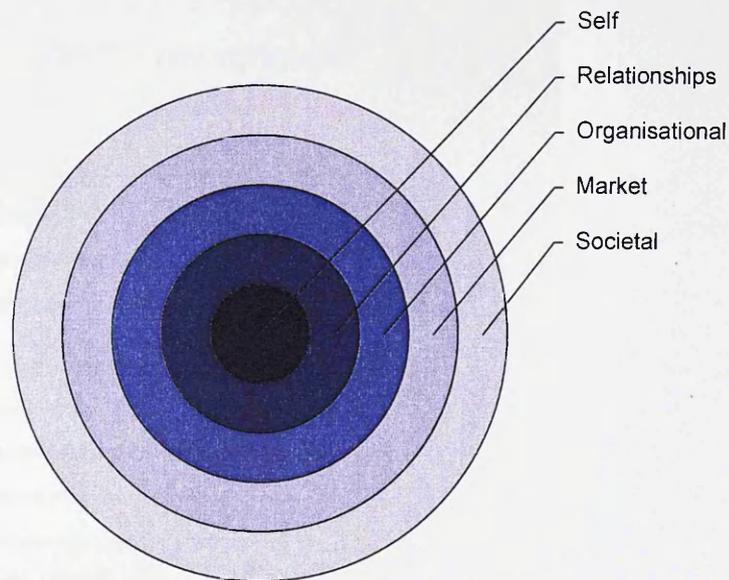


Figure 15 The five waves of trust [based on Covey 2006]

Covey’s model begins by emphasising the need for *self-trust*, trusting oneself by establishing one’s personal credibility. Credibility in turn comprises ‘four cores’ of:

- integrity - congruence between behaviour and motive, humility, courage and openness
- intention – positive motive, agenda and behaviour
- capabilities – talents, attitudes, skills, knowledge, style
- results – demonstrating the ability to deliver.

Once self trust is in place, it can be extended to others as *relationship trust*, which is based upon the consistent demonstration of “the 13 behaviours”, summarised in Figure 16. Core to these behaviours is promoting honesty and openness, and respecting and valuing others.

The 13 behaviours

1. Talk straight
2. Demonstrate respect [being kind, caring, genuine and dignified]
3. Create transparency
4. Right wrongs [by making amends]
5. Show loyalty [share credit, speak as if others are present and represent others' views]
6. Deliver results [and do the right things]
7. Get better [by seeking feedback and learning from mistakes]
8. Confront reality [acknowledge the elephants in the room]
9. Clarify expectations [discuss and negotiate, don't assume]
10. Demonstrate accountability [for self and for others]
11. Listen before you speak [understand, diagnose, listen with ears, eyes and heart]
12. Keep your commitments
13. Extend trust

Figure 16 'The 13 behaviours of trustworthiness' [source: Covey 2006]

For managers, underpinning all of these behaviours is the promotion of “smart trust”, a measured and considered willingness to trust others in contexts of acceptable risk.

Covey sees such a strategy as central to leaders: *"The number one job of any leader is to inspire trust. It's to release the creativity and capacity of individuals to give their best and to create a high-trust environment in which they can effectively work with others"* (Covey, 2006:298).

Organisational trust centres on promoting alignment between systems and processes on one hand, and espoused values and principles on the other. It results in mutual trust between individuals within the organisation, which in turn produces a range of benefits in relation to growth, innovation, collaboration and efficiency, and also promotes enhanced relationships with customers. Factors which adversely affect

organisational trust include duplication of effort, bureaucracy, politics, disengagement, turnover of staff, churn of clients and customers fraud.

Wave four centres on market trust, which is concerned with building and protecting a reputation for trustworthiness. Covey highlights the role of brands in this and their effect in promoting relationship with new customers, and deepening those with existing customers.

The fifth and final wave considers ethical responsibilities on an individual and organizational level. It highlights the importance of *contribution* to the greater good, and trading short term personal wins which destroy the stock of trust [*conscious capitalism*] with a more measured and principled stand which, defers realising immediate gains with making a difference beyond one's own personal sphere [*intentional virtue*].

Assessment

Covey provides evidence for his theories from a range of contexts but his work is heavily centred in US commerce, which raises some questions as to its applicability of his work to English schools. He is also somewhat vague as to the evidence base for his ideas, other than to highlight that it is based upon experiences gained from working with many companies on a consultancy basis. However the broad principles of his theories can be applied to alternative contexts, albeit with some slight modifications in some instances. For example while his concept of market trust [which centres on promoting brand loyalty] may at first sight seem at odds with schools, many schools are operating in an increasingly entrepreneurial way and actively seeking to develop

the notion of their own brand. There is also an appealing simplicity and synchronicity to Covey's ideas, which are underpinned by the principles of character [ethics] and competence.

Covey's work is helpful in the specificity it offers for behaviours which promote trust, thereby operationalising the principles of performative leadership to some extent.

However each aspect is offered in a relatively simplistic way and therefore represents 'top tips' for leaders rather than more detailed considerations of the specific actions that may be adopted and their potential implications. Thus it fails to really address the nature of day to day, mundane leadership practice. Similarly while his general emphasis on the role of the leader in promoting trust is helpful [he views it as their core responsibility] in drawing further attention to its socially constructed nature and the constitutive nature of leadership, he stops short of advising on how this may occur and the potential tensions which exist within this process.

Model #6: Reina and Reina's "trust and betrayal model"

Overview

Reina and Reina describe their model as "*a practical and proven framework for understanding the dynamics of trust and betrayal in workplace relationships (Reina and Reina, 2006:xi)*". Their work identifies two models of trust, transactional trust and transformational trust, the focus for which echoes the leadership models of the same name (Bass, 1998, Bono and Judge, 2004, MacGregor Burns, 1978). Both are heavily

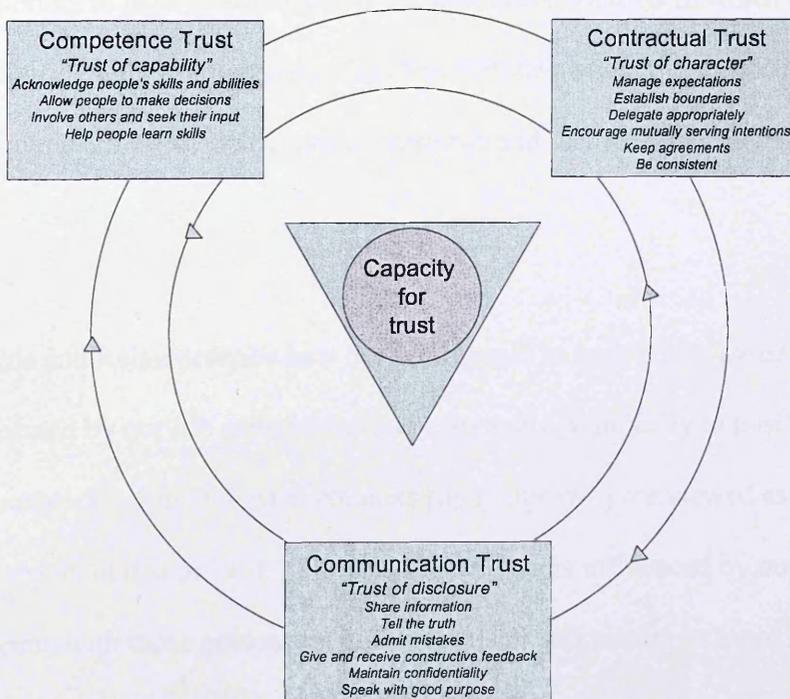
influenced by our propensity to trust and our responses to betrayal, which in turn are viewed as implicit and unavoidable components of any trust relationship.

Transaction trust is essentially based on the belief that trust occurs through mutual exchange and increases over time. Transactional trust comprises three sub-elements [Figure 17], which in turn are associated with specific behaviours that promote relationships. These are:

- The trust of character – contractual trust
- The trust of disclosure – communication trust
- The trust of capability – competence trust.

Transactional trust is:

- Reciprocal ["got to give it to get it"]
- Created incrementally [step by step]



Source: Reina & Reina [2006]

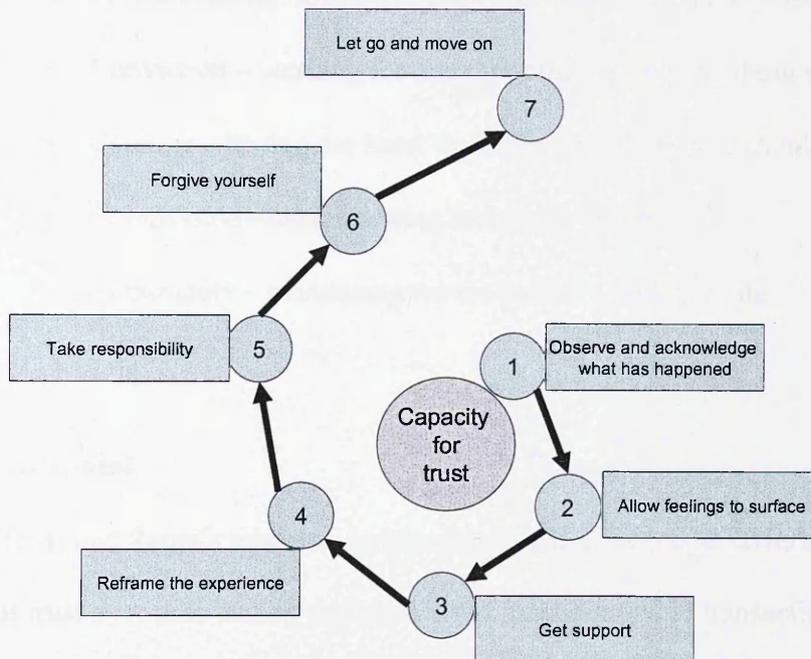
Figure 17 Aspects of transactional trust [source: Reina and Reina 2006]

Contractual trust is concerned with our perspective towards areas of mutual understanding and agreements. It forms the basis for most interactions in the workplace and reflects our need for reliability. Six behaviours are associated with contractual trust [summarised in Figure 17], and largely relate to managing relationships and demonstrating consistency in one's approach. *Communication trust* reflects the reciprocal, mutually informing relationship between trust and communication. In high trust organisations, areas which lack clarity will be viewed more positively than in lower trust ones. The six behaviours associated with communication trust support openness and a healthy dialogue around positive and negative aspects of performance. They also promote the protection of confidences and a reduction in gossip. *Competence trust* centres on acknowledging people's expertise, skills and abilities and involving them in the decision making process. It is particularly important in high knowledge and complex work contexts in which employees' technical skills will be greater than those of the manager in a specific area³¹. Key behaviours involve encouraging autonomy and distributing leadership and avoiding micromanagement.

Reina and Reina describe how our willingness to trust others [*trust capacity*] is informed by our life experiences and responds dynamically to positive or negative encounters³². Our earliest encounters [up to age two] are viewed as especially important in this process. Our capacity for trust is influenced by our levels of self esteem, with those possessing higher levels of self esteem as more likely to trust others and be open to taking risks. Increasing our propensity to trust over time

³¹ Schools-based provision of extended services is one such example

involves making *conscious choices* to trust and taking positive experiences from these instances. It also involves adopting a positive approach to healing, which Reina and Reina view as comprising a seven stage process, which is summarised in Figure 18.



Source: Reina & Reina [2006]

Figure 18 "Seven steps for healing" [source: Reina and Reina 2006]

When sufficiently well established, transactional trust will reach a ‘critical point’ where *transformational trust* is subsequently seen to emerge. Reina and Reina describe transformational trust as “*the hope and vision of the future as today’s leaders raise the level of awareness among themselves and their people regarding behaviours that develop trust, those that destroy it, and the choices they make to rebuild it*” (Reina and Reina, 2006:147). Transformational trust therefore connects

³² Attributes which inform our capacity to trust include realism [i.e. a realistic assessment of the risk involved], abstractness [one’s willingness to rely upon gut feeling and philosophy over concrete fact], complexity [how comfortable one is will highly involved contexts] and differentiation [the extent to which one distinguishes between self and others]

strongly with transformational leadership in its emphasis on addressing the visions and beliefs of followers and promoting a paradigm shift in their perspective. They describe transformational trust as growing exponentially in a self-generating and synergistic way, increasing people's capacity for trust, healing and transforming the quality of relationships. Underpinning it are four core characteristics of:

- Conviction – working for a higher purpose on something we believe in
- Courage – having the heart to do the right thing in difficult situations
- Compassion –demonstrating caring for others
- Community – evidencing we are part of a wider whole.

Assessment

Reina and Reina's model is ambitiously broad in its scope, covering the development of trust over time and its evolution from functionary and transactional to the more abstract and values based notion of transformational trust. Their ideas on transactional trust are clearly presented and highlight the importance of a range of factors in informing its growth. There is also a strong focus on relationships throughout their model and the need to manage expectations within this. As such they connect strongly with notions of authentic leadership, highlighting the importance of integrity in this process. In doing so they demonstrate the highly complex nature of trust development. Reina and Reina also consider positive approaches to addressing betrayal by adopting specific leadership strategies and are more explicit in this area than many other writers.

However while their terminology is in the main clear, some elements of their work are more challenging. For instance, elements of *propensity to trust* are relatively complex,

while the notion of transformational trust is less clearly covered in their work and indeed accounts for only fourteen pages of their two hundred page book. The process through which it occurs is particularly sketchy and quite vague, although the underpinning focus on values is helpful and connects with themes in my own work. Similarly the evidence base for their work is unclear, with an inference that it is drawn from practical experiences of working with companies rather than formal research or a consideration of existing theories [their references section is also surprisingly thin]. Perhaps for this reason, Reina and Reina [like many authors] describe broad leadership strategies rather than specific actions, which may be undertaken on a day to day basis. Finally they fail to consider the potential tensions which may exist between the various different types of trust they describe, e.g. the need to promote openness but maintain confidences.

Model #7: Vangen and Huxham's "trust building loop"

Overview

Huxham and Vangen (Huxham, 1996b, Huxham and Vangen, 2004, Vangen and Huxham, 2003b) consider trust as part of their broader theory of collaborative advantage, which has already been touched on several times in this review. They highlight the particularly important role trust plays in dealing with issues of power and overcoming inter-agency hostility and mistrust (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). A key part of their model centres on the way in which trust develops over time through exposure and experience, a process they describe as the trust building loop [Figure 19].

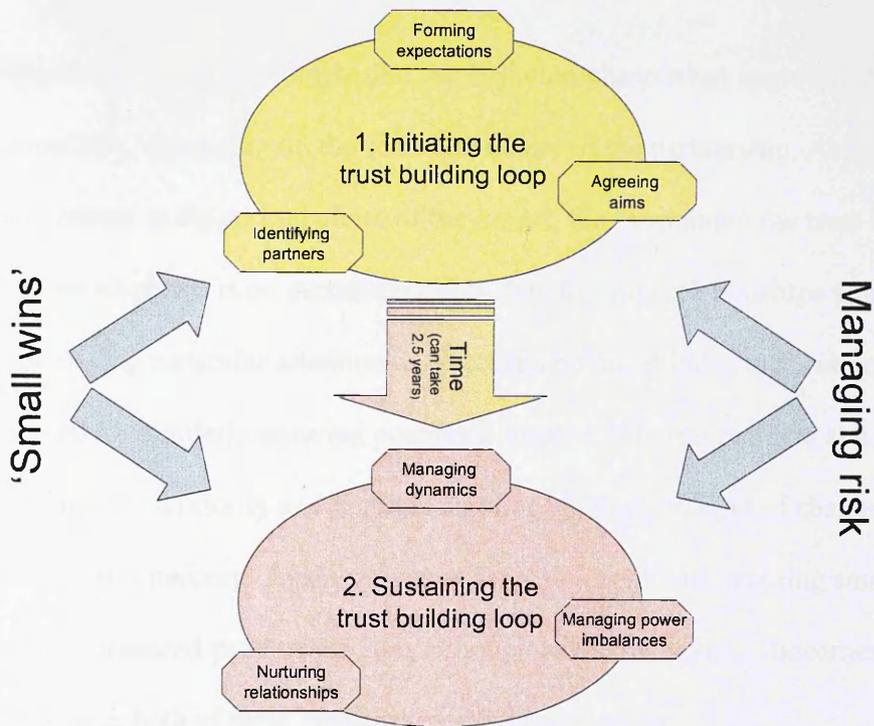


Figure 19 The "trust building loop" [source: Huxham & Vangen 2005]

The 'trust building loop' has two elements. Firstly it offers a means of understanding the process through which trust can initially be promoted with partners, via the 'initiating the trust building loop' process. This involves identifying would-be partners and agreeing realistic aims for joint activity. Leadership activities which are key to this include communication and negotiation, described more fully in other parts of their model. Then via a measured approach to risk taking, trust is developed by securing 'small wins', real tangible gains that are achieved relatively quickly and of equal benefit to both parties. These small wins are often a pragmatic response to instances where difficulty is encountered in agreeing the fine detail of the activities to be undertaken and as such start on the ground in areas where gains can be achieved and the risk of failure is not prohibitive.

Vangen and Huxham estimate that the initiation phase takes approximately 2½ years to conclude, depending on the scale and nature of the partnership. At this point, the focus moves to the second phase of the model, the “sustaining the trust building loop”. Here the emphasis is on nurturing, rather than forming relationships with partners, while paying particular attention to perceived or actual imbalances in power within the partnership. Similarly ensuring positive dynamics between partners at a macro and micro level is a priority and requires ongoing attention in light of changes in the partnership’s makeup. Again strategies for action centre on securing small wins through measured exposure to risk, although as the relationship becomes more established, both of these elements may increase in size.

Relationships are critically important to all aspects of the trust building loop and the ‘sustaining the trust building loop’ element of their model highlights how constant nurturing is needed to prevent their breakdown, as Huxham and Vangen note: *“given the fragility of the trust loop, those who wish to build and maintain a high degree of trust need to pay relentless attention to trust building activities”*(Huxham and Vangen, 2005:171). This can be extremely resource consuming and requires continuous attention to the interaction between changes in structure and membership, changes in aims and agenda and changes in power. A summary of the implications of this model for practitioners, which differentiates between modest collaborations and more ambitious ones, is offered in Figure 20.

	Initiating the trust building loop [weak trust]	Sustaining the trust building loop [presence of trust]
Comprehensive trust management [ambitious collaboration]	<p>Manage risk as an integral part of trust building</p> <p>Explore complexity of structure and aims eg by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identifying with whom to network and build trust •Assessing sources of power and influence •Exploring who can act •Exploring differences in organisational purposes •Negotiating agreement on aims •Exploring willingness and ability to enact the agenda <p><i>Assess potential for achieving collaborative advantage whether associated risk can be managed and [given choice] is worth taking.</i></p>	<p>Nurture, nurture, nurture!</p> <p>Facilitate trust building cycle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Keep nurturing relationships by carefully managing all aspects of the collaborative process including communication, power imbalances and credit recognition, joint ownership, varying levels of commitment, conflicting views on aims and agendas and so on... <p><i>Maintain a high level of trust to create the basis for collaborative advantage</i></p>
'Small wins' trust management [modest collaboration]	<p>Adopt small wins approach to trust building</p> <p>Initiate trust with relevant partners and aims eg by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Beginning to identify with whom to build trust and •Getting started by undertaking modest but joint actions <p><i>Get started without having to deal with all aspects of trust building</i></p>	<p>Manage instability</p> <p>Manage dynamics and power imbalances eg by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Keeping momentum when trusted members leave the collaboration •Putting efforts into fast tracking new members into the trust building loop •Recognising the inevitable effect of power imbalances on members' actions •Finding ways of ensuring that shared power is maximised <p><i>Sustain trust gained long enough to reach and then work with a comfortable level of trust</i></p>

Figure 20 Managing trust: summary of implications for practice [source: Huxham & Vangen 2005]

Appraisal

Huxham and Vangen have researched and written extensively on the issue of collaboration in England and much of this has concentrated on public sector partnerships. Their work is strongly evidenced therefore and this is demonstrated in their grounded and realistic consideration of partnership issues. Their trust building loop differentiates between new and more established partnerships, explaining its simultaneous emphasis on relationship building and responding to context. Huxham and Vangen also provide a useful indication of when the focus for trust moves from

initiation to sustaining, and offer broad guidance on how the scale and ambition of the collaboration informs the nature of activity undertaken. Their work therefore highlights the need for leaders to manage others' understanding of partnership working while also consistently displaying trustworthy behaviours. In this way it connects strongly with modelling elements of social learning theory.

Huxham and Vangen's work is limited in scope however and explains only one element of trust within partnership working. It also fails to explicitly connect trust with leaders' values and beliefs [apart from displaying trustworthiness], thereby missing potential linkages with notions of authenticity, which I believe are fundamental to trust. Meanwhile their model offers only one explanation for developing trust, based upon incremental growth. Finally it offers little detail on the precise nature of leadership practice required to promote trust.

An integrated model of trust

As noted above, each of the models reviewed possesses a number of strengths and weaknesses. The first two studies both centred on schools in the USA. Bryk and Schneider (2002) emphasised the relational element of trust and the significance of perception and culture in its development but focused exclusively on schools and did not consider the development of cross-organisational trust. Tschannen-Moran's (2004) trustworthy leadership matrix identified five universal elements of trust and five constituent audiences, thereby offering a strong basis for informing practice and placing emphasis on the importance of giving attention to the 'media of leadership'.

However her evidence base was limited and as a result, relatively untested empirically.

The third and fourth studies shifted our focus onto the development of trust over time. In the first of these, Lewicki and Bunker (1996) highlighted how time could potentially deepen trusting relationships, noting how the basis for trust changes as it progresses through each of three identified stages. However their work was vague in terms of the tipping point for each stage and downplayed the role of experience within this. In our next study, Bottery (2003, 2005) developed and expanded Lewicki and Bunker's work, both with regard to relational trust, but also by introducing notions of meso and macro trust. However his attempts to account for trust at a societal level were vague and raised as many questions as they answer.

Studies five and six came from the world of US-commerce, and as such potentially targeted at a more mainstream business audience. Both were impressive in their scope and sought to offer detailed advice on the leadership actions and approaches which would support the development of trust. In the first, Covey (2006) extended the scope of trust to embrace issues of self-image, highlighting the need to trust ourselves before trusting others. He also highlighted the role of intentions and outcomes in promoting trust. In the second study, Reina and Reina (2006) placed further emphasis on the individual's propensity to trust and the ways in which betrayal may be positively addressed. They also attempted to develop understanding on the evolution of trust over time, but their work in this respect was vague and confusing. Elsewhere they highlighted the importance of establishing the expectations for the role which form the basis for considerations as to how trustworthy leadership is.

Huxham and Vangen (2005), the final model, arguably had the strongest evidence base, being developed from long term research into cross organizational partnership working in the UK. It offered an alternative view on the development of trust over time, again being highly grounded in relationships and offering strong advice on which leadership behaviours to adopt. Arguably Huxham and Vangen’s work offered the clearest view of how the focus of trust changes from ‘initiation’ to ‘sustainability’, but was limited in its scope and failure to consider personal characteristics, traits and perceptions in the process.

More broadly, each of the models lacked detail as to the day to day actions leaders should undertake as part of the collaborative process or in order to promote trust. Nevertheless, taken together these approaches move us towards a view of trust which is multi-dimensional and informed by a variety of factors which interact at a number of levels (Mayer et al., 1995). Furthermore, during my discussion on these models I have sought to identify areas where they connect with my own original model for collaborative leadership in schools, and in Figure 21 I summarise these main linkages.

Figure 21 Connections between selected theories on trust and elements of my model for collaborative leadership in schools

	Bryk & Ssneider	Tschannen-Moran	Lewicki & Bunker	Bottery	Covey	Reina & Reina	Vangen & Huxham
Relational leadership							
Distributed leadership							
Political leadership				Macro?			
Authentic leadership							
Constitutive leadership							

Figure 21 shows that overlap exists between all of these theories of trust and the relational element of my model for collaborative leadership in schools. There are equally strong parallels with the concept of authentic leadership, centred principally on the leader's role in modelling trustworthy behaviour, although these theories were less helpful in understanding the connection between the leaders' values and their behaviours. Constitutive leadership also feature in these models of trust, highlighting the importance of being able to trust the leader's portrayal of context.

Amongst the most interesting aspects of Figure 21 however is how little consideration is given to distributed leadership and political leadership within these theories. One explanation for the lack of interest in the former is that displaying trust in others potentially overlaps with relational leadership, although I would argue that its significance is such that it warrants examination in its own right. Indeed from a partnership perspective, trusting others to lead is a critical part of maximising the collaborative's potential. Similarly political leadership may be viewed as overlapping with other elements of collaborative leadership, most notably the need to manage meaning relating to partnership work, which coincides to some extent with constitutive leadership. At the same time it may also be argued that behaviours associated with promoting partnership working represent an element of performative leadership.

Limitations in an integrated model of trust

As noted already, these various models encourage us to see trust as a concept which is multi-dimensional and informed by a range of factors at a variety of levels (Mayer et al., 1995) and in Figure 22 I outline my own conceptualisation of this in my 'integrated

model of trust', which forms part of my original contribution to theory and knowledge.

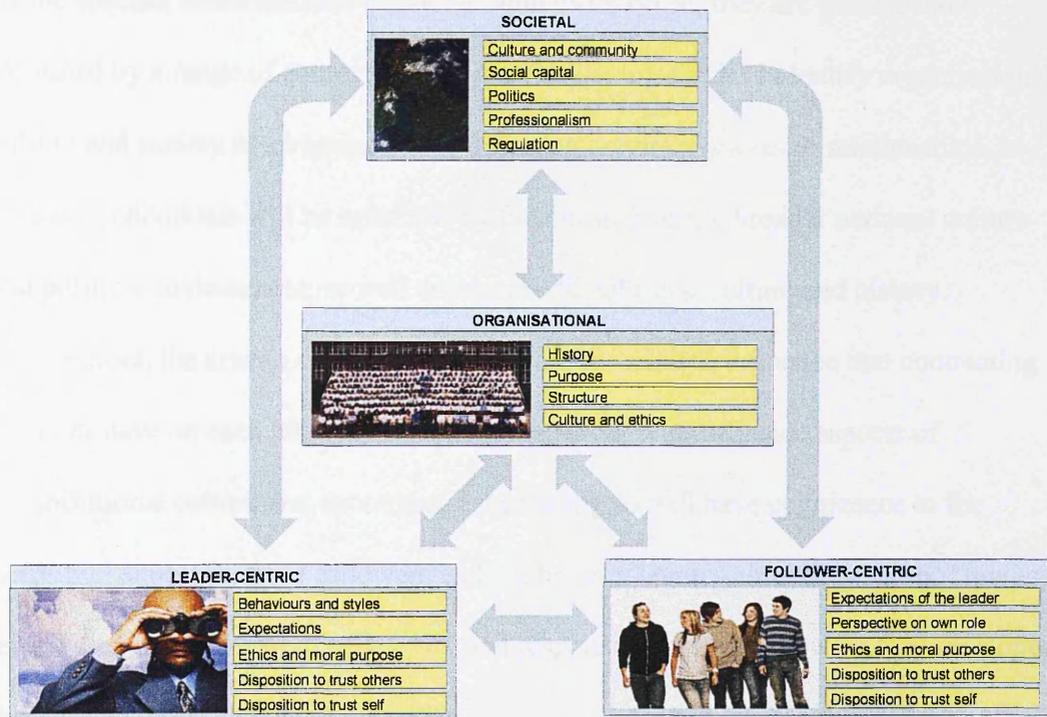


Figure 22 'Integrated' model of trust [source: author]

In Figure 22 I identify four broad domains which influence trust between followers and leaders. These comprise those relating to the leader and follower themselves [leader-centric and follower-centric respectively], the organisation and society more broadly. In doing so I highlight the role that factors at each of these levels play in influencing the development of trust in any individual context. For instance, as a leader, my relationship with any given follower is informed by my expectations of our respective roles, my values and my general disposition to trust. I may also prefer to adopt a trusting leadership style. At the same time of course, the follower will be

influenced by a similar range of factors³³. Furthermore and as indicated by my earlier consideration of causality, I believe that the socially constructed nature of interpersonal interactions means that while each relationship is unique and informed by the specific characteristics of the individuals involved, they are guided and informed by a range of contextual factors. Thus in this model I identify organisational culture and society more broadly as influencing factors. As a result relationships between individuals will be informed by factors such as the broader national culture and political environment, as well as organisational rules, culture and history. Furthermore, the arrows on this model indicate the relative influence that contrasting domains have on each other. For instance the leader will influence aspects of organizational culture and structures, but in doing so will have cognizance to the needs and expectations of followers and the broader communities they serve. Thus my model contains a degree of reflexivity and responsiveness that allows it to evolve over time and in line with the wider context.

In offering my model I recognise that there are strong practical and theoretical objections to producing an 'aggregate' model of trust. Indeed while many aspects of these approaches are complementary, others may clash. For instance, how could an 'average' view of the various stages be developed? It is clearly nonsensical to simply add Huxham and Vangen's two stages, to Lewicki and Bunker's three and Bottery's seven and divide by three. Similarly, simply combining the various elements of these models may only result in the production of bigger lists of action and potential areas of duplication. Instead I believe that a more realistic ambition is to establish a

³³ Expectations feature within both leader and follower domains and is influenced by organisational and societal factors, thereby highlighting the multiple factors which influence the negotiation of role and its subsequent performance.

framework which builds on these ideas and principles, combining those elements which are seen to have the greatest merit into an original model, thereby drawing on others' work for inspiration. Furthermore while highlighting the mutually informing nature of these elements, I have not attempted to quantify the relative degree of influence each emits, or the tensions which underpin these relationships. For these various reasons, I position my model as an interpretation of the ideas of others rather than a composite picture. I also recognize that any attempt to consider all aspects of trust in a single diagram will inevitably be judged as much by what it omits as what it includes. However in developing my model I have sought to offer a relatively clear and simple consideration of this issue, highlighting the main constituent groups, themes and interconnections.

Gaps in the evidence base

I conclude this chapter by considering the main gaps which exist in the literature. As I noted in my earlier discussions, the concept of collaborative leadership is relatively new and emerging, although its emphasis on relationships builds upon many of the classic leadership studies and more recent post-transaction theories. Moreover a number of writers have begun to consider it as an entity in its own right within a variety of context, such as Chrislip and Larson's work on empowering communities in the US and Huxham and Vangen's studies of partnership working in the UK. Nevertheless it remains under-explored within English school based collaborations.

One consistent theme within collaborative and relational leadership models relates to the role trust plays as a lever of influence. At the heart of this is its ability to serve as a

substitute for the lack of formal structures which exist within many partnership contexts and to lever additional good will and discretionary effort from followers more broadly. I have demonstrated that a range of work has been undertaken into trust in relevant contexts. However none of this specifically examines English school-based partnerships, which forms the focus for this study. For instance, Bryk and Schneider and Tschannan-Moran explore trust within schools, but look exclusively at the American context. Although some similarities exist, there are also marked differences between the two systems. Not least amongst these is the far more decentralized approach in England and the greater autonomy this affords to English head teachers, whose roles may be compared with that of a chief executive officer in a small medium size business, in contrast to American principles who are more akin with a branch manager. Similarly while Bottery's work explicitly considers English schools, it fails to address the specific demands of inter-school and inter-agency contexts. Conversely Huxham and Vangen explore partnerships but don't focus on schools. Covey and Reina and Reina offer advice on leadership practice but in a very generic and almost superficial way, which offers little help on what the practice of trustworthy leadership looks like. Another limitation centres on the relatively light focus placed on followers in the development of trust. The final and related limitation centres on the potential areas of conflict between authentic leaders and their performance of the leadership role. As I have noted throughout this chapter, trust is dependent upon the authentic performance of leadership which for many, may be viewed as a contradiction in terms. This tension therefore forms a major focus for my findings section.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the evidence from literature relevant to my study. In doing so, I have sought to highlight why my work is important and to connect it to the current areas of debate. I have explored the three main foci of my work, comprising collaborative working, leadership and trust. In the first of these I concluded that interest in collaboration has increased, as a result of drives for increased efficiency and efforts to address society's most entrenched challenges. I described how this has resulted in tensions within schools between pressures to compete and to co-operate, and how a range of factors influence the effectiveness of partnerships, foremost amongst which are their leadership and issues of trust.

My next two subsections explored the issues of leadership and trust further. In the first of these I examined the notion of collaborative leadership in schools, charting its relatively recent history and highlighting similarities with broader leadership theory. I described my view that literature on this phenomenon is weak and how it is more helpful to consider such leadership as a blended concept which draws on a range of other ideas, rather than comprising a unified and unique concept of its own. I then outlined my own model for collaborative leadership in schools which forms part of my original contribution to knowledge. Within this I found that models of leadership which emphasized relationships and 'concern for people' were most relevant. Aspects of this built upon authentic leadership and its focus on values and constitutive leadership's concern with developing common understanding and promoting meaning. I also highlighted how the effective leadership of collaborations demands leaders on occasion adopt political approaches which may be viewed as anti-collaborative in

nature. Thus I drew attention to the potential tensions this introduces between authenticity and the affected leadership behaviours which support the performance of the leadership role. At the same time I noted that trust was the critical factor in ensuring the efficacy of this approach.

In my third subsection, I discussed factors which promote trust in leaders more broadly. I began by clarifying the notion of causality, discussing the tensions between structure and agency, and the extent to which any findings on causal effects can be generalized or must be viewed as contextually specific. I concluded that limited inference of findings to other contexts is possible provided causality is viewed as a conditioning rather than determining response, and at the same time, highlighted my belief in the socially constructed nature of reality. I then offered a definition for trust which embraced character and competency, thereby serving as a basis for collective action, and undertook a detailed exploration of seven of the most prominent theories of trust development. In doing so I identified a range of consistent themes and issues which I utilized to develop a new and original “integrated model of trust”. I describe how this was inspired by existing literature, while at the same time, noting the tensions and potential contradictions that existed within it, before describing the considerable overlap that existed between these drivers of trust and the various aspects of my model for collaborative leadership in schools described previously. In particular I note how this connects the relational nature of trust and the importance of values, behaviours and perceptions in its development.

I concluded by considering the main gaps that I believe exist in the literature on collaborative leadership and trust in partnership working. Here I highlighted how the

exploration of collaborative leadership is relatively new and gives little attention to the role of trust within it. Furthermore, while work has been undertaken into trust from a range of contexts, none of it specifically explores its significance for leaders of school based collaborations. I therefore concluded that insufficient consideration has been given to the practice of collaborative leadership and the role trust plays within it.

Instead I observed a tendency in existing work to offer a somewhat simplistic template for action which if followed [so the theory goes], will inevitably lead to the development of trusting relationships. However I concluded that this failed to offer sufficient insight into what this meant for leadership practice on a mundane and day to day basis. Furthermore I also described how I see the emergence of trust as dependent upon a range of factors and informed by elements of both structure and agency. Thus I concluded that followers play a highly active role within this process and their understanding of leaders' underpinning motivations for performing such actions is fundamental in determining the nature of the relationship which ensues. In essence then, a leader cannot control the ways in which their actions are viewed or that the strategies they adopt will have the desired outcome of promoting trust.

In my fieldwork I explore the extent to which my original research supports the findings from my literature review and my hypothesis that a blended approach is required for the effective leadership of collaborations. I also consider the nature of leadership practice in these regards and the ways in which leaders define, negotiate and perform their role to promote trust amongst their followers in their ability to lead partnership work, concluding that an unremitting focus on the nature of day to day leadership practice is critical in this process. I also pay particular attention to the potential paradox between the need for authenticity and their performance of this role,

and reflect on how the notion of professionalism may represent one mechanism for managing this. In the next chapter I outline the approach I adopted to addressing both collaborative working and trust, before outlining my findings in more depth.

Methodology and philosophy

Overview of this chapter

In this chapter I outline the methodology I adopted to complete my study. In doing so, I offer a detailed account of each aspect of my enquiry, including the research strategy I adopted and my approach to sampling, data collection and data analysis. During the course of this, I follow Bryman's (2008) direction that this involves my revealing, in a systematic manner, the practices I adopted and the presuppositions that lie behind those practices. Furthermore, as there are strengths and limitations associated with any research design, I have attempted to be balanced in terms of the main strengths and weaknesses of my methodology. I conclude this section by considering the issue of research quality before outlining why I believe the findings from my study are trustworthy.

To support this examination, I have utilized the various aspects of Saunders et al's notion of the "research process onion" (Saunders et al., 2003) as an organizing structure for this chapter. According to this model, a full appreciation of the research process may only be achieved by exploring a number of elements, each of which informs and is informed by the others. These aspects comprise the researcher's:

- philosophy
- approach
- strategy
- time horizons and
- data collection methods.

In addition to these I believe we must add *Data analysis and report writing* and *trustworthiness of research* to gain a full appreciation of the methodology used. I therefore begin by considering the issue of philosophy and the significance of our philosophical assumptions in informing our interactions with the world.

Research philosophy: the nature of reality and our engagement with it

It is not my intention to provide a highly detailed and complex consideration of all potential research philosophies. This field is too wide, contradictory and confusing to attempt to do so within the limited confines of this study. I do not believe [as do Saunders et al (2003)] that our research philosophy acts as an ‘invisible hand’ in determining our subsequent decisions on the focus for our explorations and the means through which we pursue them. However neither do I believe that research is a purely technical process conducted in isolation from our philosophical beliefs. Instead I echo Hammersley’s sentiments that an effective research design requires a balance between the notions of *methodology as technique* and *methodology as philosophy* (Hammersley, 2007). Thus I believe that too often researchers overlook philosophy and that offering an explicit consideration of it is helpful in enabling the reader to assess more fully the appropriateness of the approach adopted. In this section I undertake a consideration of the three philosophical elements which are fundamental to my study, these being the notions of ontology, epistemology and causality [the third of these I already explored to some degree on page 105 of my previous chapter]. By doing so, I hope to set the foundations for outlining the various elements of my study,

and provide a sounder basis upon which the reader may judge its relative strengths and weaknesses. I start this discussion with ontology.

Ontology

Ontology centres on conceptions of reality and the nature of truth. At its heart is the issue of what exists and the form this existence takes (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997, Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). This notion of reality is the most basic element of the research design and fundamental to all subsequent claims as to the appropriate means to proceed.

The key ontological debate rages between the notions of realism and idealism /nominalism, an idealized account of which is included in Figure 23.

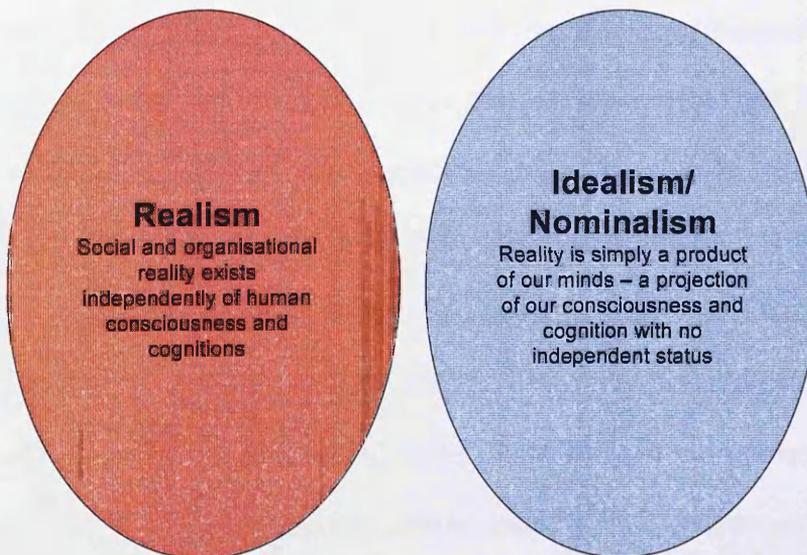


Figure 23 Realism and Idealism/ Nominalism (Based on Burrell and Morgan, 1979)

The notion of realism is the bedrock of the natural sciences. Realism has also enjoyed considerable support within social sciences, with such luminaries as Durkheim

believing there to be sufficient parallels between these to warrant the adoption of naturalistic scientific methods for their study in the social world (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997). Indeed realism was at one time the ontological orthodoxy in social science, supported by philosophers such as Descartes, who assumed a realist ontology in his rationalist view that valid knowledge could only be accumulated through a sceptical contemplation of the external world (Johnson and Duberley, 2000b). Realism is closely linked to empiricism and also assumed more broadly within the *Enlightenment*³⁴, the philosophy closely associated with writers such as Comte. Similarly Kant's notion of the *noumenal*³⁵ world (May, 1996) is consistent with a realist ontology. Realist principles are consistent with philosophical viewpoints such as positivism and critical realism.

In contrast, idealism focuses on the extent to which reality is a product of our cognitive structures, and dismisses essentialist notions of things in themselves. Thus for the idealist, separating knowledge from the process through which it emerges is problematic and as a result, the idealist rejects the Cartesian dualism between knower and known (Johnson and Duberley, 2000b). Instead reality is conceived as an emergent entity, produced through our cognitive processes. Reality is therefore determined by personal and interpersonal interaction rather than representing a direct reflection of the external world. For the idealist reality is therefore *created* through our ideas and actions (Hammersley, 1992c) and it is these created conceptions which attain a fundamental ontological status. As Liam Gallagher once sang:

³⁴ The Enlightenment is used to characterise the cultural changes that occurred in 18th century western Europe and sought to overcome traditional authority exerted by religion and feudalism.

³⁵ While Kant identified the notion of *noumena* to describe the reality of things, he concluded that we could not attain direct knowledge of their existence as all knowledge is filtered through our *a priori* cognitive structures. Thus all understanding is mediated and Kant described this interpreted form of knowledge as *phenomena*, distinct from but representative of noumena itself.

“The nature of reality is only in your mind” (Bell, 2009)

Idealism is associated with sociology and anthropology rather than natural science – indeed there is no discernable idealist tradition within the natural sciences (Hellman, 2001). Philosophically idealism is a central component of some conceptions of constructivism and relativism, and anti-essentialism in general (Johnson and Duberley, 2000a, Schwandt, 1998).

It is my view that trust is inescapably *ideal* in nature although this is not to say that trust in particular may not *seem* to be very real at times. For instance, in my triumvirate model of trust [Figure 48 on page 288] I outline three elements which I see to represent the foundations of trust, these being ideology, perception and behaviour. It is my belief that the first two of these are inescapably ideal in nature and reside solely within our individual consciousness [although their construction is social to some degree]. Similarly idealism is central to my integrated model of trust [Figure 22 on page 142], which I developed from published literature.

Further evidence of the ideal nature of trust comes from the fact that its scale and basis varies over time and between societies. This indicates that it does not exist independently of those it relates to but rather is constructed and reconstructed collectively, based upon shared meanings, expectations and conventions. In this way, trust is dependent upon culture, which similarly does not possess an ontological status independent of the social world but rather is created in accordance with prevailing attitudes, beliefs and perspectives. I believe that these arguments also hold true for the issues of leadership and collaboration, which form the remaining foci for this work.

Epistemology

Epistemology is the study of the nature of knowledge and concerned with how we come to learn about the ontology of what we are studying. From an epistemological viewpoint the key questions of interest centre on issues such as ‘what constitutes knowledge?’ and ‘How do we differentiate between knowing and merely having an opinion?’ (Pring, 2000). Hughes and Sharrock define epistemology as:

“...concerned with evaluating claims about the way in which the world can be known to us and as such, involves issues as to what it is to know anything”
(Hughes and Sharrock, 1997:5).

Ontology and epistemology are closely related and these two notions are often blurred. Crotty (2003) notes how in practice ontology and epistemology often emerge together, for it is difficult to consider the notion of reality independently of the means through which we become aware of it, i.e. the mechanisms for establishing *meaningful reality*. It is common therefore for ontology and epistemology to be confused or conflated – a phenomenon described as the *epistemic fallacy* (Scott, 2000). However while related, these issues are clearly distinct and competing philosophical traditions assume very different epistemological and ontological combinations.

In broad terms, epistemological debates centre on the degree to which we are able to acquire knowledge ready-made, or are required to interpret and create it through our cognitive processes. Thus we can differentiate between *externalism* or objectivity and *internalism* or subjectivity.

Externalism or objectivity³⁶ has several different meanings and is often be used in a confused way³⁷ (Fleetwood, 2004). At its most trite and unhelpful, Levering notes that it can simply be taken to refer to an “*absence of subjectivity*” (Levering, 2007:215) but more commonly externalism/ objectivism sees ‘things’ as existing independently or *a priori*³⁸ of the individual and possessing meanings beyond those we chose to ascribe to them - we discover the meaning of things which are ready-formed, rather than develop or interpret it. Objectivism is therefore premised upon the realist ontology outlined above (Crotty, 2003) and is closely associated with the Enlightenment movement, and modernist philosophy. It is supported by methods and approaches that promote independent, value-free and objective description of these items (May, 1993).

As I have already noted, I believe that collaboration, trust and leadership are all social constructions which are dependent upon shared meanings and [inter]personal interpretation. Therefore my epistemology must be founded on the principles of an ‘anti-objectivism’, for which once again, a range of terms are used³⁹. I will use the terms *subjectivism* and *internalism*⁴⁰ to denote this perspective and while these terms are often used in an intricately nuanced way, they share a number of common

³⁶ While recognising the very subtle differences between these slants I believe their similarity is such that they may be used interchangeably

³⁷ Fleetwood identifies four different meanings for objectivity, these are:

- value neutral or impartial [subjectivity is therefore theory laden]
- known or taken to be true [subj.: opinion]
- objects which exist independently of our experience [subj :. dependent on experience]
- referring to material/ physical entities [subj :. referring to human entities]

³⁸ A priori represents understanding which exists prior to experience. Examples of a priori understanding include instinct and innate abilities. As noted above Kant posited that mental structures were established a priori and, as such, all knowledge was deciphered. Empiricism and scientific knowledge is generally based on a commitment to *a posteriori*, based knowledge, i.e. that established through the collection and understanding of experience.

For instance interpretivism and constructionism are both often used to describe this viewpoint, but each is also used to describe an alternative philosophical position more generally.

⁴⁰ Again I believe that the marked similarities are such that these terms may effectively be used interchangeably for the purposes of my thesis

principles. Core to this is that meaning is *created* through our engagement with the social world (Crotty, 2003) and our experiences of it - we cannot detach ourselves from what we seek to understand, but instead are inextricably intertwined with it. As infinite variations exist in our individual experiences, it follows that there are also infinite variations in our descriptions of 'reality' – even those aspects of reality which we share.

As I have already noted, collaboration, trust and leadership are implicitly relational in nature and dependent upon shared understanding and meaning for their existence. They can not be created in isolation but rather rely upon *something* or *someone* else for its survival. Furthermore, fundamental notions of leadership, partnership and trustworthiness are themselves embedded within our collective culture, values and norms, and as such essentially social in nature. In this way our understandings of them are created and recreated over time in a constant process of negotiation, as they evolve in response to changes in the broader context within which they reside. As individuals and collectively, we play an active role in this process, a scenario reminiscent of the performance of leadership and encapsulated within the concept of dramaturgy (Goffman, 1959). Thus we are a *part* of these phenomenon and the notion that we can somehow stand aside from them to recognize, describe and categorise them as we might a rock, a plant or an insect is in my view fundamentally flawed. Indeed they only exist because we as individuals and a group chose for them to do so.

I therefore believe that to see cognition as an individual process, discreet from the world [or worlds] we live in is falsehood. Instead, our views and the process through which we *construct* reality are a summation of all our experiences and as a result

inevitably shaped by the wider world, which is itself undeniably social in origin (Gergen and Thatchenkery, 1996). This view is consistent with the underlying principles of social constructionism, for while this notion is contested and used in a variety of ways⁴¹ (Gergen and Thatchenkery, 1996, Grint and Woolgar, 1997), it is utilised to describe a context within which reality is not immediately self evident but rather constructed and reconstructed through language (Gergen and Gergen, 2003, Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003b). As language is fundamentally social in nature, the accounts of reality which prevail are often temporary and collective in nature, with what comes to count as 'true' in fact simply the outcome from the resolution of contending accounts of 'reality'. Such a scenario clearly limits the degree to which we may assert anything with certainty, and Grint and Woolgar (1997:147) notes, "*the book is never closed but permanently open to contestation*".

Social constructionism is helpful in understanding the development of meaning as it places considerable emphasis on culture and social institutions as the mechanisms through which this occurs. Writers such as Fish (1990) and Gergen and Gergen (2003) have highlighted the inter-subjective nature of this process and clearly differentiated between the principles of constructionism [where meaning is construed and developed through interaction with the other] and subjectivity [where meaning is created and individually conjured up through recourse to one's own knowledge and imagination]. As I have indicated already in this discussion, I have considerable sympathy with the former position and believe that a fuller understanding of any phenomenon may only emerge through the pursuit of multiple perspectives. Indeed it is my belief that only through this strategy may the conflicting and complementary influences of agency and

⁴¹ Grint and Woolgar note that "there are many varieties of social constructionism" [p3 1998] and descriptions such as this inevitably represent something of an idealised version.

structure be explored and their relative influence on our beliefs and behaviours considered. It is to the issue of influence [or causality] – the final of the three elements I highlighted as important - that I now turn.

Causality

On page 105, I began to explore the issue of causality. This concept is not unproblematic and embraces three key controversies. Firstly, does causality actually exist or is it something we have created to satisfy a deep seated need within our psyche? Rosenzweig (2007) for instance has described how a belief in causality creates order and control, while Lincoln and Guba quote Oppenheim as stating that *“the need to understand cause constituted the third major drive of human beings after self preservation and the preservation of the species”* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:130). In contrast writers such as Tolstoy have highlighted how our desire for order and answers can lead us to falsely attribute undue influence to someone or something (Thomas, 2002), resulting in the view that it is the wave that effectively pulls the ship rather than the reverse. Certainly I believe that in sociology the notion of simple cause and effect relationships is often problematic and that the danger of falsely attributing influence is ever-present. However this is not to deny their existence, but rather to emphasise the need for caution and sufficiently robust evidence before making such claims.

The second controversy centres on the stability of any cause and effect relationship which does actually exist. To continue with Tolstoy’s metaphor, if the wave does indeed pull the ship, does it always do so with the same force and in all circumstances, or is every instance unique? At the heart of this is the possibility of the *universal law*,

identified for instance through the satisfactory completion of Hume's four tests⁴², summarized in Figure 24.

Hume's tests for positive understand of causal relationships

- 1. Constant conjunction**
–it always happens
- 2. Antecedence**
–it always happens in the right order
- 3. Contiguity**
–it always happens at the same place
- 4. Necessity**
–it can't happen in any other way.

Source: Johnson & Duberley 2000

Figure 24 Hume's tests of constant conjunction, antecedence, contiguity and necessity [source: Johnston & Duberley 2000]

For the pseudo-scientific positivist, the demonstration of such universalism is the fundamental aim of enquiry. However while I feel that Hume's consideration of causation is helpful and relevant in establishing laws in the natural world, I argue that there is a fundamental and qualitative difference between the notion of laws in the natural and social worlds. In essence, while they may be irrefutable and compelling in the former, their existence in the latter may be viewed as far less assured, as their continuation is reliant upon convention, acceptance and usage. Klein summarises this perspective thus:

⁴² Hume's is not the only test for causality of course, but is arguably the most famous – Lincoln and Guba (1985) provide a useful summary of some of the alternatives

"Whereas regularities in the physical sciences can be thought of as being the consequences of natural laws, the overwhelming amount of regularities or 'patterns' in the social world are the results of the interpretation of meanings, values and norms - be they shared or constructed. Does anyone doubt that the ontological and epistemological status of norms and values is very different from that of natural laws? Does anyone doubt that meanings, values and norms are linguistically mediated in the study domain of the social and cultural sciences in ways which in a realist sense, simply do not exist in the natural sciences?" (Klein, 2004:129)

I therefore see causality as being "circumstances relative" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and unique to the time and place in which it resides. Thus the influence a variable exerts is specific to its individual context and negotiated relative to the other factors present. To return to our ship metaphor, the extent to which the wave will pull the ship will therefore be mediated by a range of other considerations, such as the weight of the ship itself, the strength and direction of the wind, the depth of the water and so forth. While this denies the prospect of postulating specific universal laws, it nevertheless retains value in exploring causality per se.

The third and final debate differs from the others in that it accepts the prospect of causality but expresses scepticism as to whether we may ever isolate and understand it. In essence it is concerned with the epistemological challenges in exploring causation. According to this viewpoint, as all elements are in mutual and continual interaction and located within their specific context, it is not possible to 'properly' fix their relative position and distil their respective influence. Note that this does not deny the existence of causality but rather demand scepticism as to our capacity to uncover

its true nature. I have some sympathy for the broad thrust of this argument, but feel that rather than abandon our interest in causality altogether, we should instead moderate our ambition as to what we may achieve. Indeed I have already cast doubt on the notion of universal laws⁴³ and view the establishment of causality as problematic rather than impossible. In this way, I recognise the plethora of practical and philosophical challenges associated with this endeavour, but also believe that matters such as trust are of sufficient importance to warrant our continued attention. Thus I argue that our emerging knowledge is not fact but rather our ‘best guess’ at that particular time.

Concluding comments on research philosophy

As noted at the start of this chapter, it is not my intention to provide a comprehensive and exhaustive viewpoint of all aspects of research philosophy. Rather I have sought to provide an introduction to the main issues which affect any study and offer my perspective on the three key areas of ontology, epistemology and causality. These can be summarized as follows:

- **Ontology:**
 - ideal, constructed and reconstructed collectively, based upon shared meanings, expectations and conventions
- **Epistemology:**
 - anti-objectivist, subjective, researcher is a participant and facilitates the reconstruction of socially constructed reality
- **Causality:**

⁴³ Of course to entirely dismiss the prospect of the universal law would be to introduce a universal law of my own!

- rejection of universal laws, but acceptance of multi-causal circumstance relativity.

In the sub-sections which follow, I build upon these philosophical commitments to develop a coherent approach to exploring the issues of collaboration, trust and leadership which formed the foci for my work.

Research approach

Research approach is concerned with the use of theory in the research project (Saunders et al., 2003). More specifically it considers whether the project is intended to test an existing or emerging theoretical perspective, or designed to support the production of a new theory. Two broad views exist with respect to the use of theory in research, *deduction* and *induction* and these are outlined in Figure 25.

Induction –the development of theory through data collection		
Advantages	Limitations	Associated with...
Promotes flexibility in data collection Supports more in-depth considerations Supports 'falsification'	Ambiguity as to when sufficient data has been collected Philosophically difficult to 'prove' anything How open-minded can one really be?	Anti-positivism in general Verstehen inspired studies in particular
Deduction – the systematic collection of data to test theories		
Advantages	Limitations	Associated with...
Supports a high degree of data control Allows studies to be replicated	Requires a clear working hypothesis Focus on universal laws is deterministic Assumes the prospect of objectivity Requires the operationalisation of human behaviour which is reductionist	Positivism, natural sciences

Figure 25 Key features of induction and deduction [source: author]

Figure 25 shows the various strengths and weaknesses associated deduction and induction, noting also the philosophical paradigms they are most commonly used with. It demonstrates how in essence induction is potentially the more flexible of the two, highly suited to exploratory studies of human behaviour. In contrast deduction potentially offers a more coherent approach to the development of universal laws, supported by systematic quantitative based research and is therefore most closely associated with natural science.

In this study I adopted a broadly inductive approach, seeking to develop theory based upon the evidence which emerged from my research. In this subsection I seek to justify this decision in relation to the main criticisms of induction.

As already noted, induction focuses on developing theory through the process of data collection – i.e. theory emerges from the data once a sufficient amount of information has been collected (Baker, 2003b). Its importance grew with the popularisation of social science in the 20th century, based largely in the belief that induction offers a means for gaining insight into how individuals construe their world. The second main benefit of induction is that it facilitates a high degree of flexibility, in contrast with the controlled scientific approach demanded by deduction (Saunders et al., 2003). For these reasons induction is strongly associated with anti-positivism in general and approaches which promote the exploration of “*verstehen*” in particular. Inductive studies are generally undertaken using qualitative techniques, which are viewed as more appropriate because of the lack of emphasis they place on control (Grohol, 2005).

Induction has three main limitations which are summarised in Figure 25. The first of these relates to the ambiguity which surrounds when sufficient data has been collated to support the development of theory. For instance when does an emerging theme become the basis for a theory - after 5 interviews, or 50 or 500? I believe the most helpful response to this comes from the principle of *saturation* (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, Smith and Deemer, 2003), according to which the researcher continues to collect data until it appears that no new themes are emerging. In this respect the researcher attempts to balance their desire for certainty with the pragmatic recognition that limitations on resources constrain the amount of fieldwork that can be achieved. Saturation offers a potential path through this dilemma by offering the prospect of knowledge which is 'good enough'. I explore this principle further later in this section in my consideration of grounded theory. It is my view that saturation possesses considerable merit as a test of sufficiency and I adopted this strategy in stages 1 and 2 of my fieldwork.

The second main criticism of induction is that it is not in reality able to prove anything, but rather, as Popper noted, may only be used within a strategy of falsification (Popper, 1959). So if induction does not tell us when we have sufficient data to be able to say anything with certainty, it does at least offer a path for ruling things out. I believe this focus on falsification is helpful in drawing attention to the provisionality of understanding and forcing us to acknowledge that all things are subject to change, and connects strongly with principles of social constructivism, which also assert that all knowledge is contested. Indeed this view is implicit to my unease over the positivist pursuit of universal laws within social sciences and my view that causality should be seen as a conditioning rather than determining phenomenon.

Thus the theory of causality I offer in this thesis is based on conditioning rather than determining principles and viewed as provisional and subject to development in light of new emerging evidence.

The third limitation centres on the degree to which the principles of open-mindedness which form the basis for induction are possible. At the heart of this is the idea that the researcher is able to effectively clear their mind of any preconceptions or prior experiences related to the subject in hand. However this is clearly problematic not least because as I have already indicated, such background knowledge and insight is fundamental in helping us to create fresh understanding. Furthermore in many instances the research focus will emerge as a direct consequence of the researcher's previous experiences. In my own case, I have worked as a researcher in the public sector for 15 years, during which time I have gained considerable experience of partnership working and undertaken a large number of school based studies. It seems impossible to believe that I brought none of this interest to bear on this study and indeed, my interest in pursuing this line of enquiry was based in part on my contrasting personal experiences of collaborative working. However I do not believe that these difficulties necessarily force us to accept that all research is inevitably biased and that induction is fundamentally flawed and impossible to achieve. Rather then I believe that a more pragmatic view of induction is required. In such a model we would accept the practical difficulties of achieving complete open mindedness, but nevertheless retain this as an aspiration and through the processes of self discipline and reflection, aim to realise Husserl's notion of phenomenological reductionism. In this way, I believe we may acknowledge our opinions, beliefs, preconceptions and so forth, but effectively 'bracket' them and place them to one side. I will return to this

concept again in my exploration of Grounded Theory [page 167], which formed the research strategy for my work and which is the focus of the next subsection of this chapter.

Research strategy

Research strategy is concerned with the means through which the overarching research questions will be answered, and includes decisions such as who the target group is for the work, and how data relating to them should be gathered (Saunders et al., 2003). For this study I adopted a Grounded Theory inspired approach, primarily because it is highly suited to the pursuit of inductive enquiry, the nature of which formed the focus for my preceding subsection. In this section I describe the background to Grounded Theory in more depth, and outline the way in which I utilized this strategy in my own work.

Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory was developed in the mid 1960s by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to generate substantive theory on a scholarly basis while at the same time, reducing the demands placed on researchers to verify these findings (Selden, 2006). It has proved popular in social sciences in general and in the practitioner-led fields of nursing and healthcare in particular. Principally employed by qualitative researchers, Grounded Theory has proved particularly suited to ethnographic and case study based research and is primarily [but not exclusively] associated with qualitative research (Pettigrew,

2000). Philosophically it is strongly influenced by symbolic interactionism⁴⁴ (Crotty, 2003, Blumer, 1969) and the quest for *verstehen* (Burton et al., 2008, Bryman, 2004). Thus it supports ideographic rather than nomothetic⁴⁵ enquiry, highlighting the importance of achieving density of understanding (Lansisalmi et al., 2004) and the comparison and reconciliation of alternative perspectives through the process of triangulation (Douglas, 2006). Each of these features is consistent with the work I have undertaken, making Grounded Theory a strategy which is highly suitable for my work.

The Grounded Theory framework is illustrated in Figure 26. This clearly shows the highly iterative nature of Grounded Theory and how it emphasises the need for the constant comparison of findings with that which went before, to identify potential patterns and differences. Thus theory emerges over time, its development grounded in the ongoing collection of data and supported by the structured development of codes. Grounded Theory consists of a number of distinct stages, the nature of which emerges in response to what has gone before. In this way knowledge generated is viewed as emergent and provisional, with its value judged according to its explanatory and utilitarian powers (Selden, 2006). In my own study, I completed three distinct data collection phases, which are described further subsequently in this chapter.

⁴⁴ 'Symbolic interactionism' describes how an individual's actions are informed by the meanings we ascribe to them. These meanings themselves evolve over time as they are modified according to our interpretations of our own and other's behaviours. Thus human interaction is implicitly symbolic in nature as behaviours and actions are effectively signs which require interpretation according to the social conventions in place at the time.

⁴⁵ Ideographic emphasises the importance of gaining an in-depth appreciation of the subjective experience for a narrow field of enquiry. Nomothetic highlights the benefits of generalisation and the development of laws to explain objective phenomena.

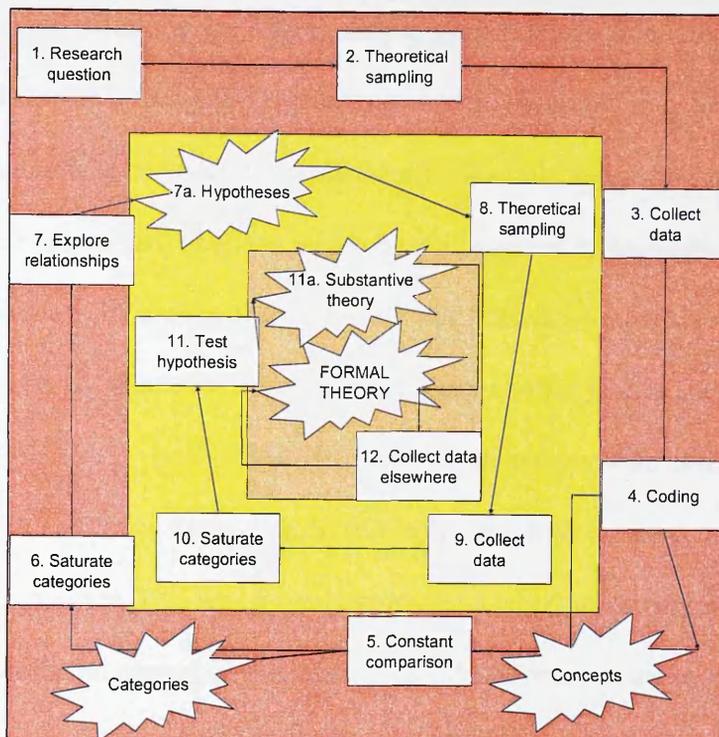


Figure 26 Summary of Grounded Theory approach [developed from Bryman and Bell (2003)]

Grounded Theory therefore involves a journey in one's thinking and theory over time, as new data emerges, is reconciled with that which went before, and new directions for exploration identified. In the case of my own work, this involved the progression from a broad interest in the issues affecting collaboration, to a specific focus on the ways in which leaders perform collaborative leadership in such a way as to promote a culture of trust through the principles of Social Learning Theory while reconciling the potential conflict implicit within this.

A major criticism of Grounded Theory is the extent to which its commitment to principles of inductive enquiry encourages the researcher to pay insufficient regard to work that has preceded his study and instead commence fieldwork early in an effort to

avoid colouring prejudging the potential findings from their work (Selden, 2006). I believe that adopting this strategy is dangerous and may lead the researcher to undertake considerable work which adds little to existing studies. Furthermore as already noted, I believe this to be philosophically problematic, and advocate instead a strategy of ‘symbolically bracket’ our everyday knowledge and preconceptions, in order to reduce the impact of such assumptions, beliefs and values (Levering, 2007). Of course even this is problematic and in many instances the most basic decision of which area to focus on will have been driven by the personal interests of the researcher. This was the case in my own work, where my background in partnership work and current engagement as an educational researcher resulted in my having an increased interest in school based collaborations. I fought shy of allowing these perspectives to develop into a broader hypothesis for my work, however.

A final point of controversy involves the extent to which grounded theories may be generalised⁴⁶. Pettigrew (2000) sees this issue as centring on the extent to which induction may produce findings which can be generalised and concludes that developing substantive theory in this way requires a commitment to fieldwork that most researchers are simply unable to make. This was certainly an issue for my study, as undertaking the additional data collection required to be confident that the lessons from my work may be generalised to wider settings was infeasible due to a range of personal and professional constraints. As a result I view the output from my study as substantive theory, which offers value to the field through the principles of transferability rather than generalization. I return to the issues of generalization and transferability later in this section as I discuss issues of trustworthiness in research.

⁴⁶ Indeed Glaser and Strauss, the co-founders of Grounded Theory, are themselves divided on this point

Sampling

Grounded Theory encourages a ‘commonsense’ approach to sampling (Goulding, 2005), by focusing on individuals who are likely to prove useful as early informants of the work. As the study develops, sampling may continue to adopt a degree of spontaneity, supported by the process of theoretical sampling (Bryman, 2004) whereby individuals are selected according to their fit or deviation from an emerging theoretical perspective (Silverman, 2005). Thus the selection of new participants is inextricably linked to the emerging findings of the research as the concepts and themes which are uncovered point the direction for further investigation (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). This process continues until the point of *saturation* is reached, i.e. the researcher judges that the development of categories in terms of their properties and dimensions, including variation and the delineation of relationships between concepts, is complete.

In my study, sampling occurred at three stages, each of which involved a strategy which was consistent with Grounded Theory.

Phase 1

In phase one of my study I sought to understand the key factors in the leadership of collaborations.

To address this, I undertook two tranches of fieldwork, both of which focused upon individuals who I anticipated may have particular insight into these questions. In the first tranche, I completed 49 interviews with individuals who were identified as likely to have some degree of insight into these issues. I operationalised this as having

experience of leading extended services in schools or coming from a school with a strong tradition of collaboration⁴⁷, having experience of advising schools in relation to collaborative services [for instance on behalf of a local authority] or having undertaken considerable research into issues relating to collaboration and partnership working [for instance as part of an evaluation or in a Higher Education Institution]. During this phase I also undertook a focus group of senior academics from English universities with a background in school leadership. Individuals were identified from a range of sources but were linked by the belief that they were able to provide a high degree of insight into the areas of interest, rather than by any more formal sampling criteria, such as school type etc. Respondents in phase 1 were from a range of backgrounds, but generally comprised senior school leaders, leaders from other partner agencies [e.g. police, social services etc] and senior academics. I completed these interviews between June 2004 and March 2007. As part of this work, I visited 18 schools nationally. Table 1 summarises the occupation of interviewees in phase 1.

Table 1 Summary of interviewees in phase 1 by occupation and gender

Position	Total
Head	13
Extended schools manager	8
Deputy / Assistant headteacher	7
Professionals from other agency	3
Children's centre manager	4
Researcher/ consultant etc	5
Governor	2
Other school leader	3
Local authority advisor	4
Grand total	49

⁴⁷ I focused on those identified as having a strong and positive experience of collaboration on the grounds that negotiating access was likely to be less problematic and respondents were likely to be more open in their responses.

Table 1 shows that 13 of the 49 interviewees were headteachers and four were Children's Centre Managers, with overall responsibility for the strategic development and operation of extended services. Eight were extended schools managers, responsible for the day to day running of services, but also in many cases, with a key strategic role in their development. A further nine were deputy or assistant headteachers, identified by the headteacher as having a major strategic role in the development and management of this area of activity. Thus nearly 70% of phase 1 interviews were completed with senior schools leaders of one form or another with direct involvement in collaborative working. Table 2 summarises the school phase that these respondents worked in.

Table 2 Phase, occupation and gender of school-based participants in phase 1

Phase	Job role	No.	Of which male	Female
Children's centre				
	Children's centre manager	4	0	4
Children's centre total		4	0	4
Primary school				
	Headteacher	4	3	1
	Extended schools manager	1		1
	Govenor	2	1	1
	Other school leader	1		1
Primary school total		8	4	4
Secondary school				
	Headteacher	7	5	2
	Extended schools manager	7	2	5
	Deputy/ Assistant headteacher	7	5	2
	Other school leader	1	1	0
Secondary School total		22	13	9
Special school				
	Headteacher	2	2	0
Special school Total		2	2	0
All phases		36	19	17

Table 2 shows that 22 of the 36 individuals interviewed from schools worked in secondary education – 61% of all school related interviewees. This is a greater

proportion than would be anticipated based upon a pro rata distribution of school employees nationally. However this 'over-sampling' was a reflection of the fact that, at the time of my fieldwork, schools with a historic legacy of collaborative working and offering extended services were more likely to exist in the secondary phase than primary phase. For instance influential attempts at the provision of community services in England such as the Village Colleges established in Cambridgeshire and Community Schools introduced in Leicestershire (Smith, 1998, 1996a, 1996b) were invariably restricted to secondary education with no equivalent existing at the primary phase.

In terms of non-school or children's centre staff, three professionals from other agencies were also interviewed as they were able to offer an alternative and complementary perspective on the issues of school based collaborations⁴⁸. Five researchers/ professors were also interviewed⁴⁹, each identified as having considerable experience and insight into this work. Amongst these were Professor Alan Dyson who co-led the national evaluation of the Full Service Extended Schools evaluation on behalf of the then Department for Education and Skills, and Doctor Siv Vangen, who developed the theory of collaborative advantage in conjunction with Professor Christine Huxham⁵⁰.

Alongside these formal interviews, I undertook a survey of individuals involved in the development of extended schools. This survey occurred between January and March

⁴⁸ These comprised 2 police officers and 1 social worker.

⁴⁹ In addition to these formal interviews, I was involved in informal discussions with a further nine senior academics or professors with an interest in schools leadership from overseas universities.

⁵⁰ I also conducted interviews with Dr Rimawan Pradipto who evaluated the Safer Schools Partnerships and Professor Jeremy Kedian, Director of at University of Waikato.

2005. The rationale for this was that as the focus on providing extended schools was, for most schools, new at this time and their provision necessitated a greater degree of multi-agency and cross school partnership working, these individuals may be particularly well placed to offer insight into issue of collaboration. The data gathered from this survey complemented that obtained through the interviews, by further exploring the key factors which influence the effectiveness and leadership of collaborations, in terms of:

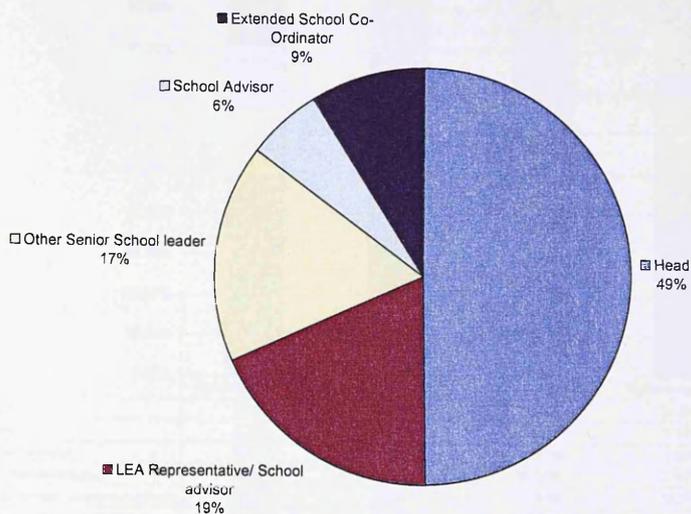
- The main challenges facing leaders of extended schools
- The strategies used to address the most significant challenges identified
- The key characteristics, skills and experiences needed by the following individuals in an extended school:
 - The headteacher
 - The senior leader responsible for extended school activity (if not the head)
 - The extended schools co-ordinator
- The key factors in ensuring the continued success and sustainability of extended schools

To achieve this, I gained permission to administer a structured questionnaire to participants at a series of seminars on the “Leadership of Extended Schools” run by NCSL and Continyou. There were six seminars in total, the location, number of attendees and respondents for each event is provided in Table 3.

Location	Attendees	Respondents	Response rate
Manchester	51	28	55%
Birmingham	69	37	54%
Bristol	43	23	53%
Gateshead	50	23	46%
London [two events]	160	28	18%
Total	373	139	37%

Table 3 Summary of attendees, respondents and response rates for individual seminars

Table 3 shows that response rates from individual seminars was typically in the region of 50%. Part of the reason for this high response was the fact that respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire during the course of the seminar they attended and pass it to me before leaving. I attended all but two seminars in person, these being the events in London where, as Table 3 shows, only 18% of attendees participated in this survey. The response rate for the series as a whole was 37%. Figure 27 summarises the stated occupation of respondents to the survey, where this is known. It shows that, of those who stated their occupation, 49% of respondents were headteachers in schools, with a further 17% describing themselves as an 'other senior school leader'. Furthermore 9% were extended schools co-ordinators, employed by a school and with specific responsibility for developing extended services. Thus we may be confident that 76% of respondents were directly responsible to a greater or lesser extent for leading the development and introduction of extended services within a specific school. The remaining 25% were employed by a local authority to support the development of these services and so were able to offer considerable insight into issues of collaborative working.



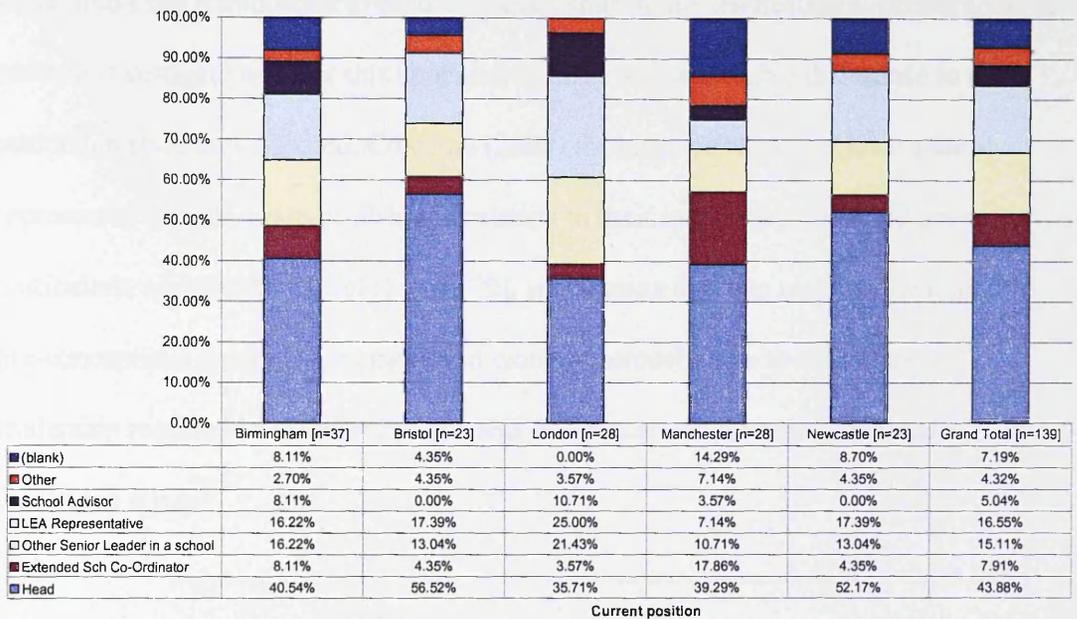
N=107

source: "Leadership of extended schools" survey, 2005

Figure 27 Profile of respondents to "leadership of extended schools" survey 2005

Figure 28 provides a profile of respondents to this survey by seminar. It shows that there was relatively little difference in the occupational background of respondents, but highlights that compared with the average for the series as a whole:

- Respondents from Bristol and Newcastle were more likely to be headteachers;
- London respondents were most likely not to work in a school and most likely to work for a local authority;
- Mancunian respondents were more likely to be a co-ordinator of extended services than was the case elsewhere;
- Respondents from Birmingham most closely mirrored the average for the series as a whole.



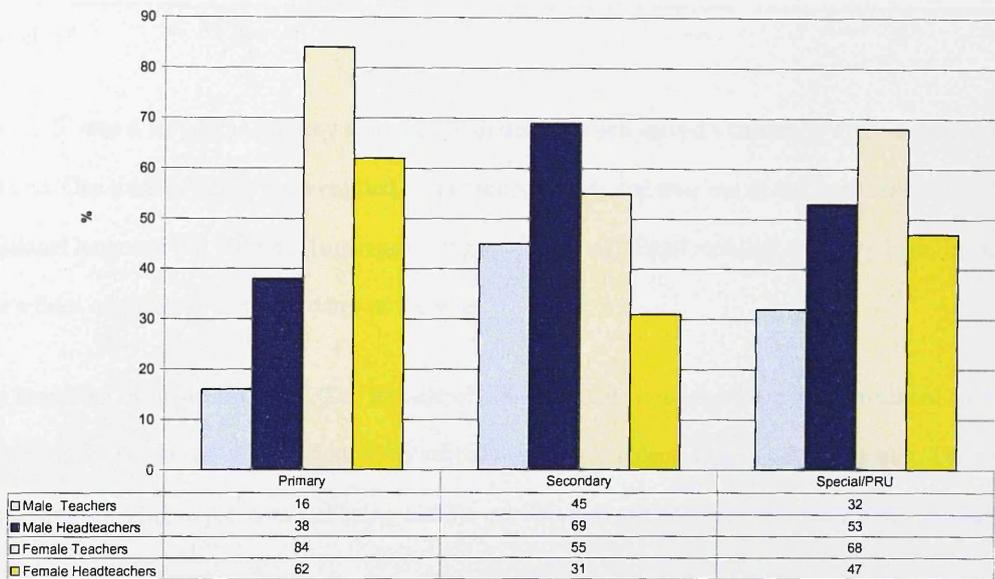
source: "Leadership of extended schools" survey, 2005

Figure 28 Profile of respondents to "leadership of extended schools" survey 2005 by seminar

Phase 2

Phase 2 drew heavily on the findings from the first phase of my work. In this instance, I adopted a theoretical sampling strategy, inspired by my desire to gain further insight into the key finding from my initial work – this being that trust was a critical factor in the effective leadership of collaborations. Thus theoretical sampling in this instance focused on identifying cases which may be able to offer insight in the factors that inform trust in collaborative leadership, rather than any ambition for statistical reliability or some other [pseudo-] scientific approach (Bryman, 2004). To achieve this I gathered data from six field sites, comprising two secondary schools, two primary schools, a special school and a children's centre. I therefore sought to increase the range of contexts I studied to check the consistency of emerging findings in a variety of phases, consistent with the principles of theoretical sampling. At the

same time I felt it important to ensure an even split in the headteachers' genders, in order to investigate whether this appeared to make any noticeable difference to the leadership style they adopted. Coleman (2000) for instance has noted how under-represented women are in headship in relation to their numbers in teaching per se particularly at secondary level [Figure 29], speculating that this may be due in part to pre-conceptions amongst governors and women themselves as to the nature of leadership required in such institutions and the greater call for using masculine leadership styles⁵¹.



source: Coleman, 2005

Figure 29 Balance of headteachers and teachers by gender and phase of school

⁵¹ The imbalance is less pronounced in primary schools reflecting a view that feminine leadership styles are more appropriate in such contexts.

Each of the schools served an area of deprivation, where the need for partnership working arguably is at its greatest. Sites were selected on the basis of evidence of effective partnership working to promote the wellbeing of children, which was sourced via each institution's most recent Ofsted inspection report. Evidence of effective leadership was also required, with this again being sourced from the latest Ofsted report. Table 4 provides a pen portrait of each of the six case study sites which participated in phase 2 of this study.

Table 4 Overview of the case study sites in phase 2

School 'S'

School 'S' was a very large primary school [477 students] which served a culturally diverse area in London's east end. One third of pupils were entitled to free school meals and nine out of ten pupils spoke English as an additional language [43 different languages being spoken in all]. Pupil mobility was very high, involving well over a third of pupils at different times of the year.

Last inspected by Ofsted in June 2006, the school demonstrated strong evidence of intra-school collaboration, but little across agencies. Leadership of the school was judged outstanding in this inspection. The standard of partnership working to promote wellbeing and the provision of extended services were both viewed as good.

Three interviews were undertaken in this school, these being with:

- The headteacher
- The deputy headteacher
- The Assistant Headteacher and SENCO

Interviews were completed during March and April 2007.

School 'L'

School L was a larger than average primary school with 372 pupils. It was situated in a north London borough, serving a pocket of disadvantage in quite an affluent area. The school represented a very ethnically diverse community. The largest ethnic groups were from the Black British-African and Eastern European communities. Attainment on admission was below average and pupil mobility was very high. A high proportion was eligible for free school meals. There had been high staff turnover in the two years prior to its most recent Ofsted inspection in May 2006, at which it was judged to be 'good' in terms of its partnership work to promote student welfare, provision of extended services and the overall standard of its leadership and management. The school was part of an Excellence cluster, and so this provided a strong basis for considering collaborative working.

Four interviews were undertaken in this school, these being with:

- The headteacher
- The Assistant Headteacher and SENCO
- The Local Authority Link Officer and co-ordinator of the Excellence Cluster
- The School Governor, linked with the Excellence Cluster work

Interviews were completed during April 2007.

School 'F'

School 'F' was a smaller than average secondary school with 664 students, that drew most of its students from a highly deprived area on the south coast. Almost 90% of students were of White British heritage and approximately half of the students had learning difficulties or disabilities. The school provided a range of additional services on site to support the education and well-being of students and the local community.

Its most recent inspection was completed in November 2006, in which the school's partnership work was viewed as 'outstanding'. Provision of extended services and overall leadership was judged to be satisfactory.

Eight interviews were completed with individuals connected with this school. These comprised:

- The headteacher
- The deputy headteacher [Inclusion]
- The community co-ordinator
- The school's Counsellor
- A young person support worker from a voluntary group which worked in partnership with the school
- The co-ordinator of the School's multi-agency support centre
- A health worker who worked with the school
- An educational psychologist from the Local Authority who worked with the school

Interviews were completed during June and September 2007.

School 'R'

School 'R' was a mixed comprehensive school with 917 pupils, located in north west London. The school drew many of its pupils from the local area, which suffered multiple deprivation, and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was above the national average. The school was ethnically very diverse and mobility was very high. Refugees or asylum seekers accounted for a quarter of the school population. English was an additional language for 54 per cent of pupils and over 30 first languages are spoken. The school also had an exceptionally high proportion of pupils with special educational needs [44%].

The school was part of a Local Public Service Agreement cluster which aimed to increase opportunity in the area and raise the life chances of residents. Its overall effectiveness and leadership were both judged to be 'outstanding' in its most recent Ofsted inspection [February 2005].

Eight interviews were completed with individuals connected with this school, these being:

- The Headteacher

- The Assistant Headteacher and SENCO
- Head of Pastoral Care
- School Manager
- Police Community Support Officer
- Police Duty Sergeant
- Deputy Head and designated teacher
- A group interview with five support staff.

Interviews were conducted in May and July 2007.

School 'B'

School 'B' was a special school which provided support for pupils with serious physical or medical conditions and complex learning difficulties. It was larger than most similar schools with 170 students and was located in the midlands. The school provided outreach provision to support pupils with learning difficulties in many mainstream schools in the region and worked extensively with other agencies.

In its last inspection [February 2006], the school received 'outstanding' ratings for working in partnership to promote the wellbeing of children, the provision of extended services and leadership and management in general.

Three interviews were completed with individuals connected with this school. These were:

- The headteacher
- The deputy headteacher and designated teacher for child protection
- The Local Authority Link Advisor and Special Educational Needs Inspector

Interviews were conducted in June and July 2007.

Children's Centre C

Children's Centre C was located in a northern town and comprised a nursery school and day nursery, which offered childcare from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. A total of 103 children were on roll at the Centre. A separate crèche facility also offered up to 16 places to support parents and carers attending the centre; and a variety of courses and drop-in support groups for parents, carers and their families. The overall head of centre was supported by a management team which included the day nursery manager, two qualified early years teachers and a qualified social worker. The setting was part of an early years excellence centre.

The Centre had been inspected in January 2007 and found to be outstanding. There was also very strong evidence of collaboration in the inspection report.

Five interviews were completed with individuals connected with this school, these being with:

- health visitor from the local Primary Care Trust who was also on the Centre's governing body
- Social work co-ordinator
- Head of centre
- Deputy head
- Team Leader - Social Care from the Local Authority

Interviews were conducted in July 2007.

Stage 2 fieldwork was completed between March and September 2007. Interviews were conducted with 37 individuals connected with the six field sites. This included the headteacher/ centre leader at each site, and a range of other identified individuals from within the organisation itself or partner agencies. Interviewees were primarily identified through discussion with the headteacher/ centre leader on the basis of their involvement in the collaboration, although a small number of additional individuals were subsequently identified during the course of the fieldwork itself. Interviewees

were therefore selected via a purposive sample and supplemented by a small number identified through snowball sampling techniques. Additional consideration was given to instances where the researcher had previously worked with the school, as this was felt likely to provide a basis for a more trusting relationship which in turn, may promote a more open discussion on the issues being explored. In doing so, I recognised that this strategy could potentially restrict my ability to use induction in its purest form, and quite literally follow wherever the data led me. However I believed that while the potential benefits which may be gained in terms of improved access and higher quality of response were such that they justified such a deviation from the theoretical path. In the event I am confident that this decision was the correct one for my study.

Table 5 summarises the job role of interviewees in phase two of this study by their organization.

Table 5 Overview of interviewees in phase 2

School	position	Total	School	position	Total
School S	Headteacher	1	School R	Headteacher	1
	Deputy/ Assistant head	1		Deputy/ Assistant head	2
	SENCO	1		SENCO	1
				Police officer	2
				Business manager	1
				Head of pastoral care	1
				Group interview with 5 office staff	5
School S	Total	3	School R	Total	13
School F	Headteacher	1	Children	Headteacher	1
	Deputy [inclusion]	1	Centre C	Deputy/ Assistant head	1
	Health worker	1		Health worker	1
	Youth worker	1		Social worker	2
	Educational psychologist	1			
	Community Co-ordinator	1			
	School counsellor	1			
	Multi-agency support worker	1			
School F	Total	8	Children	Total	5
School B	Headteacher	1	Centre C		
	Deputy/ Assistant head [SENCO]	1	School L	Headteacher	1
	LA adviser	1		Assistant Head [SENCO]	1
				Governor	1
				LA adviser	1
School B	Total	3	School L	Total	4

Table 5 highlights some noticeable variation in the number of interviews undertaken in each organisation. For instance while only three interviews were completed in school S, thirteen were completed in school R and eight in school F. This variation was the result of my adoption of a theoretical sampling technique. In essence, each case study initially involved a discussion with the headteacher, the Senco or individual with the greatest responsibility for areas of partnership and another individual, I invited the school to nominate who could offer insight into this work. From this initial core, I then followed potential leads identified by these interviewees until all reasonable avenues of investigation had been covered. In the case of school S, partnership work was tightly focused and so only three individuals were interviewed. Furthermore the head of school S subsequently left during the course of phase 2, and indicated that she was unwilling to commit her successor to continued involvement in my work. In the case of school B, the headteacher was very generous in the length of time he was prepared to be interviewed for, but demands on other school staff were such that they were unable/ unwilling to participate. As a result my remaining fieldwork was restricted to interviews with his deputy/ SENCO and a Local Authority school advisor. In contrast, staff in school R were enormously supportive of this work. Furthermore as this was a large school, there was greater opportunity for staff to be released from their duties in order to participate in interviews. As a result I interviewed 13 staff in this school as considerable potential leads were generated and followed up. As noted above, the headteacher from school R subsequently formed the focus for one of my two micro-ethnographies, produced during phase 3 of my work. Similarly school F offered me considerable support particularly in relation to leads outside of the school and formed the focus of 8 interviews.

Phase 3

The third and final stage of fieldwork was also informed by theoretical sampling and involved my attempting to gain a fuller and richer understanding of how the level and nature of trust was influenced by day to day leadership activity. To achieve this I conducted 'micro' ethnographic studies in two of the schools I had researched within stage two of my research. In this instance, theoretical sampling was based upon several factors. Firstly, I had developed a degree of trust with these two headteachers and colleagues in their schools, who had been particularly welcoming and supportive of my work in phase 2 and this was also an important factor in my decision to approach them to support this final phase of my work. In addition to using the principles of theoretical sampling, I felt a number of other criteria should be taken into account, these being:

[a] School based criteria

- Phase
- Size of school

[b] Headteacher based criteria

- Phase
- Gender

Bryman (2004) distinguishes micro ethnography from 'full' ethnography by the nature of its focus, and the shortness of its timescale. In my study, these micro-ethnographies were developed over a period of three days in each school and comprised my shadowing the headteacher and conducting interviews with individuals who were identified as important in relation to particularly relevant incidents, observed during

the shadowing period. Micro-ethnographies were completed in May and June 2008. The relative strengths and weaknesses of micro-ethnographies is considered further on page 207.

Time horizons

The time horizon for the project may be viewed as a specific element of the overarching strategy. In essence it is concerned with whether the research questions are most effectively addressed as a snapshot [cross-sectional] (Burton et al., 2008, Bryman and Bell, 2003) or whether a more prolonged period in the field is required, with data collected on more than one occasion (Adams and Schvaneveldt, 1991). Cohen et al (2005) provide a useful overview of the respective strengths and weaknesses of these two approaches, which I have summarised in Table 6.

Table 6 Strengths and weaknesses of cross sectional and longitudinal research

Cross-sectional research	
Strength	Weakness
Comparatively quick to conduct	Does not support analysis of causal relationships
Comparatively cheap to administer	Doesn't support considerations of individual change
Limited control effects	Sampling isn't comparable for repeat surveys
Greater chance of participation	Development of repeat samples can be time consuming
Provides comparative information between groups	
Supports the use of inferential statistics	
Repeat surveys can support the consideration of net change	
Longitudinal research	
Strength	Weakness
Supports the identification of causal relationships	Time consuming [e.g. it can take years for the findings to emerge]
Highlights how micro and macro change compare	
Separates 'real' change from chance occurrence	Problems of sample mortality increase over time and diminish representativeness
Supports the charting of growth and development	
Gathers data contemporaneously rather than retrospective and is therefore more accurate	Control effects – repeated interview can influence attitudes and behaviours
Sampling error is reduced as the study remains consistent over time	Intervening effects can attenuate the initial research plan
Supports the development of clear recommendations for intervention	Problem of securing participation as it involves repeat contact
	Data analysis can be highly complex

As noted above, my use of a Grounded Theory approach meant that my research questions emerged during the course of my enquiry and as such effectively precluded the use of a longitudinal study strategy. My study was therefore cross section in nature as I undertook three phases of research, each of which centred on addressing a different research question. In the event, one school featured in all three phases of my study, while two others each featured in two phases of my work. In each instance, the decision to sample the school in question was determined by its relevance for the specific question in hand.

I now turn to consider the specific methods I used to collect data from these schools.

Data collection methods

Data collection methods are concerned with the precise tactics adopted to elicit data from the participants in the study. I believe there are two main criteria⁵² for selecting the precise methods to be used. These are:

1. The researcher's underpinning philosophical perspective and
2. the specific demands of the project being undertaken.

As I have demonstrated already in my thesis, I believe all aspects of the research process are underpinned by the researcher's philosophical perspective. I have also outlined how my personal philosophical orientation is influenced by what I have described as constructivism and described the importance of meaning and understanding within this. A range of qualitative methods are strongly associated with

this viewpoint and include interviews, participant observation and focus groups. These share characteristics of flexibility and responsiveness and each was utilised during the course of my study, with the first two featuring particularly prominently.

The second issue focuses on the pragmatics of research and the need to adopt an approach which is fit for purpose (Cohen et al., 2005, Silverman, 2005). Cohen et al (2005) identify a range of factors which determine the overarching purpose of the research, but foremost amongst these is the specific question to be answered. Other factors include the audience and constraints such as the expertise of the researcher, timescales, budgets etc. Thus I believe we should conceive research methods as various tools in the researcher's toolkit and as such form should follow function (Burton et al., 2008). As my study focussed on promoting understanding and explanation, I primarily drew upon the ostensibly qualitative research methods of interview and participant observation because of their strengths in these areas. My use of a self-completed questionnaire in phase one was largely pragmatic, being introduced in response to an unforeseen opportunity to research a large number of individuals at a series of seminars. I believe this decision resulted in my gathering a considerable amount of valuable data which guided my subsequent work and demonstrates the importance of retaining an open mind to the use of methods rather than slavishly following a philosophical line.

I will explore the practical considerations which informed the operationalisation of these techniques in my subsequent discussion of their strengths and weaknesses.

⁵² Bryman and Bell [2003] identify a third set of issues, *values*, as important. However I believe these are implicit within considerations of philosophy and ethics explored elsewhere in this chapter.

Before embarking on this however, I reflect on the reasons why I adopted a mixed methods approach for my overarching strategy.

Mixed-method approach

Recent years have seen a marked increase in the extent to which alternative methods are utilised within a single research project (Bryman, 2007a). This has been driven in part by a universalistic discourse which proposes that the quality of any project will be increased through the utilisation of alternative approaches (Bryman, 2007b). Saunders et al (2003) identify two important benefits from combining alternative methods within a single project. Firstly, individual methods are generally more appropriate for some purposes than others. By retaining a flexible attitude, a researcher is able to combine these approaches in a way which is fit for purpose, thus maximising the efficiency of their data collection approach. For instance in my study, I utilised four research approaches, each of which performed a specific function. I reviewed relevant published literature throughout my study, which enabled me to build on work which had already been completed. I completed a fixed design survey to gather structured data from a large amount of respondents, to better understand the extent to which my emerging understandings of the issues affecting collaborations were applicable more broadly. Finally I completed interviews with a wide range of individuals on different issues throughout my work, which allowed me to probe and explore themes, before finally undertaking direct participant observation to understand the day to day performance of collaborative leadership. Each approach was carefully selected to perform a specific function, and I believe that utilising an alternative method for any of these tasks would have reduced the overall efficiency of my fieldwork.

The second main advantage of a multi-method approach is that it facilitates triangulation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000) and promotes the internal validation of data⁵³. Adopting a triangulated approach represents a practical step in reducing the impact of the ‘method effect’, thereby mediating the specific weaknesses associated with each individual research method. For these reasons, the adoption of multi-method approaches is well established in ethnographic research (Brewer, 2004), case studies (e.g. Knights and McCabe, 1997) and, most importantly, Grounded Theory studies such as this (Douglas, 2006). I therefore followed this multi-method tradition by utilising both qualitative and quantitative methods in an effort to gain a more rounded and robust picture of the issues in hand. In this way I believe that combining alternative approaches increased the richness, rigour and depth of an inquiry.

In the remainder of this sub-section I consider each of these elements in turn, describing the scope and focus for their use, the rationale for their adoption, the limitations they possess and the means through which these weaknesses were addressed.

Phase 1

Figure 30 summarises the focus for phase 1 of this study and the approach adopted to address this.

⁵³ Several different types of triangulation exist, for instance in relation different respondents, over time and through the use of alternative methods.

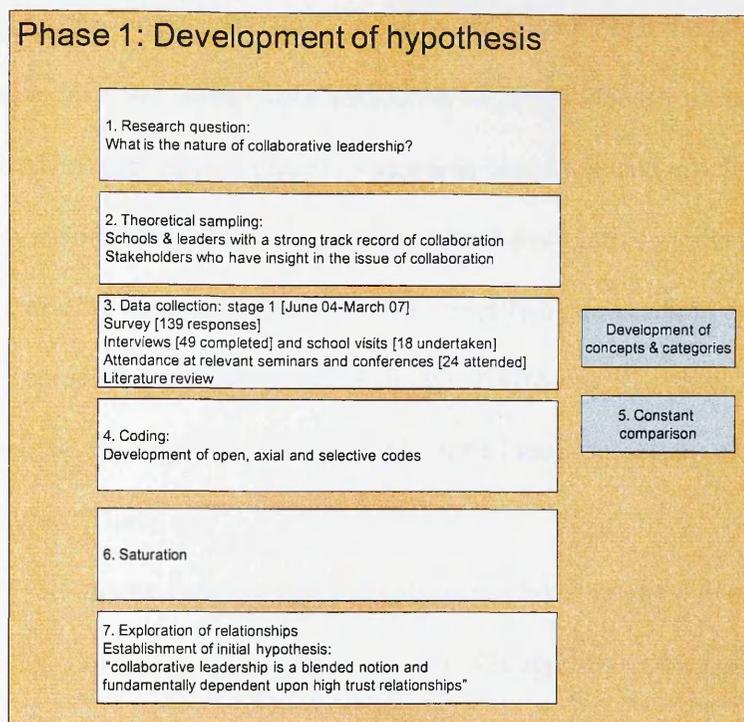


Figure 30 Overview of phase 1 data collection process [source: author]

Figure 30 shows that the first phase of my research utilized four data collection strategies, two of which involved the production of primary data [questionnaire survey and interviews] and two of which utilized secondary data [attendance at relevant seminars and conferences and the review of literature]. I have already discussed my approach to sampling in this section, so at this point I focus instead the mechanisms and instrumentation through which data was collected.

Literature review

Arguably the literature review plays a fundamental role in providing the foundations for any enquiry: as Burton et al note "*conducting a high quality review of existing ideas is probably the most important element of any successful research study*" (Burton et al., 2008:29). For this reason I dedicated considerable time to reviewing literature throughout my study.

In simple terms, a literature review is “*an account of what has been published on a topic by other researchers*” (Burton et al., 2008:29). All forms of publication may be used but emphasis is placed on research based text and articles published in peer reviewed journals, with the need to assess the relative merits of each publication a central factor in this. There is no universally agreed criteria for assessing the strength of competing publications, but Gough (2007) identifies three considerations which I believe are helpful in this task and which I took into account during the course of my review. These are:

1. the trustworthiness of the findings, based on the overall quality of the study
2. methodological relevance – i.e. the appropriateness of approach adopted for the study
3. topic relevance – i.e. the appropriateness of the research’s focus for answering the question in hand

As well as being a precursor to original research, a literature review is a valid research method in its own right, concerned with synthesise, analyse and the presentation of a clear line of argument (Bryman, 2004, Burton et al., 2008). This final point is critical as a strong literature review is more than simply a summary of what has gone before, and instead involves a reflective and discerning consideration of the story which emerges from work that has already been completed. I believe I demonstrate this in my own work, most notably through my development of new models to account for collaborative leadership and the development of trust, outlined earlier in this thesis.

Bryman (2004) identifies nine reasons for completing a literature review, which are summarised in Figure 31. Many of the reasons he identifies centre on the desire to

learn from the work of other researchers, for instance in relation to the focus for the work or the approaches they have adopted for its exploration. The precise focus for my own study was in part identified through a desire to produce an original contribution to knowledge: an ambition that was only possible following a consideration of what had gone before.

Reasons for writing a literature review

- You need to know what is already known in connection with your research because you do not want to be accused of reinventing the wheel
- You can learn from other researchers' mistakes and avoid making the same ones
- You can learn about different theoretical and methodological approaches to your research areas
- It may help you to develop an analytic framework
- It may lead you to consider the inclusion of variables in your research that you might not otherwise have thought about
- It may suggest further research questions for you
- It will help with the interpretation of your findings
- It will give you some pegs on which to hang your findings
- It is expected!

Source: Bryman 2004

Figure 31 Reasons for completing a literature review [developed from Bryman 2004]

Classically a literature review should be undertaken at the commencement of the study in order to see if the answer to the research question in hand exists. However inductive studies such as Grounded Theory advocate a more gradual exposure to literature (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Such perspectives describe how an initial consideration of literature should be undertaken prior to the first exploratory phase of fieldwork to help identify areas of focus and for questioning, but that this is far from exhaustive as to be so would potentially skew the focus for the work which follows, and result in the imposition of existing theoretical frameworks at the expense of those which may emerge. I adopted this broad approach in my work, undertaking a fairly extensive

review of published work prior to commencing my fieldwork but exploring the literature further as my enquiry unfolded.

In the first stage of my study, my literature review focused on exploring the broader issues of collaboration and leadership within the context of the provision of extended services in schools and school based collaboration. The majority of this work was completed between June 2004 and January 2006. However this review was revisited in the summer of 2009 to ensure that any relevant materials which had been subsequently published were included in this study. This review involved an interrogation of relevant academic databases including the British Education Index and the Education Resources Information Centre. Google Scholar searches were also undertaken. In addition, key texts were identified from a review of the main policy documents in this field and through discussions with officials from DfES, NCSL, Continyou and other stakeholder groups. In total 143 reports, publications, articles and other sources were reviewed in this process.

A further literature review was undertaken in phase two of my study and I describe the approach I adopted subsequently on page 203 of this sub-section.

Structured questionnaire survey

As already noted, I completed a structured questionnaire survey of attendees at a series of seminars undertaken by NCSL and Continyou to increase understanding of practice in the delivery of extended services. This target audience was relevant to this work because as I have already noted, the effective delivery of extended services is predicated on the essential role of partnership working in the delivery of this support. In total 139 delegates responded to this survey and Figure 28 on page 178 offers

further information on the nature of these respondents. Five areas were explored in this questionnaire. Their focus and the mechanism through which they were considered are described below.

1. The significance of the main challenges facing leaders of extended schools

In my initial interviews and readings I identified five broad sub-groups of challenges that faced leaders of extended schools and which collectively comprised 16 specific issues. These themes were:

1. Community
2. School related issues
3. Partnership-based
4. Leadership
5. Policy-related

Respondents were asked to assess the significance of each issue on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being 'highly significant' and 0 being 'of no significance at all'.

The following questions were all asked as open text questions, enabling the respondent to reply in their own words.

2. Some of the strategies used to address the most significant challenges identified

3. The key characteristics, skills and experiences needed by the following individuals in an extended school:

- The headteacher

- The senior leader responsible for extended school activity (if not the head)
 - The extended schools co-ordinator
- 4. The key factors in ensuring the continued success and sustainability of extended schools**
- 5. Advice and support leaders of extended schools would benefit from receiving.**

The inclusion of additional open questions on these themes provided considerable evidence to support my consideration of early lessons from interviews and the literature on these areas. It required additional work by way of coding and analysis however and writers such as Bryman and Bell (2003) question whether the use of open questions in questionnaires is appropriate. Certainly I gave considerable thought to this approach for my own work and while noting the significant additional effort it required in terms of analysis, feel the quality of data return vindicated my decision. Bryman and Bell (2003) offer a helpful summary of the main advantages and disadvantages of the structured questionnaire compared with the structured interview, which I outline in Figure 32.

Advantages and disadvantages of the self completed questionnaire c.f. the structured interview

Advantages

- Cheaper to administer
- Quicker to administer
- Absence of interviewer effect
- No interviewer variability
- Convenience for respondents

Disadvantages

- Cannot prompt
- Cannot probe
- Cannot ask many questions that are not salient to respondents
- Difficulty of asking other kinds of question
- Questionnaire can be read as a whole
- Do not know who answers
- Cannot collect additional data
- Difficult to ask a lot of questions
- Not appropriate for some kinds of respondents
- Greater risk of missing data
- Lower response rates

Source: Bryman & Bell 2003

Figure 32 Advantages and disadvantages of the self completed questionnaire compared with the structured interview [developed from Bryman and Bell 2003]

Figure 32 highlights a large number of limitations in the self-completed questionnaire compared with the structured interview, several of which relate to the lack of control over who provides information and the lack of flexibility and responsiveness implicit in the structure. However I believe that the fact my survey was undertaken within the closed confines of a seminar series which was so clearly targeted at a specific target audience reduced the significance of these aspects. Potentially the greatest limitation of all – the issue of low response rates – was also largely addressed by administering the survey as part of the event and collecting it before individuals left. As noted in Table 3, a respectable response rate of 37% was attained for the series as a whole, with 45-55% of attendees participating in all but two events. Furthermore the fact that my survey was undertaken as part of a wider data collection strategy means that there was considerable scope elsewhere to elaborate on the issues and findings raised. As a result, and as Bryman and Bell note, including a survey as part of my overarching research approach provided me with the opportunity to quickly and cheaply gather the

views of a large number of relevant individuals on my emerging findings and to gain a steer on potential areas of exploration. This proved invaluable in ensuring that my work was on the right track from such an early stage.

Interviews

Many writers have commented upon the almost ubiquitous nature of interviews in modern social science. For instance, Bryman (2004:319) notes that "*the interview is probably the most widely employed method in qualitative research*" while Wolcott (1994) notes that they are the most prevalent data collection method. Silverman (2005) goes further, stating that:

Interviews are dominant in our society and often viewed as a default approach, a form of confession: perhaps we all live in what might be called an interview society in which interviews seem central to making sense of our lives"
(2005:111).

But what exactly *is* an 'interview'? Cohen et al (2005) characterise the interview as a social, interpersonal encounter, and not merely a form of data collection. Burton et al (2008) also draw attention to this interpersonal aspect of interviewing, seeing this interactivity is one of its key benefits, as it provides opportunity for adaptation in response to situational demands. As such any form of social interactions may arguably be classified as a form of interview, although classically interviews are differentiated according to the degree of structure offered⁵⁴. As indicated earlier in this thesis, one's tacit or explicit philosophical assumptions will be a major determining factor in the

⁵⁴ A similar distinction has employed the term *standardisation* in place of structure. Three forms of structure are generally identified: structured, semi-structured and unstructured

degree of structure imposed on the interview (King, 2004), while the interview's purpose will also be a determining factor. For instance Saunders et al (2003) highlight the strength of semi-structured approaches in exploring relationships as part of an explanatory study, while unstructured interviews may be especially helpful in work undertaken from a constructivist viewpoint and concerned with the active construction of meaning (King, 2004). Similarly in-depth interviews, potentially combining elements of all three styles, are often viewed as commensurate with a detailed exploration of an issue (Saunders et al., 2003) and as such suited to broadly inductive studies such as this.

As noted above, phase 1 of my fieldwork was concerned with exploring the issues of collaboration more generally and identifying their key demands and implications for school leaders. To support this I completed a number of unstructured interviews at the start of phase 1, and these were key to developing my initial understanding of this field. As my knowledge grew, my interviews become more semi-structured in nature but remained open to emerging knowledge. Where possible my interviews were recorded⁵⁵ and all but two were undertaken in person [these being completed via the telephone]. A group interview was also undertaken with eight senior academics interested in school leaders and collaboration during this time. In instances when I recorded interviews these were semi-transcribed according to the themes they covered and to identify potentially useful quotations⁵⁶. I undertook forty nine interviews⁵⁷ in

⁵⁵ In approaching 50% of interviews I used a voice recorder to produce an audio recording of my discussion. Factors which influenced this included the formality of the interview, the level of background noise and whether or not the interviewee was comfortable with being recorded.

⁵⁶ It was agreed with my supervisor that full transcription would not be appropriate for this study as I did not intend to employ techniques such as conversation or narrative analysis in this work, but rather was adopting a naturalistic research approach.

⁵⁷ In addition to this, I participate in informal conversations with 21 individuals with an interest in this area, comprising ostensibly school leaders and senior academics.

phase 1 of my study with individuals who were identified as likely to have some degree of insight into these issues, such as leaders from schools with a strong tradition of collaboration, local authority advisors or researchers and senior academics with an interest in this field. Details of the phase, occupation and gender of school based respondents are included in Table 2 on page 173. Interviews were undertaken between June 2004 and March 2007.

Attendance at seminars

During phase 1, I attended 21 seminars, conferences or presentations which were relevant to my area of exploration. These assisted me in focusing my interest and identifying potential contacts and further reading.

Phase 2

Figure 33 summarises the focus for phase 2 of this study and the approach adopted to address this.

Phase 2: Development of substantive theory

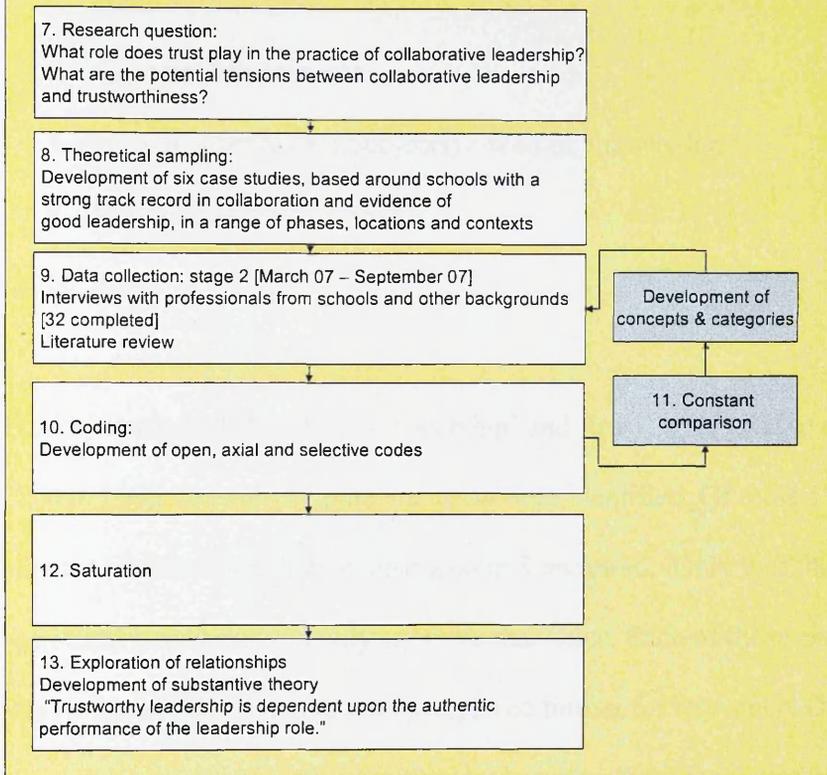


Figure 33 Overview of phase 2 data collection process [source: author]

Literature review

As noted above, a second literature review was undertaken between August 2006 and February 2007 to support the production of substantive theory. Again this review was revisited in 2009 to ensure that any important material published subsequently was included in this study. This review comprised a search of the Metalib 'business and management' section, which in turn involved a review of ten databases:

1. ABI/INFORM Global (via ProQuest)
2. Academic Search Premier
3. Business Source Premier
4. JSTOR

5. Lancaster University Library Catalogue
6. ScienceDirect (Elsevier)
7. SpringerLink Journals
8. Web of Science (All Subjects) / Web of Knowledge
9. Wiley Interscience Journals
10. Zetoc

The keywords 'collaboration', 'leadership' and 'trust' were used to cover the years 2000 to 2009. In total 117 potential texts were identified. Of these 17 were found to be relevant [following review of abstracts] and reviewed. Only 9 of these 17 works had been cited elsewhere, and only six more than once. Each of those cited more than once was reviewed and the citing works explored further for relevance. Of these a further two articles were included in the literature review. Additional materials were identified using relevant references from the articles reviewed. In total 108 publications, articles and other sources were reviewed in this process.

Interviews to develop case studies

The aim of these case studies was to develop 'rich understanding' (Saunders et al., 2003) of issues relating to trust in leaders within a number of specific contexts. Thus I attempted to develop 'thick' descriptions (Hammersley, 1992b) of the phenomena of collaborative leadership and trust, to gain a fuller understanding of the 'lived experience'⁵⁸ (Hamilton, 1998) of the individual participants in my study and to

⁵⁸ Dilthey emphasised the need to explore individual's "lived experience" (erlebnis), which relates to the intimate relationship between the inner and outer states and consequences of human existence. Thus life occurs within a historical social reality, and lived experience lies beyond the immediate awareness of the mind but can be brought to it through questioning and reflection. It therefore includes the sub-conscious and taken for granted assumptions we make.

support the development of a broader theoretical framework on this issue. Bryman and Bell (2003) describe how combining case studies in a comparative research design may support a move from the ideographic to the nomothetic and the development of a more general explanation distilled from the key characteristics of the particular. Thus while I do not claim that the findings from a case study are generalisable in the strict sense, I do believe that the detailed understanding they offer is nevertheless supportive of theory building. Mason (1996) takes a similar view, stating that:

"I do not think qualitative researchers should be satisfied with producing explanations which are idiosyncratic or particular to the limited empirical parameters of their study...qualitative research should produce explanations which are generalisable in some way or which have wider resonance" (Mason (1996) quoted in Silverman, 2005:128).

In this sense generalisable therefore relates more to a sense of connection, understanding and empathy rather than the technical aspects of this term and I believe my work in this respect offered this. I will return to the issues of validity which generalisability relates to later in this section.

Figure 34 summarises the main advantages and disadvantages associated with case study research. I believe I have covered the main strengths and weaknesses identified by Cohen et al already in this section and those I have not explicitly discussed I see as relatively self explanatory. I will return to the issue of bias and subjectivity, highlighted as a disadvantage of case studies, later in this chapter in my discussion on trustworthiness of findings.

Summary of the main advantages and disadvantages of case study research

Advantages

- Data provides strong insight into the reality of the case
- Data supports limited inference from a specific instance to other class
- Approach recognises the complexity of a context and the embeddedness of social truth - i.e. the contextual specificity
- Case studies support direct action
- The presentation of data from case studies is highly accessible
- Case studies offer flexibility in the use of methods and study design

Disadvantages

- The findings can't really be broadly generalised from the study
- Findings are not easy to cross-check
- Interpretation may be selective, biased, personal and subjective
- Observer bias is a particular concern
- Data is complex and difficult to organise

Source: developed from Cohen et al (2005)

Figure 34 Summary of the main advantages and disadvantages of case study research

I undertook 32 interviews at six different case study sites during stage two of my research. These were undertaken using a semi-structured approach and completed in person at a location identified as convenient to the interviewee. Interviews were typically 50-80 minutes in length and in the majority of cases were recorded [although in two interviews the interviewee requested that the recorder be turned off for part of our discussion]. As in phase 1, interviews were semi-transcribed. Informed consent was obtained in all instances.

Phase 3

Figure 35 summarises the focus for phase 3 of this study and the approach adopted to address this.

Phase 3: Development of formal theory

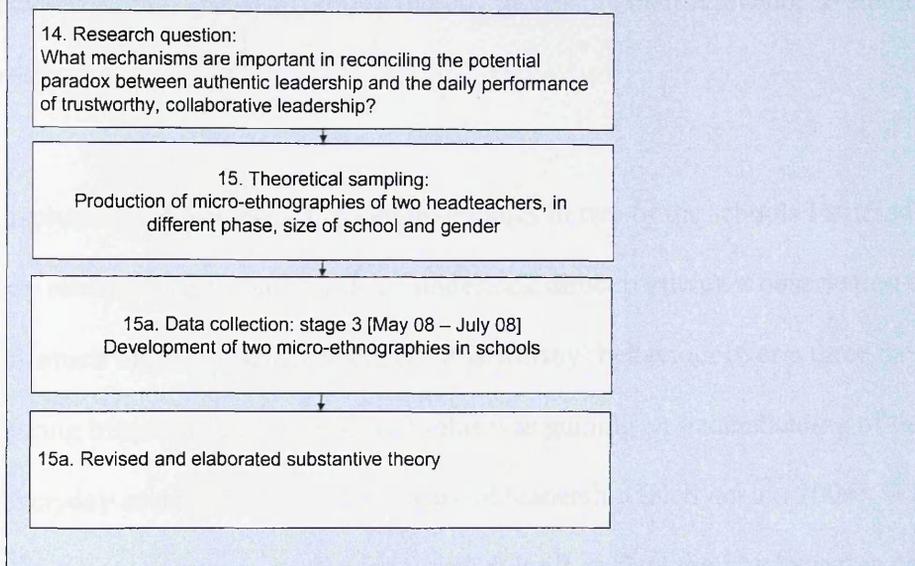


Figure 35 Overview of phase 3 data collection process [source: author]

Development of micro-ethnographies

Phase 3 of my study concentrated on developing micro-ethnographies, concerned with gaining a fuller and more detailed understanding of how trust in leaders is informed by the practice of leadership. Although originally pioneered by anthropologists such as Mead (e.g., 1933), Malinowski (e.g., 1961) and Levi-Strauss (e.g., 1963), ethnography has increased in popularity over the last thirty years and more recently has established a strong foundations in sociology (Hammersley, 1992b). Ethnography involves the development of ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz, 1973) which support an enhanced appreciation of the ‘reality’ of human social life, by “lifting the veil” to expose the truth that lies beneath (Hammersley, 1992b, Brown and Duguid, 1991). Classical ethnography requires the researcher’s ‘immersion’ in a social setting for an extended period of time (Baker, 2003a, Robson, 2002). However ‘micro ethnography’ is less intensive and allows for study which is considerably more focused in time and scope,

with the length of time required for their production varying from a few days to several months (Bryman, 2004), thereby increasing their relevance to studies like mine.

In phase 3, I developed micro-ethnographies in two of the schools I studied earlier in my research and in each instance, undertook direct participant observation of the ways in which the headteacher modelled 'trustworthy' behaviour over a three day period, during May and June 2008. Core to this was gaining an understanding of the practical everyday accomplishment of the work of leadership (Kelly et al., 2004). While each three day exposure was relatively short, it built on the time I had spent in each of these schools during phase two of my study [a further three days] and the interviews I had already completed during this work.

Background to observational research

Bryman (2004) describes how ethnography can refer to both process and outcome and how this term is used almost interchangeably with participant observation. It is more accurate to distinguish them on the basis that the former is a research strategy that may, but is not necessarily, pursued through the latter research method (Agar, 1996, Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995). In the same way, participant observation may be used to pursue alternative research strategies, such as Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Observational research is concerned with gaining a first hand appreciation of the subject's life, offering the researcher the chance of a fuller and more experiential appreciation of the subject's lived experience. A key benefit of participant observation

is its ability to capture the minutiae, taken for granted elements of existence that may be missed in a first hand account or interview discussion, but which are potentially critical in the day to day. It therefore offers a strategy for ‘checking’ the accuracy of a participant’s account. This was a factor in my own study, for I selected the two headteachers I shadowed partly on the basis of the responses they gave during our earlier interviews.

While observational research has been little used in business research (Saunders et al., 2003), education has a strong tradition of direct observation per se [e.g. through peer review, observation of student practice, Ofsted etc]. As a result, this approach may be argued as especially amenable within school-based research (Burton et al., 2008). As with interviews, observational research can be distinguished according to the degree of structure it requires. Many writers also identify a number of different forms of participant observation itself. One common approach to this, developed by Gold (1958), is to differentiate between strategies according to two major factors:

- Whether or not the observer participates in the situation
- Whether or not the observer’s role as a researcher is revealed

Such a schematic produces four alternative approaches, which are summarised in Figure 36.

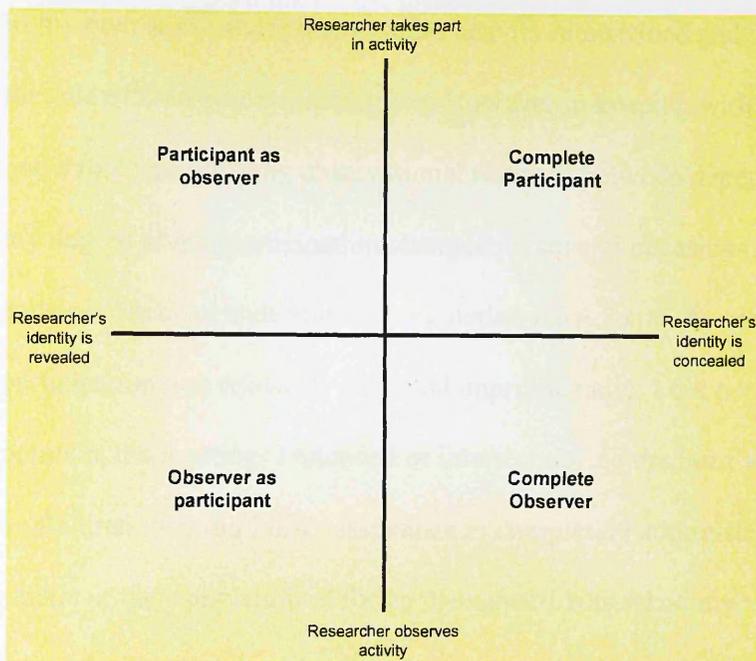


Figure 36 Strategies for participant observation (Saunders et al., 2003)

Saunders et al (2003) also identify five key factors which influence the researcher's choice of participant observation role. These are:

- The purpose of the research – is the focus to experience first hand or to observe?
- The time you have to devote to it – participant roles will frequently take longer to establish
- The degree to which you feel suited to participant observation – do you as a researcher, possess the skills and qualities to support the participant role?
- Organisational access – will access be possible if the researcher is open about his intentions?
- Ethical considerations – for instance is it ethical in this context to undertake covert observation?

In my own study, these factors were heavily intertwined and led me to broadly adopt the role of *Observer as participant*. However in keeping with Gans' (1968) belief that one's role varies during observational research between depending upon the context⁵⁹ my degree of non-participation changed on several occasions. Indeed it is important to consider what we understand by the notion *participate*. At one level, my non-participation was relatively clear and unproblematic: I did not for instance, raise points in the meetings I attended or interject during the head's discussions with staff or children. Nor did I offer assistance in completing administrative tasks relating to emails or the completion of forms. However I was asked my view on a number of issues during a governor's meeting I attended while shadowing Alison, which I offered. I was also asked to judge a science competition during my time at her school – an honour I was delighted to accept. Similarly, during my time with Edd, my responsibilities as an adult in his school demanded that I intervened in a situation which resulted in a student being punished. In each instance, I believe that my failure to respond in the expected way, would have compromised my credibility to such a degree that access may subsequently have been withdrawn, or at very least, the headteachers and/or their colleagues' co-operation may have been reduced.

There are clear parallels between my experiences of performing the role of researcher in this project and the findings from my study. Indeed these examples clearly highlight how context may demand a specific response from an actor which would not normally be viewed as commensurate with the role they are performing. To reconcile this, I was forced to redefine the nature of the part I played to enable me to respond in a way

⁵⁹ Gans [1968] identifies three main roles which are occupied by the researcher depending upon the context, these being: *total participant*, *researcher participant* and *total researcher*.

which met the expectations of my audience. Furthermore by reconceptualising the notion of the researcher [and what constitutes professionalism in this role], I was able to retain both perceived and implicit integrity and authenticity, which were fundamental to a trusting relationship between participant and myself. I return to this theme in the findings section of my thesis.

A separate issue centres on the degree to which I effectively participated in these contexts simply by being present. This problem of the *observer effect* or *Hawthorne effect*⁶⁰ (Landsberger, 1958) is well documented, and centres on the belief that individual's consciously or subconsciously modify their behaviour when they are aware that they are being watched (Baker, 2003a). In my study I encountered a number of instances of this, although I believe these were at a relatively low level of significance and did not have any notable influence on the findings from my study. For instance, during a meeting between Alison and Ruth, the outgoing head of the school she was taking over, Ruth apologised directly to me [and not to Alison] for swearing. Similarly meetings between Edd and Julie, the business manager at his school, were frequently punctuated by asides from Julie concerning Edd's 'misbehaviour' and 'showing off' to me.

Two main strategies exist to overcome this, each of which has its attractions and limitations. The first involves an attempt by the researcher to achieve *habituation* (Saunders et al., 2003) or effectively become part of the organisational scenery. For instance, in my study a major strategy for attempting to achieve habituation involved

⁶⁰ The Hawthorne effect is any temporary change in behaviour caused by an external stimulus. It is named after General Electric's Hawthorne factory, where this change was originally identified.

whenever possible, placing myself away from the eye line of individuals who were meeting with the head. For instance Figure 37 and Figure 38 illustrate how I adopted an alternative position [the green chair] depending upon the location of the meetings [shown in orange], which in turn was influenced by the degree of formality the head wished to attach to it.

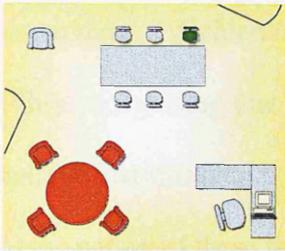


Figure 37 Researcher position - informal meetings in head's office at School A [source: author]

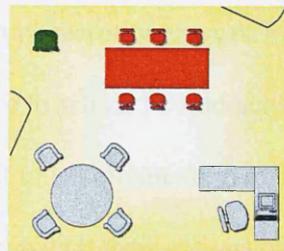


Figure 38 Researcher position - formal meetings in head's office at School A [source: author]

Similarly in each instance, I had spent a number of days at the school previously, and generally interviewed key members of the leadership team during my stay there. This also helped to increase the extent to which staff were comfortable with my presence there and to which I could blend into the background.

Bryman and Bell (2003) note that in business and social research, a number of constraints limit the time a researcher may commit to observational research and as a result, such fieldwork is noticeably briefer. Examples of these constraints include:

- Stress, caused for instance by isolation and the need to manage a front
- The nature of the topic itself
- Domestic factors resulting from prolonged absences from home

- thinking the questions have been answered [saturation]
- employment factors
- limitations of access and demands on the observed
- simply feeling you've had enough

Following a consideration of these factors and discussions with my tutors and other researchers, I decided to undertake my direct observational work for three days⁶¹.

While recognising that this limited the degree to which I could achieve *habituation*, I believe that this length of time was sufficient to enable me to gain a good appreciation of the nature of these leaders and the ways in which their actions promoted trust in these contexts. Equally though I recognise that it restricted the degree to which I was able to establish wider relationships within the school and thus develop alternative perceptions of the headteacher and the school more broadly.

The second main strategy for avoiding *observation/ Hawthorne effect*, is to undertake covert observation. However I felt there were both ethical and practical reasons for rejecting this approach. On a practical level, there was really no legitimate reason for my presence within these schools other than that of being a researcher. As a result, I was dependent upon the patronage of the main gatekeeper of the school – the head – for my study. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) notes how such a dependency is frequently found in ethnographic studies, with Whyte's '*street corner society*' a classic example of this. While it may have been possible to negotiate agreement with

⁶¹ In addition to my own practical reasons for limiting my stay to three days, I had some doubt as to whether any attempt to negotiate a longer stay in these schools may have been less enthusiastically greeted by Alison and Edd. While both were happy to host me for this period, I have little doubt that my presence and questioning did cause some disruption to their work and at some point would have overstayed my welcome. Furthermore the clear agreement of a *finite period of involvement* made my withdrawal from the school less problematic.

the headteachers that the true nature of my research be withheld from participants, I was troubled ethically by this prospect and thus rejected it. Furthermore, I was challenged [very politely] on a number of occasions by staff and students as to who I was and what I was doing during my time at these schools. Thus any attempt to avoid disclosing the purpose of my work would have involved lying directly to participants and the potential consequences of exposure. As I am not a particularly good liar I was unwilling to take this risk!

[Re]Negotiating access

Ensuring access is an ongoing challenge within observational research. Indeed while initial agreement with the gatekeeper provides access to the organisation, it does not ensure the co-operation of the individuals within it and as such getting through the door is only the first step. During my own observational work, I was frequently required to explain the nature of research, its intended usage and provide assurances of confidentiality. School staff were often concerned that I was either from Ofsted or the Local Authority, while I also felt it important to highlight that I was not a 'nark' and was not reporting the contents of discussions back to the headteacher. Children and parents frequently assumed I was a teacher from another school: I was mistaken as the 'new' deputy head on several occasions at the primary school, and as a trainee head at the secondary school. In each instance I found that a clear and open explanation of the nature of my work was sufficient to allay any anxieties or curiosity.

Note taking

A major advantage of adopting an overt participant observer role is that it provided scope for me to openly take field notes. Indeed, I came to conclude that not taking notes would create suspicion as the *authentic performance* of my researcher role demanded a diligent approach to data collection. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:58) allude to this when they describe the importance of "*establishing a reason for being there and developing a role, a persona so that people know who the researcher is, what the researcher is doing there and if necessary why!*" As my *raison d'être* for following the head was the completion of my research, others may have felt it odd if I wasn't *seen* to be researching⁶²! This notion of performance is a reoccurring theme in my study and I have already highlighted my literature review, its significance in relation to the performance of headship. I shall return to this idea again later in my findings section.

In my observation I adopted a well tested approach of taking rough notes during the day which I expanded that same evening. As Atkinson (1981) notes, there are some occasions when overt note taking is viewed as 'normal' behaviour and others when it would be less acceptable. Thus I felt comfortable writing physical notes in real time during meetings, but opted not to during informal conversations with children and staff, in the corridor or staff room for instance. In practice I therefore developed three types of fieldnotes:

1. Mental notes – non-written observations which I subsequently turned into...

⁶² Of course care was needed to ensure that demonstrating due diligence to this process did not result in my missing important points as I scribbled away merrily and I was also aware that excessive note taking may have a constraining effect on participants.

2. Jotted notes – rough, short memos on proceedings, including the location, timings, participants' role, my role and reflections etc, which were later expanded into...
3. Full field notes – completed in full at the end of the day and used for my subsequent data analysis⁶³.

Where possible, my fieldnotes also included verbatim accounts of discussions, some of which are included in this thesis. However I opted not to use a voice recording during this part of my study, due to constraining effect I felt it was likely to have on participants. I also undertook regular debriefings with the headteachers during the course of the day to clarify areas of meaning and understanding.

Criticisms of ethnography

The main criticism of ethnography centres on the extent to which extended exposure to a group or individual may reduce the researcher's neutrality. I believe this should be addressed both practically and philosophically. From a practice viewpoint, the systematic use of fieldnotes helped me to limit possible bias by:

- reminding me of my role as a researcher during my time in the field and of the rules which govern it
- providing me with a systematic set of notes I referred to in my subsequent analysis.

Thus my fieldnotes formed part of my broader attempts at reflexivity, through which I sought to minimize my potential partiality. Philosophically, I have already stated in

this chapter my belief that the notion of objectivity is impossible within social science research, and all viewpoints are inevitably partial and biased. As Bryman (2004:432) notes “*nowadays it is rarely accepted that theory-neutral observation is feasible*”.

Therefore I believe the question is not whether participant observation results in bias research, but rather whether the bias implicit in this approach is greater than that incurred through other methods. Given the counter measures described, I do not believe that it is.

Early anthropological studies were also frequently criticised on the grounds of colonialism, both in terms of their study of colonial issues and the ways in which meaning was constructed and effectively imposed on already colonised communities (Laragy, 2008). I would argue that while the danger of my imposing meaning on those I observed was a possibility, I attempted to guard against this by conducting supporting interviews, through recourse to my professional training and by my attempts at phenomenological reductionism (Selden, 2006). Of course it is ultimately a matter for the reader to judge just how effective I have been in all areas of my study, including my data analysis and writing. It is to those aspects that I now turn.

⁶³ The schools where I completed my participant observation were a significant distance from my home and as a result I stayed in a hotel during this part of my study. While this limited the time I was able to stay at these schools, it did eliminate all other distractions and as such supported the process of field noting.

Data analysis

Art and not science?

Data analysis focuses on the means through which the key lessons from the study are distilled. Corbin and Strauss (2008) state that:

“Analysis involves examining a substance and its components in order to determine their properties and functions, then using the acquired knowledge to make inferences about the whole” (Corbin and Strauss, 2008:45).

A popular misconception is that data analysis forms the final stage in the research process. However I believe that attention should be paid to this at the project conception stage, to ensure that the instruments and approach used are commensurate with the preferred analysis strategy (Cohen et al., 2005) and continued throughout the life of the project, forming a “repetitive interplay” between the collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2004). As Silverman (2005) notes:

“In most qualitative research, unless you are analysing data more or less from day 1 you will always have to play ‘catch up’”(Silverman, 2005:150).

In this spirit, I undertook formal data analysis during each phases of my data collection and the findings from this informed my subsequent data collection activity. In addition, I completed a process of analytic reflection after collecting each individual data unit⁶⁴, which helped me to clarify any emerging messages and assess the suitability of my collection methods.

Indeed qualitative data analysis differs markedly from quantitative data techniques in its relative lack of formal prescription (Robson, 2002), so while quantitative analysis involves the precise application of formal statistical measures, qualitative data analysis may be seen as more ambiguous and creative. Robson (2002:459) describes qualitative analysis as “*much closer to codified common sense than the complexities of statistical quantitative data*” while Corbin and Strauss (2008:48) note that “*In all qualitative research, there has to be some sort of balance between art and science*”, highlighting the importance of flexibility and creativity. In this way the researcher therefore takes a more active role in constructing [or construing] the ‘story’ of the research. Corbin and Strauss (2008) compare this role with that of a translator, stating how the researcher acts as an intermediary between the participant and the audience. As such their task is to convey meaning, but the process for doing so is sometimes less than straight forward: things can of course get lost in translation. Thus we may reflect on a position where it is not only impossible for us to remove the influence of the researcher from the process, but it is also undesirable (Denscombe, 1998), for if the researcher acts as the builder of our interpretation, without him, we will be left with a pallet load of bricks and no means of constructing or even visualising the final structure.

Approaches to analyzing qualitative data

Deciding how to analyse qualitative data is far from straight forward: a plethora of strategies exist, many of which may appear, at first at least, to be potentially fit for purpose. Tesch (1990) for instance, identifies 46 different labels used by qualitative

⁶⁴ E.g. interview or observations

researchers to describe the approach to analysis they adopted⁶⁵, although Denscombe (1998) suggests that two broad themes exist:

- a concern with meaning and the ways people understand things
- a concern with patterns of behaviour.

My own analysis was concerned with both elements.

Crabtree and Miller (1992) offer an alternative approach to considering qualitative data analysis, based on the degree of structure with which the data is treated. Robson's summary of this is in Figure 39.

Approach to qualitative data analysis

- **Quasi-statistical**
 - Analysis is heavily dependent on producing quantitative data from qualitative data
 - E.g. content analysis
- **Template**
 - Coding is performed on an a priori basis
 - E.g. matrix analysis
- **Editing**
 - More interactive and flexible in nature
 - E.g. grounded theory
- **Immersion**
 - Fluid, most interpretive, almost artistic or literary

Source: adapted from Robson 2002

Figure 39 Broad approaches to qualitative analysis [source: adapted from Robson 2002]

My use of a Grounded Theory inspired approach was consistent with the notion of *editing* outlined by Robson (2002) although I also produced some quasi-statistical data

⁶⁵ As this work dates from 1990, no doubt there are plenty more now!

to support the identification of emerging themes. I adopted this strategy as it offered flexibility and supported the iterative, inductive exploration of my areas of interest, but at the same time, provided me with a degree of structure within which to do so.

My approach to data analysis was interactive and reflexive, moving backwards and forwards between three tasks of:

- Data coding
- Conceptual ordering
- Theorisation and development of explanatory concepts

In the remainder of this sub-section I describe in more detail how I approached each of these elements.

1. Data coding

Coding is concerned with identifying conceptual categories within the data. It provides a way of interpreting the data's meaning, as it is first dissected, then compared and finally reassembled to produce an overarching explanatory framework for the issue in hand. Writers such as Bryman (2004) have highlighted that there is no one correct way to code data and that it should not be viewed as an end in itself but rather as a means to separate, compile and organise data. On a very practical level, coding is an invaluable means of identifying *theoretical saturation*⁶⁶ – the point at which no new ideas and theories are emerging and the effective 'end game' for the study.

In my study, all data was written up in Word and imported into N-vivo for data analysis. I found N-vivo to be an invaluable tool which supported [but could not replace] me in my role as a researcher (Graham and Hannibal, 1998). I developed codes as ‘trees’ within my broad areas of interest and these trees grew as I drilled down to identify the various meanings of the data I collected. Thus my coding frame was at once grounded and theoretical, informed by both my work and my reading and emerges during each stage of my data collection.⁶⁷ Each tree represented a broad area of interest and generally [but not always] coincided with a specific question asked as part of the data collection process. In instances where data possessed multiple meanings, a number of codes were attached to it. While this produced a thorough and comprehensive coding frame, it also made it extremely large and difficult to handle. To address this I regularly reviewed these codes to identify areas of duplication and potentially redundant codes, thereby reducing the scale of the framework. For instance during the second stage of my research I developed more than eight hundred codes at a range of levels. However my use of N-vivo enabled me to adopt a systematic approach to coding and recoding as I sought to identify the overarching themes which underpinned my work. Coding is therefore a fluid and iterative process, and codes may emerge, change and be subsequently abandoned (Denscombe, 1998) during the course of this.

⁶⁶ This process occurred in each of the three stages of my study

⁶⁷ This was in keeping with Burton et al’s [2008] view that codes can emerge from a variety of sources

2. *Conceptual order*

The second stage of analysis involves seeking to develop categories which connect the *open codes* used to dissect the data in stage 1. This is may be described as *axial coding*, as the researcher seeks to reconstruct data in new ways to identify cross cutting categories and concepts, and make judgments as to their relative importance. In my work, it was during this process of axial coding that the various elements of the triumvirate model of trust emerged, i.e.

- Competency, reliability and efficiency
- Confidentiality and discretion
- Experience and testing
- Intuition and disposition to trust
- Listening
- Openness and honesty
- Personability, sociability, humour
- Supportiveness
- Trusting others
- Values and beliefs

In my study, an important mechanism for this involved the development of assay tables, which highlighted the frequency with which specific issues occurred. Figure 40 provides an edited example assay table, produced during phase 2 of this project . It summarises interviewees' views on the degree to which trust can be pro-actively stimulated, and if so, how this could occur. It shows that six participants raised this issue during their interview, these being interviewees 6, 7, 9, 13, 15 and 29. In this example, I have already regrouped my lowest level of grounded codes into broader groupings of attitudes and culture, behaviours, relationships and structure. Amongst these, the final two areas were most commonly highlighted as factors in this issue. Thus the assay tables offered a sense as to the significance of the issue in hand [in this case, not great] and areas for further exploration [relationships and structure].

Scope Items	(2 10 17)				totals	Percent
	ATTITUDES & CULTURE	(2 10 20) BEHAVIOURS	(2 10 2) RELATIONSHIPS	(2 10 18) STRUCTURE		
interviewee 1	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 2	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 3	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 4	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 5	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 6	1	1	1	1	4	100
interviewee 7	1	0	1	1	3	75
interviewee 8	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 9	1	0	1	1	3	75
interviewee 10	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 11	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 12	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 13	0	1	1	1	3	75
interviewee 14	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 15	1	0	1	1	3	75
interviewee 16	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 17	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 18	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 19	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 20	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 21	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 22	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 23	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 24	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 25	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 26	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 27	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 28	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 29	0	0	1	1	2	50
interviewee 30	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 31	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 32	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 33	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 34	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 35	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 36	0	0	0	0	0	0
interviewee 37	0	0	0	0	0	0
totals	4	2	6	6	18	
percent	10.81	5.41	16.22	16.22		

Figure 40 Example assay table: phase 2 - "mechanisms through which trust may be stimulated"

[source: author]

I produced assay tables at regular intervals throughout my work which supported my emerging thinking and guided my areas of focus. This is not to suggest that I made such judgments purely on the basis of the frequency with which issues emerged – the significance of such issues could also be gauged for instance via the forcefulness with which they were raised by respondents. However these assay tables offered a systematic approach to assessing the prevalence of different factors, both across the sample as a whole and within specific sub-groups⁶⁸. Thus this approach played an important role in keeping me *'analytically honest'* (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and

⁶⁸ In my analysis I considered responses by role occupation, organization and gender

ensuring that the vigour with which I pursued issues was justified by the findings from my fieldwork.

3. *Theorisation and development of explanatory concepts*

In the third stage of my data analysis, I sought to develop an overarching account for the most significant categories and concepts I had identified.

In this stage I reduced the substantial number of open codes I had developed through merging and filtering until a sufficiently coherent idea could be identified for review and potential verification. To support this, I developed concept maps for the main areas of my study. Figure 41 and Figure 42 show examples of concept maps I produced of the main findings from my literature review on collaboration and trust, as of September 2006. At that time the review was focused on four key areas of:

- Definition and characteristics
- Drivers for collaboration
- Facilitators and inhibitors of collaboration
- Leadership
- Trust.

In Figure 41, connections between issues are indicated by arrows and more significant factors are highlighted in blue. At this point, trust had begun to emerge in the literature as the most significant facilitator in collaborative working and I had begun to examine the literature on this more systematically. Figure 42 shows some of these emerging findings on trust and includes a more detailed breakdown of factors associated with it, represented by the different colours on the display. By now my

Later in my study I developed data analysis frameworks to further support my thinking. Figure 43 provides an example of one such analysis framework, developed during the *conceptual ordering* and *theorisation and development of explanatory concepts* phases of my data analysis. In Figure 43, I have sought to develop connections between a number of initial open codes [shown in yellow] and found them to coalesce around seven overarching concepts [shown in blue]. Two of these concepts – ‘organisational justice’ and ‘moral purpose’ were also developed as open codes, hence their cross-shading. Several of the open codes linked with others which I have indicated by using arrows. I then considered the seven concepts themselves in terms of their importance, based on the evidence collated in the study, and assigned them a numerical value based on my perception of their order of significance. I also included an overarching explanatory concept, which may potentially explain the most significant of these, in this instance described as the articulation and modelling of moral purpose. At this point I felt that two concepts, *intuition* and *managing risk and uncertainty* did not fit as well as the others in this overarching theme and for this reason they are shaded differently. This framework subsequently provided my focus for the third phase of my research.

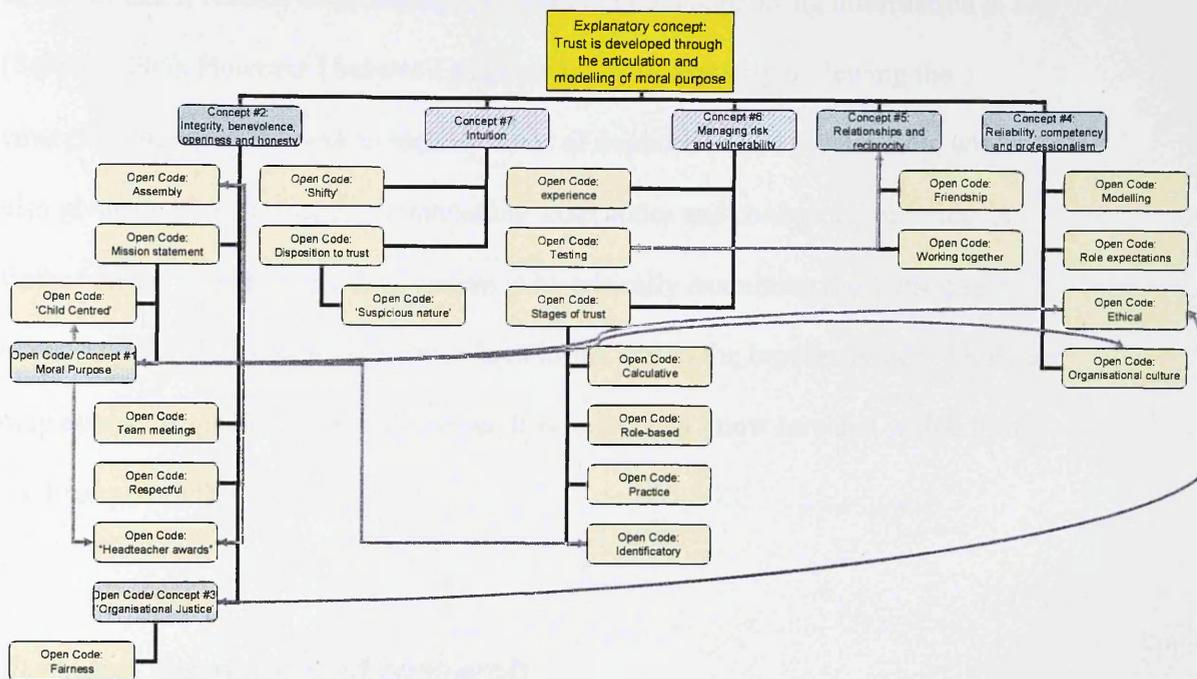


Figure 43 Example of the data analysis process for this study [source: author]

I believe my approach provided a strong framework for analysing the vast amount of data my study generated. As noted above, this broad strategy was in keeping with Grounded Theory and it is important to note that while my experiences of it were positive, it may be subject to criticism on two main grounds.

Firstly my approach was very intensive and required considerable time, particularly in relation to the development of codes. However I believe that this was an important process, particularly at the early stage of the study, when it provided genuine insight and direction on the areas to explore further. From this viewpoint I believe my coding was an investment rather than a chore, but recognise that this had implications for the scale of additional work I was able to undertake and therefore limited the number of cases I could explore.

The second main criticism is this my approach to coding may dissect the data to such an extent that it became decontextualised and important supporting information is lost (Selden, 2006). However I believe I addressed this by regularly reviewing the emerging coding framework to identify areas of duplication and redundancy, while also giving sufficient regard to establishing axial codes and conceptual ordering. A further means of addressing this concern is by critically examining my subsequent overarching explanatory framework, which forms part of the broader issues of how we may assess the quality of research per se. It is to this that I now turn and which forms the final part of this chapter.

Judging the quality of research

“Traditional” measures of quality

Judging the quality of quantitative research is a relatively straight forward and well trodden route (Burton et al., 2008), essentially being achieved through a consideration of the characteristics of *reliability*, *validity*⁶⁹ and *generalisability* (Robson, 2002). These elements are described in Figure 44.

⁶⁹ Many writers identify two main types of validity, these being *internal* [concerned with how far the conclusions provide adequate explanation and reflect the views of the population surveyed] and *external* [concerned with the generalisation of findings across contexts].

Assessing quality in fixed design research

- **Validity**
 - The extent to which the approach adopted effectively explores the issue in hand
- **Reliability**
 - The degree of consistency and stability associated with a measurement technique
- **Generalisability**
 - How far the findings from a study can be seen to apply to contexts beyond the sample

Figure 44 Definitions for measures of quality for quantitative research [source: author]

A number of philosophical considerations underpin the selection of these quality criteria, foremost amongst which is the notion of objectivity. However as noted elsewhere, I feel there are numerous reasons to believe that such a *foundationalist*⁷⁰ (Johnson and Duberley, 2000a) approach to research is misguided and that aspirations of objectivity are fundamentally flawed. As Alexander (2007) notes, all views are partial and come from *somewhere*, regardless of how much one attempts to be independent and impartial. However if we reject this assumption of objectivity, we must in turn look elsewhere for the means through which to assess the quality of our research.

Researchers such as Maxwell (1992 in Winter, 2000) have sought to modify the notion of validity to retain its relevance for qualitative research. Maxwell identifies five different forms of validity⁷¹, each of which provides a basis for considering

⁷⁰ Foundationalism is associated with positivism and assumes the existence of a series of self-evident truths which form the basis for all subsequent knowledge claims.

⁷¹ Maxwell's forms of validity comprise: i. descriptive ii. interpretive iii. theoretical iv. external and evaluative

qualitative research. However Maxwell is not alone in having adopted such an approach and consequently no single framework has established theoretical hegemony in judging qualitative research. Indeed as Seale notes "*a sometimes bewildering variety of new concepts confronts any reviewer of this field of methodological writing*" (Seale, 1999:43) and to emphasise the point even further, notes fourteen different forms of validity alone!⁷²

Generalisability is also contentious from a qualitative perspective. Schofield (1989) notes how some qualitative researchers have sought to retain the *spirit* of generalisation while recognising that producing the type of large statistical data required to achieve this is beyond the scope of most qualitative studies. As a result qualitative research places less emphasis on achieving scale and focuses more on the importance of sampling. Thus notions of *generalisability* are dismissed in favour of achieving theoretical insight which may be *transferred* to other contexts. Lincoln and Guba's (1985) idea of *fittingness* connects with this idea and is essentially based on the degree to which judgments are appropriate to alternative contexts. I believe there is considerable merit in these notions, which focus on the potential transference of theory rather than a more broad brush approach to generalisation. In this way, we may therefore recognise the possible limitations of our work, while retaining an appreciation of its value in informing our understanding of contexts beyond its limited confines.

⁷² These comprise: successor, theoretical, catalytic, apparent, interrogated, quixotic, transgressive, diachronic, imperial, synchronic, simulacra/ironic, voluptuous and situated instrumental

The importance of trustworthiness

I believe there are two immediate attractions to reframing this underlying question away from ‘how do we assess the *quality* of research?’ to ‘how do we determine whether the research is *trustworthy* or not?’ Firstly, it offers an appealing degree of synergy with one of the overarching themes for my thesis for as I have highlighted extensively throughout this paper, I believe trust is fundamental to all social interactions and argue that the creation, evolution and acceptance of knowledge is a fundamentally collaborative process itself. Secondly, as I outlined earlier in this thesis, there is some degree of consensus over the importance of *competency* and *intention* in assessing trustworthiness and as a result the concept of *trustworthiness* embraces the various criteria proffered by writers as measures of quality, while at the same time, being sufficiently flexible to allow interpretation within different contexts.

One of the more ambitious attempts to develop a *framework for understanding validity in qualitative research* is offered by Cho and Trent (2006) and outlined in Figure 45. In it, they attempt to offer a “*multi-dimensional, holistic framework to considering the validity of qualitative research [by providing] an analytical tool by which to identify a comparative, operational, methodological relationship among the research purposes, questions and processes*” (Cho and Trent, 2006:333).

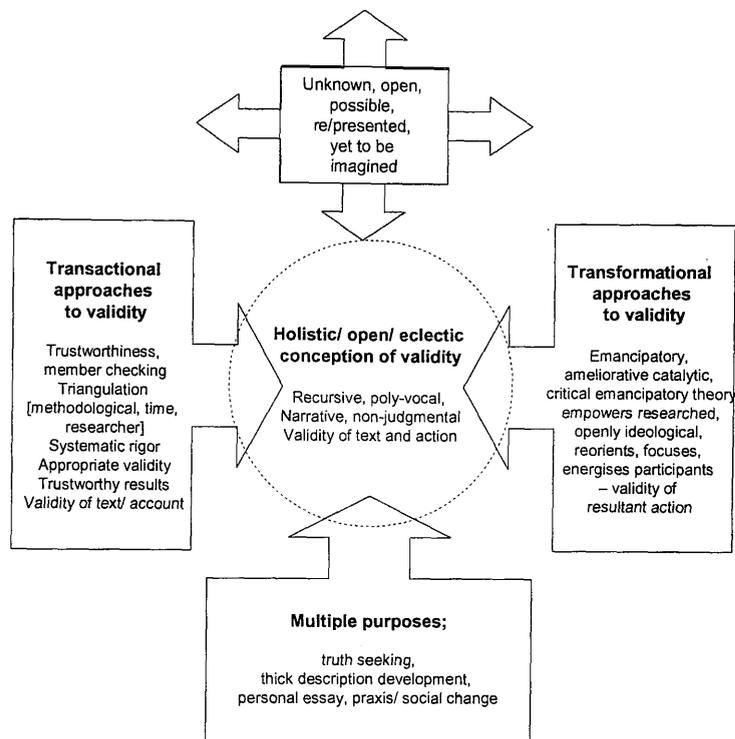


Figure 45 “Alternative framework for understanding validity in qualitative research” [source: Cho and Trent 2006]

Cho and Trent’s model captures some of the ideas implicit in my advocacy of trustworthiness as an overarching concept for considering research, most notably by differentiating between transactional and transformational approaches to validity. Transactional approaches are concerned with technical, mechanical mechanisms for considering the competency of the researcher in completing their enquiry. Examples of elements relevant to this include triangulation, validation, the basis for the choosing a particular approach to research and analysis and the competence with which these approaches were subsequently operationalised. In contrast, transformational approaches to validity are more concerned with the researcher’s aspirations for her work and her motivations for undertaking it. Considerations relevant to this include whether the work was motivated by a desire to improve the conditions of a perceived

or genuinely oppressed group, and the extent to which it may be viewed as empowering.

I believe that Cho and Trent's work is helpful in its attempt to combine these two elements into a single consideration of validity and I describe in due course how I utilised these elements in my own work. However I also feel that they are misguided in their stated desire not to develop more clearly a construction of validity that separates 'good' from 'bad' research (Cho and Trent, 2006), for it strikes me that this is the reason d'être of any such approach. By omitting to do so, they effectively invite unrestricted relativism with no means of sifting competing claims for authoritative knowledge. A further concern with Cho and Trent's framework is its sheer complexity. While their attempt to include and reflect the variety of elements that inform validity is laudable, it compromises the clarity of this framework, adding a further layer of mystification to this process⁷³. However I do see the differentiation between transactional and transformation approaches to validity as a helpful starting point for considering the trustworthiness of research and use these as a basis for developing my own model for this, outlined in Figure 46.

⁷³ I also see the top box, unknown, open, possible... etc to be particularly unhelpful, as it effectively provides an opening to any manner of additional components.

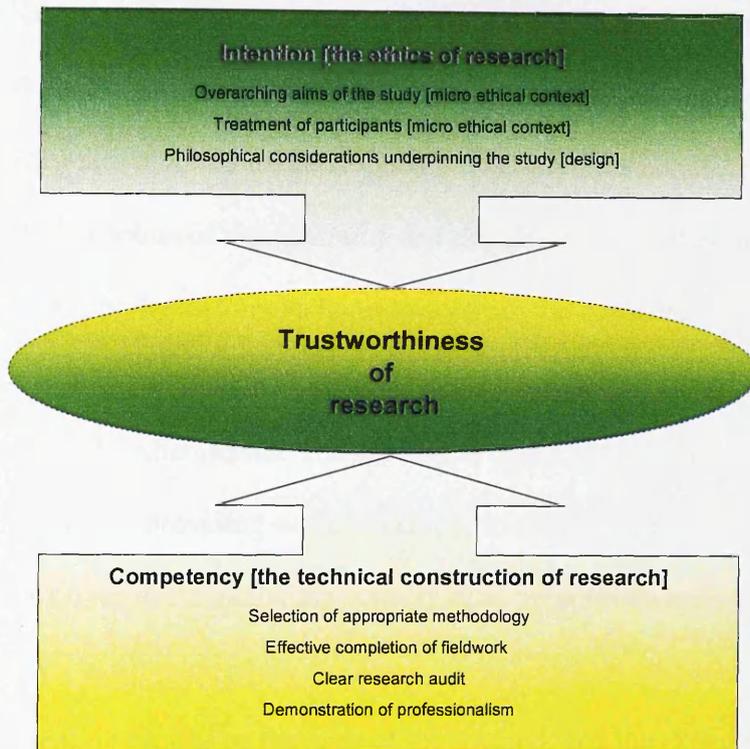


Figure 46 Trust based model for assessing the quality of research [source: author]

In this model, the key elements of *competency* and *intention* can be related to transactional and transformational respectively. At the same time, I believe it is both impractical and undesirable to attempt to include all potential permutations in this framework and instead place the onus on the researcher to describe their overarching aims and methodology, highlighting the relative merits and limitations of each. In this way, my ambition is to offer an ostensibly generic, higher level framework for considering the merits of research, in much the same way as Hammersley (1992a) attempted to with the notions of *plausibility* and *credibility*. While Seale (1999) notes that Hammersley's work has been criticised as vague in this regard [and by inference, a similar charge could be levelled at my suggestion of *competency* and *intention*], I believe this may be countered with a defence based on its flexibility, simplicity and underlying logic.

Key to the idea of competency is the possession and utilization of the appropriate skills for performing the task in hand, rather than attempting to define the minutiae of attributes required for each specific scenario. This connects with Guba and Lincoln's (1985) notion of *dependability* and can also be viewed as developing the notion of reliability by shifting its focus away from the consistent application of a specific instrument onto a more generic focus on the reliability and competency of the researcher themselves. The successful operationalisation of this relies on the researcher providing sufficient clarity to enable the reader to satisfy themselves that they have undertaken their enquiry in an appropriate and rigorous fashion.

Intention centres on the aims of the research and the extent to which the strategies adopted are fit for purpose. It also focuses on the issue of ethics, and writers such as Smith and Deemer (2003) and Kvale (2007) have highlighted the importance of being able to demonstrate an ethical approach in judging the quality of research. Thus a trustworthy intention involves positive and ethical aims pursued through ethically sound principles. Of course things become greyer when there is an apparent conflict between ethics on a macro and micro level and Ferdinand et al (2007) for instance have described the ethical dilemmas which occur when researchers observe or even participate in criminal activity. Such behaviour may be viewed as unethical, but equally pursuing an alternative and more ethical course of action in such instances may put the competency of the research [and indeed the safety of the researcher] at risk. Furthermore it may be argued that the overall outcome from such research may provide the impetus for changes which could contribute to the 'greater good'. In this case then, which ethical considerations take priority? Does the end justify the means? Ferdinand et al (2007), conclude that such decisions cannot be prescribed but rather

are negotiated on an individual basis – a conclusion in keeping with the broader spirit of this framework. Wise counsel in my view.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the methodology I used in this study. I began by explicitly outlining my view on three key philosophical aspects, these being the nature of reality [ontology], the means through which we understand reality [epistemology] and the nature of causal relationships. In doing so, I concluded that the foci for my study – leadership, collaboration and trust – do not exist as external, physical entities but rather possess a character which is subjective in nature, created and co-constructed through our shared meanings, expectations and conventions. I then described how our relationship with these elements is such that it is impossible for us to remove ourselves from our area of interest in any meaningful sense and that any attempt at objective enquiry is therefore fundamentally flawed. Instead I concluded that the researcher's primary concern is *verstehen* uncovering the meanings ascribed to phenomenon by other participants in the study. Lastly, I described my view that causality can not be entirely encapsulated in universal laws which prescribe specific forms of cause and effect, but rather must be considered as contextually sensitive and circumstance relative.

I then described how I adopted an inductive approach to progress my study from a broad investigation into the issues affecting collaboration in schools, through to a detailed exploration of the performance of trustworthy leaders and the potential paradox with authentic leadership. In this way I followed the principles of Grounded

Theory to complete three comprehensive data collection phases, the focus for each of which was grounded in the findings of the knowledge I had developed to that point. In pursuing my approach I adopted a theoretical sampling technique, selecting participants on the basis of my emerging understandings rather than seeking to anticipate from the outset what the characteristics of my sample groups should be. I believe that this approach resulted in my completing more fieldwork than I may have originally anticipated, but that my work is all the stronger for this and the overarching theories I produce describe the practice of authentic leadership in more detail and with more accuracy than could have been achieved through a more conventional approach. I consider my interactive and continued interrogation of existing literature to be central to this strategy. Furthermore I believe I displayed a considered and thoughtful approach to the completion of the data collection itself and utilized a range of approaches which are commensurate with both my overarching philosophical perspective and the demands of the study itself. I have been open in describing the limitations of these strategies and how I sought to reduce the negative effect of these drawbacks in their practical application, not least through the utilization of methodological triangulation.

In my account of my data analysis, I have demonstrated how the strategies for qualitative data are more artistic than the scientific methods utilized for interrogating statistical data. However at the same time, I have shown how this does not necessitate a reduction in the degree of rigor employed or the robustness of the outcomes achieved and through a structured and transparent strategy of coding, conceptual ordering and subsequent theorization I have demonstrated a clear and coherent path from data to theory.

In the final part of this chapter I focused on the fundamental issue of how to assess the quality of research and its associated theory. I described my view that it is through recourse to the notion of trustworthiness that this is best achieved. Furthermore I describe how the criteria of intention and competency that provide a basis for considering the trustworthiness of leaders may serve the same purpose in assessing trustworthiness of research and its overarching quality. This requires a considered assessment of the researcher's intentions and the competency with which they attempt to carry these out. In this way, I believe such a framework offers consistency and clarity in considering quality, but also provides sufficient flexibility to respond to differences in context.

Thus I believe that I have described the rationale for my approach, the practical and philosophical considerations that lead me to develop it, the challenges I needed to overcome to operationalise it and the logical and coherent steps I took to progress from the data I collated to a theory I may espouse. In the next chapter I explore the findings I produced through this method in more depth in relation to each stage of my work, i.e. the drivers and factors which promote collaboration [phase 1], the drivers and inhibitors of trust in leaders [phase 2] and the nature of operationalised 'trustworthy' leadership [phase 3].

5. Findings

Introduction

So far in my thesis I have described why my study is important and the current areas of debate which surround it. I have explored the three main foci of my work, comprising collaborative working, leadership and trust. In the first of these I concluded that interest in collaboration has risen in light of drives for increased efficiency and efforts to address society's most entrenched challenges. I noted the tensions this has produced for schools as it required them to both compete and cooperate, and how a range of factors influence the effectiveness of partnerships, foremost amongst which are their leadership and issues of trust.

I have also described the limited nature of literature on the leadership of collaborations in schools, and how my own work is intended to help address this shortfall in understanding. As part of this I have described my original model for leadership of this nature, asserting that such leadership should be viewed as a blended concept which draws upon a range of other leadership ideas and principles, rather than a unified and unique idea in itself. In doing so I have highlighted the possible tensions this introduces, foremost amongst which is the potential paradox between the anti-collaborative, political practices which support the performance of the leadership role and the demand for actual and perceived authenticity which promotes trust. In addition I have highlighted the paucity of evidence on the precise nature of such leadership on a day to day basis – a shortfall I seek to address through this study.

In this chapter I explore the ways in which my original research builds upon the findings from my literature review and explore my hypothesis that a blended approach is required for the effective leadership of collaborations. I then consider the practice of collaborative leadership and the ways in which leaders define, negotiate and perform their role to promote trust amongst followers, highlighting the role of social learning in this process. In doing so, I draw attention to the importance for school leaders of demonstrating authenticity in all areas of their behaviour in an unremitting way, and the significance of seemingly mundane leadership actions in this process. I also examine the potential tension between authenticity and the performative element of the leadership role. I then describe the ways in which *professionalism* offers a mechanism to resolve this potential paradox, by reframing potentially negative but nevertheless essential actions as part of the leadership role and providing a template for day to day leadership practice in schools.

The nature of collaborative leadership

In phase one of my research I explored the key factors in the leadership of collaborations. This was undertaken via a survey of participants at six seminars hosted by NCSL and Continyou, attended by school leaders and local authority officials responsible for and interested in the development of extended school services. It also involved interviews with forty nine individuals who were identified as possessing insight into these issues, for instance through their work as a school leader or local authority official, or as a researcher in this field.

The findings from this fieldwork coalesced around four main themes. These were:

1. Demonstrating resourcefulness to ensure the longer-term sustainability of the collaboration
2. Ensuring that services meet the needs of their target audience
3. Promoting the conditions for collaboration by establishing a shared vision and agenda and securing the involvement of partner agencies
4. Promoting a culture conducive to partnership working.

In the following subsections I draw upon my survey and interviews to explore each of these themes in more depth.

1. Demonstrating resourcefulness to ensure the longer-term sustainability of the collaboration

Ensuring the ongoing sustainability of funding was identified by survey respondents as the single most important factor in the long term success of extended services, being cited as important by 44% of respondents – four times more than any other single factor. The need for this activity to be viewed by government as a priority was also frequently highlighted as critical.

The need for ongoing financial and policy support connects strongly with elements of political leadership described in my literature review. In particular it echoes Ansell and Gash's (2008) point that political leadership at the macro level must clearly evidence continued commitment to collaborative working. It also connects with Sloper's (2004) and Yerbury's (1997) view as to the importance of establishing sufficient financial resources for any partnership.

More experienced leaders generally placed less emphasis on the need for direct government support for partnership working however, possibly reflecting their greater confidence and experience in partnership issues. For these leaders, risk taking and entrepreneurship were more important considerations, highlighting an underlying view that leaders were empowered to seek out the resources they needed to pursue their priorities. Indeed such leaders were less likely to seek permission to utilise resources or wait for them to be provided, showing a greater propensity towards identifying and accessing them themselves through innovative, creative and entrepreneurial behaviours. For instance one deputy head noted the need for creativity and making connections to achieve their vision:

"It's about making it all connected and not thinking there's a bit for this or a bit for that. It's about using the budget creatively and the business elements making money. We get a lot of money here because we apply for everything. And because we've got a clear vision, we don't have to scramble about to see where it fits" [deputy head, secondary]

Another headteacher described the need to 'blur the edges' as to what was permissible, thereby encouraging creativity but without over-stepping the mark. This point is helpful in highlighting the connection between political and constitutive leadership and the leader's role in manipulating meaning to suit their aims.

A key strategy in securing resources involved networking and developing relationships with individuals and organisations who were potentially able to support their activities. For instance, a number of interviewees described how they had lobbied local councillors to raise awareness of the school's work and gain their support. Similarly others had sought to develop a supportive relationship with a charitable

foundation. In each instance this had involved a degree of ‘smooching’ and ‘cosying up’, in an attempt to promote a positive view of the school’s work, thereby establishing ‘friends in high places’ and lever in additional resources. This echoes Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) point as to the need to develop alliances and networking to secure the resources required to pursue one’s agenda and provides examples of political leadership in practice.

This potential tension between adopting questionable means of this nature to secure their goals – however laudable they may be – is returned to subsequently in this thesis.

2. *Ensuring that services meet the needs of their target audience*

The second major theme to emerge from my fieldwork related to ensuring that the services offered met the requirements of their target audiences.

For instance, *achieving genuine engagement with the community* and *accurately defining community need* were identified in my survey as the most significant challenges leaders faced. Similarly, ensuring end users’ buy-in to the services being developed was a common theme in a majority of interviews. As one head noted:

“Engaging the community is important for every school but particularly those in low socio-economic areas” [headteacher, secondary school]

A range of strategies were identified in support of this, foremost amongst which was promoting effective ongoing communication between the school and the communities it served. Interviewees frequently highlighted the steps they undertook to engage with various target groups, ranging from the formal to more ad hoc discussion and

conversation. Interview evidence indicates that community engagement was most successful when a combination of both was adopted. Respondents described a range of steps they had taken to promote such informal communication, which included adopting an open door policy with parents, being accessible in the playground before and after school and seeking to join existing networks and groups of potential partners and end-users. Such leadership activity was clearly relational in nature and focused on developing connections, trust and communication between the school and those who accessed support. As one head described:

“Our position on extended schools is that consultation with the community is of paramount importance. It’s not about what the school wants to put on or is easy to develop, it’s about what the needs of that community are. One size will not fit all because the needs of the community will vary” [primary headteacher]

The performance of emotional labour was critical to this view, highlighting the efforts leaders went to, to ensure services offered supported their target groups. In this instance, the support provided wasn’t easy to develop but was what was needed by the target audiences. In instances when such efforts were recognised by their target audience, they enhanced relationships, building trust and respect. I believe this commitment to emotional labour is critical to the effective performance of collaborative leadership and return to this theme subsequently.

Promoting strong relationships and trust with parents and other target groups is a thread that runs through each of the four themes considered in this subsection and in this instance, involved establishing strong personal links over a period of time to promote awareness of the partnership and its aims, to ensure that parents felt they

could contribute to this process. Thus emphasis was placed on establishing an inclusive approach to partnership working which stretched beyond ‘traditional’ confines (Mordaunt, 2001) For instance one community worker described the efforts she made to achieve this as follows:

“In the initial stages much of what I did was just going into the community to get my face known and build links with parents and the community. A lot of it was about trying to break down the barriers. To say ‘you can come to talk to us, this is what we do’, to try to knock down some of the stereotypes” [community worker, primary school]

Underpinning all of this activity was the leaders’ desire to encourage local people to develop a different understanding of the role of the school and the services it offered. In this way they sought to effectively redefine expectations of the school and promote a clear view of its aims and values. There are clearly strong connections between leader’s work in this regard and the notions of relational and constitutive leadership described earlier in my literature review.

Effective day to day communication was critical to developing relationships and understanding. Similarly demonstrating that people were valued was essential in gaining their confidence and building a positive reputation. The following quote provides insight into this emphasis on relationship building:

“You’ve got to work hard to get people signed up to believe the school is a good place to do something in. Once you get people in, you give them a good experience. So you make sure that they’ve got tea, and coffee and biscuits and the room’s clear. Then they tell other people - and that’s happening and it’s snowballing. And then you get other people emailing in, saying they’ve heard

about the school and can they come and do something there” [extended services co-ordinator, secondary school]

Such approaches take time and demand a degree of patience (Alexander and Macdonald, 2005, Tett et al., 2001). One head in this study described how it had taken two years to secure significant inroads into her community, while another deputy head noted that the extensive extended schools services portfolio offered in her school had been gradually built up over ten years, with care taken to ensure that members of the community were involved throughout this process. Other school leaders described the benefits of having a history of providing extended services or community engagement, as it promoted trust and supported the development of relationships [a point highlighted by Coleman (1988) and Gillinson (2007)]. The benefits of building on such a legacy were mentioned by approaching one-half of interviewees. For instance a deputy head in a community school noted how its work for local people created expectations within and without the school which helped to progress partnership working, resulting in a de facto redefinition of the notion of the school itself:

Because we’re a community school, we’ve been up for it from the beginning. For other schools I think it’s got to be a slow process. And you start with what you’ve got as well – you start off small and informally – maybe even purely social. Once you’ve got parents comfortable you go and build from there. It’s about relationships” [deputy headteacher, secondary school]

Similarly, one extended services manager from a Leicestershire school described how the long established notion of the Community School offered such a platform, while a head teacher from Cambridgeshire made a similar point in relation to the cultural legacy which stemmed from the Village Colleges (Smith, 1996b, 1996a). This view is

helpful in illustrating the socially constructed nature of the school and demonstrating how this may change over time and between contexts, thereby demonstrating further the meaning making dimension of leadership (Grint, 1997).

Other interviewees emphasised the significance of building on existing relationships between school and community. For instance, at one school, the head had been pivotal in developing community services, which built upon relationships he'd established over a significant period of time.

"The headteacher has been here for 31 years. He knows everyone, we just developed structures and subgroups around him" [extended services co-ordinator, secondary school]

Using intermediaries was another important sub-theme in relationship building and an important strategy in promoting buy-in amongst end users. A significant proportion of headteachers interviewed had actively targeted parents and prominent members of the community for roles in the schools, to utilise their influence and leverage good will from the positive relationships they brought. In such instances these individuals acted as boundary spanners (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002a, Sydow, 1998) implicitly guaranteeing the school through their personal reputation, and thereby promoting mutual trust and openness. One community liaison officer who was also a local parent described her experiences of this in the following terms:

"I'm from the local area which works quite well because I can understand the local issues and what our parents are facing round here because I live on the doorstep. And it's quite good because they know my face and understand that I know what they go through. In a nutshell you could say I can talk their community language. The last thing they might have needed is someone

coming in a suit saying 'this is what's going to happen' and it's built up from that" [community liaison officer, primary school]

Collectively these approaches sought to promote ownership and buy-in amongst local people and foster trusting relationships between the school and individuals who may be accessing its services. In doing so they emphasised again the importance of networking and alliance building, both of which are important aspects of political leadership.

3. Promoting the conditions for collaboration by establishing a shared vision and agenda and securing the involvement of partner agencies

Establishing common agreement and shared understanding of the vision amongst partner organisations was consistently highlighted in both the survey and interviews as important [a point made in the literature by Barton and Quinn (2001), Sturm (2000) and Williamson (2001)]. School leaders described a range of strategies adopted to promote this, many of which echoed the approaches outlined in the previous theme of this subsection. For instance these ranged from formal conferences and workshops to more informal day to day interactions and ongoing communication. One head talked of giving attention to communications '*all day every day*', while others described the need to build on existing links, for instance by developing further relationships with colleagues in other organisations.

Interviewees were clear that efforts to establish a common vision were supported by a consistent focus on addressing the needs of the local community. There were two broad approaches to achieving this.

The first involved the development of a collective vision, based around the identification of areas of common interest between partners and the requirements of end users (Sturm, 2000, Strauss and Harris, 2002, Williamson, 2001). In such instances, headteachers identified key issues through consultation with others before developing a vision for the services they would offer. Here the head acted as a 'meaning maker', seeking to establish a common understanding amongst a range of groups, in a way consistent with the principles of constitutive leadership described in my literature review. This would often involve identifying and drawing attention to the ways in which the school could support the work of others (Huxham and Vangen, 2000), thereby demonstrating an ethical commitment to promoting a context where all may prosper for the common good (Brown and Trevino, 2006, Ciulla, 1995, Seidman, 2004, Starratt, 2004). In some cases this involved developing advocates for partnership working. For instance, one primary head described how a social worker employed in her school used her reputation and influence to encourage positive perceptions of the school amongst her colleagues. Another secondary head noted the similar contribution a police officer based in his school made. As noted earlier, such an approach also had echoes of aspects of political leadership, as heads adopted a range of tactics to achieve their goals.

The second perspective saw heads develop their vision first and use this as a basis for signing up support. In this way the partnership was established to support the aims of the school (Huxham, 1996a, Huxham and Vangen, 2000), an approach which could be described as a form of *collaborative colonialism*. The degree of success enjoyed in such instances varied and informal discussions with staff from other agencies often revealed an underlying concern that relationships with such schools were more akin to

a takeover than a partnership. In such instances schools had to work hard to convince others that they were valued and all were contributing to a common goal, albeit one that was predominantly owned by the school itself. Internally this frequently centred on reassuring teaching staff that learning remained core to the school's goals. Amongst partners, it involved promoting a culture of mutual respect and trust at the operational level (Lloyd et al., 2001, Jackson, 2007, Gillinson et al., 2007).

It is interesting to reflect how both scenarios demanded constitutive leadership, but in different ways. In the second scenario, the emphasis was on constructing a context which enabled the school to 'win' the argument, by convincing others that its vision was right for the area and others should contribute to it. In contrast, the first scenario was concerned with constructing a more democratic collective viewpoint. Indeed strong parallels exist between this second view and some of the anti-collaborative elements of political leadership, most notably the *manipulating the collaborative agenda* element of Huxham and Vangen's notion of *collaborative thuggery* (Huxham, 1996b). In this instance leaders sought to impose an agenda on partners to ensure that it was their, rather than other's priorities which were addressed. This scenario is helpful in highlighting the danger that constitutive leadership may be seen as manipulative and self serving, which potentially may have catastrophic effects on the partnership.

In both instances however, school leaders often adopted a strategy of identifying 'win-win' scenarios initially to break down suspicion and territorialism, and then to encourage different parties to identify the ways in which they could support each other's work (Sloper, 2004, Kanter, 1994, Atkinson et al., 2002). For example some

school leaders described how the school offered a ready-made audience for partner organisations who had services they could directly target at the students, for instance health screening. Such an approach represented a form of *strategic altruism*, whereby they supported others' pursuit of their objectives in the expectation that this would subsequently be reciprocated (Ferrin et al., 2008). In some instances this involved establishing formal connections by recruiting individuals from the community or partner organisations to join the school's governing body or seeking to gain representation on other relevant management groups to ensure optimum synergy (Stone, 2001). For instance one head noted how such a strategy had secured significant funding for his school's work:

"It's not just about signing people up to our groups, it's also about getting onto other's organisations. I'm part of neighbourhood services' partnership group and a couple of subgroups. So when the health and poverty subgroup said they had £10k to spend, my hand went up and we got £4k. It's as easy as that sometimes, because you've done the hard work to get there. They trust you to deliver and feedback how it's gone. Networking is key" [secondary headteacher]

There are strong connections between the pursuit of 'win-win' strategies and aspects of political leadership, outlined earlier in my literature. Here the focus is on developing networks and alliances which support the school's goals and displaying political savvy and astuteness as to what may offered in return to gain such support. There are also a variety of potential tensions for leaders around the extent to which they utilised unethical approaches to secure positive outcomes, however. For instance when does managing meaning become spin, or encouraging and cajoling turn into haranguing? As noted earlier, understanding how strategies for achieving this are

operationalised on a day to day basis is critical, and the precise ways in which leaders define and perform their role in order to navigate this difficult course is considered further, later in this findings section.

4. *Promoting a culture conducive to partnership working.*

Many aspects of this fourth theme coincide strongly with the three already covered, for instance, establishing a values-based commitment to meeting the needs of the end users of services, or ensuring a culture which promotes the long term sustainability of extended activities. At the same time though there is a degree of consistency and directness around a number of cultural issues, which were identified by participants in this study as critical to collaboration.

Strong communications were central to establishing a culture which supported partnership working. Effective communication has already been highlighted as important and connects strongly with constitutive and relational leadership. Promoting effective communications was critical to ensuring buy-in to the partnership activity and the development of services which are accessed and fit for purpose. Similarly dialogue was seen as important in overcoming suspicion between partners and countering the negative impacts of potential misunderstandings (Lloyd et al., 2001, Jackson, 2007, Gillinson et al., 2007). Critically a number of respondents identified the existence of a form of '*institutionalised mistrust*' between different professional groups that could severely impede partnership work. For instance one head described a dispute between a care worker and a teacher which centred on the former's misunderstanding of the latter's non-verbal communication. Reflecting on these difficulties the head concluded:

“If they don’t tell us about them and we don’t tell them about us, how are we ever going to learn? It would have been nice if someone had given me a book which said this is the way social services work, these are its protocols, this is its culture, so I could see where we meet. But we’re having to do that ourselves”
[primary headteacher]

Communication issues also focused on making efforts to achieve common understanding as to the precise meaning of vocabulary used by different professional groups, thereby overcoming jargon (Kasama and Tett, 2001) and potential confusion in instances when similar terminology was used by different professionals to mean different things. Recognising that these potential misunderstandings were inevitable was a critical first step in overcoming difficulties that may subsequently arise (Briggs et al., 2007) and establishing a no blame culture was essential to promoting the learning needed to undertake joint working:

“We came to a very clear mutual understanding that we were going to misunderstand each other, we were going to speak different languages. But we had very similar philosophies of what we want and what we were trying to achieve. It was just different ways of going about it, and different management structures. All that nonsense can get in the way so we made a promise that our dialogue was going to be very open and very honest non-blaming but very honest” *[primary headteacher].*

Some of the strategies which helped to overcome this included offering training and professional support to address specific processes and procedures, and generally seeking to increase exposure to different professional groups, to break down barriers, promote effective working relationships and establish a sense of common purpose (Stone, 2001, Kanter, 1994, Amistead, 2007).

One headteacher highlighted another concern involving addressing territorialism amongst school staff who saw the resources the school owned as *their*'s:

"The key thing is that people understand the school is corporately owned. Then the next thing is that the people who come in to use the territory understand the philosophy and what the rules and regulations are about the use of resources and respect for children, child protection and so on. So it's about ensuring that everyone knows the territory is owned by everyone and shared by everyone. It comes from communications and trust, we invite staff from other agencies to come to our staff meetings. It's being clear about those expectations" [primary headteacher]

This quote is particularly helpful in highlighting the need for constitutive leadership and the leader's role in setting the boundaries within which the partnership would operate and the rules and regulations that would apply. This was achieved through a clear and unequivocal articulation of expectations to all staff. That these expectations also underpinned this leader's own day to day performance of headship was critical bringing such principles to life and further communicating this message to followers (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003b, Bandura, 1977, Crosby and Bryson, 2005, Mendonca, 2001). I will return to this notion of the headteacher as boundary setter further in my discussion on the operationalisation of leadership.

Promoting trust between professionals was a fundamental aim of such relationship building activity, which also sought to clarify roles and expectations, and identify areas of common interest (Woods et al., 2006, Stone, 2001, Kanter, 1994, Hudson et al., 1999, Amistead, 2007). This connects strongly with the concept of relational leadership, explored at length in my literature review. A particularly good example of

this concerned police officers working within schools. During interviews police officers described how the school's responsibility to tackle incidents initially took precedence over their role, with matters only being referred to the police if they escalated to a specific, pre-determined level, which was agreed locally. In theory this compromised the police's ability to act and cut across its areas of responsibility. However within the context of the school environment, it was viewed as the most appropriate way forward and generally seen to work. Furthermore it had encouraged greater trust of the police amongst students and parents who had initially been concerned about the presence of police officers in the school:

'When we first went to the school it was a shock for them to see the police uniform. Initially there was high visibility in the area as we started working here to address issues with local gangs. Once this calmed down we could step back a bit. In the beginning some of the kids though 'oh my god' what are you doing here? Is the school that bad? [but] now it's an everyday thing, it's just normal'
[police officer]

Similar examples were also offered in relation to health and social workers. In each case, the head's work in redefining the nature of the school was critical to establishing the context for their presence and therefore required constitutive leadership.

Furthermore it demanded soft, locally negotiated ways of working, supported by broader national protocols, which promote trust and a genuine partnership culture locally. Establishing a cultural expectation of flexibility was key to this (Maher, 2007). Meanwhile trust itself is explored further in the next subsection of this report.

A further part of trust centred on demonstrating a willingness to allow others to lead.

Distributing leadership was consistently highlighted as important in establishing the structures for partnership working and I have already described this concept at some length in my literature review. Several leaders described the positive benefits it accrued in terms of supporting their daily activity:

To use a circus analogy, being a head is like being a plate spinner in a circus. You have to have your wits about you, keeping a look out for when one starts to wobble a bit and needs a bit more attention. The key to headship is knowing when a plate is about to drop off. Having such a big leadership team is like having another thirteen plate spinners on my side. At the very least, it's another thirteen pairs of eyes, to tell me when a plate needs a bit of attention"
[secondary head teacher]

In many instances distributed leadership involved sharing authority and accountability beyond the traditional confines of a single organisation more broadly to partner agencies, schools or the wider community. Some heads noted the challenge this brought to traditional notions of their work and their professional authority [a point also raised by Gastril (1997)]:

"A lot of people are afraid and a lot of heads think they have to do everything. But I have an extended school manager and all of my staff know what it's about, they've bought into the vision. Everyone who comes here is told what it's about and knows what the philosophy is. I can trust them to act to promote this"
[primary headteacher]

I explore this theme further later in my findings section, considering the approaches leaders adopted to promote shared leadership and the ways heads redefined notions of headship to support this. Meanwhile this quote is also helpful in highlighting the

broader significance of establishing an organisational culture to support distributed leadership and how influential the Headteacher is in this process.

Distributed leadership strategies were both formal and informal and as already noted often flowed beyond traditional organisational confines. Schools drew heavily on parents' willingness to support the development and provision of extended services, with the third sector also important within this. Students as end-users of services were also commonly utilised as a leadership group. For instance one school leader described the role students played in supporting consultations on the nature of provision required. In another, two sixth formers had joined the governing body, thereby contributing to the strategic leadership of the school in a very clear and tangible way. The deputy head's trust in students' capabilities to perform this role was very clear, as he noted how:

"If you give young people the opportunity and the responsibility, 90% of the time they will come through" [secondary school, deputy head]

However it is interesting to note that while the headteachers interviewed in this study were clear in their espoused commitment to distributed leadership, they also described how they frequently adopted a strongly directive leadership style to promote their personal and organisational values to establish and protect a culture conducive to collaborative working in pursuit of their desired leadership goals. In essence then this involved establishing a clear line around what was valued within the organisation and what would not be tolerated, which was reinforced through the consistent applications of rewards and sanctions, and an unfailing attention on demonstrating behaviours which were commensurate with these values at all levels. Thus it is arguable as to

what ‘to lead’ actually means in such instances, as such a strongly values based context for collaborative working places considerable constraints on the degree of flexibility others may have to innovate. Thus the cynic may argue that such contexts were highly normative and ‘to lead’ in fact actually meant to “to follow suit”. The potential paradox between these elements and their implications for day to day leadership practice is explored further, later in this chapter.

Concluding comments

In this subsection I have described how the most commonly identified factors in school based collaborations may potentially be grouped under four broad themes, these being:

1. Demonstrating resourcefulness to ensure the longer-term sustainability of the collaboration
2. Ensuring that services meet the needs of their target audience
3. Promoting the conditions for collaboration by establishing a shared vision and agenda and securing the involvement of partner agencies
4. Promoting a culture conducive to partnership working.

I have also noted how these themes were not mutually exclusive but rather contained a number of cross cutting issues. Moreover, I have demonstrated how these strands connect strongly with my blended model of collaborative leadership at a number of levels. For instance, both relational and constitutive leadership are important to each of these issues. Similarly political leadership is a major cross cutting theme and particularly significant in promoting long term sustainability and the vision for partnership working. Meanwhile authentic leadership and demonstrating a

commitment to values is especially valuable in establishing a culture conducive to partnership working, a further element of which focused on distributed leadership.

Of course such an approach to mapping these themes masks the tensions which exist between them and may potentially promote an overly simplistic view of what such leadership demands in practice. Indeed as noted elsewhere in my thesis, collaborative leadership requires the ability to reconcile tensions between authentic and affective performance and resolve ethical dilemmas inferred in the use of seemingly anti-collaborative approaches adopted to promote the interests of the partnership further. Core to resolving this tension is effectively redefining the role of the Headteacher by re-examining and reconceptualising the expectations that lay within it. This is no mean feat and in itself demands that competing aspects of structure and agency are accommodated. It also requires an unremitting focus on the minutiae of leadership practice and an awareness as to the significance of even seemingly mundane elements of the leadership role in establishing a context for partnership working. However as I shall demonstrate subsequently, I believe that establishing a new understanding of professionalism is fundamental to the successful leadership of school based collaborations, an understanding which remains connected to established visions of collaborative leadership but retains sufficient flexibility to support partnership working at the local level. I believe this process offers a means of explaining how leaders are able to adopt and accentuate various elements of their role in ways which are viewed as commensurate with both their professional standing and personal identity, and indeed both aspects are critical in promoting their perceived and actual sense of authenticity, which itself is fundamental to the promotion of trust. It is to this

issue of trust, already identified as a critical element in collaborative working, that I now turn.

Trust and 'trustworthy' leadership

In my previous sub-section I described how trust plays a fundamental role in promoting strong and flexible relationships, which form the bedrock to partnership working. I also highlighted its role in helping leaders to effectively define the context of the school to promote collaborative working and how trust is fundamental to distributed leadership. Finally being able to trust that the performance offered by the leader is authentic is essential in avoiding the potentially negative consequences of political leadership and the anti-collaborative approaches associated with it.

The importance of trust to collaboration is summed up by Child (1998) who notes that:

Although research has identified many determinants of cooperation, virtually all scholars have agreed that one especially immediate antecedent is trust (Child, 1998:242).

Similarly Hudson notes that:

Trust is often identified as a sine qua non of successful collaboration and conversely mistrust as a primary barrier. (Hudson et al., 1999:709)

In this subsection I explore the findings from the second phase of my fieldwork, which examined the issue of trust in partnerships in more depth. As noted on page 202 of my *Methodology and philosophy* chapter, this involved the development of six case studies, based around schools with a strong track record of collaborative working and

evidence of good leadership. This fieldwork was undertaken between March 2007 and September 2007 and comprised the completion of 32 interviews. It was also supported by a review of relevant literature.

Findings

An analysis of my fieldwork identified nine factors which were viewed by respondents as being fundamental in the development of trust. These are summarised in Figure 47.

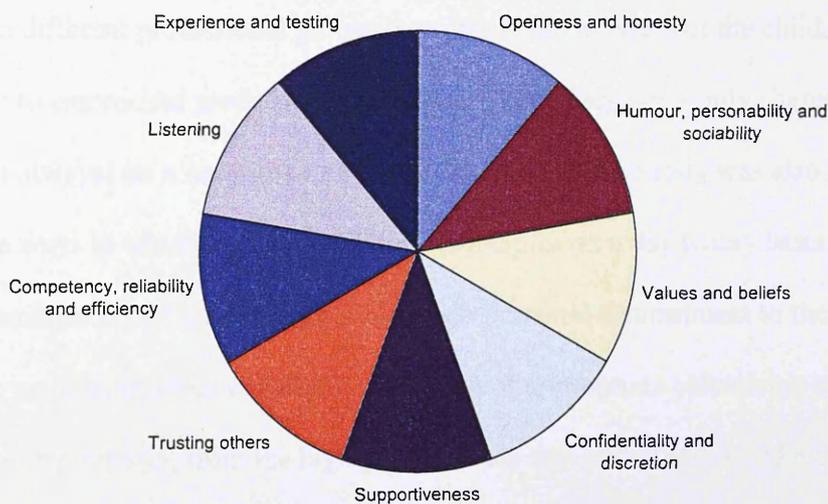


Figure 47 Factors which are fundamental to the development of trust

I will describe later in this chapter how these factors may be combined to develop a coherent, three dimensional view of trust, which sees it as based on one's underlying ideology, the behavioural manifestations of this ideology and other's perceptions of this action. However in the remainder of this subsection I restrict myself to describing

these nine factors in more depth. In doing so I make connections between my own research and the key findings the published literature.

Openness and honesty

Openness and honesty was the most commonly cited factor in determining the trustworthiness of leaders. There were several aspects to this. Most obviously it involved the perceived absence of deceit amongst followers, either directly or through omission. It also centred on a general willingness to exchange knowledge with others wherever possible (Woods et al., 2006, Kanter, 1994, Hudson et al., 1999). For instance, several respondents spoke about the need for an open sharing of information between different professional groups to promote the interests of the child, rather than a retreat to entrenched professional silos where knowledge was only shared [and even then not always] on a need to know basis. Openness and honesty was also concerned with the ways in which leaders lived these principles on a day to day basis (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003a), demonstrating their personal commitment to these values through an unremittingly consistent modelling of appropriate behaviours at all 'levels' of leadership activity, from the high profile to the day to day and mundane (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003b).

Openness and honesty also concerned the need for personal disclosure, required to promote professional relationships (Seashore Louis, 2003) and is fundamental to Reina and Reina's (2006) notion of *communication trust*. It involved being clear as to one's expectations as to the nature of the relationship, about respective roles and responsibilities and about the agenda which drive them (Lawrence, 2007, Lane and Bachmann, 1998, Barton and Quinn, 2001). That such roles were viewed by

respondents as contextually specific highlights their socially constructed nature and the role of constitutive leadership in this respect. It also assumes a flexible form of professionalism which may vary in response to factors such as local need, personal expectations and the personalities of those involved. Such a view of professionalism connects strongly with notions of authenticity and its underpinning assumptions that our values and personality are integral aspects of our professional self. Indeed a critical element of openness and honesty centres on the consistent demonstration of behaviours commensurate with these values on a day to day basis. In such instances, mundane behaviours should be viewed as of equal significance to the more 'glamorous' aspects of leadership, as followers are often likely to pay greater attention to such everyday actions and attribute them greater significance as a result. I return to theme later in this chapter, noting that such a vision of professionalism is critical to the performance of trustworthy collaborative leadership.

In this instance, openness and honesty related particularly to being honest as to one's values, backgrounds and beliefs; the various elements of our authentic selves (Tyler and Kramer, 1996, Gambetta, 1988b). In turn, it also reflected the need to be open to the views of other's, suspending judgements and respecting their rights to perceive things differently to us. One school counsellor described her view on authenticity as follows:

"Being authentic doesn't mean confessing your soul. It's about being real, strong but not indestructible, strong but human. I don't want a leader who I feel will buckle under the weight of the work. I want someone I believe can hold their position. The ones I don't want are the ones who do the position thing, talk manager speak and wear manager clothes and seem as if they're on a mission. It feels like you either go with them or you get lost. I like leaders who challenge

me and I can challenge as well, ask questions of and not feel it's disruptive or threatening and they think I should just get back in my box. I like it when I have leaders I can be open with. I may say off the wall things but they can tell me if it is or if it's a sensible thought" [secondary school counsellor]

Thus followers' confidence and belief that the leader's performance is a true, veritable reflection of who the leader is, is critical in the promotion of leader/ follower trust. I return to this theme in due course. The following quote from a social worker captures these various elements and also highlights the significance of both gut feeling and prior experiences in informing judgements as to whether the other was seen as honest or not:

I always think it's that first instinct you get when you meet someone, maybe because of my social work training, and you just get a feel for them, what kind of person they are, what their values are and whether you share these. And integrity too, that's really important to me. And if they say they're going to do something they do, and if they don't then why. That sort of honesty and openness I suppose. About them being direct with you. So if there's any issues you're straight about it, so it's over and done with and there's no lingering on. There's no hidden agenda. With some agencies we've worked with you know there is a hidden agenda and you know they're using you. They say you're great and this and that and you get involved and as soon as you do they start dumping referrals onto you, with no support. Quite a few times we've been coerced into relationships only for that to happen. And it's really sad that because it makes you quite suspicious next time someone rings up to get involved. Now we're far more formal and discuss exactly what they want from us and what we want from them so we're all really clear" [social worker]

Thus judgements as to the honesty of another can be viewed as both affective and calculative in nature and the ability to establish a rapport with others is clearly critical in this process. I return to this relational aspect subsequently in my consideration of the personability aspect of trust.

Values and beliefs

Values and beliefs build on the issue of honesty and openness and connect strongly with my description of authentic leadership. The values identified by respondents in this study as desirable included trusting others which is fundamental to distributed leadership and explored further in this subsection. The most widely shared value and belief related to what may be seen as a fundamentally ‘moral’ basis for partnership working in these contexts, which in turn centred on promoting the welfare of children through the achievement of the five ECM outcomes⁷⁴ and a more general commitment to doing what is best for children and families [a point which connects with several of the models outlined in my literature review and particularly with Bryk & Schneider’s concept of organic trust]:

“When I’m trusting other people, I have to believe that they want to do the best thing for children ...I think anyone who works with children has to have that moral purpose about them, want to do the best for children and see the welfare of children as paramount” [SESCO, secondary school]

Considerable care is needed when discussing ‘moral purpose’, for the notion of morality is highly ambiguous and heavily contextualised. Interestingly it was used in a

⁷⁴ The five outcomes are: enjoying and achieving, staying safe, being healthy, making a positive contribution, achieving economic well-being

largely unproblematic way by respondents visited in this study, with the general assumption that its meaning was self-evident. A large number of respondents mentioned elements of the *Every Child Matters* agenda, noting how it made explicit the values which underpin their collaborative working with different agencies. Only one health worker noted the need to unpick this further, stating that:

"[moral purpose] does need to be articulated at the outset so everyone knows what it means. I think everyone thinks they know...but coming together and having that shared understanding and shared purpose is critical" [health worker]

The 'moral purpose' assumed by interviewees appeared to contain a consistent focus on promoting the wellbeing of children and families. However it is interesting to note the subtle variations that existed in underpinning moral purpose between school leaders and those from other professional backgrounds. This is not to suggest that such variations were a source of significant tension, but rather to highlight how even these taken for granted, non-negotiables could not in fact be assumed to coincide. For instance a children's centre manager who was also a qualified social worker noted how:

"In social work, there's a tendency for values to be more around righting wrongs in terms of injustice, discrimination and equal opportunities, but there's less of an emphasis on that in education. I'm not saying those people don't have those values but just that it's less of a focus for them. Education is more concerned with people's right to learn, and having a passion with giving people the right to education and the power to achieve. They're both right it's just a difference in emphasis. But where you get good social workers and good teachers I think they do have the same ultimate aim of empowering families. The problem is

that there's a lot of people in all professions who don't give a buggar about children and families" [children's centre manager]

Police officers were also identified as working from a perspective which was more focused on promoting justice than educators. Overcoming these variations demanded a degree of flexibility on the part of all partners, and a willingness to focus on areas of commonality, while at the same time, respecting differences which may exist (Lloyd et al., 2001, Jackson, 2007, Gillinson et al., 2007).

In addition to promoting the wellbeing of children and families, a number of broader social values could be identified amongst professionals involved in this study [supporting Bachmann (1999)]. Foremost amongst these was the value of 'professionalism', which embraced respecting and trusting others' competence, judgement and commitment. As already noted, the fact that 'professionalism' is a fluid, socially constructed concept is critical in its ability to offer an overarching explanatory framework for considering variation in the definition and execution of the leader's role. I return to this theme again in due course.

Confidentiality and discretion

I have already begun to explore the issues of confidentiality and discretion in my discussion on communication [indeed a significant number of respondents noted the importance of both confidentiality and communication almost simultaneously]. While the need for discretion as a precursor to trust may almost appear self evident, the reality of day to day working was in practice more involved.

Several interviewees noted subtle variations in the concept of confidentiality between professional groups, which on occasions led to misunderstandings between different agencies. Indeed some professionals noted how actually *breaking* a confidence was important to maintaining the trustworthiness of the professional position:

"I guess trust is about feeling someone will treat information in a way which is respectful of you and the situation. It's respecting confidentiality as appropriate. It can't be absolute in fact I think I would trust someone more if they broke a confidence to protect me, rather than just keeping the confidence on grounds of principle" [school counsellor]

Even within a single professional setting, the notion of confidentiality was found to be blurred:

"In an "extended" school confidentiality can mean different things in different contexts. So I would hold things in my office more confidential than things which are discussed with staff on a general basis, because sometimes I have to do that to enable a child to tell their story. Although sometimes I have to break that also" [Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, secondary school]

Confidentiality contributes heavily to concepts of respect, which in turn are a consistent part of notions of relational and authentic leadership⁷⁵. Displaying, and being seen to display, the appropriate degree of confidentiality and trustworthiness is an important aspect of performative leadership and played a major role in helping to develop the appropriate culture for collaborative working (Ferrin et al., 2008). The issue of confidentiality also provides a good example of the significance of emotional

labour (Robson and Bailey, 2009), for in many instances such confidential knowledge may prompt an emotional response on behalf of the leader which they are required to manage in keeping with the relevant set of “feeling rules” (Sachs and Blackmore, 1998), for example when such information relates to issues of maltreatment or abuse. In such cases, emotional labour provides insight into the performative nature of leadership and how it may be manipulated to manage elements of authentic self in preference for displays of professionalism. In this case revulsion/ shock etc may be hidden in favour of expressions of concern.

Decisions on the treatment of confidential information were often far from clear cut. As a result the leader was often required to make judgements concerning what action, if any, they should take based upon this information, while at the same time, giving cognisance to the likely response of others. So in some instances sharing such information was generally recognised as the right thing to do and would be likely to promote trustworthiness further - in others it was seen as inappropriate and likely to reduce the degree of trust shown in the individual. That such boundaries are socially constructed and contextually specific makes responses difficult to predict and decisions to disclose even more problematic (Bolton and Boyd, 2003). Thus confidentiality can be seen to have a reflexive and reciprocal relationship with trust. On the one hand it contributes to the perceived trustworthiness of an individual, while on the other, it is dependent upon another’s trust in one’s professional judgement as to when maintaining or breaking a confidence is the most appropriate course of action.

⁷⁵ For instance it is an implicit feature of several of Bryk and Schneider’s [2002] *lenses of discernment* through which individuals decide if another is displaying trustworthy behaviour. Similarly Tschannan-Moran [2004] description of benevolence as one of the *five facets* which informs trust in all instances implicitly includes confidentiality.

In these ways, confidentiality may be viewed as both fundamentally underpinned by trust and as encapsulating many of the paradoxes associated with collaborative working in schools. Furthermore it exemplifies many of the issues connected with professionalism. It is at once both self evident and opaque; clear and confused; universal and contextual. Indeed the challenges of confidentiality offer a microcosm of the difficulties faced in dealing with the broader notion of professionalism, which I return to in due course.

Supportiveness

Supportiveness builds upon the values and beliefs described above and is indicative of a broader commitment to helping others to maximise their potential. As noted in my literature review, supportiveness features in each of the models reviewed, for instance it was part of Tschannen-Moran's (2004) notion of benevolence [page 116] and an element of loyalty within Covey's *13 behaviours* [page 125]. In my study, examples of supportiveness included making time to hear other's concerns and offering appropriate guidance as a lead professional on technical issues. For instance:

"[the business manager] is incredibly supportive and so approachable, so kind. Her heart is in the right place, she cares about the children and us" [secondary school secretary]

A further manifestation of this was adopting coaching techniques to help colleagues work through challenges they faced. As such leaders demonstrated a commitment to building capacity in others, empowering them to construct solutions that they owned through processes which could be utilised to address subsequent challenges in the future. There are clear links between this capacity building approach and Heifetz's

(2003) notion of adaptation, which also centres on developing expertise amongst followers to identify solutions to the problems they encounter. For instance one social worker described his relationship with his Children's Centre manager in the following terms:

"She's direct but in a supportive way is important. So for instance if there's a criticism coming your way, she'll say 'is there anything I can do to help with that? Is there a training need?' You always feel supported. I do trust her because if I take a problem to her, either professional or personal, she'll do her best to help. I had a concern about attending court and used to get really nervous, but I chatted with her about this and she suggested some coaching techniques which have really helped, things like relaxation and breathing control. If anyone had said to me when I started being a social worker that I'd do this I would have laughed but that's how much I trust her. Staff go to her with all sorts of problems and she'll listen, but she doesn't dish out advice, she talks you through it. I suppose I did use to go there for advice quite a lot, but soon found out that what happened was that you end up advising yourself at the end of that process. It's counselling rather than giving advice. And then if you do succeed it's you whose sorted it out, not the manager" [social worker, children's centre]

This quote illustrates the role of emotional labour in this relationship, as the leader clearly demonstrated her support for the social worker by offering counselling based coaching support. In this instance it appears that the level of support offered by the leader went beyond what would normally be anticipated and therefore incurred a cost to the leader in terms of time and, potentially, emotion. At the same time though, it promoted a greater sense of empowerment in the social worker, thereby encouraging

an improved performance on their part. Therefore such support certainly appears consistent with the notion of *prescriptive emotional labour*, described by Bolton and Boyd (2003) as motivated by altruism and a desire to achieve instrumental outcomes in keeping with the expectations of the professional role and the organisational culture.

Supportiveness also connects strongly with values typically associated with authenticity, including the desire to do the right thing for families and children, a point which connects my earlier discussion on ‘moral’ purpose. In this instance, demonstrating a supportive approach to vulnerable groups was just as significant as offering support directly to other professionals, as it showed a high degree of benevolence and as such was conducive to trust. As one social worker noted:

“It’s like when you first meet someone and they start talking about who they are working with. Having that emotional intelligence is so important. Showing they can empathise with families, that they’re non-judgmental. With some professionals you meet they start talking and say ‘I’ve got this family, they’re just a load of f-ing trouble’. Or ‘I hate going out there because they’re just wasters’. You can form a judgement in two seconds that this person doesn’t really care or give a damn about the people they’re working with, or a shit about what happens. They just want out of that relationship. I’ve sometimes had to say to social workers do you realise what your body language is communicating to this parent in this meeting? In one meeting, this social worker, every time this parent spoke, kept going ‘tut’. And shaking her head and the parent was getting angrier and angrier. She didn’t realise that she was telling this parent you’re talking a load of shit and I’ve got to stay here and listen to you. It’s basic stuff like that...I’ve spoken to individuals who are training to be social workers and

they've not understood what empathy is. You would have thought it was a basic part of their training but it's not" [social worker]

Again this quotation illustrates the importance of both emotional intelligence (Gardner, 1983, Goleman, 1996) and emotional labour (Robson and Bailey, 2009) in promoting trustworthiness. In this instance, the social worker demonstrated a more intuitive understanding of the relevant "*feeling rules*" which apply to such 'professional' discussions. Thus while feeling disdain towards others for their use of terminology, by masking these concerns he was able to engage in a constructive conversation over their future conduct, thereby converting a potentially confrontational discussion into one which is supporting and trusting. Furthermore it was through recourse to the notion of professionalism that this potential tension was resolved. I discuss the concept of professionalism further subsequently in this chapter. This quote is also helpful in highlighting the importance of seemingly mundane behaviour, as the negative body language of the social worker's colleagues clearly had an adverse affect on her relationship with her client.

Listening

Listening was one particular form of supportiveness highlighted as important by respondents. Again listening connects with a number of the other drivers of trust, most notably openness and honesty in developing the vision and determining which approaches to adopt. Larson et al (1986) for instance, note the importance of effective listening in performing reactive elements of leadership and as such view it as supporting competency based drivers of trust. Writers such as Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b), Feyherm (1994) and Huxham & Vangen (2005) have also

emphasised the importance of listening in promoting trusting follower-leader relationships, with the former of these using behaviour of this type to highlight the significance of mundane behaviours in promoting leader-follower relations more broadly. Listening also features within Covey's *13 behaviours* (2006), and Reina & Reina's *communication trust* (Reina and Reina, 2006).

In this study, a large proportion of interviewees noted that displaying a willing to listen to others at all levels was central to modelling an inclusive approach, which valued the views of all. In this instance, leaders listened to the views of others not only because they felt it was the right thing to do, but also because they were interested in the effect it would have on others. This belief in the potential power of listening to promote trust amongst others was vindicated in interviews with followers, who described the sense of value being listened to brought to them. As one health worker noted:

"Listening is just as important as talking to me. If I feel I am being listened to, I'm far more likely to trust someone" [health worker]

Wright and Taylor (1994) have described the role listening plays in promoting subordinates' feelings of being cared for and valued by leaders and this study also found evidence that displaying a willingness to listen was seen by followers an indicator of a caring personality. Meanwhile modelling a commitment to listening, leaders were seen to contribute to a wider culture of caring within the school, which in turn formed a key element of professionalism within this context. Once again this demonstrated a commitment to emotional labour, as listening increased confidence

amongst others and in turn promoted trust. This demanded patience and the ability to resist offering solutions, as evidenced by the following quote:

“In some family centres run by social services, they have 8 week programmes of work with parents. And I'd say, in 8 weeks what do you expect to achieve? We may not even get parents to start to tell us things about their past or present circumstances in 8 weeks, because why should they tell us their life stories when they don't know us and trust us with something confidential? But social services operate on this treadmill...some social services managers would say if they've not engaged after 4 or 5 visits then call it a day. But we know we have to give them more time to try to develop trust and support. Sometimes we do listening visits, where we just sit and hear what they have to say. We will try to get them to focus on one or two of their problems and then look to move on”
[social worker]

In highlighting how contextual factors such as time may adversely affect the development of trust between different partnership groups, this social worker also drew attention to the role positive experiences played in developing trusting relationships - a theme I return to subsequently in my thesis (Gambetta, 1988a, Good, 1988, Humphrey, 1998).

Trusting others

A willingness to model trust was viewed as an essential element of trustworthiness and connected strongly with values relating to respect for others. In simple terms, *“trust begets trust”* (Creed and Miles, 1996:33) and is fundamentally reciprocal in nature (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, Mayer et al., 1995, Gambetta, 1988b, Ferrin et al., 2008). The most obvious manifestations of this centred on the distribution of

leadership responsibilities. For instance one secondary head described how he was no longer involved in all but the most senior appointments in his school, with the remainder being managed by his senior and middle leaders. In a number of other instances, the development of extended service provision had been delegated to staff at an operational level and, in some instances, a strategic one too. Thus trusting others is an implicit and non-negotiable element of distributed leadership (Strauss and Harris, 2002, Woods et al., 2006, Southworth, 2004, Gronn, 2002), identified elsewhere in my thesis as an element of collaborative leadership. Further exploration of the approaches adopted confirmed that such delegation was not a *de facto* abdication, but rather the senior leader retained overall responsibility for the activity and needed to offer appropriate levels of support [often using coaching as described above]. Thus the leader was happy to delegate authority yet retain accountability, thereby ensuring a supportive environment for others to act.

It is worth noting that in some instances, followers found such distributed approaches something of a culture shock from the more directive leadership approaches they may have experienced previously. In such instances, leaders were required to effectively redefine this aspect of professionalism, thereby creating a culture within which distributed leadership was an expectation and not viewed as an abdication of responsibility.

In addition to demonstrating a willingness to let others lead, modelling trust in others included demonstrating openness with information, already described above. Implicit within this was the leader's ability to judge the appropriate degree of trust to offer. Discussions with leaders indicated that trusting others was not purely the result of

their personal disposition, but rather was more commonly based on a recognition of the benefits of adopting such a strategy and a consideration of the relative risks and benefits associated with it. This is not to suggest that some leaders were not of an implicitly trusting nature [many were], but rather to highlight how trusting was often used as a leadership strategy and the fact that for some: *“trusting others wouldn’t always come naturally and [they] had to work at it” [primary SENCO]*. Thus this quote offers us further evidence of how emotional intelligence and emotional labour inform the day to day performance of leadership in such contexts. Further support for this point came from a local authority advisor who noted that:

“In my view, some folks appear to start from a position of trust, others from a position of mistrust” [local authority advisor]

Furthermore, both quotes highlight the potential anxiety that this performance may produce for leaders in instances when it demands strategies which do not come naturally to them. As already noted elsewhere, redefining professionalism to contain expectations such as the increased use of distributed leadership may be one way of resolving this tension and this theme is considered further, later in this thesis.

The following quote offers one example of the process a leader went through in her decision to trust others:

“Part of why trust is so difficult is because it is so intuitive. When I walk into a room I sometimes think, yes I can work with that person. It’s like an interview - you know within the first five minutes whether someone is right. Your judgments can be made quite early on, because it’s a combination of your own intuition, your own experiences and your knowledge” [chair of governors, primary school]

This quote is helpful in highlighting the complexity involved in deciding whether or not to delegate. In this instance the decision to trust involved both a high degree of calculation (Lewicki and Bunker, 1996, Humphrey, 1998) and some ephemeral judgment, based on gut feel and intuition. Work by Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b) and evidence from this study indicate that such judgements are heavily influenced by the performance of seemingly mundane actions at an almost instinctive level. Thus our propensity to trust (Costa, 2003) is influenced by cognitive and affective states, which in turn are based on more general beliefs about the treatment individuals expect to receive from others (Mayer et al., 1995, Costa, 2003). Again the leader plays an important role in helping to determine followers' thinking in this regard, as such expectations will vary between contexts.

Experience and testing

As highlighted above there is a strong link between the extent to which a leader trusts others and their past experiences of trust. Some leaders described how their positive experiences of being trusted by others encouraged them to adopt a similar approach with staff. Such positive experiences were especially important when trust was displayed by a senior leader, reinforcing my earlier point concerning the significance of leadership performances which model trusting behaviours. For instance:

"I feel that personally I've been trusted by others and so it's a give back. My governors have been very trusting of me, the local authority has been very trusting of me, if I felt they weren't maybe I'd be different with my staff. I feel that I've got control and the mandate to work this school in a certain way"
[secondary head]

Experience also concerned instances when they have personally trusted others and their faith had been rewarded, or ones when they had been let down. Many leaders reflected on how trust grew gradually over time, but was lost quickly when betrayed – a point highlighted within Reina and Reina (2006), Lewicki and Bunker (1996) and Vangen and Huxham (2003b). One head encapsulated the view of many when he described how:

“If anyone tries to stitch me up, I won’t go with them a second time” [secondary head]

Another factor in heads’ willingness to trust others centred on an individual’s reputation for trustworthiness. Tyler and Kramer (1996) for instance note that this is informed by perceived levels of competence, while Good (1988) identifies motivations and background as important considerations. Reputation combined with one’s disposition to trust others therefore plays a major role in informing the development of a trusting culture. It also influences our responses to breaches of trust (Lewicki and Bunker, 1996, Reina and Reina, 2006). One head for instance described how she took a cautious approach to trusting:

“Time is a big issue. I don’t trust easily. Trust only develops over time...I had a new assistant head start some months ago. I could see she was a good teacher and a nice person but it’s only 6 months down the line that we opened up to each other. I could see she was doing the same, making judgements and weighing things up” [primary head]

In contrast, other leaders found the process significantly quicker as they were more confident to extend trust [at some level] from the start, although positive experiences were important in cementing this trust further.

Several leaders described how they proactively identified opportunities to test the trustworthiness of staff and writers such as Gambetta (1988b) have noted the importance of this approach, which is also central to Vangen and Huxham's (2003b) notion of the *trust building loop* and Lewicki and Bunker's (1996) *calculus based trust*. In this study, a special school head for instance highlighted how he had taken a bolder approach to developing trust within partnership arrangements both in terms of his view of others, but also their trust in him:

"I was very aware of trust and that we [the partnership] couldn't progress without it. In collaborations of significance, trust has to be present before you make the decision to collaborate. You need to win over stakeholders if your vision is to be achieved. You wouldn't even try to do this unless you were sure of the commitment of other partners, which is central to your trust in them. For me it wasn't intuitive and I had to create opportunities for trust to be tested and to be sure of its strength if we were to move forward. I had to establish trust with others, our external partners and internal stakeholders with the LA, staff, parents and governors" [special school head]

Others were more circumspect, and selected such opportunities in a very measured way, restricting them to areas where a breach of trust would be noteworthy but not catastrophic to the organisation:

"Like most people in this situation [of having to trust others] I lack confidence although it may not seem like that. So I try to feel my way and tentatively build up trust. I dip my toe in the water and test out the relationship, and move forward quite tentatively" [primary headteacher]

In either instance, the head sought to promote a culture within which trusting others was seen as the norm, by displaying a willingness to extend this trust themselves.

Competency, reliability and efficiency

Core to testing trust is the need to demonstrate competency, reliability and efficiency.

One police officer described how:

“We encourage staff to call us if they think there’s a problem and we do our best to go and have a look. For instance a few weeks ago a member of staff saw someone suspicious in the car park, going round and looking in the cars. They called us and we went there straight away and knew who it was and were able to nip it in the bud. So they trust enough to know they can ring us and if we’ve got manpower we’ll respond straight away” [police officer]

There are strong echoes between these themes and the notion of professionalism. One local authority officer for instance spoke of trust as based on *“others acting in a professional manner towards all involved and having the ability to do the job”*. Similarly a number of others described how they saw their own professionalism as a basis for other’s trust in them, which, when explored further, involved being fit to fulfil the responsibilities of their role and doing so habitually. This connects strongly with a number of Covey’s *13 behaviours* (2006), which include *delivering results, demonstrating accountability* and *keeping one’s commitments*. Similarly Bottery (2005) explicitly identifies competency as a key factor in informing the development of trust in his stage based model, while Reina and Reina (2006) describe *competence trust* as a key element of their overarching model. More broadly competence is inextricably intertwined with constitutive and performative leadership.

Humour, personability and sociability

Humour, personability and sociability are largely concerned with fulfilling the social pleasantries associated with an interpersonal interaction. The precise nature of these are highly contextualised, socially constructed and largely intuitive. As such they are difficult to define but clearly evident when encountered and notable by their absence when they are not. While not necessarily ‘deal breakers’ on their own, humour, personability and sociability are key to strong interpersonal relationships, providing the subtle cues which inform the ebb and flow of any social interaction (Goleman, 2007). As such they provide the foundations to trust. At one level they are indicative of a more general supportiveness, as they help others to feel more at ease in what may be difficult contexts. One educational psychologist described the importance of this in initial encounters with the parents of children he was supporting:

“You have to welcome people and help them relax, make a few jokes about the transport system and the weather! It’s human and helps to relax people. It’s neutral but also shows a shared vulnerability and brings people together”
[educational psychologist]

At one level such behaviours may appear to be mundane, even banal. However the significance of such mundanity should not be underestimated and has already been highlighted on a major theme in this thesis. Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b) for instance highlight its importance in informing followers’ perceptions of leaders and how followers attribute greater significance to such day to day actions when performed by leaders. For leaders therefore, recognising the significance of such actions is a critical part of their effective day to day performance of this role. The nature of such mundane behaviours is such that examples are often easier to witness

than to elicit via direct question and a number are offered in my subsequent subsection on *What trustworthy leadership looks like on a day to day basis*, for instance:

- Talking directly to children, demonstrating an interest in the learning activities they are undertaking
- Asking about family members, remembering their names, birthdays and the nature of any major illnesses
- Making occasional drinks for subordinates, such as PAs and office managers
- Handing out payslips to staff and thanking them for their contribution during the month
- Taking time to listen to concerns and worries of teachers and parents, even when this occurred at inconvenient times.

Warmth was a further consistent theme in interviews along with empathy, humility and generosity. Listening to and valuing others, already described elsewhere in this chapter, also played an important part in determining our perceived sociability. Similarly engaging in small talk and exchanging general pleasantries was significant, a point raised by Sjostrand and Tyrstrup (2001), who claim that such leadership behaviours are generally downplayed in favour of more stereotypical images of the leader as a great orator. A significant number of respondents drew attention to the role of the headteacher in modelling such behaviour, thereby setting the tone for the organisation more broadly – a point which is highlighted in several of the main theories of trust described in my literature review. For instance Covey (2006) includes demonstrating respect as one of his *13 behaviours*, while Bryk and Schneider's (2002) notion of relational trust places considerable emphasis on a number of these elements. This is evidence in the following two quotes:

“The leaders I’ve trusted have been interested in me as a person, not just the deputy head. They’d ask if I’ve had a good weekend that sort of thing, polite talk but genuine interest in each other as people. That’s quite important for me to trust them at least” [SENCO, secondary school]

“I have a friend who has worked here and at another school in the borough, and she much prefers the atmosphere here. She was quite surprised when she first came here that the Head is so approachable. It shocked me actually when I first came as to how friendly and approachable he is. He knows everyone’s name and chats about how they are and the football and stuff. You know he’s the Head and you can’t push too far, but you know you can go to him. I think the open atmosphere here does come from the head actually. You feel safe and secure here. There’s not much by way of staff turnover. People know they can talk to the head and the children know they can talk to the staff” [office manager, secondary school]

The notion of safety is central to both quotes but especially significant in the second where it is highlighted as a key factor and a pre-requisite for trust. Underpinning this is the fact that trust is essentially relational in nature and involves both professional judgements and personal emotion (Mayer et al., 1995). As noted above many respondents described how trust was at one level intuitive in nature and from this perspective informed by our own and the other’s levels of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996, Salovey and Mayer, 1990)⁷⁶. Indeed specific reference was made to emotional intelligence in a small number of interviews, with one head for instance

⁷⁶ Salovey and Mayer [1990] define *emotional intelligence* as a set of skills which contribute to the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and in others, the effective regulation of emotion in emotion in self and others, and the use of feelings to motivate, plan, and achieve in one’s life.

describing the steps she had taken to promote awareness of this amongst staff, parents and pupils. Emotional intelligence is closely related to the concept of emotional labour (Sachs and Blackmore, 1998) and in the case of personability, sociability and humour, it is the active performance of behaviours associated with these rather than a simple understanding of their implications which is critical. Bolton and Boyd (2003) have highlighted the importance of informal interaction in areas of ‘unmanaged organisational space’ [i.e. the various times during the day which are not clearly governed by organisational rules] and examples of these in this study included lunch breaks, out of school events and ‘downtime’ between activities. During such occasions rules governing roles may be relaxed [but are not absent] and the nature of activities performed more discretionary. Such activities are often viewed as routine and mundane in nature. For instance the expectations of a headteacher during a staff meeting are relatively clear. However it is a matter of choice as to whether she eats her lunch in the staffroom or her office, makes a drink for her PA or stops to chat informally to staff as they move between areas of the school. Evidence from this study suggests that leaders who demonstrated a greater propensity to engage in such activities and possessed a clear understanding as to the nature of behaviours required and were viewed more positively than those who did not. In this instance, emotional labour produces a sense of value and security amongst staff, and comes more easily to some leaders than others. As I describe elsewhere, I believe that reconceptualising the notion of professionalism so that such mundane and discretionary activity of this nature becomes essential to the leader’s role, offers a means through which these tensions may be reconciled and the danger of pseudo-authentic behaviours avoided.

Developing a three-dimensional framework for trustworthy leadership

As noted above, I believe that a closer examination of these nine factors identifies a number of consistent themes which I have used to development my original contribution to knowledge via the construction of a three-dimensional framework for trustworthy leadership, summarised in Figure 48.

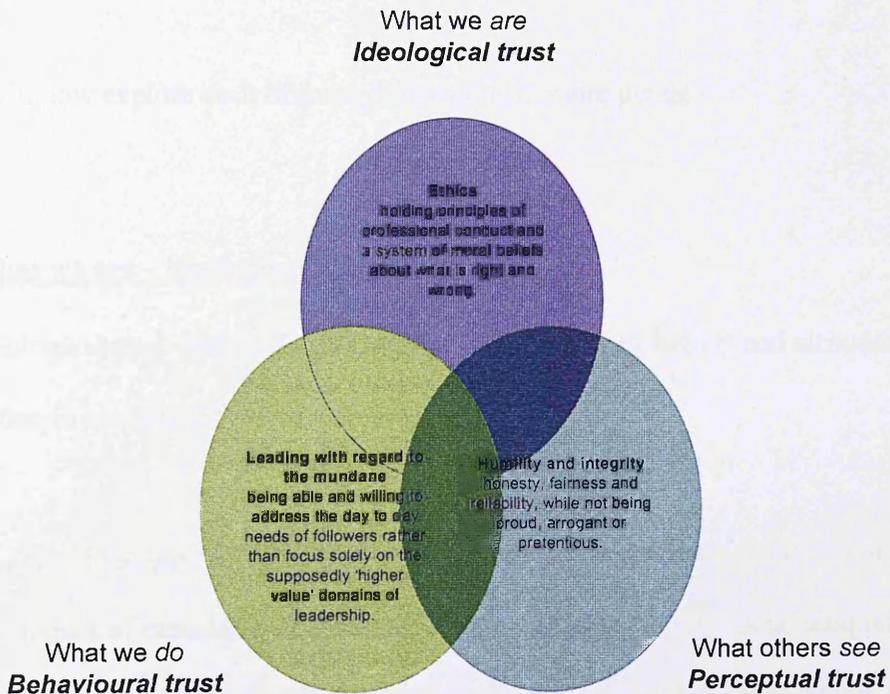


Figure 48 Dimensions of the triumvirate model of trust in leadership

In Figure 48, I identify three specific forms of trust, which I combine to form a triumvirate model to explain trust in leadership. These are:

1. What we are – ideological trust [e.g. ethics and values]
2. What we do – behavioural trust [e.g. leading with regard to the mundane]

3. What *others* see – perceptual trust [e.g. humility and integrity].

It is my contention that these notions of *ideological*, *behavioural* and *perceptual trust* collectively form the basis of all social judgements we make and together emphasise the implicitly relational nature of trust and the fact that in all instances, we have to trust *something or someone*, even if that *someone* is implicit to ourselves [for instance our abilities, judgement etc.]. Only when all three elements are in place can trust be sufficiently sound to support ongoing collaborative working.

I will now explore each of these dimensions in more depth.

What we are – ideological trust

Ideological trust centres on *what* we are, i.e. the values, beliefs and attitudes which underpin our actions.

The term ideology has often been used specifically in relation to political doctrine and as a means of explaining cultural hegemony and perpetuating social inequality (Giddens, 2001). However it also has a broader and more neutral meaning, which relates to the opinions or ways of thinking of an individual, group or subsection of society. Merriam Webster (2008) for instance defines it as “*a systematic body of concepts especially about human life or culture*”, while Porter (2000) sees it as the overarching philosophy, beliefs and values which underpin our day to day existence. Ideology can therefore be viewed to relate to our preferred way of existence, which in turn orientates us in our day to day actions.

As already noted, theories of authentic leadership highlight the significance of who the leader *is* in terms of the values, beliefs and attitudes which underpin their subsequent behaviours (e.g. Avolio and Gardner, 2005, Fry and Whittington, 2005, Gardner et al., 2005). Furthermore and in keeping with many post transaction leadership theories, many writers on authentic leadership describe the highly normative nature of such values and their strong ethical basis (Brown and Trevino, 2006, Chan et al., 2005, Hughes, 2005, Sparrowe, 2005). Thus authentic leadership is implicitly exemplary in nature. This emphasis on values is particularly strong in teaching and for many in the profession it represents a sense of vocation rather than occupation. Fullan (2001) for instance states that a sense of moral imperative is the underlying feature of schools, which are predicated on their ability to “make a difference” at a range of levels⁷⁷. Many school leaders interviewed in this study echoed this view and described their work as values based and indeed even moral in nature:

“Moral purpose is about doing what’s right for children, and perhaps a stronger theme in education than in other sectors. In education it is very difficult to work ‘on the make’. Moral purpose is paramount to schools. It’s what underpins everything. I’m very clear on the importance of having that.” Anna, Primary head

“When I’m trusting people to take things on, I have to believe that they want to do the best thing for children, and trust that they’ll recognise the confidentiality issues and those kinds of things...I think anyone who works with children has to have that [purpose] about them, want to do the best for children and see the

⁷⁷ Fullan identifies four potential levels of influence for schools, these being: [1] the individual level; [2] the school level; [3] the regional level; [4] for tomorrow’s society.

welfare of children as paramount. If you don't have that you might as well give up the job I think." Ben, Special school head

"The primary moral purpose has to be on the child, but you can't help the child in isolation. So the secondary moral purpose is to provide support to those around the child and in the child's life to help achieve the primary moral purpose". Donna, SENCO, secondary school

This study found considerable consistency in the values that headteachers and school leaders held, which centred on five areas:

1. Altruism and caring for others – dedication to supporting others, including children and adults in the school
2. Respect and fairness – treating people in a consistent and dignified way, judging each instance on its own merits
3. Trusting others – showing good faith in others and not prejudicing situations without sufficient cause
4. Professionalism – upholding the other values associated with their vocation
5. Honesty – believing in treating others in an open and truthful way.

Collectively these elements may be seen to form the values basis for school leadership and thereby offer an ethical basis for its professional performance.

What we do – behavioural trust

Behavioural trust centres on the specific actions, approaches and strategies used by leaders during the performance of their duties. Authentic leadership highlights the

strong connections between these and the values held by leaders, which effectively served as a moral compass that guides the approaches they adopted. As already noted, ensuring consistency between beliefs and actions is fundamental in protecting the leader's integrity, which itself is essential in ensuring an ongoing mandate for action amongst followers (Cuilla, 1998, Broussine and Miller, 2005). Furthermore this involves paying attention to the detail of their day to day practice, thereby ensuring that all behaviours, however routine and mundane, are commensurate with their underpinning values.

Together with ideological trust, I believe that *behavioural trust* provides the basis for the notion of professionalism, which itself underpins the extent to which others perceive us as trustworthy [i.e. *perceptual trust*].

In the remainder of this sub-section, I explore the values identified as essential to displaying on *ideological trust* and use these as a framework for considering the behaviours which support trust in this study.

Altruism and caring for others

As already noted, altruism and caring for others centres on the commitment to support others. In this study, there were two broad strands to this. The first of these centred on the overall purpose of the leader's work and their commitment to improving children's life chances which was clearly evidence in practice. For instance Anna, the head of a primary school, was committed to promoting the wellbeing of children and her work as a Special Education Needs Co-ordinator [SENCO] had been driven by a passion to help the neediest of children. This desire had in turn led her to apply to teach at one of

the toughest schools in the city. Similarly Ross, the head of a secondary school, was driven by a belief in inclusion and had implemented a series of initiatives which had resulted in his school receiving successive 'outstanding' ratings from Ofsted in this respect.

The second theme centred on how these headteachers demonstrated care for others in the pursuit of these aims. For instance these leaders displayed a consistent commitment to CPD both in terms of supporting external training and coaching and mentoring staff. Indeed it was perhaps the instances where the heads themselves offered personal guidance that evidenced this most of all and Tschannen-Moran (2004) highlights the importance of coaching in promoting trust. Several of the heads in this study demonstrated a strong coaching style of leadership, combining support and challenge as they helped individuals to develop their own solution to the issue they faced. For instance one school leader commented:

"On a one to one basis her approach was outstanding. It was her counselling, her coaching skills, she'd question you and take you through issues. She was really clear and would help you through with your thinking. She'd never give you advice or make judgements she'd just help you work it out. Her support was outstanding." Sam, SENCO, primary school

Coaching involved talking individuals through the challenge or issue they faced, helping them to decide on the appropriate strategy to tackle it and assisting them where necessary through this process. This was seen as more beneficial than offering ready made solutions, as it empowered the individual concerned, building their self confidence and belief in their own capabilities.

On another level, caring for others was frequently evidenced through the performance of mundane acts such as making others an occasional tea or coffee, opening doors and finding time for others for instance through an informal conversation when the opportunity arose. The importance of such mundanity has already been described elsewhere in this thesis. Listening was also singled out as important, as much for its own sake than as part of any formal consultation strategy. In the context of trust it was the importance of listening as a means of demonstrating interest in the individual that mattered most, as like coaching, such displays of emotional labour were taken as providing evidence of a caring personality:

“My manager is always very clear that if anyone has any personal issues or anything on their mind, they can go and talk to him. He’s always quite open, always has an open door policy. He always says ‘if you need to come and talk to me, I’m here for you. All we have to say is ‘can I have five minutes?’ or whatever, and he makes time for you straight away. That’s important. If people make the time for you to talk it makes you feel that your issues are worthy of being talked about.” Ruth, Police Officer, Secondary school.

As I have already highlighted, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b) describe the ways in which followers attribute greater significance to mundane actions such as these when they are performed by leaders and this theme is returned to again in my consideration of perceptual trust.

Fairness

These heads’ active commitment to fairness on a daily basis was critical in promoting trust. Several described the need for equity and clear processes which would prevent potential injustice or the prejudicial treatment of students or staff. Examples of this

included being equitable, consistent and not having favourites. Fairness requires courage and conviction as a commitment to being fair can also place the head in a disadvantageous position, at least in the short term, and as such provides further examples of the willingness of such heads to engage in emotional labour (Sachs and Blackmore, 1998) during the course of their work. Over the longer term though, it is likely to generate greater respect and regard, and lead to increased trust.

For instance, Steve, the head of secondary school C, was clear that resources and support should be allocated on the basis of need and not convenience. Reflecting on his predecessor, he noted that:

“The former head responded to whoever shouted the loudest. There wasn’t much trust in the school. People weren’t confident that if the head said yes to them, ten minutes later she wouldn’t say yes to someone else. Rewards were allocated on the basis of volume - whoever shouted the most got them. People were promised things but these promises weren’t always carried through.”
Steve, secondary Headteacher.

In this instance, the former head was distrusted because she was seen to lack integrity, moral fibre and did not carry through on her commitments.

Fairness also requires leaders to recognise when they have made mistakes and to seek to right these wrongs. For instance a number of interviewees described how they had made mistakes in this regard in the past and had learnt from these, taking steps to ensure that such mistakes were not repeated.

Trusting others

Bennis (in Covey, 2006:223) states that *"leadership without mutual trust is a contradiction in terms"*. Similarly Creed and Miles (1996:33) have described how *"trust is built by trusting...trust begets trust."* While these quotes take slightly different perspectives, they both highlight how trusting others is an essential requirement of leadership designed to develop high trust organisations.

Demonstrating a willingness to trust others is a critical part of distributed leadership (Kirwan et al., 2007) and was a consistent theme in this study, where numerous examples of distributed leadership were identified. For instance at one level, a SENCO described how she had been trusted very early on by the head to lead the school assemblies, and the positive feelings this had engendered within her. At another, I encountered several instances where the headteacher effectively delegated both strategic and operational responsibilities for significant areas of activity while still retaining overall responsibility for their success. In all instances though the distribution of leadership was both a pragmatic response to the day to day demands of school leadership and the outcome of a philosophical commitment to empowering others.

Professionalism

Professionalism is concerned with defining and performing a role in accordance with an underpinning set of beliefs. It is therefore inextricably linked with trust as it shares a common focus on both values and competency (Evetts, 2003). It connects closely with the expectations of leader and follower alike, and is informed by past experiences and understanding of the purpose of the role.

As I describe later in this chapter, the notion of professionalism is not static but rather defined and redefined in an ongoing way (Doyal and Cameron, 2000). For instance Barton and Quinn (2001) note how engaging in partnership work is an increasingly core element of the leadership role, while Riddel and Tett (2001) describe the ways in which the recent emergence of extended schools has blurred the nature of school leadership. Furthermore the specific nature of professionalism emerges through its day to day performance and is informed by the responses of the audience who receives it. Hanlon (1999:3) for instance describes it as *"the product of a dialectical relationship with its environment"*. Meanwhile I have described on several occasions already the significance of emotional labour and this connects strongly to professionalism in this context. Thus we may view professionalism as reflexive and socially constructed, but residing within a broader set of assumptions and structures.

Professional socialisation (Evetts, 2003) is concerned with how individuals learn to behave in ways which are viewed as appropriate to their role and I describe later in this thesis, modelling forms a key aspect of this process, as all behaviours demonstrated by the leader are observed and internalised by followers.

Professionalism is therefore highly normative and for this reason is viewed by critical theorists as a means of ensuring ideological control and protecting cultural hegemony (Gramsci, 1990). In the context of this study, identified elements of professionalism involved confidentiality and demonstrating a general care about the way one talked of others, especially when they weren't present. It also included delivering results and keeping one's commitments. Being able to trust the head's word was critical. Delivering results also meant displaying competency in the areas associated with the

role in a reliable and efficient way (Erickson, 2006, Yukl, 2002), both in one's professional and private life. Professionalism is returned to subsequently in this thesis.

Honesty

Honesty was consistently highlighted as fundamentally important to trust by interviewees. This was more than simply not telling lies and also involved demonstrating openness and authenticity. One head for instance highlighted the importance of this type of honesty and openness in discussions with other professionals in reaching a shared understanding of a child's need:

"One of the things I knew would be an issue when I started working with people from different professional bodies is there is a different way of thinking and trust is respecting and understanding that difference. For instance social services will look at a young person's needs differently to me, because I'm an educator and that young person has got to learn in this environment and not affect the learning of others. But social services will look at that person's needs quite differently, particularly if they start getting excluded, so it's trying to see other's points of view really. That's the key element. There needs to be a robustness that you can challenge people and be open and honest with people, because if you try to hide things from others then trust breaks down. And that takes time because initially you can't have that dialogue as it will have an adverse affect on the relationship. It takes time to build up that respect for different people's point of view." Steve, head, secondary school.

Thus honesty involved being seen as open, truthful and displaying integrity (Mendonca, 2001, Broussine and Miller, 2005). It also involved being willing to acknowledge one's own mistakes and being open to feedback (Yukl, 2002). However

it was also critical that leaders accepted this with good grace and respected the views of others. Instances when leaders solicited feedback but resented the messages they received were seen as real breakers of trust.

A commitment to demonstrating openness is fundamental to the notion of *authentic leadership* (Avolio et al., 2005) and emphasises the need for self awareness and behaviours that consistently and transparently demonstrate a commitment to one's values. Authenticity is identified by writers such as Chan (2005) as a driver of trust, which in turn positively influences other proximal outcomes of leader-follower relations⁷⁸. The theme of authenticity is returned to later in my description of the daily practice of trustworthy leadership, during the course of which I consider the tensions between structure and agency in the performance of headship on a daily basis.

What others see – perceptual trust

In contrast to ideological and behavioural trust, perceptual trust is concerned with the trustor rather than the trusted, and the lens through which the trustor views them. To this end, the main focus of perceptual trust is on those factors which influence our viewpoints of others.

Writers such as Thomas (2004) note the almost continual glare of attention that leaders endure from followers and the ways in which their interpretations inform leader-follower relations. As Thomas notes: "*People in organisations are keen observers of leadership behaviour. They quickly note any disparities between what leaders say and what leaders do*" (2004:64). Perceptual trust therefore focuses on

⁷⁸ Chan [2005] sees these influences as positive factors in promoting leader-led interventions, which in turn enhances overall organisational outputs and which he terms *the leadership multiplying effect*.

how we are *seen* to be or act, and draws attention to the ways in which followers interpret and construct meaning from a leader's action (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997, Saunders et al., 2003). As already noted, mundane actions are especially important in this regard because of their immediacy to followers. However the nature of such practice has generally been neglected – an oversight I feel my work serves to address. Therefore it focuses on issues of role and expectation, and other factors which predispose us to trusting others.

Dispositions to trust and perceptions of trustworthiness

All decisions to trust are made within a context of uncertainty. They therefore involve some form of conscious or subconscious consideration of the motives and competency of the other and a calculation as to the potential risks and benefits of entering into a trusting relationship (Rus and Iglic, 2005, Humphrey, 1998, Hudson et al., 1999). According to transactional theories, trust will only be granted if the potential benefits are seen to outweigh the possible risks (Powell, 1996, Doney et al., 1998). Two factors play a major role in underpinning these decisions. These are our:

1. disposition to trust and
2. perceptions of the trustworthiness of the other

These factors are distinct but closely connected. *Disposition to trust* relates to our generalised and abstract willingness to trust while perceptions of the *trustworthiness of the other* centres on specific, concrete decisions to trust within a specific given context.

Disposition to trust is influenced by both cognitive and affective states. Seashore Louis (2003) notes its strongly emotional dimension, which in turn is based upon more general beliefs about the treatment individuals expect to receive from others (Mayer et al., 1995, Costa, 2003). These beliefs are not static but rather are influenced by our life experiences, cultural background, education and other socio-economic factors (Sako, 1998). The power and control we retain [and by inference the degree of vulnerability we display] is also a major factor in this (Sydow, 1998). Our propensity to trust therefore changes over time and varies between contexts, providing further evidence of the socially constructed nature of trust.

Perceptions of trustworthiness are closely linked with our general disposition to trust but are more flexible and negotiated at an individual level. For instance I may have a general disposition to trust police officers based upon the underlying values of the police service, these being: collaboration, trust, respect, accountability and public service (Reid, 2007). However my decision to trust any individual police officer will be heavily influenced by their personal behaviour and any additional supporting information concerning their reputation. I am more likely to trust individuals who display cues consistent with my expectations of their role and reserve the right to distrust those who do not. Individuals who appear to perform their role in accordance with the principles that govern it will therefore be afforded greater levels of trust than those who do not. Furthermore, as I have already noted, these principles are at once fixed and fluid, embracing widely recognised values which are interpreted through localised practice. These ideas are subsequently explored later in my thesis when I consider the ways in which our understandings of roles develop through negotiation and ongoing social interaction, and the significance of how a role is performed on a

daily basis, in promoting trusting relationships. I also return to the importance of modelling and Social Learning Theory in my consideration of daily leadership practice. These themes are of great significance to perceptual trust and writers such as Tschannen-Moran (2004) have highlighted how leaders need to demonstrate trustworthiness at all times, a point reiterated throughout my thesis in my emphasis on mundane leadership practice. Interestingly Tschannen-Moran highlights the importance of leading *quietly* in this; evidencing personal humility, exercising restraint and modesty, but nevertheless retaining a tenaciousness in their pursuit of the overarching goals. The notion of ‘quiet’ leadership was clearly evident in this study and many school leaders and other professionals highlighted the importance of humility as a characteristic which promoted trust in relationship. As noted earlier in this thesis, this is also a new, but growing area of interest in leadership more broadly (e.g. Lowney, 2003, Sugrue, 2009). Sally, an official from the local authority, described how she trusted Ben, the head of a local special school as:

“the head is one of the quietest, most dignified and modest gentlemen on one level, but he is assertive and knowledgeable, and doesn’t typify what some people would see as a ‘classic’ leader. The respect and the trust that his staff have for him is total and completely reciprocated. He just role models how an outstanding leader can be.” Sally, local authority official

Sally’s comments highlight the value of humility and modesty which were consistently cited as important factors in the development of trust. Moreover her quote is especially relevant as it calls into question how the nature of leadership is defined and highlights its highly contextualised and socially constructed nature (Grint, 2005b, Sjostrand and Tyrstrup, 2001). In this instance, Ben’s quiet and modest approach was defined as a strength rather than a weakness, as it connected strongly with the values

held by subordinates and was viewed as promoting meaning through the effective performance of leadership on a day to day basis. However in contexts which may place a far greater emphasis upon charisma and oratory prowess, such an understated approach may be viewed as a potential weakness⁷⁹.

Further insight into the issue of personal style came from Wendy, a health worker, who reflected that:

"I really do think that not everybody can do it [leadership]. My previous manager at the time was quite quiet and gentle and softly spoken, but she had this ability to hold the team safely and for people to talk to her safely, and not to judge them. Not a big shouty leader or manager but someone who just got on with things, had good relationships with other agencies and was respected. I don't know whether you can teach people that kind of stuff, I think it's just there. Perhaps it can be tweaked and stuff but I think there is something that's innate, perhaps to do with their parenting and so on, which makes them more personable, less threatening and less narcissistic."

While Wendy also espoused her preference for a quiet form of leadership, her quote is especially interesting as it questions whether it is possible to 'teach' people humility and other characteristics associated with trustworthiness. In this way, she implicitly focuses on the need for the leader's performance to be perceived as authentic and in keeping with their underlying personality traits and values. Of course there is a limit as to how far leaders may go with such an approach before it calls into question the authenticity of their performance, but as I have highlighted, emotional labour offers a

⁷⁹ The most obvious example of this is politics and the case of Iain Duncan Smith, for whom the sobriquet of "The Quite Man" ultimately became of term of derision.

potential means through which concepts such as humility, respect and caring may be made manifest. As a result, it is possible to promote levels of perceptual trust through the careful management of leadership actions and by giving attention to the processes through which meaning is attributed to them.

As noted above, there are very clear connections between perceptual, ideological and behavioural trust and this section is helpful in bringing these into relief. For instance, our disposition to trust is directly informed by our views on the importance of trustworthiness per se and if we do not value trust, we are less likely to trust others ourselves. Furthermore if we do not believe trust is important or chose not to trust, others are less likely to display trust in us. As noted already, *trust begets trust*, and perceiving others as trustworthy will lead to trustworthy behaviour which is likely to be reciprocated (Möllering, 2005)⁸⁰.

It is therefore consistently meeting others' expectations which is most fundamental in perceptual trust. This theme is developed further in the next sub-section of my thesis, in which I consider the significance of the performance of the leadership role and its connection with Social Learning Theory as a means of promoting trust more broadly.

Concluding comments

In this sub-section I have summarised the evidence from the second phase of my study, which centred on the drivers that promote trust. In it I identified nine specific factors which influence the emergence of trust, these being:

⁸⁰ Of course this need not necessarily be the case and as in love, trust can be unrequited.

1. Openness and honesty
2. Values and beliefs
3. Confidentiality and discretion
4. Supportiveness
5. Trusting others
6. Experience and testing
7. Competency, reliability and efficiency
8. Listening
9. Humour, personability and sociability

In doing so, I described their essential features and the potential synergies between these various aspects. Moreover I outlined my triumvirate model of trustworthy leadership, which forms a major part of my original contribution to knowledge and in which I identified three intertwined forms of trust, these being:

1. What we *are* – ideological trust [e.g. ethics]
2. What we *do* – behavioural trust [e.g. leading with regard to the mundane]
3. What others *see* – perceptual trust [e.g. humility and integrity].

During this discussion I described how the first two of these, ideological and behavioural trust, provide a potential template for professionalism for leaders, while the third, perceptual trust, offered a process through which judgements may be made against these. As such this model highlights the implicitly relational nature of trust.

At the same time, I highlighted the connections between my findings and the broader literature on trust, demonstrating how each of the themes I identified connects with and builds on existing evidence. I have also made connections with the wider literature on partnership working, and in doing so, demonstrated how my findings support my blended model of collaborative leadership of schools, developed as part of my literature review. During this discussion I showed how these aspects of

collaborative leadership are not mutually exclusive, but rather are complementary and strongly interconnected. For instance positive experiences stemming from having tested trust in the past may promote perceptions of another as competent, reliable and efficient. Similarly listening is one manifestation of supportiveness and may also involve protecting confidences and demonstrating discretion. Openness and honesty can be seen as aspects of sociability and personability.

In this section I have argued that it is through the consistent modelling of these characteristics that the leader informs the culture of their organisation, promoting an ethos which is consistent with their underpinning values and supportive of trust. In doing so, I have emphasised the significance of mundane actions in this process, a point which is neglected in many existing theories and a theme I develop further in my own work. In this way, modelling can be viewed as part of a broader leadership performance, the precise nature of which emerges in response to the specific context within which it resides. As already noted, this performance must be commensurate with both leader and follower expectations of the leadership role, which are at once both mutually informing and informed by their broader context. Furthermore this definition of leadership must support the leader's own sense of authenticity if it is to promote an authentically trusting relationship between leader and follower. As I have highlighted in this section, in instances where the leader is seen to be displaying affected behaviours, this relationship may become compromised resulting in a loss of trust and increased suspicion.

However I have also drawn attention elsewhere to how the effective leadership of collaborations necessitates that leaders occasionally undertake manipulative and

Machiavellian actions. Such behaviours are clearly at odds with the positive values assumed within the notion of trustworthiness and are frequently incompatible with the specific values held by the leader themselves. As such then there is an implicit tension between the 'who' and the 'what' of collaborative leadership, which must be resolved if a veritable rather than pseudo-authentic leadership performance is to be given, and leader-follower trust developed further.

One specific aspect of this centres on emotional intelligence and emotional labour, i.e. the specific tasks undertaken by leadership to manage emotion and offer a practical exemplification of a supportive ethos. However differentiating between an appropriate level of emotional management and the de facto manipulation of emotions is highly problematic and fundamentally intuitive and perceptual in nature. I have already argued that this is dependent upon the effective definition of professionalism within its specific context, and how this in turn is an ongoing, fluid and reflexive process.

In the next subsection of this chapter, I explore the practicalities of this performance more fully, exploring the ways in which leaders fulfil the key elements of this role on a day to day basis, a performance which is fundamentally important to the creation of trust and effective collaborative leadership in schools. I also consider the part that professionalism plays in this, reconciling tensions which emerge as part of this process.

What trustworthy leadership looks like on a day to day basis

Introduction

In my preceding consideration of the factors that promote trust in partnership working, I offered quotations and illustrations of how these may be manifest in practice, drawing attention to various connections and cross cutting themes which relate to them. In this sub-section I build upon these examples by offering seven vignettes which describe and analyse seven incidents that occurred during the direct observational fieldwork I undertook of two headteachers involved in the leadership of school based collaborations over six days during phase three of my study. While these incidents vary in nature, they all share a fundamental reliance upon the presence of high trust relationships in one way or another.

Each vignette comprises a brief description of a specific event, followed by an analysis of the role trust played within it and the behaviours that promoted trust within this context. Vignettes are presented in the broad order in which they occurred and are drawn equally from the two schools visited. Thus I start with a description of the pre-school briefing which occurred in school A, and conclude with the de-briefing of an unsuccessful applicant to a position in school B, which took place late one evening.

At the end of this sub-section I conclude that it is consistently offering a seemingly authentic performance of leadership, which is bespoke and in harmony with the context of its enactment that is critical to the development of trust. At the same time I highlight the attention each leader gave to seemingly mundane elements of their performance and its significance in promoting trustworthiness more broadly. I also

highlight the role professionalism played as a means of reconciling those aspects of this performance which present the greatest challenge to the leader's sense of integrity and providing a framework against which the trustworthiness of behaviours may be assessed.

Findings

1. "Morning prayers"

Description

In school 'A', Edd, the headteacher had instigated a daily briefing meeting. This involved all staff congregating in the staff room at 8.30am to hear a set of notices, read by his deputy head. Notices began with announcements from management as to the events of the day and were augmented by any points individual staff members wished to make. At the end of the briefing, the floor was open for any other individuals to make further announcements to colleagues.

'Morning prayers' had become firmly established in the school in a relatively short period of time. It had initially been introduced by the head to address an identified lack of formal communication between management and staff, but had also been motivated by his desire to increase the visibility of other senior leadership team [SLT] members. Edd was clear that in the deputy's absence an alternative member of the SLT should lead this session, rather than him filling in. At the end of 'morning prayers' the head was available to address any specific issues staff members had. The briefing had the incidental benefit of promoting increased sociability amongst teachers

and between staff and leaders, as it ‘forced’ individuals out of their offices and classrooms and into the communal and neutral space of the staffroom.

The session I attended was characterised by its relative informality and the low hum of relaxed chatter, as staff mingled with each other before the start of the working day. Once the briefing began, staff listened quietly to the deputy as he ran through the notices, but the atmosphere did not become stifled or formal. Indeed there was much amusement when the final notice announced that I was shadowing the head for three days to “research what a headteacher does”, particularly when the head’s PA heckled “can he tell us when he finds out?” At the end several staff raised points for other’s attention, ranging from the official to the social. In our subsequent discussion, Edd summarised the importance of “morning prayers” in the following terms:

“Morning prayers is important on a number of levels. It’s the only chance we all get to come together at the start of the day and it’s also important that the deputy head leads on this. It says that we’re a leadership team and that he is just as capable as I am of tackling any of the day to day stuff. It also gives staff a chance to grab me for five minutes if they have something they need to ask me – it just makes things a bit less formal and more accessible for folks”

Analysis

The above quotation is important in gaining greater insight into the symbolic significance of “morning prayers”. While on one level it may be viewed as a relatively straightforward team briefing session, it demonstrated the head’s commitment to promoting a culture of trust on a number of levels. Firstly the introduction of a daily briefing evidenced a strong commitment to openness and honesty on behalf of the

school's leadership team, with the inference that other day to day issues may be dealt with by them also. At the same time, Edd demonstrated trust in other members of the SLT by delegating its running initially to his deputy and in his absence, any other member of the senior team. He also showed trust in others by allowing any member of staff to raise an issue during this session without the need for prior agreement, enforced through the use of a formal agenda. Thus he was content to release control to others, confident that this trust would not be used against him. Edd also clearly showed supportiveness towards others by listening to any concerns they may have at the end of the briefing. Finally in this specific instance he displayed good humour in his response to the ribbing he received from his PA in relation to my shadowing of him, demonstrating both trust in the sincerity of this member of staff and a high degree of personability and humour.

However Edd had undertaken a great deal of work to establish the context for these displays of trust and as such given considerable attention to the minutiae of this element of his daily practice. Most notably this involved establishing clear boundaries and expectations of others, thereby clarifying the degree of flexibility and informality that he would permit. For instance, Edd was very clear that he expected all staff to attend these briefings except in exceptional circumstances. Indeed Edd described to me how in the early days of these briefings, he had visited classrooms to ensure that staff had not 'hidden' there to avoid attending. This approach was highly directive in style and indicative of Edd's initial lack of trust in the commitment of all staff to these sessions. It may therefore be viewed as an example of anti-collaborative leadership, undertaken to achieve a desired, positive outcome. By portraying leadership in this

way Edd sent a clear message to his staff as to [a] the value he placed on these briefings and [b] his determination to ensure that all staff should attend them.

Similarly it was evident that while ‘prayers’ were led by his deputy or another leader, the scope of this delegation was quite tight and ostensibly comprised the role of the chair. The format for the briefing was therefore clearly modelled by his deputy head, who understood and complied with Edd’s expectations. It could even be argued that clear boundaries related the degree of informality which existed in the briefing. For instance while staff chatted in a relaxed fashion prior to its commencement, hush descended as soon as the deputy head stepped forward to talk –no request for quiet was required. Thus staff were clear as to the protocols which existed and behaved accordingly, with the unspoken understanding that any deviation from this line would not be tolerated. In this respect, Edd had utilised a masculine, directive leadership style to afford staff limited agency within a clearly defined structure, in a similar way to which Edd was able to perform his role.

2. Assembly

Following morning registration, Alison, the headteacher of school ‘B’ led an assembly of 120 infant school children and staff. As part of this she recounted the story of Chief Seattle and the potential sale of lands to European settlers in the USA. Seattle was noteworthy as he rejected the offer to buy these lands because of the Suquamish belief that all land was sacred:

Flowers are our sisters

Animals are our brothers

Water is the blood of the land and our ancestors

Air is precious, it gives us life and carries away our last sigh

The earth is our mother and whatever happens to it also happens to our children.

Alison used this story to highlight society's ethical responsibilities and connections between the individual and their broader social and ecological environment. Her assembly linked with the school's theme for the week: "us and the world". The focus on the importance of respect for others and the world was key to this. Later that week her junior assembly explored the holocaust, which reiterated some of the themes examined in this assembly.

On our way back to her office, Alison pointed out an impressive wall display by the side of the main office, which explored some of the issues examined in this theme. She also highlighted the plants students were growing as part of this project and in support of their science curriculum. Alison described how the opportunity to influence children's views was for her, one of the most important parts of headship:

We have a massive opportunity to help create the society that we want our children to live in. Yes tests are important but it's their values and how they relate to each other and the world which is really key. It's an enormous responsibility too and we should never forget that.

Later in her office I notice a picture of a child in Alison's office with a quotation from Ginot's (1972) poem, "The Teacher" which further illustrates this responsibility to set a positive example:

"The Teacher. I have come to the frightening conclusion: I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated; a child humanised or demonised" (Ginott, 1972)

Alison described how this poem epitomised her personal philosophy and how its presence constantly reminded her of her responsibility as headteacher.

Analysis

Alison was explicit in her pursuit of a moral vision as head of the school. Her assembly was heavily values based and concerned with promoting a positive ethos among staff and children alike. Thus she was clear that part of her role as headteacher was to positively influence the views and values of children and in doing so, set clear boundaries for others in terms of the desired behaviours and attitudes. This aspect of her role was clearly accepted amongst the children and adults in the school and it should be noted that while it may be viewed as a consistent aspect of the headteacher's role in all schools, not all heads perform this aspect of their work so tirelessly. Furthermore, while a broadly consistent set of values may be identified amongst many headteachers, some notable variations exist in the emphasis placed on the individual elements. For instance in Alison's case, her Jewish background led her to place a particular emphasis on the values of tolerance, respect and care. Alison had therefore successfully established her vision of headship within her school which meant she was trusted to promote her values and beliefs with de facto impunity.

Moreover the focus of these values encouraged others to trust and respect her role further, thereby cementing her position as the Headteacher further.

Like Edd's "morning prayers", there were two highly symbolic elements to Alison's assembly. Firstly it involved demonstrating to staff that she was competent, reliable and efficient as a leader and a teacher of children. She had clearly planned extensively for the assembly, giving considerable attention to detail and was keen to justify her position as 'lead teacher' in the school. In this respect she sought to inspire and justify the trust of her staff in her professional competency as a storyteller. For Alison, this involved recounting the story in an animated style, adopting the mannerisms of the main characters and utilising a highly articulate alliterative style of phrasing. This aspect of her role was unashamedly performative in nature and indeed was encouraged and enjoyed by the audience of children and teachers. Thus Alison presented a highly humanised vision of leadership, demonstrating to others her humour, personability and sociability. At the same time, she was quick to stop short of any performative aspects which may be incompatible with her personal or professional standing, which protected her authenticity. This necessitated an acute awareness of relevant social boundaries and a strong understanding as to the limits of acceptable behaviour. Both aspects are central to emotional intelligence.

More broadly Alison placed values at the heart of the school, and had undertaken considerable efforts to encourage others' commitment to them. One particular strategy in this involved seeking to model her personal belief in these ideals, with the display of "*The Teacher*" in her office being a very public, personal reminder of her responsibilities in this regard. Tellingly Alison described to me how she had engaged

staff and parents in developing the school's mission statement and values, but had drafted the final version of this herself, prior to its rubber stamping by the governors. Thus Alison could be seen to have worked collaboratively with others and encouraged a degree of consultation, while ensuring that she ultimately decided exactly what the school would stand for and the values it would promote. Alison was clear that others had genuinely informed this process, but seemed equally at ease with the more Machiavellian aspect of this approach, which she viewed as commensurate with her personal commitment to collaborative working⁸¹. However the extent to which the views of others were embraced in instances where they differed from her own is a moot point and it seems reasonable to view such consultation as informative at best and potentially of purely symbolic value. Such an approach may therefore be indicative of a political style of leadership in this instance, undertaken to promote her agenda and head off any threat of opposition that may subsequently occur. It was also highly blended in nature, combining elements of masculine and feminine leadership to ensure her overall vision was adopted and accepted by followers throughout the school.

3. Meeting with business manager

Description

At school A, I observed a mid-morning keep in touch [KIT] meeting between Edd and Jean, his business manager. The meeting lasted for 55 minutes, during the course of

⁸¹ A more cynical researcher may view this as a commitment to joint working only on areas of her interest of course.

which Julie and Edd worked through 32 different issues, each of which was resolved in some way. Aspects covered included areas as diverse as:

- What to do about a parent who has still not paid for his son's participation on a week long trip to a youth hostel
- The agenda for this week's governors' meeting
- A request for a reference for a former [not very good] member of staff
- Correspondence relating to a recent visit by the British Safety Council
- An opportunity to apply for lottery funding
- A plan for a cross-agency training session on child protection
- Edd's personal expenses from his attendance at a headteachers' conference
- The timetable for a party of Chinese heads who are visiting the school.

Edd and Jean worked at a rapid pace, with verbal exchanges characterised by an high degree of friendly banter, openness and mutual respect.

Analysis

While Edd and Jean worked through these items in a highly efficient way, their interactions were good humoured and evidenced by a high degree of professional regard. Clear lines of demarcation between their respective roles were also important in this process and it was clear that these had been established more effectively in this instance than is the case in many schools. Thus we may conclude that Edd haalso contextualised them to meet the specific needs of the schools. Edd worked hard to promote a clear understanding of the business manager role and its implications for the role of the head, thereby promoting a clear structure within which individuals had scope to act. In doing so, he had utilised popular understandings of these roles but.

Edd consistently showed a willingness to defer to Jean's experiences, trusting her judgement and invariably accepting the recommendations she made. Indeed Jean had effective autonomy over a range of activities and reporting to Edd on these was largely symbolic and a formality. Edd and Jean had worked closely together for a considerable number of years and this clearly offered a strong basis for their trusting relationship. Their discussions were open throughout as they considered the contextual factors which surrounded a number of these issues and the personal factors they encountered sensitively, demonstrating supportiveness and discretion.

4. Management by walking about

Description

At school 'B', I accompanied Alison on a pre-lunch tour of the school. She explained that she toured the school several times a week, sometimes with visitors but more often alone. Her motivation for this came from a former head who was seldom seen by staff:

One of the lessons I learned from watching my former headteacher was that it's important not stay hidden away in my office. As head I need to get out and see staff, to make time to chat with people and get to know them a bit. On New Visions⁸² we'd call it MBWA [management by walking around]. I'm not sure if it's in any text books but it should be!

Alison visited each classroom in turn, starting with the nursery and finishing with year 6. Her appearance in each room created little fuss, indicating that she was a frequent

⁸² New Visions is a professional development activity Alison had undertaken at the start of her career as a headteacher

visitor. However as a newcomer I provoked considerably more interest from the children. Alison talked to the teachers in each room, enquiring as to what they are doing and how things were going. In the overwhelming majority of instances, teachers and teaching assistants appeared relaxed and open with her, although one teacher did appear somewhat tense [I later found she was the subject of an ongoing disciplinary procedure].

Alison also talked to the children in classes where they were undertaking a task themselves and not simply listening to direction. These children clearly loved receiving attention from the Headteacher and Alison evidently enjoyed the interaction, reflecting later how as a head she missed the day to day contact with children that teaching brought.

During our visit Alison took the opportunity to hand out payslips to staff. As she did so she thanked every member of staff in turn for their efforts:

I picked this up from my old headteacher - he was always very keen on thanking people for their work. I've always felt it was important too. Everyone likes to be told they're doing a good job and a thank you and well done go a long way. Giving the pay slips out personally gives me a chance to say thank you to everyone individually for their hard work. And it does mean a bit more coming from me as the head, I know that. It also means that I have to talk to everyone in the school, one to one at least once a month. It's not much I know but it's more than some heads do. It gives people an opportunity to raise any issues with me if they want to – either for me to address them or to ask for a bit of time to see me separately. It's definitely a good thing and something I feel is very important now.

After a while I remarked to Alison that it was noticeable that each classroom door was open prior to our entering – a practice that is not universal to all schools. She paused for a moment before replying:

Openness is a big thing for me. There's a tradition in schools – a bad one I think – that the classroom is the teacher's domain. They go into their little box, shut the door and that's their little empire. I don't know whether it's because I went into teaching later after working in an open plan office or what, but I've never felt that happy with that. I have my office door open so don't see why they can't do the same. If they're doing music or doing something noisy then it's fair enough but as a rule, I think they should be open and we should all be able to see what other's are doing. As much as anything else it creates a climate where we can share good practice or help each other out if we need support.

Analysis

Accompanying Alison on her tour of the school was remarkably revealing and vividly demonstrated the importance of seemingly routine day to day behaviours. Many of the actions Alison undertook during her tour may be viewed as mundane but their completion by the headteacher added a level of significance they would otherwise have lacked. For instance, simple conversations with pupils demonstrated a high degree of personal value and gave the children an additional sense of 'specialness' simply because they came from the headteacher. Furthermore, Alison was clearly aware of the way in which others attributed additional significance to her actions, a fact evidenced by her quote concerning the importance of her handing out payslips to staff personally as a means of her thanking others for their work.

Meanwhile the absence of any noticeable fuss when she entered the room indicated that her presence in classrooms was a common and indeed routine occurrence. It is worth noting that while many headteachers regularly tour their school and talk to their children, a surprisingly large number do not and as such, this behaviour offers a helpful example of discretionary leadership behaviour which is negotiated at the local level. In this way, Alison demonstrated a commitment to her values which incurred a cost in time which she could easily have avoided. Indeed discussions with her clearly identified a range of competing pressures which she could have opted to address instead. However, that she chose to invest her time in talking to staff and children instead was evidence of her willingness to engage in emotional labour (Bolton and Boyd, 2003) which supported the wellbeing of others at a potential cost to herself [the fact that she enjoyed such activity was also a potential consideration of course].

Through her actions, Alison defined such visits as part of the Headteacher's role, although again it should be noted that such approaches are not the norm in all schools. For instance, a study of English headteachers concluded that very little time was spent in direct contact with children (Bristow et al., 2007), while a study of US principals indicate that as little as 2.5% of their time is spent in classrooms (Frase et al., 1999).

Alison was clearly aware of the importance of maintaining a high level of visibility and accessibility, and her strategy of *management by wandering about* (Peters and Austin, 1985) supported this. She also promoted her values of openness and honesty by employing an open door policy. It was noticeable during this tour how Alison had ensured these values were implemented throughout the school in a variety of ways, for instance classroom doors were not closed, in keeping with her commitment to openness. Meanwhile the prominent presentation of the school's mission statement

and values by the school reception, further reiterated this very public display of principles.

As noted above, her decision to distribute payslips herself to staff offered her an opportunity to say thank you in person for their work and to listen to any concerns they may wish to raise, again offering concrete evidence of her belief in valuing others. In adopting this strategy, Alison was aware of the value staff placed on this mundane action and the additional importance they attributed to the thanks she offered simply because it came from her as the headteacher. At the same time her accessible approach supported the very deliberate and conscious ongoing modelling of behaviours expected of others.

5. Admissions interview

Description

In school A's local authority, the policy on inclusion dictated that all schools must admit students who were excluded from other schools on a rota. It was a policy that Edd firmly supported and school A was rated as outstanding on inclusion in its latest Ofsted inspection. During my visit, Edd interviewed Chantelle Hunter for a place at his school. Chantelle had previously been excluded from a neighbouring school and had subsequently been attending a local Pupil Referral Unit.

Prior to the interview, Edd met Sonia, the local authority inclusion officer, who provided him with an overview of Chantelle's progress and recommended that she be admitted to the school. Edd asked only a few clarifying questions of Sonia during this

exchange and accepted her recommendation on face value. Edd then welcomed Chantelle and her mother, Mrs Hunter, in reception and took them into his room. He began by outlining the nature of the interview in a relatively informal way, but then his tone became noticeably sterner as he drew attention to Chantelle's appearance...

"However I should point out straight the way that your appearance this morning is unacceptable. You've come dressed more for a fashion show than an interview with your prospective new school. I'm not prepared to carry on this interview with you dressed as you are –you're breaching several areas of this school's uniform code. You're wearing a stud, eye shadow, a scarf, bracelet and hair band. All of these items contravene our code. If you address these then we can start again."

After a few seconds stand-off, Chantelle eventually took off her head band and scarf. Clearly upset and cross, she started to cry and Edd spoke again:

"Ok that's better. There's no need for tears. You started well outside, you shook my hand and smiled, you made a positive first impression. Give yourself ten minutes outside and we can start again. We want to help you here, but you have to do so on my terms not your's."

Edd escorted Chantelle and her mother from the room and found them a private space for Chantelle to compose herself. Sonia went with them. He waited a few minutes and then fetched them back into the room personally, adopting a far more positive demeanour. He offered reassurance to Chantelle that she may still be accepted to the school provided she makes certain assurances which she agreed to do. He then described the next steps to Chantelle and Mrs Hunter in broad terms, before escorting them back to reception.

Sonia later offered me her reflections on the meeting, beginning by highlighting the importance of schools being able to trust her in her work:

“I have to be honest with the school. It would be pointless not to be, because the next time I went to them they’d say no. I have to be clear about [the child’s] issues, what they need by way of support, and that these are issues that the school can address. The head has to be confident in the trustworthiness of the PRU. These children are potentially quite resource intensive and disruptive and the school has a lot of kids to look after. But equally at the PRU we can see their alternative side. We work with them a lot, and quite intensively. We know their problems and their potential and when they’re ready to go back into schools”.

Sonia then spoke highly of Edd and indicated a high degree of trust between them. A critical moment in this was the occasion when she recommended, off the record, that Edd refused to accept a student who she felt wasn’t right for his school. I then asked Sonia why she trusted Edd:

“The schools that I trust most are those where I will get a response, where they’re open and honest. Like Edd will always get back to me quite quickly and he’ll always be very clear and up front. Also if they decide not to take someone then it’s easiest if they are up front about this and say why this is, and have a plan as to what can be done.

The ones I don’t trust so much are those where a head will say something to the pupil or family, like they will admit them, but then change their mind and not tell them. That leaves me in a really bad position, because I have to give this message to the child and try to explain the reasons for it. But I can’t just say

that the school doesn't want them, because that would be really hard for them and we don't want them to be negative because it sets them back so much. No-one wants to go somewhere where they are not wanted."

Analysis

Edd's approach to the inclusion interview was highly choreographed and provided an excellent example of the performative nature of leadership. During the course of it he displayed remarkable emotional dexterity (Bolton and Boyd, 2003), alternating between 'good cop' and 'bad cop', emphasising the need for compliance and respect for others, before offering assurances about the benefits that would be accrued from agreeing to such conditions. In this way Edd again clearly delimited the boundaries for acceptable behaviour in the school, effectively establishing the organisational context and leaving Chantelle in no doubt as to the consequences should she fail to adhere to them. Furthermore this incident provided a good example of the ethical dilemmas which face headteachers on a consistent basis, in this case how to reconcile the needs of an individual with those of the wider population. In Chantelle's case, Edd drew the battle lines over what he later conceded were relatively minor concerns, i.e. a handful of breaches of the school's uniform policy. However he also recounted how this formed part of a conscious strategy of institutionalisation he adopted with all children admitted in such circumstances, which saw him adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach to breaches of school regulation. Indeed in this instance, Chantelle's conformance to the values of the schools [which were also his] occurred through both the physical and metaphorical stripping of her identity with the removal of her headband and scarf as she underwent the first aspect of her institutionalisation into the 'school A' way of life.

Meanwhile Sonia's reflections on the various elements of Edd's role playing were interesting and revealing:

"There is a degree of role playing that goes on in the interview. All the heads do it different, but Edd is quite flamboyant really. They all lay down the law, say what's going to happen if the child stepped out of line. It's being clear about the future, but it's also an immediate test for the child, to make sure they don't react in a bad way. I have to prepare them for that prior to the interview. If they didn't do this, I think I would be a bit suspicious. It's part of their role, what they have to do."

Thus we see how the 'feeling rules' associated with the head's role in such circumstances demand a display of emotional labour, undertaken to reinforce the head's role and with the very clear instrumental goal of ensuring compliance by the would-be admittee. Furthermore, Sonia's quote provides clear evidence that elements of this performance are negotiated at the local level, thus supporting my view that collaborative leadership is emergent and socially constructed, created through an ongoing interplay between performer and audience. In this context, Edd's approach can be viewed as complying with the contextual demands of the leader's role while utilising the flexibility afforded to him by Sonia to remain true to his own personality [Edd was clearly a highly social person and it was therefore to be anticipated that he would be more rather than less flamboyant in such a context]. Meanwhile her final words, *"If they didn't do this, I think I would be a bit suspicious"* clearly indicate how a failure to perform within the established boundaries of this role would have significant implications for this relationship.

For Edd, the performance of leadership in this way was potentially stressful and indeed he reflected later that while the confrontation with Chantelle had been necessary, he took no enjoyment from it and that *“no head takes pleasure in making children cry.”* However the fact that this exchange was an essential part of her socialisation into the school enabled him to recast it as part of his professional role and therefore distinct from his own personality. In this respect therefore, the notion of professionalism provided Edd with a means of distancing himself from the less pleasant but no less critical aspects of his role.

Sonia’s comments on the basis of her trust in the school – Edd’s open and honest approach - is also highly telling, based as it is on her perception of Edd’s motives and behaviours [in this instance, these were seen as Edd’s strong ethical values and commitment to inclusion]. Similarly Sonia highlighted the importance of demonstrating good intention and professional competency in her own behaviours in order to gain the school’s trust and establish a long term relationship, highlighting the need to demonstrate a willingness to trust others and encourage reciprocity in this process. Discussions with Edd during my time at the school indicated the importance he placed on the characteristics of openness and honesty, along with a number of other factors including inclusion. As noted earlier, he also very clearly articulated the boundaries associated with these through his performance of headship. All of these aspects are evident in the following quote, which is taken from the debrief Edd offered of the admissions interview and which also includes his own reflections of the potential conflicts of interest implicit in such scenarios:

I think the authority's policy on inclusion is absolutely the right one and I support it whole heartedly. But I have to be able to say no if I think that admitting a child

is going to have a strong negative impact on others in the school. Any child who comes to this school has to be clear that if they step out of line there will be consequences. It is far easier to start off strict and loosen up than go the other way. You have to be straight and let them know you are in charge – you have to stand up to the line”

During the interview Edd clearly demonstrated respect for Chantelle and her mother, meeting them personally, treating them courteously and showing concern when Chantelle became upset. While it may be argued that doing so was merely fulfilling the expectations of his role, it is clearly the case that not all headteachers would have behaved in this way and the extent to which such expectations are universal is therefore questionable. This suggests that while Edd’s performance was consistent with popular notions of headship, it was underpinned by his personal values and effectively represented a bespoke interpretation of this role, providing further evidence of the role structure and agency play in this process.

6. The uncollected student

Description

Around 45 minutes after school B’s day ended, Alison was informed that Rabinna [a year 2 pupil] had not been collected by her mother. It was not unusual for parents to be a few minutes late in collecting their children and Rabinna had initially waited in the school office. However the length of time elapsed was now giving cause for concern.

Alison asked Jo, the school secretary to continue to try to reach Lynette, Rabinna's mother. After thirty minutes of trying without success, Alison contacted another parent, Lisa [Lynette's sister in law], to [a] see if she knew what's happened to Lynette and [b] ask if she was able to collect Rabinna. Lisa arrived at the school twenty minutes later to collect Rabinna, at which point, Lynette also arrived in obvious state of distress. They agreed that Lisa should take Rabinna home, while Lynette stayed to talk to Alison.

They made their way to Alison's office, where Lynette hugged Rabinna before Lisa took her home. Alison then invited Lynette into her room, saying "*Come in Lynette. Tell me all about what's been happening to you.*" It transpired that Lynette had been arrested that morning over an allegation of criminal damage, an allegation which she vigorously denied. She had then been taken to the police station and strip searched before being left alone in a cell for five hours. She had repeatedly told the police about her need to collect her daughter but her pleas had fallen on deaf ears. Alison sat and listened carefully, and Lynette began to cry when she told how they had refused to let her leave to collect Rabinna:

"I kept saying about my girl, that I needed to collect her but they wouldn't let me. I pleaded with them but they didn't care. I said to the policewoman, don't you have kids and she said 'no, no and I don't care'. I said 'you would care if you had kids. They mean everything to me'"

Alison offered Lynette a tissue and water [she later commented to me that "*water and tissues are the essential tools of headship*"] and when Lynette finished talking, Alison began to speak.

“Rabinna’s been safe here Lynette. We all know you love her. When do you have to go back to the police station, Lynette? Can you pick Rabinna up tomorrow?”

Lynette confirmed that she had to report for bail the following week and could collect Rabinna later. Alison then asked Lynette if she had a social worker [she didn’t] before suggesting she talk further with Lisa, *“she’s a good friend and can help you”*. She then asked if she’d thought what she was going to tell others:

A *What are you going to say to other people about what’s happened?*

L: *I don’t care what people know.*

A: *But you might want to think what is best for Rabinna. People need to know a little but not everything*

L: *No, I’ll think about it. It’s just my business. I don’t care if they know, but it’s just my business.*

Alison asked Colleen, a learning mentor to talk to Lynette a little longer. As Colleen and Lynette left Alison office, Lynette thanked Alison again for *“everything you’re doing for Rabinna”*.

Analysis

This was the most delicate incident I witnessed during the course of my micro-ethnographies. Quickly establishing a high degree of empathy and trust was essential in enabling Alison to deal effectively with the challenged she faced.

Alison’s approach to this incident was heavily informed by her values, most notably the need to care for and respect others. Meanwhile her previous training as a

counsellor provided her with the practical tools needed to offer support to Lynette. Throughout her dealing with her, Alison demonstrated genuine care and interest in Lynette, offering her time to explain her situation and the problems she was facing, providing strong evidence of her readiness to undertake emotional labour in such instances:

One of the key things is about giving the other person time to speak and yourself time to think. It's helping people to work through their problems and not jumping in with instant answers. There's a demand in schools for instant responses. I learned very early not to give snap answers.

Alison demonstrated a non-judgemental approach and offered a high degree of support to Lynette. As headteacher Alison's primary concern was the welfare of the child but in this instance she clearly recognised that ensuring this necessitated her offering help to her mother too. Once again, it is important to note that not all headteachers would have been so understanding and sympathetic, and as such, Alison's approach offered a localised and authentic performance of headship which was in keeping with her values and personality. In this instance Alison's display of emotional labour was primarily motivated by instrumental and altruistic factors [Rabinna's and Lynette's wellbeing respectively]. At the same time, the feelings rules associated with headship offered an assurance of confidentiality and discretion, which Alison reinforced personally in the way she conducted herself during this interaction. Listening was fundamental to all of this. At one level some of the care Alison offered was very mundane – for instance just the simple kindness of a glass of water and the offer of a tissue – but this provided additional reassurance to Lynette as it came from someone in a position of authority and was therefore attributed with greater

significance (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003a, 2003b). At no point did Alison appear hurried or rushed – despite the fact that it was approaching 6.30pm by the time Lynette left – and as such she offered Lynette the reassurance that her concerns were important and she was being taken seriously. Again this readiness to put the emotional needs of others before her own demonstrated Alison’s willingness to perform tasks of emotional labour.

Alison expressed a wider concern for Lynette in relation to how she would deal with the inevitable fall out from this incident within the school and offered wise counsel on what needed to be said. She also directly addressed this issue with her staff the following day in a very clear and directive way, as she informed them of the line she wished them to take. Implicit in this was the threat of sanctions to any individual who did not follow this line. In this way Alison demonstrated that she was comfortable in taking such a clear line to protect the overarching values and principles she believed in and was prepared to adopt a highly directive approach when the situation necessitated [much the same as Edd had when undertaking the admissions interview]. Alison was therefore comfortable with the use of more directive, masculine leadership styles when circumstances demanded to complement the more inclusive feminine style she adopted generally.

7. Debriefing an unsuccessful job applicant

Description

For the last task of the day in school 'B', Edd and Jean, his business manager, met with Sally, who had recently applied unsuccessfully for the role of School Office Manager.

Sally had expressed surprise and disappointment when she had been informed that she would not be offered the job and had asked if it was possible to receive personal feedback on the decision. In particular she highlighted how she had worked at School 'B' for a number of years before leaving to take up the role of Office Manager at the neighbouring Hope Farm School. Thus she felt that she understood the school's context and culture and had practical experience of the role itself.

Edd and Jean had both been involved in the original interview and felt this was a potentially tricky meeting. Sally had indicated on the phone to staff that she felt the appointment was 'an internal stitch up' [the job had gone to Melanie, the present office administrator and former colleague of Sally's]. They were therefore keen to ensure a fair hearing for Sally and that when she left she was under no illusion that the job had been awarded purely on merit. Edd and Julie agreed on a number of key points for the review and that Edd would lead the meeting.

Edd greeted Sally with a firm handshake and set the parameters for the meeting in a very clear and business-like manner. He stressed that the conversation would be restricted to Sally's application before running through a number of issues which

prejudiced Sally's application in a very direct but not rude way, ensuring that he was extremely clear in the points he made. Edd maintained strong eye contact throughout the meeting and used straightforward language, pausing after each point to allow Sally to digest the issue and formulate a response. Examples of the points he raised included:

"your application was strong but not the strongest. It included two typos and a misspelling."

"We were concerned as to why you were moving so quickly from your current school when you'd said you'd gone there to broaden your experience."

"Your presentation was good, very solid. You were strong on the link with teaching and learning. Where you fell down was on ECM. You lacked detail here."

"In the interview the approach you outlined for managing staff was weak and lacked formality."

"In the interview, you came across as being off the pace. What you're saying is on the pace now, but you didn't say it at the interview. You have to sell yourself, you have to say it."

Sally was initially shocked to learn of the presence of typos in her application but listened to the points raised and appeared to appreciate the level of detail offered. After a while she opened up further as to her unhappiness in her current role and her desire to leave. It became clearer that her request for feedback was largely motivated by her disappointment at not gaining the position. Edd concluded by assuring Sally that he would welcome an application from her for a suitable post in the future. Her final words as she left were:

"I'd have loved to work for you."

Analysis

In our discussion after the meeting Edd shared his philosophy with me:

You have got to be honest in this situation. It's no good dressing things up or skirting around the issue. You've got to respect people's feelings of course but if I don't tell her the truth how can she improve? And more than that, she'd go away thinking she'd been lied to, or patronised or fobbed off and that has impact for the school's reputation, and I can't have that. It's not nice but you just have to bite the bullet and tell people how it is.

This quote is revealing in a number of ways. It highlights Edd's fundamental commitment to openness and honesty, and his belief in demonstrating respect for others is equally clear in his commitment to neither 'patronise' nor 'fob off' Sally. Indeed Edd had the opportunity to delegate this debrief to other members of the interview panel but decided not to [once again, this is not a decision which every headteacher would have made]. Instead by handling the debrief personally, Edd showed his willingness to face challenges head on and incur the costs associated with doing so, in terms of time and emotional labour. In adopting such an approach Edd also demonstrated awareness of the need to model desired leadership behaviours and the values he espoused. In this instance it clearly set the tone for Sally's reaction to the negative feedback she received.

The importance Edd placed on boundaries was once again evidenced in this incident.

Firstly, Edd was clear from the outset of the parameters for his discussion with Sally and highlighted the issue of confidentiality in relation to other's who applied for the role, with the inference that this also extended to Sally's application. Thus Edd demonstrated a clear commitment to his personal values of honesty and respect for others, and I believe this played an important factor in encouraging Sally to share her negative feelings concerning her current position. Secondly, and as highlighted above, Edd noted that the process Sally described for managing staff was weak and lacked formality. In highlighting the weak boundaries associated with this, he drew attention to the potential inconsistencies that may arise and the implications of these in terms of the unequal treatment of staff. Thus Edd's focus on boundaries in this instance can be viewed as motivated by a strong ethical commitment to the fair treatment of others.

As in the incident with Chantelle, Edd described how he had experienced some discomfort from the nature of the performance he was required to give, while recognising that it was consistent with his values and his role as head. As noted previously, Edd saw his approach to the interaction as *right* and his conceptualisation of professionalism at once determined the strategy he should adopt and at the same time it also, offered a means by which he was able to overcome the dissonance associated with the more negative elements it required. Thus professionalism offered a means of protecting his sense of authenticity.

Trustworthy leadership in practice – professionalism as a means of promoting trust

In this subsection I have described seven leadership incidents observed during the production of micro-ethnographies in the schools visited during this study. In each case, the presence of strong and trusting relationships was central to activities observed, offering insight into the practice of trustworthy leadership on a day to day basis. In each case, strong connections may be identified to one or more of the nine factors I identified previously as informing trust, these being:

1. Openness and honesty
2. Humour, personability and sociability
3. Values and beliefs
4. Confidentiality and discretion
5. Supportiveness
6. Trusting others
7. Competency, reliability and efficiency
8. Listening
9. Experience and testing

During these incidents, these headteachers offered a bespoke and contextualised performance of leadership which was commensurate with their expectations of the role. Such expectations were localised and defined through ongoing interaction between leader and follower, but at the same time, were underpinned by the values of the headteacher concerned and the broader, more commonly accepted principles of the role. Thus at once the role possessed both structured and agentic properties, combining societal conceptualisations of headship with the head's authentic self.

The performances offered were therefore a deliberate manifestation of these personal and generic values, undertaken in line with the headteacher's sense of professionalism. Thus they represented a clear articulation of how all should act in the school, as the headteacher clearly and deliberately modelled behaviours and attitudes required. In this sense they implicitly recognised the fact that their approaches were observed and evaluated by others and that they were continually on show, a point explicitly noted by Alison and implicit in their consistent focus on both the 'glamorous' and mundane elements of their role. In turn, professionalism offered a means of reconciling feelings of dissonance which were experienced when less pleasurable or ethically cloudier aspects of the performance were required. In this way, professionalism introduced a discipline and structure to their personal approach to leadership, yet offered sufficient scope and agency to ensure that their performance remained authentic. Finally both leaders demonstrated flexibility in their leadership, utilising both masculine and feminine leadership styles and a variety of approaches as the context demanded.

Concluding comments

In this chapter I have effectively described my research journey, noting how my enquiry initially began with an interest in exploring why collaboration was important to schools and the key factors which influence their leadership. From this I concluded that relationships were of paramount importance and that trust was the central factor within them. In the second phase of my study, I explored my initial findings further and investigated the issues which support trust in the leadership of partnership

working. In doing so I identified nine separate but inter-related factors which underpin trustworthy leadership. These were:

- Openness and honesty
- Humour, personability and sociability
- Values and beliefs
- Confidentiality and discretion
- Supportiveness
- Trusting others
- Competency, reliability and efficiency
- Listening
- Experience and testing

Collectively these elements formed the basis for my “*triumvirate model of trustworthy leadership*”, which describes the significance of the interconnections between ideology, behaviour and perception in promoting trust.

These factors provided me with the focus for the final phase of my work, during which I explored the ways in which headteachers perform their role on a daily basis. Reflecting on the findings of this work, which was undertaken via direct observational research, I identified three considerations in the operationalisation of trustworthiness, each of which represents an original contribution to existing literature in this field.

The first of these concerns the tension between agency and structure in the day to day enactment of headship. Central to this was the way in which heads constructed the concept of professionalism within their context, developing an understanding which supported them in their pursuit of their aims and which was compatible with their underpinning values and sense of self. At the same time, the performance of headship demanded that consideration was given to others’ perspectives and that sound judgements were formed as to the degree of tolerance associated with the notion of

headship within this context. Thus professionalism is a dynamic notion which evolves through ongoing interaction and negotiation with followers.

The second theme connects strongly with this by exploring the ways in which leaders consciously modelled the positive behaviours associated with headship, utilising the principles of Social Learning Theory to promote a culture of trustworthiness in their school. These leaders utilised areas of ambiguity within the concept of headship to good effect and as a lever to pursue their broader agenda. Core to this was its ability to support a performance of leadership which was seen as authentic and commensurate with their personal values and followers' broader expectations of the role. Failure to achieve such veritable authenticity would severely damage leader-follower relationships and have significant consequences for the development of trust. This demanded a high degree of self-awareness, as well as considerable understanding of how their personal values should become manifest. By effectively reconciling these elements, these heads embodied the "dramatic realisation" of their role, as it was through their day to day performance of leadership that they demonstrated the acceptable boundaries for behaviour and the values within their organisation.

The third theme focuses further on these headteachers' performance, by exploring their attention to detail and the ways in which they consistently demonstrated respect and regard for others. These leaders placed considerable emphasis on the mundane aspects of leadership practice on a day to day basis in recognition of the additional significance placed on these actions by followers. Thus by performing what were often viewed as relatively simple acts of kindness these heads sent an important message to both the individual and community that everybody mattered. This

willingness to engage in emotional labour was critical in promoting their perceived trustworthiness amongst followers and an essential part of the dramatic realisation of headship they offered. In my next and final chapter of my thesis, I offer my overarching conclusions from my study.

6. Conclusions and implications

Overview of my dissertation

My dissertation comprised an ostensibly inductive exploration of the issue of collaborative and trustworthy leadership in schools, as part of which, I undertook three distinct phases of fieldwork.

The first of these centred on partnerships in general and examined why collaborative working in schools is important and the various factors which promote it. In doing so I highlighted the importance of government policy in driving such approaches and their implications for relationships between schools and with other potential partners. I also drew attention to the belief that collaborations in general increase efficiency, promoting learning, increasing access to resources and sharing risk.

My second major theme explored the leadership of partnership working in schools, which was highlighted as one of two key factors in effective collaborations [the second – trust formed my third area of interest]. During the course of this, I built on Collinson and Collinson's (2006) concept of blended leadership to develop an original model to account for partnership work in schools. This original contribution to knowledge draws on elements of both masculine and feminine leadership, as well as a range of existing leadership theories, including relational, constitutive, distributed, political and authentic.

As already noted, my final theme centred on the issue of trust and the essential role it plays in supporting collaborative working in schools, leadership and their intersection

of collaborative leadership. As part of this I noted how trust comprises attitudinal and performative elements and developed explanatory frameworks for both its development in general and its contextual manifestations.

I concluded my work by exploring its implications for the day to day practice of collaborative leadership of school based partnerships, drawing particular attention to the potential synergies and tensions within this and the significance of mundane activities.

The overarching questions for this study can therefore be summarised as follows:

1. What is the nature of collaborative leadership within school-based contexts?
2. What role does trust play in the practice of collaborative leadership in these settings? What are the potential tensions between collaborative leadership and trustworthiness?
3. What mechanisms are important in helping leaders to reconcile the potential paradox between authentic leadership and the mundane, day to day performance of trustworthy, collaborative leadership?

Approach

In my philosophy and methodology section I considered the ‘philosophical trinity’ of the nature of reality [ontology], the means through which we understand this reality [epistemology] and the mechanisms through which our actions occur [causality]. I began this section by outlining my commitment to a social constructivist philosophy,

as part of which I perceive social science to be the study of idealism, and key principles such as leadership, collaboration and trust as possessing no objective reality of their own. I then outlined my belief that an objective exploration of this reality is impossible and that instead, understanding occurs through an interactive, social construction of meaning, based upon both broader social conventions and one's own subjectivity. In this way meaning is at once created and recreated through one's own experiences and reactions to the perceptions of others. I then considered the issue of causality and described how I viewed this as the product of personal preference, undertaken within the confines of existing social structures. As such I described how we are effectively free to act but only within specific confines, with action therefore the product of both agentic and structural forces.

My study comprised three distinct research phases, the first of which was conducted between June 2004 and March 2007 and comprised an exploration of collaborative leadership in schools, completed through:

- a review of relevant literature
- a survey of 139 school leaders, advisers and local authority officials
- interviews with 49 individuals with strong experience of school based collaborations
- visits to 18 schools
- attendance at 24 relevant seminars and conferences.

In phase 2, I sought to explore the conclusions from my work and considered the role trust plays in collaborative leadership in schools, and the potential tensions between collaborative leadership and trustworthiness. This involved the development of six

case studies in a range of phases, locations and contexts, based around schools with evidence of good leadership and a strong track record in collaboration. Data was collected between March and September 2007 and comprised interviews with professionals from schools and other backgrounds. This was also supported by a review of relevant literature.

In the third and final phase of my research, I sought to understand more fully the day to day practice of collaborative leadership, focusing on the mechanisms through which trust may be developed and the potential paradox between veritable authentic leadership and the daily performance of collaborative leadership reconciled. To achieve this, I produced two micro ethnographies of school leaders who had participated in phase 2 of my study and were identified as highly trustworthy by other interviewees in their context. Micro ethnographies were developed through participant observation completed between May and June 2008.

Main findings

In the first phase of my study, I noted how the notion of collaboration is ill defined and is often used interchangeably with a range of alternative terms relating to partnership working. I described how in general collaboration is viewed in positive terms and frequently assumed to implicitly offer some form of mutual benefit, examples of which may include improved efficiency, increased access to resources, enhanced service provision and shared learning. As a result, much of the literature published in this field considers collaboration in largely unproblematic and relatively simplistic terms, although some notable exceptions do highlight the potential

challenges relating to this approach. From a schools perspective, I described how government policy is increasingly premised on assumptions of partnership working, with each of the significant school centred initiatives of this century demanding inter-school and inter-agency collaboration. However I also note how this produces tensions in relation to the continued competition between schools in other areas of activity.

From my consideration of the literature, I indentified six factors which I viewed as significant in determining the relative success of partnership working. These were:

- a context which is conducive to partnership working, for instance in terms of history, local capacity, demographics and politics
- clearly defined and widely shared aims and objectives for the partnership, supported by a set of common values
- sufficient planning, resources and supporting structures
- positive member relations, a supportive culture and a common language
- the presence of trusting relationships
- effective leadership.

Of these, the final two – trusting relationships and effective leadership – were highlighted as most significant and as noted above, formed the focus for the second and third themes of my thesis respectively.

My second major focus therefore considered the leadership of partnership working. During the course of my discussion I described how this is most appropriately viewed as a composite phenomenon, which demands the effective blending of a number of alternative leadership elements. These comprise:

- Relational leadership – the connection between leader and follower
- Distributed leadership – leadership as a pluralistic endeavour
- Political leadership – understanding and navigating the macro, meso and micro political climate
- Constitutive leadership – constructing contextual meaning for followers
- Authentic leadership – ensuring a consistent, values based performance of leadership.

I also highlighted the connections between these themes and gendered leadership approaches as well as the well documented dichotomy between transformational and transactional leadership. In doing so I highlighted how my conceptualisation of collaborative leadership links closely with feminine and transformational leadership theory, but also utilises elements of masculine and transactional leadership.

Furthermore I considered the various potential tensions within my model of collaborative leadership and in particular, noted the possible conflict between the consistent demonstration of positive values required by authentic leadership and the potentially anti-collaborative, manipulative and Machiavellian elements of political leadership. In doing so I concluded that effective collaborative leadership in schools calls for the ability to modify behaviours and approaches in accordance with the demands of the context, while at the same time, maintaining the leader's own sense of integrity. Thus I described how it is possible for such 'collaborative' leaders to utilise directive approaches within specific contextual conditions. I highlighted the non-negotiable nature of authenticity in this process and the essential part it plays in promoting trust between leaders and followers.

Trust itself formed the focus for the third main theme of my dissertation, which considered the development of trust in leader-follower relationships. In exploring this theme, I described how trust may be viewed as comprising both an appropriate level of functional expertise and a generally benevolent philosophy and approach.

Trust was highlighted throughout my study as fundamentally important to partnership working in schools and the most important factor in their effective leadership. It was found to offer a basis for action by managing uncertainty and reducing risk, by offering an assurance that the other will not behave in an opportunistic way which is potentially prejudicial to one's own interests. Trust itself was viewed as socially constructed and informed by personal, relational, organisational and societal considerations. These in turn were considered mutually informing and informed. More specifically, I concluded by outlining an original model for exploring trust, which identified three distinct elements to this phenomenon. These were:

- ideological trust – the values, beliefs and attitudes which underpin our actions
- behavioural trust – the specific actions, approaches and strategies used during the performance of our role
- perceptual trust – the extent to which our behaviours are observed as commensurate with our espoused ideology.

I outlined how from a leadership perspective, trust supports contexts where more formal hierarchical structures are insufficient or absent and is integral to each of the five dimensions of collaborative leadership in schools described previously. It was seen as particularly significant to constitutive leadership, as the leader's success in defining a context within which collaborative working may prosper was found to be

fundamentally dependent upon their being perceived as trustworthy. Similarly, strategies of distributed leadership were seen as premised upon the leader's ability to trust followers to lead in a way which is commensurate with their own values and vision.

In either instance, the development of trust was seen as dependent upon the leader being consistently viewed as authentic. In this way, trustworthy leaders were seen to model the behaviours and values which were desirable to the collaboration in a way consistent with the principles of Social Learning Theory. This involved an unremitting focus on leadership practice at all levels from the 'glamorous' to the mundane – indeed the latter of these was found to be particularly significant in light of its immediate proximity to followers and the extent to which followers considered such approaches as indicators of levels of trustworthiness. However as I have described, on occasions, collaborative leadership demands leadership approaches and strategies which may be viewed as anti-collaborative in nature and in such instances, the performance of such actions was seen to pose a genuine threat to the leader's actual and perceived level of integrity. One potential means of overcoming this challenge to authenticity was through the concept of professionalism. In this context, professionalism is viewed as the overarching set of values and principles associated with a specific role and the behaviours through which these values become manifest. Professionalism may therefore be seen as relating to the part we play when inhabiting any given role. As such, a professional performance is akin to Goffman's notion of *dramatic realisation* (Goffman, 1959), in that it embodies the espoused ideals of the individual performer.

Professionalism [like trust and leadership], was found to be essentially socially constructed in nature and as such, contained both generalised and specific elements. Thus it may be viewed as at once both determined [in terms of the more general expectations concerning its key elements] and agentic [in relation to the leader's ability to promote specific principles and perspectives]. Professionalism is therefore seen to contain sufficient 'stretch' to enable the leader to develop a localised vision of this notion which is at once consistent with both social convention and their personal, unique perspective. In doing so the leader must ensure that their subsequent professional performance is commensurate with the demands of followers. In this study, these leaders' willingness to perform routine actions as part of their leadership role was frequently given particular significance by followers who perceived it to be evidence of their broader trustworthiness. Furthermore that these leaders recognised the importance of paying such attention to the detail of their performance, evidenced a broader awareness of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and the importance of modelling the behaviours desired. Thus they demonstrated high levels of emotional intelligence, while their willingness to perform elements of emotional labour was taken as evidence of a broader caring personality and professionalism.

Conclusions

I draw five key conclusions from my work.

[i] Collaborative leadership is an essential element of headship in the 21st century

In this work I have highlighted how changes in government policy and an increased appetite for partnership working amongst school leaders themselves have resulted in the expectation that schools will collaborate with other organisations, to promote the well being of children and families. Thus the context for schools has changed from one based on a single organisational unit, to one where it is normal to work in partnership with others to increase the effectiveness of teaching and provide a range of additional services, targeted at children and families. The ability to lead across organisational boundaries – to other schools and a range of different agencies - is therefore an essential aspect of headship in the twenty-first century.

[ii] Effective collaborative leadership demands a highly contextualised blend of skills, styles and strategies

However as the scope of school leadership has increased, so too has the range of abilities, attitudes and aptitudes required to perform this role. During the course of this thesis, I have described how the leadership of school-based collaborations is more appropriately viewed as a blended model, containing several alternative conceptualisations of leadership. These comprise:

- relational leadership – the connection between leader and follower
- distributed leadership – leadership as a pluralistic endeavour
- political leadership – understanding and navigating the macro, meso and micro political climate
- constitutive leadership – constructing the contextual meaning for followers
- authentic leadership – the values based performance of leadership

Furthermore I described how effective collaborative leadership involves combining elements of both masculine and feminine leadership approaches.

Aspects of these elements are complementary, but implicit tensions exist, most notably between competing elements of masculine and feminine leaderships, and between the potentially manipulative aspects of constitutive /political leadership and the values which underpin authentic leadership. I return to this theme later in these conclusions.

[iii] Collaborative leadership is fundamentally premised on high trust relationships

Throughout this thesis I have consistently described trust as the key lubricant in relationships, as it offers an assurance of both the intention and competency of the other. In light of this, I therefore view trust as *the* essential element in the leader-follower relationship as it is my contention that the only truly effective form of followership is one which is not assumed or demanded but given freely and with good

grace. Conversely I have argued that leadership only functions effectively when executed consensually.

This reliance upon high levels of trust is even more pronounced in contexts where leadership is unsupported by systemic structures, as is the case in cross-organisational partnership work. In such instances, the leader's ability to draw upon transactional leadership strategies is compromised, therefore increasing their reliance upon relational and transformational leadership approaches. Trust is therefore especially important as it offers reassurance against the threats of opportunism introduced by the increased levels of vulnerability involved in partnership work.

Within the context of leadership, trust is fundamentally important in promoting a common vision and the leader's attempt to establish a shared understanding of the context. It supports change and promotes improved communication. It is also fundamental to strategies of distributed leadership, as it offers assurances in instances where a leader's direct control is reduced. More broadly it increases the speed of transactions with followers and facilitates improved problem solving as it reduces individual levels of insecurity.

[iv] Trust is a social construction which comprises ideological, behavioural and perceptual elements

In describing the various antecedents of trust, I highlighted how this concept is highly contextualised and constructed through an ongoing discursive process involving truster and trusted. Furthermore I identified three elements to this, which I combined to form a new model for trust, which forms a key element of my original contribution

to knowledge. The first two elements of this comprised the nature of the trusted individual's values and the ways in which these values are manifest through their day to day performance of their role. I termed these *ideological* and *behavioural* trust respectively. The third aspect, *perceptual* trust is concerned with the degree of observed congruence the truster believes exists between these aspects. The combination of these elements is unique to the specific context, and informed by both parties' previous experiences and their expectations and assumptions as to the nature of their role. Furthermore these are informed, negotiated and revised on an ongoing basis, emerging in a reflexive and simultaneous performance, as each party alternates between performer and audience. Thus while trust may be universally viewed as comprising benevolence and competency, the specific nature of these are bespoke to each unique incidence and emerge in light of the interaction between each party.

[v] The performance of collaborative leadership is inherently paradoxical

My next conclusion is that an additional level of complexity is added to the creation of trust between leader and followers in school-based collaborative contexts, as collaborative leadership of schools itself is inevitably paradoxical in nature. More specifically, I believe there is an essential conflict between the broadly 'positive' values, associated with partnership working and the manipulative and Machiavellian leadership practices which are occasionally demanded to promote the overall effectiveness of partnership work. In this way, I identify an unavoidable disjoint between a leader's espoused commitment to openness and honesty and some of the day to day leadership actions which may be undertaken to manipulate the partnership agenda to pursue the leader's chosen cause. Similarly a purported commitment to

respecting the differing views of others in principle may be at odds with the need to exclude parties which are potentially unsupportive or even obstructive in the pursuit of the collaborative's goals. In each instance, a potential juxtaposition can be seen between the underpinning principles of leadership and its day to day performance.

[vi] Trustworthy collaborative leadership involves the reconciliation of these paradoxes through the exemplary professional performance of this role on an everyday basis

The existence of these tensions is an essential threat to the leader's perceived trustworthiness, as they call into question the degree to which their actions are commensurate with their underpinning values set. It therefore follows that resolving this challenge requires such actions to either [a] remain unseen or [b] be recast as consistent with the espoused values themselves. In the context of this study, both approaches were adopted by leaders. However it is the latter which offers the most sustainable and effective means of ensuring trustworthy leadership, as it provides a means through which leaders were able to protect their perceived and felt authenticity. In my study I therefore identify the concept of professionalism as a key lever in resolving this tension, describing how leaders may utilise this notion to develop and negotiate the anticipated and acceptable manifestations of their values on a day to day basis. In doing so, I describe how, as with the various other concepts described in this study, professionalism should be viewed as a relative and socially constructed notion, the precise nature of which varies from context to context. I also note the similarities between trustworthiness and professionalism, and how both represent an intersection between values and behaviours. Furthermore I describe how the performance of professionalism is constrained by the expectations of leader and follower alike, but

that these are influenced by the local enactment of role which in turn influences the broader expectations of the parties concerned. Thus professionalism is at once both structured and agentic as the leader builds their performance on the views and principles which exist, but utilises these to develop fresh meaning and revised expectations. Furthermore I describe how a willingness to undertake acts of emotional labour represented a consistent feature of these localised understandings of role, and offers a means through which leaders may connect with followers at a highly personalised level to promote the degree of trust required for effective leadership. Thus effective leadership of school based collaborations is essentially premised on the consistent and exemplary performance of this role on an everyday and mundane basis, and it is through these immediate and intimate leader/ follower interactions that notions of professionalism and expectations of leaders are effectively operationalised.

Implications for practice, policy and theory

In this sub-section of my thesis, I explore the implications of my work from three perspectives, these being:

- leadership practice
- education policy
- leadership theory.

1. Implications for leadership practice

Leaders need to have greater awareness of the importance of collaborative working

The most fundamental implication from my work is that it draws attention to the ever increasing demands placed upon schools to work collaboratively with each other and partner agencies in the delivery of services for children. For instance in part one of my literature review, I describe how collaborative working has become the modus operandi for the delivery of extended services in schools and how the twelve most significant school improvement initiatives of this decade have all been underpinned by a fundamental belief in the benefits of collaborative working.

This has significant implications for our view of schools. Most notably it calls into question the concept of schools as semi-autonomous, isolated units of learning, competing with each other for students and resources. Instead the most beneficial outcomes for students are likely to be achieved by working in partnership with neighbouring schools to offer the most enriching learning opportunities, and with partner agencies to protect the welfare of children. This demands a re-conceptualisation of the headteacher's role, which must be viewed in turn as more outwardly focused and concerned with promoting alliances and trusting relationships with partners to promote mutual benefits, rather than solely focused on the internal organisation. This has significant implications for the practice of headship, elements of which are effectively transformed by this process. Most notably headship becomes fundamentally more relational in nature, relying less on transactional means of promoting followership and instead is more dependent upon the leader's ability to establish strong and meaningful connections with followers. This in turn demands a

greater understanding of the role trust plays in this process and the means through which it is developed and nurtured.

Leaders need to have greater awareness of the importance of trust and leadership in the success of collaborations

A closely related point centres on the factors which promote effective partnership working. Through my literature review and original research, I identified six factors which were key in this, these being:

1. a context which is conducive to partnership working, for instance in terms of history, local capacity, demographics and politics
2. clearly defined and widely shared aims and objectives for the partnership, supported by a set of common values
3. sufficient planning, resources and supporting structures
4. positive member relations, a supportive culture and a common language
5. the presence of trusting relationships
6. effective leadership.

Of these, the latter two were most critical. Effective leadership of collaborations therefore demands greater awareness amongst leaders of the added complexity that stems from these various elements and the interplay between them. Furthermore there is considerable evidence from this study of the significance of day to day, mundane leader/ follower interactions in this process. In instances where leaders are aware of such considerations they are able to give them additional attention, thereby proactively develop positive relations of this nature further. In this study, examples of such interactions included:

- trusting others to lead assemblies and briefing sessions
- respecting the expertise and capabilities of staff in addressing day to day management issues
- demonstrating a willingness to give time and consideration to the needs of others
- addressing difficult and challenging issues personally rather than delegate them to staff.

Effective leadership of collaborations demands the ability to build synergy and overcome conflict within the nature of leadership itself

The ability to build connections and overcome conflict between partners is well documented. Considerably less attention has been given to the implications of collaboration for leaders and the potential tensions this produces, however. In my thesis I have described collaborative leadership as a blended concept, which comprises a range of elements that are both potentially complementary and conflicting in nature. Central to this conflict is the fact that trusting and trustworthy relationships are dependent upon the perceived and actual presence of authentic leadership, but that this is simultaneously at odds with the less collaborative approaches demanded to ensure the partnership progresses in the desired way. Examples of these include managing meaning and undertaking political leadership actions, such as manipulating agendas, forging alliances and excluding those who are unsympathetic with the desired goals for the partnership. Recognising and reconciling these potential tensions is critical for leaders in such partnership contexts, in order to promote their personal and perceived authenticity, which as noted already, is so fundamental to trustworthiness.

As noted, professionalism offers one potential mechanism for achieving this, as it is premised upon the values and beliefs which underpin a role's professional identity, but only becomes manifest within the context of its enactment. Leaders must therefore give greater consideration to the basis of their professional role and the ways in which these elements may conflict and complement their personal values and beliefs.

Leaders need to have more awareness of how trust develops

In my fieldwork I identified a range of factors which inform the development of trust. I also described how these could be viewed as underpinning three basic dimensions of this phenomenon, these being the notions of:

- Ideological trust [what we are]
- Behavioural trust [what we do] and
- Perceptual trust [what others see].

Understanding these three dimensions is important in appreciating more fully the role of both truster and trustee in defining this relationship. More specifically it offers an individual headteacher a framework for recognising the inextricable connection between their values and behaviours and highlights the need to give greater regard to how these are perceived by followers. This in turn demands increased focus on how specific actions, however glamorous or mundane, encourage or inhibit trust amongst followers. It also encourages greater reflexivity on the part of the leader in considering the implications of their actions for the perceived authenticity of their performance.

Leaders can take practical steps to inform the development of trust beyond hierarchical boundaries

I have described in my thesis, how leaders help to promote understanding of partnership working as part of the constitutive leadership process. In doing so, I have highlighted the ways meaning is created through both word and deed, and how the perceived performance of trustworthy leadership acts as a guarantee in this process. In this way, I have highlighted how leaders may promote the context for partnership working by outlining the vision and values which underpin it and subsequently reinforce this through the actions and activities they undertake.

In my thesis I also describe the importance of leader's paying attention to the specific minutiae of their day to day practice, noting the ways in which followers may elevate such mundanity to levels of significance beyond that which the leader may have originally envisaged (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003b). Many of these actions can be viewed as examples of emotional labour (Robson and Bailey, 2009, Sachs and Blackmore, 1998), activities which when undertaken promote a specific form of response amongst their recipient. Leaders are therefore counselled to consider the ways in which all areas of their practice may be construed, and not only those aspects which may conventionally be seen as on show. There is also scope for providers of professional development targeted at leaders to place greater emphasis on such activities and offer practical guidance on the strategies which may be employed to perform such emotional labour.

Placing a high regard on social learning can promote trust

In my thesis I have described how demonstrating a high level of care and competency encourages others to trust the leader and exhibit trustworthiness themselves in their everyday actions. I have also highlighted specific behaviours and approaches which support this process, for instance in relation to coaching, promoting effective and open communications, demonstrating supportiveness and trusting others.

Furthermore I have drawn specific attention to the significance of trusting others in promoting trust more broadly. This has major implications for leaders in relation to the leadership styles and approaches they adopt. Most notably it highlights the benefits of distributed leadership and utilising styles which emphasis support for followers, rather than more centralised strategies of command and control. Leaders are therefore advised to consider the degree to which they utilise distributed leadership and explore how this may be developed in ways which are sympathetic to collaborative working.

2. Implications for policy

Judging the effectiveness of schools on their own is problematic

Since being established as part of the Education Act (1988), the Office for Standards in Education [Ofsted] has been responsible for assessing the performance of schools. Although the precise framework for this assessment has altered over time, it has been based upon the completion of a periodic review of the individual school, undertaken by a team of inspectors. However as outlined in my literature review, schools are increasingly reliant upon each other and alternative agencies to deliver governmental

policies on education and child welfare. While a consideration of how well schools work in partnership with others has been included in the most recent Ofsted framework for school inspections (Ofsted, 2009), it remains a relatively small aspect of the overall accountability process. There appears to be a strong argument therefore for redesigning at least some elements of this inspection framework to take greater account of school's partnership working, for instance in relation to collaborative based approaches to delivering extended services.

Taking a more measured approach to policy development and the introduction of change

A related issue centres on the high degree of change that occurs within schools in general at present. Whilst the notion that “the only constant is change” is held to be both self evident and true of many areas of society, the speed and frequency with which new policy initiatives are introduced into our schools is greater than in many other countries. Furthermore there is also strong feeling amongst school leaders in general that insufficient time is allowed to enable the impact of such change to fully emerge before the next initiative is introduced. This view is particularly prevalent in areas of partnership working where realising the full potential of any change in working is dependent upon establishing meaningful trusting relationships, which as noted in my thesis, may require not inconsiderable time to occur. As a result greater patience is required from policymakers in introducing new initiatives and assessing their overall effectiveness.

Developing professional support to raise awareness of issues of collaborative working

At present relatively little professional development offered to school leaders focuses on the issues of collaborative working. This stems in part from a general lack of precision in leadership development provision, which results in its collective failure to inform leadership practice to its full potential (Burgoyne et al., 2004). As a result there is a clear need for providers of CPD⁸³ to develop provision which addresses this shortfall. Examples of such provision could include modules on training programmes, online learning, case studies etc. which address the issues that underpin effective collaborations and which are outlined in this thesis, e.g. values, aims and objectives, member relations, culture and language, and context. Furthermore the fundamentally collaborative nature of schools means that such support should not be restricted to headteachers, but also made available to leadership teams and more broadly across the school and beyond, including professionals and para-professionals from across the children's workforce. As many individuals are required to collaborate with other agencies with immediate effect from when they enter their profession, such support should also form part of their initial professional training. One specific area for exploration relates to the potential for individuals to shadow staff from alternative professional backgrounds, with shadowing having been found in this study to be a particularly valuable approach to gaining clearer insight into the roles of others.

⁸³ Examples of such providers include the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services, Department for Children, Schools and Families, Children's Workforce Development Agency and the Teacher Development Agency.

3. Implications for theory

Identifies collaborative leadership as a composite, blended leadership approach, with a clearly distinguishable identity of its own

The first theoretical implication of my work centres on the underlying nature of collaborative leadership in schools. In my findings section I describe my view that collaborative leadership represents a form of blended leadership, containing elements of the following:

- Relational leadership
- Distributed leadership
- Political leadership
- Authentic leadership
- Constitutive leadership

At the same time, I highlight how collaborative leadership in schools combines elements of both transactional and transformational leadership, and masculine and feminine forms of leadership. Thus collaborative leadership embraces a range of leadership theories, yet possesses a unique and distinct identity of its own. At the same time, these various elements may complement and conflict with one another. For instance, strategies of distributed leadership may support, develop and embed leader-follower relationships. In contrast, political leadership demands leaders perform a range of actions which at first sight may appear to be anti-collaborative and potentially threaten the individual leader's personal sense of authenticity. Similarly alternative contexts for partnerships may variously demand more consultative or directive strategies. As already noted, identifying mechanisms for reconciling such tensions is therefore a fundamental element of effective collaborative leadership and a process which may be supported through recourse to the notion of professionalism.

I have also provided evidence of how partnership working transforms the nature of leadership, emphasising the importance of values and personalised interactions with individual followers. Furthermore I have noted its strong connection with social learning theory, by describing the significance of the leader modelling approaches which are commensurate with these values, both as an end in itself and as a means of informing followers' behaviours [I return to this theme again later in my findings section]. Such modelling is important for both the 'glamorous' and mundane elements of leadership alike. In this way I highlighted the strong connect between collaborative leadership and values based, transformational leadership inspired models. At the same time, I have drawn attention to how such work requires strong political skills and the ability to tackle the pragmatics of partnership on a daily basis. In such instances, transactional leadership skills are paramount in ensuring effective leader-follower-exchanges, for instance in relation to establishing clear and strong boundaries for followers. Thus my approach bridges the gap between transactional and transformational leadership theory, by blending these two elements to form a coherent, values based but strongly pragmatic approach to partnership working. Furthermore I have highlighted how aspects of both masculine and feminine leadership approaches are demanded at different stages of development, further reiterating the blended nature of collaborative leadership in schools. This notion of blended leadership and my strong focus on both the glamorous and mundane elements of leadership form key parts of my original contribution to knowledge.

Demonstrates the significance of professionalism as a means of reconciling anti-collaborative behaviour and authentic leadership

As noted above, authenticity forms a central theme within my model of collaborative leadership as it uses the leader's espoused values as a means of guaranteeing the benevolence of their behaviour. Underpinning authenticity is the idea of professionalism, which itself is based upon macro, societal expectations of role, which become manifest through their localised interpretation. Professionalism therefore combines aspects of agency and structure, as it is through the daily performance of any given role that its precise nature comes into being. Thus professionalism is neither static nor universal, but rather reflexive, localised and often mundane in its nature.

Furthermore professionalism offers a means through which the individual may distance themselves from less pleasurable aspects of their role which are potentially threatening to their personal sense of authenticity. In such instances therefore, the leader may view themselves as performing elements which are essential to their role but potentially removed from their own personality. At the same time, they are able to inform others expectations of their role, such that subsequent, similar demonstrations become accepted and anticipated elements of headship. In this way, professionalism is socially constructed and provides a framework against which the authenticity of the leader's performance may be judged and assessments as to their trustworthiness determined.

Offering a multi-dimensional framework for understanding trust both in theory and practice

In my findings section I described how my study offers a rounded and multi-dimensional framework for understanding trust within the context of partnership working. More specifically it brings coherence to the range of views outlined by the main theorists in this field, such as Bryk and Schneider (2002), Covey (2006), Tschannan Moran (2004) and Reina and Reina (2006). In doing so, I account for the emergence of trust and its manifestation on a day to day basis.

Furthermore in my integrated model of trust I draw attention to how trust is influenced by a range of factors, including the personal, interpersonal, organisational and societal. In this way I highlight how any meaningful consideration of trust must pay attention to these various levels of influence. I also note how trust is affected by economic, sociological and psychological drivers, which also feature within my integrated model. Again my inference is clear – I see any model which does not combine or at least refer to these various aspects as inevitably limited in its contribution to knowledge.

Reinforcing the importance of social learning and its practical application in schools

A major feature of my study is my inclusion of Social Learning Theory as a mechanism for explaining the development of trust in the day to day performance of leadership. As already noted, Social Learning Theory offers a coherent framework for understanding the ways in which leaders influence organisational culture, by

exemplifying the behaviours they expect others to aspire to. This element of my model connects with Tschannan Moran's (2004) work in particular and offers a clear theoretical basis for explaining leaders' influence in this respect. Furthermore, I have paid consistent attention to the importance of modelling appropriate behaviour in the most mundane aspects of practice as these are the elements which are most frequently on show to others. As with my previous point, I therefore believe that theoretical frameworks which fail to consider the significance of modelling as a means through which trust is developed are fundamentally flawed.

Emphasises the socially constructed nature of trust and the significance of expectations, attribution and role playing in its development

An important consideration relating to modelling concerns the processes through which expectations of appropriate or inappropriate leadership behaviours are established. Drawing on the principles of dramaturgy (Brannaman, 1997, Goffman, 1959), I described how roles are defined and redefined in an iterative and ongoing discourse between leader and follower. I then propose that such ongoing interactions provide a backdrop against which individuals perform their respective roles, which in due course evolve into agreed and more established vision of trustworthiness.

Maintaining this flexibility is critical in explaining context-based variations in leadership and avoiding the false trap of determinism. For theorists of trust my model therefore introduces an expectation that broader principles for developing trust can be established but not at the expense of a flexible response to context.

Offering a grounded consideration of the practical implications of partnership work and trustworthy leadership

My study is supported by extensive fieldwork which offers considerable insight into both the practicalities of partnership work and trustworthy leadership. It therefore goes beyond the superficial to demonstrate the practical implications of these issues for daily practice.

In the case of partnership working, this involves highlighting the importance of seemingly ‘anti-collaborative’, directive leadership approaches in the pursuit of the partnership aims. For trustworthy leadership, this may demand the performance of leadership styles and approaches which are unauthentic at one level, but designed to be perceived as such and promote an affective response from the observer. In both instances, I highlight the potentially manipulative nature of leadership in these contexts. Furthermore in my literature review, I have drawn attention to the potential costs involved in undertaking partnership work and thereby questioned the extent to which this approach is necessarily suited to all contexts.

I therefore believe my study offers a more sophisticated consideration of partnerships and trust, and resists the temptations of presenting either as unproblematic or universal panaceas to the leadership challenges facing schools today.

Potential areas for future study

In this very final subsection of my thesis I reflect on the implications of my work for potential future research.

Developing the depth of understanding on the day to day performance of headship

In my methodology section I outline the approaches I undertook for this work. I believe that these provided me with a strong evidence base for my findings, and support the measured conclusions I draw and recommendations I make. However notwithstanding this, I believe there is scope for more evidence to be collated to assess the transferability of my findings more broadly.

At one level, this could involve undertaking further observational research of the heads I studied over a longer period of time in order to develop richly detailed account of the way in which they develop, negotiate and perform the role of headteacher within their context. Further work could involve extending the sample frame for this study more broadly to cover a number of alternative contexts.

Of foremost interest in this is the prospect of building on my micro-ethnographies to develop a richer and more nuanced understanding of how trust is informed by the day to day practice of leadership. A core focus for this should centre on gaining a better understanding of the ways in which emotional intelligence and emotional labour support their work. A second important theme concerns how leaders reconcile areas of potential conflict between their personal values and the anti-collaborative elements of their role. As I have described throughout this study, professionalism offers a

potentially supportive mechanism for achieving this, and further exploration of the cognitive and emotional processes involved in this could be of interest for both its own sake and its implications for the professional development of headteachers.

A further area of interest centres upon the relative merits of masculine and feminine leadership approaches. As noted earlier in this thesis, there is a growing body of evidence to support the hypothesis that feminine approaches may be better suited to collaborative settings, given their emphasis on caring, nurturing, sharing and empowering others. However as I have demonstrated in this work, masculine approaches continue to play a significant role in effective partnership working, particularly in relation to establishing boundaries and areas of political leadership. Clearer insight into their respective roles and the ways in which they are undertaken on a daily basis would be highly informative.

Exploring the applicability of the findings in other school based contexts

In my methodology section, I describe my strategy for identifying the potential participants in this study and draw attention to the fact that the schools I included in phase 2 and 3 of my work were all judged by Ofsted to be positive examples of partnership working. There is some potential scope therefore broadening this study to include less positive contexts for partnership working. More specifically, it may be interesting to undertake a similarly designed study in failing schools, which we may hypothesise as likely to feature a low trust culture. Similarly partnerships which are characterised by inertia rather than advantage could provide a natural avenue for further exploration.

Again this may be of particular interest in terms of a possible ethnographic study to explore the ways in which the day to day performance of headship is manifest in these contexts. Comparing and contrasting the specific approaches adopted would allow the most significant aspects of practice to be identified, thereby enabling my models to be tested further and potentially refined to increase their applicability in other contexts. This would also be helpful in supporting the development of professional training and learning on the issue of leading collaborations.

Exploring the applicability of the findings in other contexts beyond school

Similarly there is scope for investigating the approaches adopted by leaders in partnership contexts beyond education. I do not necessarily believe that any aspect of my findings is uniquely applicable to the school sector. However a more detailed exploration of the issues of partnership in other contexts would provide a basis for making a sound judgement on this. One specific area which may potentially vary in significance between contexts relates to the values and principles which underpin the collaboration. In my study, these were inspired by a general commitment to public service, located within a desire to boost the life chances of children and their families. They were also motivated by government initiatives which effectively necessitated co-operative working between providers of child welfare services. Thus a considerable amount of partnership activity described in this study was undertaken in areas which were broadly neutral in nature and centred on meeting the needs of the individual child, rather than promoting the competitive advantage of the organisation involved. This was a little greyer in areas of school to school partnership, but again I argue that this was still the case. However it would be interesting to assess the approaches adopted in instances where commercial organisations undertake collaborative

working. In such examples it is logical to assume that a key driver for partnership working would be promoting commercial advantage and the extent to which this effectively substituted moral purpose as a driver of partnership working would be an area of considerable interest. Indeed I have described in several areas of my study how the notions of moral purpose and altruism have supported partnership activity at a range of levels. These include the identification of potential partners, establishing the areas of scope for collaboration and generating good will between specific individuals from different agencies, to support their day to day working. Thus these factors are significant at the macro, meso and micro level. The degree to which commercialism could perform a similar role would be interesting to observe.

Understanding the development of role expectations

My final suggestion for further research centres on the ways in which leaders and followers develop their understandings as to the nature of the leadership role within the context of collaborative working.

I have noted elsewhere how professional expectations of leaders are negotiated through an interplay of agency and structure. This sees them as grounded in wider social conventions of the role, but developed through their day to day performance, as leaders utilise areas of flexibility to emphasise those aspects which they feel are most significant. I have also highlighted how the locally defined nature of professionalism offers a means through which leaders are able to protect and promote their sense of authenticity and why manifest leadership practice is context specific. Further studies into the basis for these socialised views of individual roles would be helpful in understanding their origins and clarifying the emphasis placed on specific elements.

Areas of particular interest in understanding role definition include the importance of initial professional training, the influence of significant figures such as the headteacher of the school one attended as a child, the implications of gender and the part media representations of leadership functions play in developing these identities and stereotypes. The degree to which the individuals who fulfil these roles recognise areas of potential scope for personal interpretation is also of significant interest.

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