

**INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PRINCIPLES
FOR RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION
IN UK BUSINESS SCHOOLS**

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INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBLE
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Jonathan Louw

This thesis results entirely from my own work and has not been offered previously for
any other degree or diploma.

SignatureJ P Louw.....

Abstract

This thesis provides an account of an empirical study into the institutionalisation of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) in UK university business schools. 29 academics in 22 schools were engaged in dialogic interviews to address three questions: (1) What are the reported practices and strategies deployed by PRME advocates (institutional entrepreneurs) in their work to institutionalise PRME in their business schools (2) What are the dimensions of institutional logics within business school settings that hinder or promote the work of PRME institutional entrepreneurs and (3) How do PRME's field level characteristics affect PRME outcomes at organisational level?

A context for PRME is presented, including recent critiques of alleged ethical failings in business education. Core constructs in neo-institutional and relevant other theoretical domains are outlined. The social constructionist, interpretivist basis of the research design and related methodologies are explained. Findings are presented in a way consistent with institutional theory; at individual entrepreneur, organisational and field levels. Conclusions include the proposition that PRME as currently enacted lacks the capacity to disrupt dominant institutional logics and enable sustained institutional change. Despite strategic, adept and emotionally demanding institutional work by PRME advocates, the power of current logics and weaknesses in PRME's framing appear to mean that implementation is often partial or easily derailed. Closing reflections include an evaluation of the research design and process. Contributions to future practice as well as to theory, particularly in relation to institutional logic complexity and an understanding of the affective dimensions of institutional work, are suggested.

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List of Abbreviations

AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
ABS	Association of Business Schools
AMBA	Association of MBAs
CLADEA	Latin American Council of Management Schools
CME	Critical Management Education
CMS	Critical Management Studies
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EFMD	European Foundation for Management Development
EQUIS	European Quality Improvement System
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GMAC	Graduate Management Admission Council
GRLI	Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
NSS	National Student Satisfaction (Survey)
PRME	Principles for Responsible Management Education
REF	Research Evaluation Framework

SIP	(PRME) Sharing Information on Progress report
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
UNPRME	United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education

Note on pronunciation and terminology

PRME is commonly pronounced PR(i)ME. When I wish to refer to the PRME initiative as a whole I normally write “PRME” and use a singular verb form. When I wish to refer specifically to the principles and their content I normally write “the PRME” and use a plural verb form.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Genesis and rationale

At the heart of this thesis is an attempt to understand the complexities of the institutional work undertaken by advocates for the adoption and implementation of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management (PRME) in UK business schools. Although open to multiple interpretations, the PRME project is essentially a normative one. At its core is a challenge to the values base of business education and in that sense, and in ways that will be demonstrated throughout this thesis, it goes against the grain of much current practice in many schools.

The PRME initiative was launched in 2007 by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon. Intended as an educational complement to the big business corporate social responsibility initiative that is the UN Global Compact, the six principles (Table 2, p. 51) sought to point the way towards more ethical, responsible and environmentally sustainable orientations within business and management education and research. They can also be seen as a response to wide and deep critiques of the relevance and values of management education that had gathered pace since the 1990s. Equally, they would not have been possible without the evolution during that time of the academic fields of corporate social responsibility (CSR), business ethics and education for sustainability, and of multiple other international joint statements of intent, such as the Talloires Declaration, in relation to sustainability and higher education. This historical and conceptual situatedness is explored in Chapter Two.

The origins of my subject choice lie in both practice and conceptual domains. As an academic in a business school that is a signatory to PRME, and as an advocate for research, teaching and external engagement consistent with the PRME impulse, I was aware of the difficult history that PRME implementation had experienced in its early years in my school. Simultaneously, I was reading other examples of the obligatory bi-ennial Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports that all signatories are required to submit to the UNPRME Secretariat in New York. I was puzzled by their sunny optimism and the implication that PRME implementation elsewhere was straightforward. This did not fit with my own experience or that of the few other PRME advocates whom I then knew. As a consequence, I began to explore the then (2012/2013) much more limited journal literature in relation to PRME. This confirmed my experience of the challenges involved, and cast further doubt on the completeness of SIP narratives, unpunctuated by setbacks as they mainly were.

Spurred on by these recognitions, I decided during the first phase of my doctoral programme to conduct a discourse analysis of key PRME documentation, including a sample of SIPs from UK business schools (Louw, 2015). This process highlighted what I concluded were substantial limitations on the conceptualisation of values renewal underlying the PRME discourse. It also engaged me fully for the first time in the wider debates about the purpose, values and relevance of business school education. Simultaneously, I also began to meet other PRME advocates in business schools that are part of the UK and Ireland PRME Chapter. Their accounts of where they had and had not been able to effect change intrigued me. These conversations confirmed too that the complexity of day to day PRME implementation was often not reflected in the official SIP narratives that the individuals concerned may well

subsequently even have authored. All of these factors drew me into a gathering interest in the practices and strategies adopted by PRME advocates, and the factors that helped or hindered their success. As can be inferred from the above, my own situatedness in this policy and practice arena prior to the current study imparts to this work some of the characteristics of insider research. The implications of this are acknowledged in Chapter Three.

As the literature review in Chapter Two demonstrates, there is widespread agreement amongst those writing about management education that the values base and social relevance of business schools need sustained and robust attention. This is true of sector representative and accreditation bodies such as the EFMD, as well as mainstream and Critical Management Studies scholars. These are not the only issues pressing on the sector's legitimacy and future role. Funding patterns, demographic change, research focus, HE marketisation and technological innovation are also very much in the frame. Nevertheless, what might loosely be termed the PRME agenda (ethics, sustainability, CSR and responsible management) is central to these debates.

The PRME project is not the only cross-border or cross-discipline initiative of this kind in the HE and business school fields. The Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative, the 50+20 initiative, the Education for Sustainable Development movement, and the British Academy of Management Special Interest Group on Sustainability and Responsible Management are examples of others. However, it is what Forray and Leigh (2012) with some justification call the "first large-scale global initiative for change in business education" (p.301). And with over 500 of the world's 13,000

business schools (EFMD, 2014) as signatories to date, it appears to have potential traction in a way that other initiatives have not achieved. These factors, combined with PRME membership being proportionally higher in the UK than in other countries, encouraged me to focus on the PRME project rather than any alternatives.

My turn to neo-institutional theory to help make sense of the PRME advocate experience can be accounted for in a number of ways. In the broadest sense, I was alive to the central role it has grown to play in Organisation Studies over the past thirty to forty years. However, although Tight (2012) notes an established pattern of borrowing from other disciplines by HE researchers, my early investigations (see Chapter Two) showed relatively modest evidence of neo-institutional empirical studies in HE and business school settings. This suggested opportunities for useful further exploration. I was alert also to two calls by Pettigrew, Cornuel and Hommel (2014), one for increased understanding of the institutional dynamics of business schools, and the other for greater synergy between research into business schools and wider HE research.

More specifically, core concepts within neo-institutional theory of logics, fields, institutional work and institutional entrepreneurship seemed to fit well with the phenomena I was encountering in practice. To provide some framing for this discussion, Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin and Suddaby, in their Introduction to the *Sage Handbook of Organisational Institutionalism*, suggest that an institution is “more or less taken-for-granted repetitive social behaviour that is underpinned by normative systems and cognitive understandings that give meaning to social exchange and thus

enable self-reproducing social order” (2008, p 4). The specific forms and impacts of those behaviours, normative systems and understandings are central to the notion of institutional logics. Within HE and business schools, it was clear to me from the outset that dominant research and teaching logics were likely to be important influences on a project like PRME that was seeking to challenge, replace or at the least reformulate some aspects of these logics. Institutional theory, with its understanding of institutions being nested, Russian doll like, at societal, field, organisational and individual levels, also spoke to my aspiration to relate individual advocate experience to wider social phenomena.

Early neo-institutional theory and empirical study (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) emphasised how organisational forms and practices in a field tended to converge in an isomorphic, fairly deterministic manner that reflected a search for legitimacy. More recent research has turned away from deterministic, structural models to account for divergent change. This has led to a turn towards more agentic accounts of individual and organisational actors’ attempts to disrupt or transform institutions. Interest in so-called institutional entrepreneurs has grown, as has interest, in the arena of institutional work, in their detailed practices. This practice focus in turn has drawn on the sociology of practice literature. My interest in the practices of PRME advocates has thus aligned well with evolving debates within neo-institutional theory about how embedded actors achieve institutional change.

Neo-institutional theory also intersects in ways significant to this study with social movement theory. The impetus towards the PRME project has in part arisen from the

influence of the wider environmental movement. Similarly, the critiques of business school values have in part derived from movements for greater corporate accountability. Moreover, my starting assumption was that individual PRME advocates might possibly have connections to such movements. Thus the capacity of neo-institutional theory to draw on insights from social movement theory seemed to offer potentially fruitful avenues for exploration.

Thus it is that my own situated practice sparked an exploratory PRME discourse analysis that in turn led to encounters with a wider set of PRME advocates and subsequently an engagement with neo-institutional theory as a framework for understanding these and similar actors' experiences.

1.2 Research context

The setting for this study is business schools operating within the HE sector in the UK. In June 2014 there were 117 such schools (ABS, 2014) and although a small minority are stand-alone and/or for profit in nature, all represented in this research were part of wider, non-profit Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Further data on the business school sector can be found in Chapter Two.

All of the then (June 2014) 43 UK PRME signatory business schools were approached to participate. This led to 22 agreeing to do so, which then generated 29 individual participants. Those interviewed were all business school academics, ranging from junior lecturers to deans (reflecting the variety of posts held by PRME lead advocates in their schools). At the time of initial approach there were no PRME signatories in

Wales or Northern Ireland. Only one of four Scottish signatories agreed to participate, meaning 21 out of the 22 business schools represented here are in England. As Chapter Three indicates, these schools are spread fairly evenly across the English regions and across the subsectors within UK HE (Russell Group, Post 92, nonaligned etc.). Participation was on the basis of individual as well as organisational anonymity.

In ways that will be detailed in Chapter Three, this research in the qualitative tradition has been carried out within a social constructionist ontology and deploys an interpretive epistemology. As Geertz (1973) noted, the interpretive perspective is about ‘inquiry from the inside’ – in this case principally from the inside of the PRME advocate experience. The 29 participants were engaged in mid-late 2014 in dialogic, narrative style interviews that were influenced by Gabriel’s (2000) narrative interviewing protocol.

1.3 Research questions

For reasons already alluded to, this study has sought to address the following questions:

1. What are the reported practices and strategies deployed by PRME advocates (here deemed institutional entrepreneurs) in their work to institutionalise PRME in their business schools?
2. What are the dimensions of institutional logics within business school settings – at both organisational and field levels – that hinder or promote the work of PRME institutional entrepreneurs?

3. How do PRME's field level characteristics affect PRME outcomes at organisational level?

As the focus of this research is PRME entrepreneurial practice, institutional work, logics and fields, this study does not seek to address issues in related literatures, such as the merits of stand-alone modules vs embedded approaches to business ethics, effective pedagogies for teaching criticality and the relative merits of sustainability vs responsibility foci in PRME implementation. Many important debates within institutional theory such as in relation to isomorphism, agency and power are also not addressed in any detail. These are significant issues and debates, and they featured in many interviews, sometimes at length. However, given limitations of space they are not explored in this thesis other than by way of contextual detail for discussions in relation to my principal research foci.

1.4 Thesis framework

This thesis follows a traditional PhD thesis format. Following this introduction, Chapter Two seeks to place this study in the context of relevant literatures. Four contextualisations are offered in relation to: (1) critiques of business school education; (2) institutional theory and particularly institutional entrepreneurship and work; (3) approaches to the sociology of practice; and (4) PRME's location within a history of international statements of intent in relation to higher education, as well as within the fields of CSR, business ethics and sustainability.

Chapter Three covers my research design and methodology. Starting with an explanation of my social constructionist, interpretivist orientation, I then seek to

outline the rationale for my intended narrative research methodology as a way to explore PRME institutional entrepreneur experience. Reflecting on the ways my 29 narrative-orientated interviews did not provide the expected level of storied data, I explain how I adjusted my data analysis towards a more traditional thematic approach. Reflexivity, ethics and evaluative criteria are also considered.

In the presentation of my findings in Chapter Four, I adopt an approach consistent with my neo-institutional frame of reference and outline 15 themes arising from my data at individual entrepreneur, organisational and wider field levels.

My discussion in Chapter Five seeks to examine my findings in relation to concepts and theoretical constructs identified in Chapter Three, while at the same time identifying the implications of my data for the future evolution of some of those concepts and constructs. Particular attention is paid to the way in which my findings contribute to recent debates about institutional pluralism and complexity and the emotional components in institutional work.

In my sixth and final Chapter I reflect on the extent to which I have addressed my research questions and I summarise the potential contributions of this study at both theoretical and practice levels. An evaluation of the study in relation to quality criteria identified in Chapter Three is also offered, and potential future lines of research are suggested.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to underpin and contextualise the current study in four areas:

1. A contextualisation of PRME (UNPRME, 2007) in relation to the history, evolution, as well as recent and current critiques of business school education
2. An outline of the key contributions made to Organisation Studies by new institutional theory, and an introduction to concepts and debates relevant to this study in relation to institutional logics, organisational fields, institutional entrepreneurs, institutional work and social movement theory
3. A brief introduction to the sociology of practice, on which the literature on institutional entrepreneurship and institutional work often draws
4. A contextualisation of PRME in relation to other international declarations of intent in HE as well as the fields of business ethics, corporate social responsibility and sustainability.

All four areas will help to frame this investigation. From a theoretical perspective, however, the second is the most significant. The chapter thus ends with a summary of the core components in the neo-institutional analytical approach adopted in this study.

2.2 PRME in relation to business school education and critiques thereof

Depending on the definition adopted, modern business and management education has its roots in the USA and/or various European nations in the mid to late 19th century

(Thomas, Thomas and Wilson, 2013). Starting at Wharton in 1881, the USA university business school sector grew rapidly throughout the early 20th Century (Khurana, 2007). The first university business schools outside North America appeared in the UK in the 1960s following the Robbins (1963) and the Franks (1963) Reports. Although now a global phenomenon, with over 13,000 business schools worldwide (EFMD, 2014), the extent of North American and European dominance of the sector can be seen in the origins and location of the three international accreditation bodies, the US based AACSB, Brussels based EFMD EQUIS and London based AMBA. Indeed the composition of the PRME drafting group is another such indicator, where just 16 of the 60 members came from institutions across the whole of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Although there are deemed by some (e.g. Perriton, 2007; Durand and Dameron, 2008) to be distinctive UK and European business school traditions (e.g. less corporate, more engaged with wider social science and educational debates), the dominant view is that the US model, both in terms of values and curriculum structure (Neal and Finlay, 2008), has been imprinted on business schools worldwide.

This is generally seen to derive from the indisputable reach of US business models in the second half of the twentieth century, and the US economy's role as the initial engine of globalisation (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007; Durand and Dameron, 2008). Such dominance is also said to carry over into the academic journal domain, where the overwhelming majority of the four star business and management journals emphasise the quantitative, positivist methodologies associated with the finance and economics disciplines that have high status in US business schools (Ghoshal, 2005).

This research orientation, and the shape of much subsequent business and management education, are widely attributed to the influence of the 1959 Carnegie and Ford Foundation reports into the state of US business schools (Bennis and O'Toole, 2005; Khurana, 2007). Both recommended that the route to enhanced academic quality and standing lay with greater investment in more 'scientific' research of a kind based on the natural sciences. This established an orthodoxy that through staff appointments, research collaborations and the like became influential in early UK business schools (London Business School, Warwick, Manchester) and beyond (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007).

For reasons that it is not central to this study to debate here, business school student numbers have seen steady, and in certain periods exponential, growth in many parts of the world since the 1970s. In the UK alone, total fulltime business student numbers grew from 221,000 to 260,000 in the five years from 2008/9 to 2013/14 (HESA, 2015). Some 13 % of all UK undergraduates in 2013/14 were studying a business related course, at one of the 117 members of the UK Association of Business Schools (HESA, 2015). Also attracting some 28% of total non UK domicile taught masters students (ABS, 2012) in a context where 54% of all taught masters students in 2013/14 (HESA, 2015) were of non UK domicile, business schools are often described by as the 'cash cows' of the HE sector (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002). Characterised as hypercompetitive (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007), the sector is hierarchically ordered in the UK as elsewhere, with league table ranking schemes (Financial Times, Forbes, Economist etc.) and accreditation systems (AMBA, EQUIS,

AACSB) an embedded part of the competitive landscape (Wilkins and Huisman, 2012; Thomas, Billsberry, Ambrosini and Bartin, 2014).

While continuingly successful in relation to student numbers (albeit that there have been some debates about peak demand for the MBA degree having been reached), the Anglo-Saxon business school model has in the past 20 years become subject to increasing critique from media (e.g. Newsweek, 2009; Forbes.com, 2011; Guardian, 2015) and academic sources (the latter being the focus of concentration here). As will be suggested in due course, PRME can be seen as one response from within the sector to these critiques. Critical perspectives centre on a set of inter-related issues, including (1) the nature of the relationship between the business school sector and the corporate sector (2) perceived moral and ethical lacunae in business school curricula (3) a lack of practitioner relevance in much business school research and (4) insufficient attention to wider social and environmental responsibilities.

In a North American context Pfeffer (2005) among others has lamented the undue influence of the marketplace in business schools in the form of dependence on corporate philanthropy and collaboration. Indeed corporate partnership including involvement in business school governance is a key indicator for the sector accreditation systems (EFMD 2013). Khurana (2007) traces the evolution of this corporate orientation in his analysis of how USA business schools used their institutional legitimacy as a means to legitimise a new management class through the pursuit of professionalising management. Critically, he argues, such a discourse of

professionalism carried with it normative values related to the moral codes and public good associated with professions such as medicine. Khurana's widely regarded thesis is that the failure, for many reasons, to legitimise management as a profession combined with the rise of neoliberal free market ideologies since the 1980s has meant business schools "capitulated to a view of management as agents of shareholders" (2007, p. 6) with a related loss of professional and moral ideals.

In the Critical Management Studies (CMS) tradition (Alvesson and Willmott, 1992) and related Critical Management Education (CME) field (Perriton, 2007; Boje and Al Avkoubi, 2009) writers similarly depict a situation in which business schools have renounced "their moral and political responsibility to society" (Locke and Spender, 2011, p. xix). As Grey notes, CMS proponents make the "core claim ...that management studies is ...irredeemably political" (2004, p.179), that management education works in the interests of corporations and that an espoused 'scientific approach' conceals an unstated set of managerial values. It is suggested that a commitment to a utilitarian rather than critical view of management education (Grey and French, 1996) leads to the absence of questioning about modern capitalism and its consequences (Zald, 2002). The consequence of this, many both inside and outside the CME tradition have claimed, is that business schools must take responsibility for the contribution of the elites they have trained to many of the recent spectacular failings of corporate governance and financial institutions e.g. at Enron and Lehman Brothers (Mintzberg 2004; Ghoshal 2005, Pfeffer, 2005, Locke and Spender, 2011). An assertion of the need to engage with values other than corporate and managerial ones is not restricted to those in the CMS tradition, with many others also calling for a

renewed focus within management education on the wider public interest (Mintzberg, 2004; Morsing and Rovira, 2011). Such calls are implicit or explicit too within the specific fields of business ethics, CSR and sustainability, as will be identified later in this chapter.

Turning to business school research, critiques centre on practitioner relevance, methodology, and ideological orientation. These have come from individual critical academics as well as mainstream accreditation bodies (AACSB, 2008). A search not only for academic but also for senior corporate credibility is alleged to be behind the emphasis on positivist, quantitative, ‘scientific’ research (Bennis and O’Toole, 2005; Ghoshal, 2005). This has reflected, it is claimed, a search for managerial control (Grey, 2004) and led to an orientation to research, teach and “theorise as if managers operate under conditions of certainty” (Spender, 2005 p.1283). Indeed a so-called rigour vs relevance debate has been at the centre of ongoing discussion in the sector since the 1980s (Porter and McKibbin, 1988; Kieser, 2011; GMAC, 2013).

Bridgman (2007) highlights two readings of the relevance debate, both germane to PRME. The first relates to the alleged lack of relevance of business school research (and teaching) to organisational practice because of the assumptions of certainty and failure to investigate the complex, unpredictable nature of management as an activity (Mintzberg 2004; Ghoshal, 2005; Spender 2005). Related to this, some scholars (e.g. Schoemaker, 2008) have rehearsed ways in which business school research and curricula might better reflect the complexities of the modern corporate world. The

second reading derives from the CMS standpoint that relevance can only be achieved with a critical orientation, an orientation to research and educate about management rather than for management (Watson, 2001) requiring more curriculum emphasis than in the past on education in critical thinking (Mingers 2000, Smith 2003, Antonacopoulou, 2010). In relation to ethics and ideology, Mitroff (2004), Ghoshal (2005), Giacalone and Thompson (2006) and others argue that lack of criticality in management theory has led to academics “propagating ideologically inspired amoral theories” involving a limiting, “pessimistic” view of human nature as purely self-interested (Ghoshal, 2005, p. 76). Amongst many responses to these critiques, the Carnegie Foundation and others have advocated a future curriculum drawing more widely on the humanities and social sciences as a way to enhance students’ intellectual curiosity and frames of reference (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007; Colby, Ehrlich, Sullivan and Dolle, 2011; Iniguez de Onzono, 2011).

Also responding to these critiques, field level actors on both sides of the Atlantic such as the GMAC (2013) and EFMD (Thomas et al, 2013; Thomas, Lee, Thomas and Wilson, 2014) have in recent years commissioned studies on the current state and potential future scenarios facing the sector. Much of the writing has remained significantly Anglo-Centric in orientation, but there have been attempts to take more global and regional perspectives (e.g. Durand and Dameron, 2008). In addition to challenges specific to the sector, attention has also turned to wider issues of HE funding sources as well as the vulnerability of the whole on-campus based HE system to technology-driven innovation in content and learning delivery. Referring to the latter as one of the ‘blind spots’ of the sector, Thomas, Lee et al (2014) like GMAC

(2013) and echoing Friga, Bettis and Sullivan (2003) ten years earlier predict significant disruption to the business school model in its wake. At a more theoretical level, as will be returned to below, other scholars are seeking to make links between future business school research agendas and those of other disciplines, including the wider field of Higher Education research (Pettigrew et al, 2014). While the level of optimism about the future prospects for business and management education and research varies from study to study, what is largely shared is a sense of a field the value of which is both contested and in need of more persuasive articulation. Common to the majority of the mainstream accounts too, i.e. not just emanating from those in the CME, business ethics or sustainability camps, is the proposition that business school missions, teaching and research need to be increasingly aligned with wider societal and environmental rather than solely corporate needs (Starkey and Tempest, 2008; Morsing and Rovira, 2011; GMAC, 2013; Thomas, Lee et al, 2014).

2.3 New institutional Theory

2.3.1 The wider field of institutional theories

Early manifestations of institutional theory were to be found in the disciplines of economics, politics and sociology from the beginning of the 20th century and evolved into their more recent, neo-institutional forms from mid-century onwards (Scott, 2008). This study will be located within the sociological and more particularly Organisation Studies strand of neo-institutional theory which crystallised in seminal works such as those of Meyer and Rowan (1977), Zucker (1977) and DiMaggio and Powell (1983).

Neo-institutional perspectives from the Organisation Studies tradition have been widely adopted in other research fields too. In their 2009 literature review covering the period 1988-2007, Weerakkody, Dwivedi and Irani identified its presence in 67 subject areas. In common with this wider trend, as will be shown in more detail below, neo-institutional theory has established a clear foothold in Higher Education research too. This reflects what Tight (2012) refers to as an established practice of theoretical borrowing by HE studies from sociological, business and management theory in particular. Given its origins outside HE, initial parts, at least, of this review will be firmly located in sociological and Organisation Studies literatures. It should also be noted that there continue to be separate institutional research agendas within other disciplines, with some points of convergence with the Organisation Studies strand (see Pacheco, York, Dean and Sarasvathy (2010) in relation to institutional economics) but these are not engaged with here.

2.3.2 New institutional theory within the wider Organisation Studies field

In Organisation Studies, institutional theory forms a counterpoint to: technical-rational models of organisational actor behaviour; decision theory; structural-contingency theory; and resource-dependency theory (Greenwood et al, 2008); as well as to the contemporary post-structural paradigm reflected for example in postcolonial and actor-network theory (Hassard, Cox and Rowlinson, 2013). Reed (2006), in his historical overview of approaches to organisational theorising, identifies seven metanarratives or interpretative frameworks (with their associated organisational problematics). He co-locates institutional theory with other approaches such as labour process theory and Weberian theory – with a common metanarrative of power and an interest in problematising domination. The analytical and empirical focus of research

of such theory is, he suggests, “the ‘expert’ discourses and practices through which particular patterns of organizational structuring and control are established in different societies or sectors” (2006, p. 30). Reflecting this orientation, Meyer and Rowan identify the focus within studies of institutionalisation as being the ways in which “social processes, obligations, or actualities come to take on a rule-like status in social thought and action” (1977, p. 341).

2.3.3 New institutional theory – core concerns

There is no one agreed definition of what an institution is. Indeed Zilber (2012) contends that it is better to talk of institutionalisation rather than institutions as “Institutionalization is fluid and dynamic, an ongoing process rather than an end point” (p. 90). Similarly Bjerregaard and Jonasson (2014) argue for the need to “ground the study of institutions in a social ontology of continuous becoming” (p. 2). Scott (2008), one of the earliest and still active scholars in the field, traces the history of the concept across twentieth century institutional studies. His working definition and the one adopted here is that “Institutions are comprised of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life” ([1995], 2008, p. 48). Tolbert and Zucker (1983, p. 25) early on proposed three characteristics of institutionalised practices: that they are widely followed, without debate, and exhibit permanence. While at least two of these characteristics will be contested below, the emphasis on order and stability indicates a broad consensus amongst early new institutionalists at least about the nature of institutions.

The new institutionalism was, as noted, a conscious rejection of the assumptions of cognitive rationality underpinning much previous organisational theory and writing. Instead of seeing the search for efficiency as the rationale for organisational behaviour, the focus turned to the ways in which organisations increasingly conformed to their external environments in order to achieve legitimacy (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). Such conformity could however result in institutional decoupling if more symbolic than true of the organisation's operational reality and if such conformity were seen to come with an efficiency price (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1987). DiMaggio and Powell (1991) argued that individual and organisational actors were subject within their environments to coercive, mimetic or normative forces which created isomorphic pressures and tendencies that institutionalised particular practices within organisations and organisational fields (for a discussion of fields, see below). The ways in which these pressures shaped cognitive processes was highlighted inter alia by Scott ([1995], 2008). As a consequence of these isomorphic pressures, these writers emphasised a process of diffusion to describe the spread of institutions.

While this study concentrates on the manifestation of institutions within individual practice and at organisation and field level, the concept of institution has far wider reach. Early scholars in this field, Friedland and Alford (1991), identified five institutional sectors: the capitalist market, democracy, the bureaucratic state, Christianity and the nuclear family. Subsequently Thornton (2004) extended this classification to six sectors: markets, corporations, professions, states, families and religions. Society, from this perspective, is seen as an "inter-institutional system"

(Thornton and Ocasio, 2008, p. 104) with institutions also nested, Russian doll like, at different levels of social life.

2.3.4 Organisational fields

What is now universally referred to within new institutional theory as the organisational field, was in the early years also referred to as the institutional sphere, the institutional field, the societal sector or the institutional environment. The notion of organisational field (Scott, 1994), however, became the common term for what was for most early new institutionalists, and for much institutional research today remains, the central unit of analysis. Thus the study of legitimacy-seeking organisational behaviour leading to isomorphic organisational forms all took the field as their unit of study. The interest has been in the network of organisations within which a particular organisation is located and whose behaviour is shaped by a common set of institutions. As Scott notes, the notion of organisational field “connotes the existence of a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside of the field” (1994, p. 207).

Wooten and Hoffman note that in the early period of new institutional theory the organisational field “was conceived as predominantly static in its configuration, unitary in its makeup and formed around common technologies, industries or discrete network ties” (2008, p. 133). From the late 1980s/early 1990s, field studies turned away from what Hoffman and Ventresca (2002) later came to refer to as a fixation on isomorphism as “the master hypothesis”. The turn was away from outcomes towards process analysis, with a view to bringing back considerations of agency, politics and

change that had been present in early forms of institutional theory in the organisational domain (Selznick, 1949). For instance, Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) introduced the notion of institutional translation in place of diffusion, to emphasise the actor effort involved in making sense of and appropriating institutions into local contexts. One of the earliest calls for such a turn came from DiMaggio (1988) with his identification of the role of institutional entrepreneurs (see section below). Subsequent conceptualisations of the field have focused on groups of organisations with shared but potentially competing interests in sets of issues. This has led to a view of fields as dynamic, contested, open to change, and subject to conflict (Scott, 2008) even when appearing to be enduring, because of actors seeking to build legitimacy or other interests at the expense of other field members. As DiMaggio and Powell noted as early as 1991, “although we stress that rules and routines bring order and minimize uncertainty, we must add that the creation and implementation of institutional arrangements are rife with conflict, contradiction and ambiguity” (p. 28).

The developing literature on change at both organisational and field level has highlighted both endogenous as well as exogenous factors that might prompt change. One source of change has often been theorised as external system shocks that create temporary disequilibrium (Greenwood and Hinings, 2006). Seo and Creed (2002) by contrast see endogenous change factors resulting from field members needing to reconcile differences and conflicts between the variety of institutional systems in which they are located. The positioning of institutional change agents or entrepreneurs (see below) might be external to or internal to a field or organisations, but their actions often emphasise the interconnectedness of organisation and field. With relevance to this study’s concern with fields and logics (see below), much recent writing has

emphasised how individuals and organisations can occupy multiple fields with pluralist logics and the implications of this positioning and complexity for change processes (Kraatz and Block, 2008; Pache and Santos, 2010; Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta and Lounsbury, 2011; Besharov and Smith, 2014; Bjerregaard and Jonasson, 2014; Lindberg, 2014; Taylor, 2015). This evolving literature on pluralism and complexity, and its relevance to the institutional work practices of PRME advocates, will be returned to in a more expansive way in Chapter Five.

2.3.5 Institutional logics

Parallel with the broadening out of the research agenda within field level studies, increasing interest in the notion of institutional logics (Friedland and Alford, 1991) has enhanced the move away from a more deterministic, isomorphic view of institutionalisation. Friedland and Alford proposed that “each of the most important institutional orders of contemporary Western societies has a central logic – a set of material practices and symbolic constructions – which constitutes its organizing principles and which is available to organizations and individuals to elaborate” (1991, p. 248). The introduction of the potential for agency, however structurally embedded, is a critical development here and is identified by the scholars who have most nurtured the study of institutional logics (ILs), Thornton and Ocasio (1999), as one of five core principles that underlie what they deem to be a IL Metatheory. They define ILs as “the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality” (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999, p. 804). Their argument for ILs as a metatheory is based on the way logics help theorise how “institutions through their underlying logics of

action, shape heterogeneity, stability and change in individuals and organizations” (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008, p. 103). In addition to embedded agency and other principles covered previously, they also emphasise a metatheory principle that institutional logics should be seen as historically contingent, changing over time depending on wider society-level influences. The notion and perceived power of institutional logics have become central to understandings of change, and particularly the challenges of bringing about divergent change, within new institutional theory.

2.3.6 Institutional entrepreneurship

The concept of institutional entrepreneurship stems from DiMaggio’s (1988) seminal recalibration of new institutional theory. Already noted for its concern with process rather than outcome, and agency rather than isomorphism, in this paper he also contended that “new institutions arise when organized actors with sufficient resources (institutional entrepreneurs) see in them an opportunity to realize interests that they value highly” (p.14). Subsequent writers have extended the reach of the concept, for instance Maguire, Hardy and Lawrence, (2004, p. 657) seeing such entrepreneurship as the “activities of actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or to transform existing ones”. In the hands of some scholars, the concept has been extended even further to include work not only to initiate or change but also to maintain institutions (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). However, making a distinction that is not made by Lawrence and Suddaby, Battilana, Leca and Boxenbaum (2009) argue that to classify as institutional entrepreneurs change agents must “(a) initiate divergent changes; and (b) actively participate in the implementation of these changes” (p. 68). Unlike the convergent change associated with isomorphism, only divergent change, in their view, challenges

and seeks to alter the institutional order of a field. In this body of literature, as elsewhere, institutional actors can be organisations, groups of organisations, individuals or groups of individuals.

Research in this area has clustered around four core questions: which actors are involved in institutional entrepreneurship, what field conditions tend to generate such action, what the nature of interpretive struggle during entrepreneurial action is, and what strategies are adopted by these actors (Hardy and Maguire, 2008, p. 199). Reviewing empirical work in relation to actor characteristics, Battilana et al (2009) note that attention has been paid to subject positioning vis a vis access to resources, and to actor perceptions of a field and the likelihood of change succeeding. Low or high status on the part of organisational actors has also been suggested to influence whether they engage in entrepreneurial activity. Others studies suggest that actors' positioning at the intersection of fields might be more likely to spur such action. The positioning of individual actors within fields can also be influential, as can their demographic or psychological characteristics. On the question of field conditions leading to entrepreneurial action, Hardy and Maguire (2008) identify the existence of uncertainty, tensions or contradictions in a field as potential encouragement to such action.

The focus on interpretive struggle seeks to explore change in relation to processes of contested meaning making. Meaning is the “outcome for which actors struggle”, suggest Hardy and Maguire (2008, p. 205), and also the medium through which power struggles between actors take place. Meanings form a resource (Zilber, 2002) that actors can use politically to further their causes or to constrain the options of others.

Research in this area also homes in on discourse at a higher societal level (Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy, 2004) and its impact on field level struggles. As intimated earlier, rather than seeing meaning creation and adoption as diffusion of fixed concepts or ways of acting, as the first wave of new institutional theory did, later understandings have emphasised translation (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996, Lindberg, 2014) i.e. the negotiation and reformulation that characterises ideas communication and meaning making.

A consideration of the strategies available to institutional entrepreneurs is picked up below in the discussion of institutional work, in which the entrepreneurship literature has played a formative role.

2.3.7 The question of agency

Hardy and Maguire (2008), Battilana et al (2009) and Pacheco et al (2010) have mapped the rapid growth of scholarly interest in institutional entrepreneurship. The closely related interest in how divergent as distinct from convergent change occurs within institutions has partly been spurred by the ongoing quest for a theory of action and agency that addresses the ‘paradox of embedded agency’ (Seo and Creed, 2002). The continuing search has been to resolve the tension between institutional determinism, that many have seen as a defining characteristic of neo-institutional theory, and actor agency, without resorting to “over-voluntaristic“ (Battilana et al, 2009, p. 67) and “overly rational” (Meyer, 2006, p. 732) and “heroic” (Hardy and Maguire, 2008, p. 213) notions of human action.

Neo-institutional theory's allegedly under theorised view of agency has come under sustained critique over the years. Seeking to avoid placing "actors, organizations and organizational relationships per se at the centre of attention", Hasselbladh and Kallinikos (2000, p.716) from a CMS perspective instead argue for focusing on the way institutionalisation is "given meaning and direction through its capacity to constitute distinctive forms of actorhood" (p. 701). Similarly Cooper, Ezzamel and Willmott (2008) point to a weakness of Seo and Creed's (2002) influential formulation of embedded agency by suggesting that they conceptualise agency as external to institutionalization, thereby contradicting a central tenet of institutional theory that actors' perceived/experienced interests must by definition be themselves formulated by institutional processes.

From deep within the scholarship on institutional entrepreneurship but drawing significantly on insights from practice theory, Battilana and D'Aunno (2009) propose a more relational view of agency as "an actor's engagement with the social world that, through the interplay of habit, imagination and judgement, can both reproduce and transform an environment's structures" (p. 46). Also from a non CMS perspective, Fligstein and McAdam (2012) critique institutional entrepreneurship for its inability to offer a systematic theory of field stability and change that results in a "thinly veiled 'great man' theory of agency" (p. 28). They attribute this to institutional theory's origins in seeking to explain conformity in existing fields and inability to coherently theorise divergent change as a result. By contrast, and as seen in other recent writing (Hargrave and Van de Ven, 2006; Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca, 2011) they too propose shifting the focus for studying emergence, change and transformation to a

more collective, intersubjective view of agency, influenced by social movement theory, within what they term strategic action fields.

2.3.8 Social movement theory

The study of social movements has drawn on the disciplines of sociology and political science, with a significant proportion of the scholarship US in orientation. A well-known early study, for example, focused on the civil rights movement (McAdam, 1988). In their review of the contribution of social movement scholarship to institutional theory, Schneiberg and Lounsbury (2008) point to two approaches to the ways in which movements affect fields, both of which potentially add important perspectives to a study of PRME institutionalisation. The first, they suggest, centres on studying movements as forces against institutions, and in this case recognising the social movement origins of some of the environmental influences on PRME and thus on the business school field is relevant. The second takes as its focus the study of social movements within fields, and an interest in how “diffusion, translation and adoption are contested, political processes that often depend on collective action” (p. 652). In this case, the extent to which the PRME project is able to harness collective action within a contested environment and “fuel field-level change and new path creation” (Schneiberg and Lounsbury, 2008, p. 651) will be the focus of interest.

Whether at field and/or at organisational level, social movement theory offers insights into de-institutionalisation processes as well as the formation of new organisational forms and institutions (Rao, Morrill and Zald, 2000; Davis, Morrill, Rao and Soule, 2008). How these transformations occur, social movements theorists suggest, depends on the ability of institutional entrepreneurs to frame (or reframe) institutional logics,

to exercise collective agency, and to exploit political opportunities that exist (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996; Benford and Snow, 2000; Rao et al, 2000; Rao and Giorgi, 2006; Jasper, 2014). The benefits of this theoretical engagement are not just one way, as the deployment of two core constructs of institutional theory, logics and institutional work, in recent studies of environmental social movements has shown (Bertels, Hoffman and DeJordy, 2014; Larson and Lizardo, 2015). Overall, what the convergence of social movement and institutional theories mostly brings to the latter is a more political orientation. This emphasises that change depends on challenger movements and their actors to generate political resources, resist those defending the status quo and create supportive political environments for the embedding of alternative practices (Schneiberg, King and Smith, 2008).

2.3.9 Institutional work

Phillips and Lawrence (2012) recently suggested the existence of a ‘turn to work’ within organisation and management theory, identifying institutional work as one of 14 instances of recent work study that also included values work, emotional work, practice work, strategy work and identity work. They suggest two common themes to these disparate areas, the first being “work as purposeful effort by actors to affect some social-symbolic effect of their context, in ways both constrained and enabled by its context” (p. 226). The second they suggest is an emphasis on the “role of actors in socially constructing elements of work and organizations previously taken-for-granted as beyond actors’ control” (p. 226).

Certainly both themes are evident in the increasing attention given to institutional work since Lawrence and Suddaby’s (2006, p. 215) framing of the concept as “the

purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting organizations”. What they suggest there and in Lawrence et al (2009) is that the notion of institutional work productively brings together institutional theory’s interest in exploring the constraints on and opportunities for agency with the insights of the sociology of practice (see below), thus taking up the injunction of DiMaggio and Powell (1991) to study practice as a microfoundation for institutional research. They argue the benefits of so doing for understanding key actions involved in achieving institutional formation, continuity and transformation. Such perspectives build incrementally on the insights generated within institutional entrepreneurship scholarship in relation to institutional formation and disruption, and promise the “opening up of the black box of diffusion” (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006, p. 247).

Drawing on prior studies of entrepreneurial action, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) propose that the types of work involved in creating institutions include: advocacy, defining, vesting, constructing identities, changing normative associations, constructing normative networks, mimicry, theorising and educating. Further forms of work involved in maintenance might be: enabling work, policing, deterring, valourising and demonising; mythologizing; embedding and routinizing. Finally, they suggest that work involved in disruption can involve: disconnecting sanctions or rewards from practices; disassociating moral foundations from practices; and undermining assumptions and beliefs. Further enrichments of such typologies have been suggested as a result of empirical studies, for example Jarzabkowski, Matthieson and Van de Ven’s (2009) and Bjerregaard and Jonasson’s (2014) studies of institutional creation and maintenance work in organisations experiencing pluralistic logics.

Lawrence, Leca and Zilber (2013) suggest three key focal areas for institutional work research: how does it happen, what is it, and who does it? All three have points of convergence with the entrepreneurship literature and the first two are central to this study. They also suggest a number of gaps in institutional work research at present, including an absence of focus on the effort and emotional cost of institutional work, and the need to get at the messy reality of practice.

In the last few years a small but growing body of work aimed at what Voronov (2014) has called the ‘emotionalizing’ of institutional theory has developed (Creed, DeJordy and Lok, 2010; Voronov and Vince, 2012; Zietsma and Tobiana, 2015). Voronov and Vince (2012) suggest that a solely cognitive view does not explain how and why people engage in institutional work, and Creed, Hudson, Okhuysen and Smith-Crowe (2014) likewise call for a more holistic – cognitive and affective – view of people in institutional processes. With these perspectives in mind, and based on the insights generated by my data into the affective dimensions of institutional work, this study also draws on research into emotional work initiated by Hochschild ([1983], 2012) and developed by scholars such as Ashforth and Humphreys (1993). Hochschild’s relational view of emotions, suggest Voronov and Vince (2012), is particularly compatible with the interactional nature of institutional processes. Drawing on Hochschild as well as subsequent, related non-institutional studies of emotional work in professional groups (Harris, 2002) and of university lecturers (e.g. Bellas, 1999; Ogbonna and Harris, 2004; Mahoney, Buboltz, Buckner and Doverspike, 2011; Wilson and Holligan, 2013), the focus here will be on how the emotional work construct contributes to an understanding of the “microfoundations and embodied practices that underlie institutions” (Creed et al, 2014, p. 277).

2.4 Sociology of practice perspectives

As already indicated, the study of institutional entrepreneurs' work encourages attention to their micro practices. To frame this endeavour for current purposes requires a brief excursion into the sociology of practice literature developed since the earlier work of amongst others Bourdieu (1977) and Giddens (1984) and applied in learning contexts inter alia by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Chaiklin and Lave (1996). The concept of practice, suggests Wenger (1998, p. 47), "connotes doing, but not just doing in and of itself. It is doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do. In this sense, practice is always social practice". Reckwitz (2002 p. 249) expands on social practices as "forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion, motivational knowledge". The notion of embodiment is emphasised in Schatzki's understanding of practices as "embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding" (2001 p. 11).

Drawing on such perspectives, Lindberg (2014) for example argues that institutional logics "do not exist per se but must be performed into being" and that logics are translated through practice and with the assistance of inscription into material objects. A practice approach can be distinguished from a purely process approach by its attention to what Brown and Duguid (2000, p. 95) term the "internal life of process", the "knowledgeable, creative and practical work of individual and collective actors" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006, p. 219). Within this broad notion of practice, but without adopting any one definition as a specific reference point, the interest in this

study has been in the discursive and other practices that entrepreneurs engage in to negotiate the embedding of PRME.

Both the sociology of practice and new institutional theory have a central interest in the role of field. One influential variant of this within practice theory is the notion of community of practice, of which Lave and Wenger note: “A community of practice is a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice” (1991, p. 98). Also emphasising the importance of field, Schatzki (2001, p. 12) suggests that practice approaches reflect a “distinct social ontology: the social is a field of embodied, materially interwoven practices centrally organized around shared practical understandings”. The more recent conception of field within institutional theory, identifying tensions, conflict and contradictions as inherent characteristics, moreover draws significantly on Bourdieu’s notion of field as a “field of forces”, marked by relations of dominance and subjugation. In Bourdieu’s words, “constant permanent relations of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field” (1998, p. 40).

2.5 Higher education, business schools and institutional theory

Institutional theory has for some time occupied a central position within Organisation Studies as a whole. It has not played as significant a role in the study of HE environments, as the relatively limited references in Table 1 below confirm. And where there does appear to be some level of interest (Table 1, Search Terms 6+7),

institutionalisation is often deployed as a generic term rather than with reference to institutional theory (e.g. Furco, 2007). Nevertheless, as Taylor (2015) notes, from the early days of neo-institutional theory to the present day higher education has been understood as an institutionalised field. It has been the setting for empirical study in relation to topics such as ranking systems (Enders, 2014), homogenisation or academic drift (Morphew and Huisman, 2002), funding and policy change (Reale and Seeber, 2011) and organisational structures. Indeed one of the most frequently cited early empirical studies (Tolbert, 1985) was a study of institutional influences on HE structure. Whether in relation to academic restructuring (Gumport, 2000), HE publishing (Thornton, 2004) or the impact of market discourses and practices (Berman, 2012; Howells, Karatas-Özkan, Yavuz and Atiq, 2014) there has also been significant interest in the nature and effects of institutional logics in HE. Both Gumport (2000) and Berman (2012), for example, identify conflict and co-existence between multiple logics within the HE field, and Taylor (2015) explores how such conflict and complexity are experienced within organisations at the point of intersection between fields.

The application of institutional theory to specifically business school settings, and notably in relation to institutional entrepreneurship, is very modest, as Table 1 (Search Terms 4+8+12) confirms. However, it is growing, possibly attributable to the substantial influence of Khurana's (2007) work cited earlier. Although critiqued for its inattention to differences in the evolution of non US business school fields (Spender, 2008), its historical insights and engagement with the institutional literature have provided many points of departure for other scholars. One of the particular dynamics of the sector that Khurana identified, a rankings and accreditation culture and its

relationship to legitimacy, has been the subject of considerable attention (e.g. Wedlin, 2010; Masrani, Williams and McKiernan, 2011; Rasche, Hommel and Cornuel, 2014). The isomorphic and disciplining effects of this culture are repeatedly emphasised (e.g. Wilson and McKiernan, 2011; Thomas, Billsberry et al, 2014). The conflicting logics and pressures in the sector (Lejeune and Vas, 2014) often associated with practitioner relevance vs academic rigour (Kieser, 2011; Hommel and Thomas, 2014) have been addressed as have curricular issues such as the isomorphic trends in MBA curriculum design across the world (Datar, Garvin and Cullen, 2010).

In a recent volume dedicated to institutional perspectives on business schools, largely from a European standpoint, Pettigrew et al (2014) have also proposed that a future research agenda on the institutional development of business schools should “be in conversation with the larger and better developed scholarly fields of higher education policy and development“(p.5). That volume cites particular points of potential convergence and joint interest, including: governance practices, the rise of entrepreneurialism and managerialism in HE, faculty management including tenure debates, learning and teaching, as well as innovation in the context of threats to HE’s established business models (p. 21). So, for example, one could argue that already cited research into the institutional effects of rankings on business schools’ competitive culture could valuably be situated within a related wider HE literature on the rise of managerial and market logics (Lynch, 2006; Deem, Hillyard and Reed, 2007; Enders, 2014). In seeking to explore how an understanding of institutional work and logics in HE might contribute to an analysis of the educational change project that is PRME, this study also seeks to add strands to the conversation proposed.

Table 1: PRME journal article searches

(Number of peer reviewed journal articles, title and abstract searches, no date restrictions set. March 2015)

Search Term (ST)	Search term (s)	Academic Search Complete	ProQuest	Business Source Premier	Web of Science
		<i>Number of</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Articles</i>	<i>Found</i>
ST1	“institutional theory” AND education	39	39	39	136
ST2	“institutional theory” AND “higher education”	15	12	10	46
ST3	“institutional theory” and university(ies)	17	25	19	96
ST4	“institutional theory” AND “business school(s)”	1	8	8	10
ST5	Institutionalization AND education	269	47	67	1,422
ST6	Institutionalization AND “higher education”	55	16	17	146
ST7	Institutionalization AND university(ies)	132	32	35	564
ST8	Institutionalization AND “business school(s)”	1	5	4	5
ST9	Institutional entrepreneurs	34	92	87	125
ST10	“institutional entrepreneurs” AND “higher education”	0	0	0	2
ST11	“institutional entrepreneurs” AND university(ies)	1	1	2	7
ST12	“institutional entrepreneurs” AND “business school(s)”	1	0	1	1

2.6 PRME in educational policy and business school disciplinary contexts

If this study were located within the field of institutional approaches to politics and international relations, with their concern for institutions of governance at the international level, this section of my literature review would of necessity be much more central. For current purposes, however, only a brief contextualisation will suffice before the PRME initiative is outlined. Any understanding of PRME needs to be set in the context of other declarations, statements of intent and calls to action at an international level. Three short contextualisations are envisaged. First, in relation to

the broad purposes of higher education – an example being the UNESCO World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century (UNESCO, 1998). Second, in relation to declarations on sustainability and higher education of which Perry and Win (2013) identify 27 since 1972. Related to this, the roots of PRME in the literatures related to business ethics, CSR and sustainability are identified (Forray and Leigh, 2012). And third, in relation to the declaration aimed at the adoption of responsible management, ethics and sustainability in the corporate sector – the UN Global Compact (UNGC, 2000) - from which the PRME evolved.

2.6.1 International declarations of intent in higher education

A set of international principles for business education, a subset of higher education, needs to be seen in the context of a growing conceptualisation of educational policy and principles at a global level from the second half of the twentieth century onwards (Smith, Pigozzi, Tomsevski, Bhola and Mundy, 2007; Mundy, 2007). This discourse has often been framed in relation to human rights. The pre-eminent founding statement of this approach can be found in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) that declares:

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental

freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

The promotion of this right is fundamental to the work of the UN agency UNESCO, established in 1945. UNESCO has a long involvement with higher education policy, and its World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century (UNESCO, 1998) can be seen as a consolidating statement of many previous international conferences in relation to the societal and environmental obligations on HE. This declaration set a particular goal of opening up higher education into an environment for lifelong learning. The follow-up 2009 World Conference on Higher Education focused on the implementation of these goals and the transformation of HE to make it “in all regions a driver of development and international understanding in the second decade of the twenty-first century” (UNESCO, 2009).

2.6.2 Ethics, CSR and sustainability – academic, corporate and wider social contexts for international declarations on sustainability in higher education

Forray and Leigh (2012) suggest that the genesis, reception and implementation of the PRME need to be understood in the context of previous and ongoing developments in relation to business ethics, corporate social responsibility and sustainability. Echoing the wider HE arguments of Mundy (2007), they and Waddock (2008) point out how PRME as an initiative needs to be seen within the context of the globalisation of business and higher education and the evolution of what they term a corporate responsibility institutional field infrastructure. Other such field actors include the UN Global Compact (UNGC), the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI), the

Global Reporting Initiative for corporate reporting on social and environmental performance, and NGOs such as Transparency International.

In a review of business ethics education, Bell, Caulfield, Hibbert and Jennings (2014, p. 8) comment on a “widespread definitional ambiguity” in relation to the term ‘business ethics’. De George (2005) confirms the potential for such ambiguity in his history of the current use of the term from 1970 to the present, identifying three strands that all have played their part in creating an environment conducive to the emergence of something like the PRME initiative. These strands include the application of ethical standards to business by society, the adoption of ethical standards including the commitment to CSR into businesses, and the development of business ethics as an academic field. Forray and Leigh suggest that it is from “roots in the business ethics literature that the PRME derive normative, empirical, and critical orientations” (2012, p. 299).

The CSR field has expanded significantly since the 1970s as recent literature reviews (Egri and Ralston, 2008; Taneja, Taneja and Gupta, 2011) make clear. It has provided probably the single biggest impulse towards the creation of field level actors such as the UNGC and the PRME project. Focused on the relationship between business and society, and in particular on the responsibility of business towards all its stakeholders, it is hailed by its advocates as “an emerging logic in business practice” that will enable society to “meet the challenge of shaping an inclusive and sustainable global society” (Williams, 2014, p. 9). To its critics, CSR and related discourses are formulated to serve corporate interests and marginalise those of other stakeholders (Banerjee, 2008).

Emerging from both the wider environmental movement as well as the CSR field, interest in and commitments to sustainability have developed across higher education since the earliest Stockholm Declaration in 1972 via the UNESCO sponsored Talloires Declaration of 1990 through to the recent ISCN/GULF Sustainable Campus Charter of 2010. UNESCO's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2015 is currently coming to an end. Calder and Clugston (2003) identified 25 significant international conferences or declarations related to promoting higher education for sustainable development between 1972 and 2002. In a slightly different measure, Perry and Win (2013) have identified 27 declarations and sets of principles to support sustainability in higher education in the period 1972 to 2010.

Education for sustainable development has been defined as “the process of acquiring the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to build local and global societies that are just, equitable, and living within the environmental limits of our planet, both now and in our future” (Sustainable Development Education Network, n.d). A growing literature on the methods and resources used as well as challenges encountered is apparent (e.g. Walck, 2009; Hannover Research, 2011). The limited progress experienced by HE educators and managers engaged in encouraging sustainability has been documented both at individual HEI level (e.g. Bekessy, Samson and Clarkson, 2007) and at wider discourse level (e.g. Lozano, Lukman, Lozano, Huisinigh and Lambrechts, 2013) and within business schools (e.g. Lourenco, 2013). In relation to voluntary codes, principles and declarations (as all those cited have been), the limits on impact achieved as a result of low barriers to entry but limited accountability measures have been identified across many studies, as highlighted by Perry and Win

(2013). It is thus within a field both comparatively longstanding but also characterised by doubt about impact and accountability that the PRME sustainability aspirations within business and management education need to be contextualised.

2.6.3 The United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)

Although the global aspirations for HE voiced by UNESCO are an important backdrop to PRME as a global management education initiative, the UN initiative from which the PRME project grew directly is in fact focused on corporate responsibility values rather than educational principles. The UNGC is a voluntary corporate citizenship and sustainability initiative and since its launch in 2000 has recruited more than 12,000 participants, including over 8,000 businesses in 145 countries around the world (UNGC, 2014). The UNGC asks companies to commit to and implement within their domains a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption. These are drawn from;

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
- The United Nations Convention Against Corruption

2.6.4 The United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME)

Initiated under the auspices of the UNGC and drafted by a 60 strong task force drawn from business schools worldwide, the PRME were launched in 2007 (Alcaraz and Thiruvattal, 2010; Godemann, Haertle, Herzig and Moon, 2014). Seen as the

educational counterpoint to the corporately orientated UNGC, the PRME initiative is governed by a committee including the UNGC and various sector accreditation and network bodies such as the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International, and the Latin American Council of Management Schools (CLADEA).

Table 2: The Principles for Responsible Management Education

As institutions of higher education involved in the development of current and future managers we declare our willingness to progress in the implementation, within our institution, of the following Principles, starting with those that are more relevant to our capacities and mission. We will report on progress to all our stakeholders and exchange effective practices related to these principles with other academic institutions:

Principle 1 | Purpose: We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

Principle 2 | Values: We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

Principle 3 | Method: We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

Principle 4 | Research: We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

Principle 5 | Partnership: We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

Principle 6 | Dialogue: We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

We understand that our own organizational practices should serve as an example of the values and attitudes we convey to our students

By mid 2015 the PRME initiative had recruited over 500 sector signatories including 48 in the UK (the highest penetration of the sector in any country). The initiative has been positioned by its UN advocates including Escudero, a representative of the PRME Secretariat, as a response to many of the previously highlighted critiques of business schools. He suggests that PRME promises a “paradigm change” that places responsible management, ethics and environmental sustainability at the centre of business school teaching and research (Alcaraz and Thiruvattal, 2010, p. 548). The extent to which the PRME do indeed embody a paradigm shift in their view of business education of the kind Escudero envisages is open to debate, as I have argued elsewhere (Louw, 2015). Likewise, the extent to which PRME provides any additionality to previous statements on HE and sustainability has been questioned (Perry and Win, 2013). Given the rights-based discourses within which UNESCO and the UNGC operate, the PRME discourse is also notably more institutional, pragmatic and modest. Nevertheless, it is clear from the levels of participation and the small but growing literature on PRME (see Table 1 continued below) that this initiative is regarded as an increasingly significant point of reference in the responsible management education field.

Table 1: PRME journal article searches (continued)

Search Terms (ST)		Academic Search Complete	ProQuest	Business Source Premier	Web of Science
		<i>Number of</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Articles</i>	<i>found</i>
ST13	PRME	1	8	14	10
ST14	“Principles for responsible management education”	4	16	34	8
ST15	PRME or P... R...M... E.. AND				
	• institutional theory	1	0	0	1
	• institutional entrepreneur(s)	0	0	0	0
	• institutionalization	0	0	0	0
	• institutional work	0	0	0	0

One component in the published literature to date consists of content analyses of PRME Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) Report submissions to the UN PRME office (Alcaraz, 2010; Godemann, Herzig, Moon & Powell, 2011; Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2011; Arac and Madran, 2014) with additional primary research and wider HE sustainability contextualisation in the case of Perry & Win (2013). A synthesis of findings across the first three studies has also been carried out by Godemann et al (2014). These authors also comment briefly on the potential role of SIPs, regional Chapters and Working Groups in the institutionalization of PRME at field and organisational level, as well as identify the need for a much more clearly defined PRME research agenda to promote such institutionalisation. Showing some authorial overlap with these content analyses, there is a related group of contributions focused on promoting PRME to specific academic audiences (e.g. Alcaraz and Thiruvattal, 2010; Rasche and Escudero, 2010) and providing, with case studies, guidance on implementation issues (Waddock, Rasche, Werhane and Unruh, 2011; Murray, Baden, Cashian, Haynes and Wersun, 2015).

A second component in the PRME literature comprises what might loosely be called case-based institutional implementation studies. In 2012 Forray and Leigh highlighted a need to research “new models for change management within the higher education context that address fundamental barriers to PRME adoption and implementation” (p. 307). Many of the studies in this area of PRME research bear witness to such barriers. With some though limited reference to institutional theory, Solitander, Fougère, Sobczak & Herlin (2012) examine the role of so-called PRME champions in two business schools in France and Finland and identify strategic, structural and cultural barriers to CSR/PRME implementation and potential ways to overcome them.

They suggest that “to convince the dominant coalition, champions need to be not only motivated by the challenge of implementing ... PRME but also willing to engage in political behaviour to ensure its successful institutionalization” (p. 345).

With not only a dominant coalition but all faculty in their sights, Maloni, Smith and Napshin (2012) report on the development and testing in their own institution of a survey instrument to measure staff engagement with or resistance to sustainability in the curriculum. They too identify a range of perceptual, resourcing and institutional reward issues that militate against widespread involvement. In their reflection on the introduction of PRME into postgraduate programmes, Young and Nagpal (2013, p. 503) highlight implementation challenges “in the field of resources, staff resistance, inertia, structural barriers and silos”. They also identify the appointment of faculty as PRME champions, as well as support at senior university staff level, as significant contributions to reducing the impact of such resistance and barriers. Like Maloni et al (2012), Kirby (2012) sees PRME solely through the lens of sustainability, and has a similar focus: in this case the establishment of base line data not about faculty but about student and practitioner readiness to engage with a PRME-related curriculum. Her conclusions identify a dominant profit maximisation logic, poor sustainability knowledge and the absence of appropriate teaching materials as key impediments to engagement. Maintaining this curriculum focus, Sroufe, Sivasubramaniam, Ramos and Saiia (2015) propose and empirically evaluate a framework for aligning MBA international study trips to PRME in the pursuit of responsible leadership competencies.

A third and final arena within the academic PRME literature includes papers, mostly very recent, that have suggested future avenues for wider, more theoretical engagement. Blasco (2012), for example, draws on concepts from critical pedagogy (the hidden curriculum), transformative learning and communities of practice theory to propose a diagnostic framework that can be used to assess how best to align the hidden curriculum with PRME concerns. Fougère, Solitander and Young (2014) report on a study that used PRME as an arena in which to deploy Rorty's notion of 'final vocabularies' in the pursuit of a critical exploration with students of the values embedded in business and management education. And with curriculum change rather than moral imagination as the focus, Burchell, Murray and Kennedy (2014) use their empirical findings that PRME has not been a direct driver of organisational change as the basis for an analysis of PRME from a soft governance perspective. In terms of institutional theory however, there has, as Table 1 Search Term 15 suggests, been negligible engagement.

2.7 Concluding comments

Given that PRME was launched only in 2007, it is not surprising that PRME scholarship remains in its infancy. As demonstrated earlier, there has been little or no consideration of PRME from an institutional theory and in particular from an institutional entrepreneur or work perspective. This absence reflects the modest presence of business schools as objects of the institutional gaze, despite the abundance of institutional studies carried out by academics within those schools. Interest in addressing this deficit is gathering pace though (e.g. Khurana, 2007; Pettigrew et al, 2014) and this study potentially makes a timely contribution to its further evolution.

Historical and current debates about the purpose of business schools, and related scholarship in fields such as CSR and business ethics, all shape the context in which the PRME project needs to be understood. PRME scholarship generally and in the case of this study both owes a debt to and potentially contributes new dimensions to research in these related areas. However, it is the institutional dimension and contribution that are of most interest here. Thus, central to the analytical approach informing my investigation have been a set of perspectives, concepts and aspirations drawn from within the Organisation Studies strand of neo-institutional theory and some of the current debates, referred to earlier, in this domain.

2.7.1 The neo-institutional analytical approach adopted here

Core components in the application of neo-institutional theory within this study include:

- 1 An emphasis on a multi-level analysis of institutional effects at individual, organisational and field levels, consistent with the longstanding conception of institutions being nested at different levels of social life
- 2 An interest in the dynamics of divergent rather than convergent institutional change, whilst recognising isomorphic effects where relevant
- 3 Relatedly, and drawing on social movement theory, a conception of institutional fields and the organisations within them as being essentially contested, fluid rather than static spaces
- 4 A principal interest in the nature of the institutional work undertaken by institutional entrepreneurs seeking to embed new normative values and practices

as part of a divergent change project within such a contested field and set of organisations

- 5 Drawing on sociology of practice theory as well as the literature on emotional work, a concern to explore both the cognitive as well as affective dimensions of these institutional work practices and to model the origins, content and consequences of the latter
- 6 An attempt to identify the nature of established institutional logics within business school settings and their impacts on the institutional work practices of advocates of divergent change
- 7 Relatedly, and drawing on recent interest in logic plurality and complexity, an attempt to model the particular forms of complexity involved in PRME institutional work.

Neo-institutional theory and related empirical research constitute an evolving field in which the analysis undertaken here will make only a modest contribution. On the basis of future research priorities proposed by others and not yet fully addressed, I am, however, hopeful that my study might add to a greater appreciation of:

1. The detailed, micro-level practices and strategies deployed by institutional actors in their work (Battilana et al, 2009; Lawrence et al, 2009; Lindberg, 2014)
2. The effort and emotional dimensions of institutional work (Voronov and Vince, 2012; Lawrence et al, 2013, Creed et al, 2014) and the value of drawing together scholarship on different forms of work (Phillips and Lawrence, 2012)

3. The power and/or fragility of institutional logics, their impact on change processes and their complexity (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Greenwood et al, 2011, Besharov and Smith, 2014) within HE and particular business school settings
4. The contribution of social movement theory insights to the understanding of institutional change (Davis et al, 2008; Fligstein and McAdam, 2012).

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methods

3.1 Introduction

Methodology, suggests Schwandt (1997) is “the theory of how inquiry should proceed. It involves analysis of the principles and procedures in a particular field of inquiry that, in turn, govern the use of particular methods” (p. 93). The articulation of the research methodology in this study is influenced by Denzin and Lincoln’s (2011) proposition that there are five phases involved in any qualitative research process. First I acknowledge and outline my own situatedness as researcher and how this has influenced the choice and framing of the research questions and design. This includes a consideration of ethics, insider research and reflexivity. Second, the broad theoretical perspectives – social constructionist and interpretive - underpinning the research are described. Third, a rationale and outline for a narrative strategy of inquiry is provided. Fourth, I describe how the inquiry was operationalised through the selection of appropriate research participants, the development and use of semi-structured narrative interviews, and the identification and application of appropriate data management and analytical processes. Finally questions of research presentation and, in an addition to the Denzin and Lincoln schema, of evaluation criteria, are addressed.

3.2 Situating myself as researcher

This research grew out of a critical discourse analysis I conducted of documents relating to the PRME (Louw, 2015). The texts I used – documents from the UN, and the progress reports of 15 PRME UK business school signatories – alerted me to the variety of discursive and other strategies and practices to be found in PRME

implementation projects. They identified PRME advocates and supporters in many business schools, but also considerable evidence (e.g. Kirby, 2012; Solitander et al, 2012; Young and Nag pal, 2013) that processes of institutionalisation were contested and anything but straightforward. The contestation and the discourse component drew me into seeking a wider understanding of the way in which PRME institutionalisation is occurring, and of the experiences of PRME advocates in these processes.

Biographical factors from my own background have influenced my own positioning in relation to this research project. I have a professional background in charities including critical engagement with CSR practices and policies. I have taught in areas of business ethics and third sector management in my business school career. My own institution is a PRME signatory. Significantly, PRME implementation has a chequered and contested history in my business school.

All of these experiences and orientations suggested that I would come at this research from particular directions and the need for sustained engagement with issues of ethics, insider research and reflexivity.

3.2.1 Ethics, insider research and reflexivity

Floyd and Arthur (2012) build on Tillich's (2004) notion of internal and external confidentiality with their wider concern for external and internal ethical engagement. While Lancaster University's ethics committee has addressed the standard outward facing issues central to external ethical engagement (see Section 3.5.7 below), it is the internal dimensions that I want to address here. These have related to my experience

of multiple insider-outsider identities in the research process (Adler, 2004). Including a research participant from my own university created one set of insider dynamics. My role as PRME advocate and business school employee interviewing other similarly positioned respondents created further insider issues that had to be managed, particularly in relation to prior professional relationships with a few interviewees and taken for granted assumptions about PRME or about how business schools function. Trawler (2011) similarly suggests vigilance in managing any tacit assumptions about what a Higher Education Institute is, while also identifying the advantages of being ‘culturally literate’ in such environments. Relevant also to the insider dimension was the potentially highly personal, self-revealing nature of data generated through the narrative method. In this context Creswell (2007) also highlights the potentially charged issue of data ownership – “Who owns the story? Who can tell it? Who can change it?” (p. 57) - that required careful pre-interview clarification.

The need for strategies to manage insider tensions spoke not only to the need for robust, auditable research methods in general but in particular to the need for reflexive practice (Sikes and Potts, 2008). Clegg and Hardy (1996, p. 4) see reflexivity as concerned with “ways of seeing which act back on and reflect existing ways of seeing”. Similarly, Tripp (1998) talks of the reflexive “circularity ... in which the [researcher]... examines the way in which their developing understanding changes them and their relation not only to both the phenomenal world they are observing and their knowledge of it, but also to how they are observing and understanding the phenomenal world” (p. 39). The experience of such deepening understanding, and the ways in which it served to colour successive interviews, became particularly evident in my growing alertness to the impact of HE logics as the research progressed.

Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009, p. 271) depict reflexive interpretation as being about the “open play of reflection across various levels of interpretation”. These levels include: the choice and application of appropriate and rigorous techniques; clarity about the primacy of interpretation in every dimension of research; awareness of the political-ideological character of research; and reflection in relation to the problem of representation and authority (p. 11). The implications of my own subject positioning have been particularly relevant here. While critical of the PRME discourse (Louw, 2015), I am broadly supportive of what the CME/CMS traditions would term its future emancipatory potential. This is the sort of tension alluded to by Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009, p. 176) when they propose that a minimum requirement for researching with a reflexive and critical orientation is that:

“Researchers recognize that they are working in an ideological-political context in the broad sense of the term, where research...is embedded in the field of tension between the reproduction and/or reinforcement of the existing social order, and the challenging of that same order”.

They also suggest that “In good research such a recognition should be discernible in the research context” (p. 176). Indeed, not only in my research context setting but also in the interview and analysis phases of my study I have needed to remain aware of this tension and its implications for my own and my interpretation of my participants’ practices. Particularly resonant for me has been Pillow’s injunction to pursue “uncomfortable reflexivities” as a means to “challenge the representations we come to while recognising the political need to continue to represent and find meaning” (2003,

p. 192). In my research practices I have thus sought to apply systematic checks to avoid theoretically or ideologically engendered disregard for competing interpretations of participant accounts. And in Chapter Six I reflect further on the field of tension Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009) refer to, in relation to my experiences of the interviewing process.

3.3 Research perspectives

The dominant research perspectives on which this study has drawn have been those generated within the field of Organisation Studies. This is partly owing to the genesis of the sociological strand of neo-institutional theory largely within Organisation Studies, and partly as a consequence of my own situatedness as an academic in an Organisational Behaviour/ Human Resource Management department of a business school. Prichard, Jones and Stablein (2004), taking their cue from Habermas (1971), argue that there are three broad research perspectives or frameworks within Organisation Studies (1) the positivist approach, built on a technical interest in control (2) the interpretive approach built on a practical interest in action-oriented meaning-making and (3) the critical approach, based on an emancipatory interest in human autonomy and responsibility. While having a critical orientation too, as alluded to above, my principal interest here has been in how PRME advocates make sense of organisational events and institutional change, and their own roles in such change. This speaks largely to the interpretive approach.

The ontological positioning of most narrative methodologies is that of social constructionism (Crotty, 2003; Bryman, 2008). This is true of my study too, concerned as it is with the way in which respondents and I construct and attribute

meaning to social phenomena through and out of the behaviours, actions, discourses and related practices described in interview. The planned emphasis on story telling as a means of sense making - in relation to what I deem to be complex, ever changing, socially constituted entities (organisations) - was antithetical to any objectivist ontology. Those studying organisational discourse are often interested in the social constructionist effects of language in organisational settings (Grant, Hardy, Oswick and Putnam, 2004). Reflecting the majority of discourse and narrative analysts, Mumby and Clair (1997, p. 181) suggest that “Organisations exist only in so far as their members create them through discourse. This is not to claim that organizations are ‘nothing but’ discourse, but rather that discourse is the principal means by which organisation members create a coherent social reality that frames their sense of who they are”. Similarly Rhodes and Brown (2005) argue that the fact narrative can generate different and at times competing stories emphasises that our knowledge about organisations is actively constructed rather than a stable entity waiting to be explained. In their view, “The organization is not regarded as an object of study, but seen rather to be subjectively and inter-subjectively constructed through the stories told by both researchers and organizational stakeholders” (p. 178).

Epistemologically, what flows from this and through most narrative-inspired research is an interpretive approach that privileges understanding of subjective meaning making above any search for an external objective truth about the phenomena studied. The quest is to understand the “subjective meaning of social action” (Bryman, 2008, p. 16). As Geertz (1973) noted, the interpretive perspective is about inquiry from the inside – in this case principally from the inside of the PRME advocate experience. And as Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p. 35) suggest, theorising from narrative contains

an epistemological position that the “knower and respondent co-create understandings”.

3.4 The inquiry strategy – narrative and thematic analysis

The original intention was an inquiry strategy based on the generation and analysis of narratives/ stories about PRME implementation, involving analysis of language in use (especially story structure) and in context. Subsequent events, however, made the full achievement of that intention impractical. This was because despite careful and considered design (see below) the interviews did not consistently generate storied responses from participants. In some cases stories were multiple, structured and colourful. In many other cases, encountering similar prompts and approaches, participants proved disinclined to engage in extended or structured story telling. This led me in the post-interview phase to have to review my analytical options. One possible route was to concentrate my analysis, findings and discussion on the highly storied accounts of some 10 participants. To do that, however, would have involved losing significant insights into the process of PRME institutionalisation that were available to me through the reflections and accounts of the other 19 participants. A second route, and the one I opted for, was to disregard my plan to analyse texts from the perspectives of language in use, and narrative/story structure, and instead to focus on a more traditional thematic analysis whilst retaining an interest in participant sense-making through reflection and dialogue with the interviewer. Within this latter approach, it was still possible to maintain a concern with language in context (Grant et al, 2004), that in this case was related to a curiosity about how institutional context informed and shaped organisational discourse and thus the way in which individuals performed and pursued their organisational tasks and goals.

Looking at my choices from the perspective of Rhodes and Brown (2005), I recognise that narratives can be utilised as a form of data, as a theoretical lens or as a methodological approach. The original intention here was to combine all three of those perspectives, but as events unfolded my participant narratives became principally a form of data.

3.4.1 Rationale for the intended narrative approach

Although I had to give up my first plan for the linguistic analysis of participant stories, my interviews were conducted with a concept of narrative and an interview design that it remains appropriate to describe here.

Interest in stories and narrative is longstanding and cross disciplinary, with substantial academic interest in fields such as literary studies, history, psychology, anthropology and sociology. A “foundational assumption of the literature” on narrative, suggest Rhodes and Brown (2005, p. 171), is that humans are predisposed to think in storied form. Storytelling is seen as a defining feature of the human condition (Bruner 1991) and humans are labelled as “homo narrans” (Fisher, 1984 and 1985) or “homo fabulans” (Currie, 1998, p. 2)). Claims for the power of stories are multiple. Sims (2003, p.1200) declares that stories are “the meaning of our life” and Weick (1995) amongst others sees the stories of our lives as critical sense-making devices. Kearney attributes agency to this sense-making activity when he goes so far as to propose that it is “only when haphazard happenings are transformed into story, and thus made memorable over time, that we become full agents of our history” (2002, p. 3).

Challenges of definition abound in this domain, partly as narrative has a close relationship to fantasy, story, myth and saga (Rhodes and Brown, 2005). Riessman (2008) suggests that although there are diverse concepts of narrative in the social sciences, which reflect an "absence of a single meaning" (p. 6), nevertheless what all forms of narrative share is that they are "strategic, functional, and purposeful" (p. 8). As Gabriel (2000) notes, some writers distinguish between narrative and story, others do not. His view is that "Narratives involve temporal chains of interrelated events or actions, undertaken by characters" i.e. involving sequencing (Gabriel, 2004, p. 63). Stories, however, in his view have narrative characteristics plus further dimensions. He defines stories thus: "Stories are narratives with plots and characters, generating emotion in narrator and audience, though a poetic elaboration of symbolic material" (Gabriel, 2000, p. 239).

While Gabriel (2000) acknowledges with his notion of 'proto-stories' that not all stories are fully formed, Boje's (2001) core thesis is that in organisational contexts stories are frequently fragmented, what he calls terse stories. Unlike Gabriel, he sees stories simply as an "account of incidents or events" (2001, p. 1) and that the addition of plot and coherence in fact transforms stories into narrative. Gabriel's tighter definition of what constitutes a story and its implied demands of storytellers lead him to conclude that organisations are not natural homes to storytelling and that the craft of storytelling is dying (2000). Unlike Gabriel in this regard too, Boje (1991) however sees organisations as storytelling systems which reflect the reality that they are discursively polyphonic – multiply voiced, with multiple narratives.

When I reviewed the data generated in my interviews, there were indeed 10 that contained many examples of plotted, chronological, retrospectively interpretive accounts of events and actors that would have fitted Gabriel's notion of story or Boje's notion of narrative. A few others fitted Gabriel's proto-story concept or what Boje deems stories to be i.e. simply an account of incidents or events. However, the majority demonstrated reflection on issues rather than recall of events, and a predisposition to conceptual/theoretical engagement rather than the reliving of experience. Certainly on the basis of my experience in this study I would support Gabriel's view that organisations are not necessarily natural homes to storytelling.

For the purposes of clarifying terms, however, what I deem my narrative data to be in this study are reflections on or accounts of organisational life, ranging from extended, structured and/or plotted to short and fragmentary, generated through exploratory and sense-making dialogue between participant and researcher.

3.4.2 The potential value of the narrative approach

What drew me to the narrative approach were the many claims made by its adherents. For instance Gabriel (2000) proposes that "organizational stories take us directly to those events and experiences that generate strong emotions... by highlighting the untypical, the critical, and the extraordinary, stories give us access to what lies behind the normal and mundane" (p. 240). To guard against over claiming, it is, I would argue, simultaneously important to heed Denzin and Lincoln's reminder that "there is no clear window into the inner life of an individual... there are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of the observer and the observed" (1994, p. 25).

In their review of the contribution of narrative research to Organisation Studies, Rhodes and Brown (2005, p. 170) highlight research findings that stories are an effective entry point into an understanding of organisational values, very relevantly here that they “encapsulate the complexity of practice” (p. 174) and that they help identify the cultural resources available to the storyteller. Grant et al (2004) in similar vein highlight how narratives can be studied as elements of organisational culture, as expressions of political domination and opposition, and to examine organisational policy, strategy and change. With my constructionist perspective in mind, Rhodes and Brown (2005) also emphasise ways that narrative work challenges the dominance of abstract, scientific, detached views of the researcher within positivist management research traditions and suggest that it has “the potential to dissolve the duality between traditional scholarship and subjective experience” (p. 180).

3.4.2 Thematic analysis

Riessman (2008) distinguishes between three broad although not incompatible approaches to narrative analysis – thematic, structural (as in the linguistic structure of texts) and dialogic/performative. As already outlined, the interview data generated were not as consistently storied as originally expected thus the structural/linguistic approach was discounted. Consequently the principal approach adopted here has been thematic. However, where the approach taken has departed further from classic narrative analysis is that the thematic analysis has been across the whole data corpus. As Riessman notes, traditionally “narrative scholars keep a story ‘intact’ by theorizing from the case, rather than from component themes (categories) across cases” (2008, p. 53).

In their widely cited formulation of the case for and a framework for thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke suggest that it is “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns [themes] within data” (2006, p. 79). Confirming too the distinction between the part and the whole made by Riessman above, Braun and Clarke also propose that a common characteristic of most forms of thematic analysis in qualitative enquiry is that “these different methods share a search for certain themes or patterns across an [entire] data set, rather than within a data item” (2006, p. 81). Here a theme is understood to be “a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 161). Boyatzis’s inclusion of a potential interpretive component in the identification of themes extends his definition beyond that of some other scholars. Ryan and Bernard (2003) for instance see themes as the conceptual, abstract categories which make possible the classification of particular expressions of feelings, practices and views revealed in texts. While my search has been for recurrent patterns, I have also sought through my analysis to be alert to the problem identified by Buetow (2010), that “thematic analysis tends to conflate two concepts: recurrence and importance.” As he suggests, “codes that do not recur – however important they may be – cannot, by definition, be thematic” (p. 123). His proposed solution to this dilemma, saliency analysis, is not one I have used in coding my data but has sensitised my analysis to the potential significance of non-thematic codes.

The thematic analysis undertaken here reflects what Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009) refer to as part of an abductive approach, based in hermeneutics, in which “The analysis of the empirical fact(s) may very well be combined with, or preceded by, studies of previous theory in the literature; not as a mechanical application on single

cases but as a source of inspiration for the discovery of patterns that bring understanding” (p. 4). Thus my approach has combined both inductive and deductive elements (see Research Methods below, for a more detailed discussion). As Braun and Clarke suggest, deductive “theoretical thematic analysis would tend to be driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytic interest in the area, and is thus more explicitly analyst driven” (2006, p. 84). This theoretically-led perspective derives from my interest in the institutional, structural, social and cultural phenomena that have influenced my participants’ experiences and accounts.

3.5 Research methods

The discussion to date has centred on a research framework and broad strategy of inquiry based on narrative and thematic approaches. Now the focus changes to the way in which the research was operationalised.

Narrative analysis requires texts. In this study, the traditional attention to written transcriptions of oral exchanges has been maintained and neither visual nor any other semiotic materials have been utilised. Options for text generation included: ethnographic immersion, observation, participation, interview and focus groups. As is often the case with single-researcher organisational investigations, constraints of time, financial resources and access have made longer term, immersion, observation and participation methods impractical. Interviews, by contrast, are more time efficient. They can also provide a window into the sense-making activities of PRME advocates and allow for the exploration of agentic responses to field, structural and policy change which are less likely to emerge in workgroup situations (Knight and Saunders, 1999). I decided therefore to concentrate data generation activity on narrative

interviewing. As my principal interest was in PRME advocate experience of institutional work, and I was not seeking to triangulate their data with that of other organisational actors, I did not extend the study beyond those with lead PRME responsibility in the 22 organisations included in the study.

3.5.1 Narrative interviewing

Narrative interviews are a form of semi-structured interview; the dominant approach to the latter being to have a detailed protocol in which particular issues are discussed across all interviews (Bryman, 2008). However, the search for stories and a whole-story emphasis within a narrative approach required an interview process that encouraged exploration and sense making, and avoided multiple, shorter, content-orientated questions (Mishler, 1986; Riessman, 2008). As Mishler notes “Looking at how interviewees connect their responses into a sustained account, that is, a story, brings out problems and possibilities of interviewing that are not visible when attention is restricted to question-answer exchanges” (1986, p. 78)

Narrative interviews are demanding because, in contrast to the usual semi-structured protocol of keeping participants to the point, “what matters is not the interviewer’s own categories and research questions, but rather what the narrators themselves select for their plot construction in order to make sense of their own world” (Soderberg, 2006, p. 4). Czarniawska (1998 and 2001) also reinforces a need to remain narrator-centred in the interview situation. Such authors’ emphases on narrator meaning-making in interview draw heavily on Mishler’s (1986) work, in which he explores a variety of ways in which the interviewer/participant relationship can be recast so that

interviews aid participant meaning making rather than being principally concerned with the interviewer's interpretation of meaning.

However, a notion of dialogue can also be at the centre of this method of interviewing. To quote Riessman, "Narrative interviewing is not a set of techniques ... it can offer a way, in many research situations, for investigators to forge dialogic relationships and greater communicative equality" (2008, p. 26). The view of interviews as dialogue draws also on Denzin's interpretive interactionist approach to life-history interviewing (Denzin, 1989), with its emphasis on explicit dialogic engagement in which both parties collaborate to elicit and construct meaning.

Gabriel (2000) also has a view of the narrative interviewer that goes beyond assisting the participant's meaning making. His view of the interviewer is as the narrator's "empathic" or "fellow traveller", as "someone keen to engage with it [the narrative] emotionally, displaying interest, empathy, and pleasure in the storytelling process" (p.136). As Neander and Skott (2006) note of the human sciences more widely, "the researcher does not find narratives but instead participates in their creation" (p. 297).

Some of the more creative implications of this form of interviewing for the researcher role have been identified above. Words of caution are also called for. Some writers note that the implications for interviewer power and control in the interview need recognition. For instance, Riessman suggests that "Creating possibilities in research interviews for extended narration requires investigators to give up control, which can generate anxiety" (2008, p. 24). How much significance can be attached to interview-generated stories is also questioned. For one thing, in interviewing, stories are not

encountered in their natural state but “as part of the dyadic research relationship rather than of organizational discourse proper” (Gabriel, 2000, p. 137). In relation to the constraints on accessing social practices through narrative methods, one also needs to be mindful of the important distinction between practices and statements of practice drawn by Kane, Sandretto and Heath (2002). Thus what my interview narratives could only give access to were the reported practices of PRME advocates and the meaning they held for interviewees.

3.5.2 Generating interview questions

Addressing the framing of narrative interview questions, Denzin (1989) notes the importance of focusing on ‘how’ rather than ‘why’ or ‘what’ questions. Riessman (2008) likewise emphasises ‘how’ and ‘tell me’ questions rather than ‘when’ or ‘what’ questions. Riessman also argues that “the specific wording of a question is less important than the interviewer’s emotional attentiveness and engagement and the degree of reciprocity in the conversation” (2008, p. 24). For this reason she and many others in this tradition recommend that the investigator should also be the interviewer – as the interpretive process begins during the interview conversations.

Beyond these two background sources of advice, the development of my interview questions was specifically influenced by Gabriel’s narrative interviewing protocol (2000, p. 138). My interviews started by inviting interviewees to tell two stories: an account of their own coming to PRME work and of the PRME journey in their institutions (See Table 3 below). It was intended that these open questions would encourage participants to range backwards and forwards in time and stimulate both individual and organisational sense-making narratives. Subsequent questions focused

on eliciting memories of PRME related incidents that had particular organisational resonance or led to especially strong feelings of any kind, positive or negative. Gabriel (2000) also suggests a set of prompts to use when participants prove less amenable to storytelling overtures. In my case these included prompts about any feelings engendered by events, invitations to describe the reactions of other involved actors, or speculation on the ‘moral’ of a particular story or event. There were also questions at the end of a less overtly narrative nature and intention, which invited interviewees to reflect on their experience of change, the strengths and weaknesses of the wider PRME project as well as the future of PRME in their business schools.

Table 3: Interview questions (excluding formalities and prompts)

1. If you were around at the time or have heard from others, can you tell me how your business school decided to sign up to the PRME?
2. Could you tell me the story of how you became involved in the PRME?
3. Thinking back over the time from when you signed up to now, how would you describe the PRME “journey” that your business school has gone on ?
4. Can you tell me about an event/project/development that you have been involved in that illustrates a PRME success in your business school?
5. Can you tell me about an event/project/development that you have been involved in that illustrates the challenges, stresses or strains of putting PRME into practice here?
6. If there has been opposition to PRME-related work here, what forms has this taken?
7. What have you learnt from the PRME project about change in your business school?
8. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the PRME project in general?
9. What do you think is the future for PRME in your business school?

3.5.3 Primary data sampling approach

As of June 2014, there were 43 UK business school signatories to PRME. While all signatories were initially approached (see method below), a purposive sampling approach (Bryman, 2008) and a targeted sample size were driven by the following considerations:

1. That this was principally an empirical rather than theoretical study, and therefore accessing a wider rather than narrower sample was important
2. That the sample should reflect a range of academics from institutional early adopters (2007/8) through to recent adopters (2012/13)
3. That the sample should include academics from old and new universities, and from business schools with diverse missions, values and levels of emphasis on teaching or research
4. That there should be sufficient evidence of individual academic engagement with PRME to warrant inclusion
5. Pragmatic considerations of access.

In the light of the above, the proposal was to aim for 20-25 interviews across at least 20 business schools. This goal was achieved, with 29 interviews across 22 schools carried out.

3.5.4 Primary data generation and sample profile

The 29 interviews were carried out in the period June to November 2014. Of these, 21 were conducted in the offices of the participants, and eight via Skype.

All 43 university business school signatories to PRME in the UK in June 2014 were approached in writing via named PRME points of contact or, where this information was not publicly available, via email enquiry to information desks. Those that did not respond to the first approach were written to a second time. Representatives of a total of 26 universities made an initial response, four subsequently decided not to participate, leaving 22 participant universities. In each of the participating 22 universities the principal PRME point of contact was interviewed. An open invitation to these individuals to identify others in their business schools who were active in PRME advocacy and who might be willing to contribute led to a further seven interviews in three of the schools involved.

Table 4 below indicates that 16 of the 29 participants were male, 13 female. The diversity of job roles undertaken by participants was marked, but with a bias towards those relatively junior in organisational hierarchies.

Table 4: Gender and role profile of research participants

Male	Female	Total	Lecturer/ Senior Lecturer	Programme Manager	Professor/ Reader	Dean/ Assistant Dean	Total
16	13	29	13	3	7	6	29

Table 5 below shows a diversity of disciplinary origins in the participant group, but with significant clusters in the areas of CSR, Organisation Studies and Finance and Accounting.

Table 5: Disciplinary profile of research participants

Corporate Social Responsibility	6	Organisation Studies	4
Business Ethics	3	Finance and Accounting	5
Sustainability	2	Marketing	3
Pedagogy	3	HRM	2
Innovation and Design	1	Total	29

As can be seen in Table 6, the 22 participant HEIs included a cross section of older and newer universities from across the English regions. Only one of four Scottish signatories agreed to participate. At the time there were no signatories and therefore no participant universities from Northern Ireland and Wales. The length of time since signup (Table 7) varied from seven months to just over six years, with a significant skewing towards those with longer-term memberships.

Table 6: Profile of the participants' universities

Post 1992	Russell	Other	Total	South East England incl. London	South West England	English Midlands	Northern England	Scotland	Total
9	5	8	22	6	4	4	7	1	22

Table 7: Length of time since becoming a PRME signatory

Time since signup	0 >1 year	1 > 3 years	3 > 5 years	5 > 7 years	Total
No of business schools	2	4	8	8	22

As Table 8 below suggests, my sample was broadly representative of the population of PRME UK business school signatories vis a vis level of accreditations. Where my

sample was slightly less representative was in an under sampling of non-accredited and an over sampling of Double Crown accredited schools.

Table 8: Organisation profile by level of accreditation

		THIS STUDY	UK PRME SIGNATORIES AT 6.14
Participant Business Schools		22	43
Of which:			
No accreditations		8	18
AMBA accredited		14	25
EQUIS accredited		8	14
AACSB accredited		8	13
Single Crown Business School		4	9
Double Crown Business School		4	5
Triple Crown Business School		6	11

To put the data above into perspective, Table 9 below shows the degree of penetration of PRME into the membership of AMBA, EQUIS and AACSB accredited schools in the UK in June 2014.

Table 9: PRME membership in sector accreditation schemes

	All UK business schools	AMBA Accredited schools (UK)	EQUIS accredited schools (UK)	AACSB accredited schools (UK)
In the UK	117 *	43	25	26
PRME signatories	43	25	15	15
% PRME signatories	37%	58%	60%	58%

* No. of Association of Business Schools (ABS) members at 6.2014 = 117

What is striking in Table 9 is the extent to which PRME membership is associated with participation in sector standard setting schemes, and the remarkably similar levels of PRME penetration across the three accreditation schemes despite their varying memberships.

3.5.5 Secondary data collection

Documents in two principal categories were collected:

3.5.5.1 Institutional documents related to PRME from the selected UK business schools

It is a requirement of PRME membership to produce a Sharing Information on Progress report to the United Nations PRME office every two years. Given the varying lengths of membership (seven months to six years) of the participating organisations, some had produced no reports and others up to three. In total 32 SIP reports were collected. These reports seek to document a signatory's progress towards engaging with and implementing the six PRME principles, in areas including teaching and learning, research, partnership with business and stakeholder dialogue. In addition, other documents both online and offline were collected and/or consulted in relation to signatory academic programmes, research clusters, student recruitment materials etc.

3.5.5.2 An extended set of PRME documentation drawn from UN sources

A wide range of materials relating to the PRME initiative was consulted on the PRME website (www.unprme.org). These included marketing materials, founding

documents, the records and outputs of PRME's eight working groups (e.g. on poverty, on gender), and the work of the regional PRME Chapters. In particular the work of the UK and Ireland PRME Chapter was studied, including its recent publication: *An Inspirational Guide for the Implementation of PRME, UK and Ireland Edition* (Murray et al, 2015).

It was not the intention to use these secondary sources as the basis for detailed thematic analysis, nor as the basis of interview data triangulation. Thus they do not feature as a distinct section in the Findings Chapter. However, they have provided invaluable contextual detail that is drawn upon in both the Findings and Discussion Chapters.

3.5.6 Data analysis methods

As noted earlier, the approach here has not been the exclusively inductive, grounded theory approach often associated with qualitative including narrative and thematic analysis (Marshall and Rossman, 2006) but one informed by the a priori interest in institutional theory and the practices of institutional entrepreneurs. This approach is consistent with Geertz's (1973) idea that theory building develops from existing theories rather than a grounded theory view that theory is emergent from the data. Nonetheless, my analytical process and sequencing have many similarities with – though some departures from - the dominant grounded theory paradigm, and benefited in particular from the analytical exemplars provided by Clark, Goia, Ketchen and Thomas (2010), Tracey, Phillips and Jarvis (2011), and Nag and Goia (2012). The Tracey et al study has been particularly germane, as its subject is also institutional entrepreneurship. I have also worked within the framework for thematic analysis (data

familiarisation, code generation, theme searching, theme review, theme naming and definition, and report production) proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006).

The process of data familiarisation started with the interview transcription and transcription checking procedures. I transcribed six and used a transcribing service for 23 interviews, but listened at least twice to all 29, as well as checked and corrected all of the latter 19 transcripts to bring them to a common, verbatim standard including all verbal, some nonverbal (e.g. laughter) utterances and to reflect also pauses and where the participant and I spoke across one another. In a further stage, all transcripts were checked to ensure that punctuation reflected and did not obscure the speaker's apparent intention.

The ab initio broad coding structure was principally deductive – arising from “the conceptual framework, list of research questions, hypotheses, problem areas, and /or key variables that the researcher brings to the study” (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014, p. 81). This was reflected in a decision to code all data at one of three levels consistent with institutional theory's concern with institutions being nested at individual, organisational and field levels. Apart from this broad framework, and reflecting my wish not to foreclose on more data-driven possibilities, initially holistic coding was applied to quite large units of text, aimed at capturing “a sense of the overall contents and the possible categories that may develop” (Miles et al, 2014, p. 77). Many of these codes morphed over the stages of the coding process into what are presented in Table 10 below as the first order data categories. Within these holistic categories, a mix of descriptive coding and provisional coding was then generated and applied. Descriptive codes such as “opportunism” or “values fit” (see examples

below) were designed to encapsulate in a word or short phrase the basic topic of a fairly short passage of data. Where the provisional coding element was significant was not only in my researcher-generated, a priori intention to code at three levels but also within a variety of organisation and field level codes. As Miles et al suggest, such an approach is “appropriate for qualitative studies that build on or corroborate previous research and investigations” (2014, p. 77). The systematic nature of the coding undertaken is demonstrated in Table 11. Coding was done so as to maintain some contextual data to help with the later analysis, a process much aided by the capacity of Nvivo10 (see below) to enable rapid movement between extract and whole interview context. Given the decision outlined to pursue principally thematic rather than whole-story analysis, narrative coding (Riessman, 2008; Saldana, 2009) more tightly aligned with structural or dialogic narrative analysis and involving literary conventions (e.g. character, setting, plot, flashback, high point) was not adopted.

Following first phase coding, a process of sorting began the journey towards thematic identification. Initially the coded extracts were organised into what is shown in Table 10 below as first order data categories, essentially a set of statements such as “Most PRME work is within the system”. This process was based on a search both for similarities and differences. What then occurred was a phase of thematic identification that sought to work directly from the data and data categories but also iteratively with institutional theory concepts resulting in the emergence of themes that reflect a “synthesis anchored both empirically in (the) data and theoretically in the literature” (Tracey et al, 2011, p. 64). While a grounded theory approach would have used axial coding at this point to identify the relationships between the first order data categories, my methods were less formal and involved both repeated re-reading of the coded data

extracts and interrogation of the data with particular institutional concepts in mind (entrepreneurial behaviours, divergent change, logics, agency etc.). Braun and Clarke make the important observation that themes, despite the ubiquitous use of the term, do not simply ‘emerge’ from a dataset and that any “account of themes emerging or being discovered is a passive account of the process of analysis, and it denies the active role the researcher always plays in identifying patterns/themes” (2006, p. 80). In my case, the identification, defining, reviewing and naming of themes has certainly been not only a conscious but also arduous part of the study. What has been particularly challenging has been finding a way that is both brief and memorable to “not just paraphrase the content of the data extracts presented, but identify what is of interest about them and why” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 92).

Consistent with the theoretically informed approach, the third and final stage of my process involved the framing of the aggregated theoretical dimensions of my analysis (see Table 10). Unsurprisingly, these have sought to capture the resonance of my findings within the terms of my research questions and current debates within neo-institutional theory in relation to entrepreneurship, logics and institutional work.

In Table 10 is a schematic representation of my data structure- shown with excerpts of representative interview data - for part of one of the three levels analysed: that of the individual. Similar analysis occurred at organisational and field levels but for reasons of space is not shown here.

Table 10: Example of data structure

<p>PRME AT INDIVIDUAL ENTREPRENEUR LEVEL</p> <p>FIRST ORDER DATA CATEGORIES</p> <p>Data Codes</p> <p>Representative Participant (P) Data</p>	<p>SECOND ORDER THEMES</p>	<p>THIRD ORDER THEORETICAL DIMENSIONS</p>
<p>MULTIPLE ROUTES TO ASSOCIATION</p> <p>MULTIPLE MOTIVATIONS FOR ASSOCIATION</p> <p>Initiator of PRME link No, it was very much my motivation and it was both from the point of view of: this is probably one of the things that a professor of x ought to be doing inside a business school, but also that, you know, I felt the time was right for the school itself. (P12)</p> <p>Requested by manager When I was putting together this new job description and one of the few things the Dean did say was ‘you’re gonna, you should pick up PRME and this is what I want you to do’. (P6)</p> <p>Fit with role past or present I was the obvious person to pick it up ..because social responsibility and education were one of my interests (P13)</p> <p>Values fit It came through ...my interest in the environment, I’ve been a naturalist since I was 8 years old and that’s another reason why I went to that (social and environmental accounting) congress in the first place and immediately it brought two things together ... one was dear to my heart and another was what had paid my way through life .(P18)</p> <p>PRME ADVOCATES ENGAGE IN DIVERSE STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES</p> <p>MOST PRME WORK IS WITHIN THE SYSTEM</p> <p>Position in hierarchy I took over as Director of Academic Development not long after we’d signed up to PRME (and) the role ..was to take an overview of curriculum in particular across the whole of the faculty. So there was some management oomph behind it from me (P15)</p> <p>Challenging the system What I’ve decided to do is work more with a think tank outside...personally I think that’s where my role is now. I’m looking to move outside the tent to do more work, not just on business schools but other organisations too. (P8)</p> <p>Working within the system And because the PRME requires activity across different domains I was reasonably well connected into activities across those domains... you need to be able to go to all those people involved in different strands of activity and to know what their agendas are. (P19)</p> <p>Opportunism And it’s me shoving and pushing and looking for opportunities more often than not and I’ve had some, I think some really good results that have pleased me, don’t think they’ve pleased anybody else. (P18)</p>	<p>No single PRME advocate profile</p> <p>Some common characteristics</p> <p>Position</p> <p>Contingent, located practices</p> <p>Against the grain</p>	<p>Entrepreneurial orientations</p> <p>Complexity of Institutional work</p> <p>Collision between institutional logics at field, organisational and individual level</p> <p>Failure of institutional entrepreneurship</p>

Data coding, analysis and management were aided by the use of Nvivo 10 qualitative data analysis software. However, a number of practical as well as more philosophical issues arose in relation to coding and thematic analysis. As Bryman (2008, p. 549) points out, coding can result in a “loss of context and narrative flow” – particularly relevant concerns in this case where contextual factors were of key interest. The use of dialogic, story interviewing had implications for data coding analysis as not all interviews covered exactly the same issues and in the same manner, making coding and organising more complex. Thus some of the codes in Table 10 (e.g. working within the system) are in fact already aggregated, and built up from subcodes too detailed to be shown here. Narrative interviewing also tends to generate substantial amounts of data (Lyons and Coyle, 2007) much of which may have the characteristics of thick description (Denzin, 1989). Thick description concerns the multiple layers of meaning and symbolism that characterize the arrangement of cultural systems, which are not always easily amenable to coding. Indeed the 29 interviews, lasting an average of 75 minutes, generated over 1000 A4 double-spaced pages of data. An extract in Table 11 from one page of the denser, more storied and reflective interviews, identifies some of the coding work required.

Table 11: Example of data coding

Excerpt from Interview with Participant 7 (P7) <i>(coded data in italics)</i>	I = Individual level code O = Organisational level code F= Field level code
JL: Sounds like you have plenty to write about.	
P7: <i>Yeah, have to be careful of course.</i>	I: resilience
JL: May be after you have left.	
P7: Even then I will have to be careful and anonymising things and change a little bit. But you know how it is. <i>And that's worrying about an organisation like this where someone can walk up to the vice chancellor or someone else</i>	O: structural and cultural obstacles

<p><i>and say “whisper, whisper, Jonathan Louw and P7”, you are tried imprisoned or executed before there has been any hearing ...</i></p> <p>So it’s a worry that, in this atmosphere, <i>so I think people don’t see a lot of responsible behaviour sometimes going on.</i></p> <p><i>It doesn’t stop me because as Victor Frankl says I don’t know if you have ever read, it’s in the high holy days, the Yom Kippur and, you’re not Jewish?</i></p>	<p>I: Exhaustion and burnout</p> <p>I: resilience</p> <p>O: Fit with values</p> <p>O: structural and cultural obstacles</p>
<p>JL: No,</p>	
<p>P7: <i>..What he says there, is about choice being the last thing you have got... you can be in the most impossible circumstances but your choice and how you face any set of given circumstances is really the last human freedom you have..... And that’s I think what drives certain teachers..., that I know what I believe is right ... and that might not be supported helped or facilitated by the institution, but you still have got to do it because you are either true to yourself or you are something else.</i></p> <p><i>.... You know my boss’s been chosen to move to other places,... that’s made our life more tolerable as it was bonkers before.</i></p>	<p>I: Values fit</p> <p>I Agency and identity</p> <p>I: Resilience</p> <p>O: structural and cultural obstacles</p>
<p>JL: But there’s a vacuum.</p>	
<p>P7: A vacuum inevitably, as I’ve just said ...: It’s a start of a new phase. <i>I am a 10 year man. I tend to live life in 10 years... But you know, I have just reached that sort of point and part of it is you know, PRME is right in there, is something I want to grow closer to. And the sort of ideas, so it is a possible pole against which I could...</i></p>	<p>I: Agency and identity</p> <p>I PRME as mission</p> <p>F: PRME as change driver</p>

As might be expected from the earlier discussion about co-creation and dialogic interviews, the analysis in Table 11 and more generally has also required attention to the relationship between narrator and audience, in this case the interviewer. These dynamics and what they led to in relation to surfacing the emotional labour reported by PMRE advocates will be returned to in the Conclusions chapter.

While narrative analysis, and indeed any form of analysis, tends to focus mostly on what is presented and recorded, Beech and Sims (2007) also emphasise the importance of absence or silences in narrative. Citing Burke (1965, p. 49), Brown (2006) similarly suggests that we need to remember that “Every way of seeing is also

a way of not seeing”. Absences and silences are explored in the Discussion Chapter, particularly in relation to the relative lack of explicit engagement of PRME advocates with related social movements outside academia.

3.5.7 Ethics

Wider ethical considerations related to my positioning as an insider researcher have been addressed earlier. This section deals with what Floyd and Arthur (2012) call external ethical engagement. In this regard, my research study was approved by the Lancaster University research ethics committee. Potential interviewees were approached by email, to which I attached the approved Participant Information Sheet (PIS). If they agreed to participate, in advance of interview they were sent the Interview Consent Form which was then either completed in writing or orally at the outset of the interview when interviews took place via Skype. The PIS and consent form dealt with issues of confidentiality, anonymity and data usage, and any questions arising from these were addressed prior to the interview taking place. Anonymity has been accorded to both the individual and to his or her institution. Any references to secondary sources e.g. business school PRME reports are likewise anonymised.

Consistent with the dialogic approach taken to the interviewing, and its intended reciprocity, I have sought ways of maintaining dialogue with participants after the research in order to provide them with insights from the findings which may further assist them in their PRME implementation work. Presentations on the findings were made at the UK and Ireland PRME Chapter annual conference in June 2015 and at the British Academy of Management conference (Special Interest Group on Sustainable

and Responsible Business) in September 2015.

3.6 EVALUATION CRITERIA

This chapter started by citing Denzin and Lincoln's (2011) proposition that there are five phases involved in any qualitative research process. The final phase, they suggest, requires consideration of how a study is to be presented and the implications of this decision. In this case, the standard requirements of the doctoral thesis genre have determined the presentational decisions. So, to amend this final part of their model, and, I would suggest, address one of its limitations, it is to the question of evaluation criteria that this chapter now turns.

Interpretive research can make no claim to accessing what realists might consider to be objective or scientific truth. But operating with a different notion of truth, Kearney suggests that "truth is not the sole prerogative of the so-called exact sciences. There is also a truth, with its corresponding understanding, that we may properly call 'narrative'. We need both" (2002, p. 148). Soderberg (2006, p. 413) succinctly captures the understanding of narrative scholars vis a vis truth and reality when she argues that "narrative interviews can thus be viewed as one entry into the plurivocal organisation" however "this does not mean that narrative interviewing comes closer to any 'objective truth' than other interviewing methods".

I would concur with Denzin and Lincoln's view (2011) that notions of reliability and validity associated with positivist, mostly quantitative work in the social sciences are largely irrelevant in research of the kind I have carried out. In their rebuttal of traditional grounded theory's attempts through methodological precision to emulate

natural science enquiry, Thomas and James make the pertinent assertion that “When one argues for the validity of qualitative enquiry one is arguing for a reinstatement of the validity of interpretation and understanding in a social world ...A method will not substitute for the essentials of this humanity; it will not enable one to substitute some formula for divining meaning” (2006, p.779). Much mainstream qualitative work does indeed make some claims to reliability and thus replicability via methods such as the use of standardised semi-structured interviews. However, the implications of dialogic, relatively unstructured narrative interviewing leading to the construction of accounts and meaning specific to the research dyad suggest no claims related to the reliability of the method across multiple interviews could be made. Likewise, although representatives of some 22 of the 43 UK business school signatories to PRME have been interviewed, because the focus is on their individual sense-making activities no claims to generalisability of the empirical findings to other UK business schools would be appropriate.

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What this analysis and its insights can do is generate claims to generalisability based on the extent to which the findings engage with and illuminate theories in relation to institutional entrepreneurship, work and logics in higher education. Following the abductive logic proposed by Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009), I seek to make claims to generalisability based on theoretical engagement. Such claims, moreover, need to rest on a notion of reliability based on having a sufficiently auditable, transparent and rigorous methodology that my conclusions might be judged to have plausibility (Knight and Saunders, 1999), interpretive validity or credibility (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To achieve that I have also needed to satisfy a notion of rigour that “lies in devising a systematic method whose assumptions are congruent with the way one

conceptualizes the subject matter” (Reicher and Taylor, 2005, p.549). Thus, for example, in outlining my coding and subsequent analytical steps I have attempted at each stage to display a rationale consistent with my social constructionist, interpretive frames of reference and my a priori interest in institutional effects.

For reasons of space, I have left a more detailed reflection on the extent to which I have met the quality criteria suggested above to the Conclusions Chapter, as part of a wider review there of the contribution and limitations of this investigation. In the Findings Chapter that now follows, my goal is a presentation and structure that illuminate my research questions by being consistent with my research design, my theoretical constructs and my analytical process.

Chapter Four: Findings

4.1 Introduction

Consistent with the Research Questions as well as neo-institutional theory's concern with institutional effects at individual, organisational and field levels, this chapter is organised in three principal sections:

1. At individual level – the reasons for participants' association with PRME are outlined and the ways they perceive their role are described. Attention is drawn to the strategies and practices they identify as central to their work, and the affective dimensions of this work are highlighted.
2. At organisational level – accounts are offered of what led 22 universities to sign up to PRME, and of the PRME successes and setbacks encountered since signup. Participant reflections on what has led to widely divergent outcomes are laid out.
3. At field level – while necessarily saturated with organisational level experience, here participant reflections on PRME as a wider project for change at field level are explored. The opportunities and limitations of a project that is easy to join, has broad and inclusive principles as well as limited accountability mechanisms are recounted. Reflections on the UN PRME infrastructure are also presented.

At the beginning of each section, central themes (or thematic propositions) identified in my analysis are stated as a structure for the findings that follow.

4.2 Findings at the level of the individual

4.2.1 Summary of participants' perceptions of their organisations' engagement with PRME and of their own performance in encouraging that engagement

Table 12 provides a summary overview of participants' perceptions in two key domains: degree of organisational engagement with PRME, and degree of personal effectiveness in pursuing that engagement. It should be emphasised that, consistent with the interpretive research approach, this summary does not purport to be an objective assessment of organisational progress towards implementing PRME. It seeks only to summarise participant (P) reflections shared in interview. PRME members' Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports often show very different assessments. However, as participants will be seen to suggest, these official reports should not be regarded as any more objective than accounts below.

Table 12: Summary of participant perceptions

Both categories summarise voiced perceptions	High satisfaction with own effectiveness	Low satisfaction with own effectiveness
High satisfaction with business school engagement	P3,P6,P12,P14,P19,P20,P21, P23,P25,P27 (10)	P22, (1)
Low satisfaction with business school engagement	P2,P8, P9,P15,P17,P18,P24,P28,P29 (9)	P1, P4,P5,P7,P10,P11, P13,P16,P26 (9)

Detailed findings in this section are presented under four thematic propositions:

4.2.2 PRME advocate profiles: That there is no one, standard profile of a PRME advocate, but evidence of some common characteristics.

Perhaps predictably, the majority of participants (25 ex 29) identified a clear continuum between their past disciplinary affiliations (see Table 5 in Chapter Three) and their PRME roles. 15 clearly articulated a fit between their personal or professional values and PRME values as being a driving force within their engagement. While 10 had been the direct instigators of their business schools becoming a PRME signatory, the majority (19) had taken on a PRME role after organisational sign-up, at the request of senior managers.

These varying journeys to and motivations for PRME involvement are outlined below.

4.2.2.1 *A fit with current and previous roles*

Participants' disciplinary backgrounds were diverse, but with particular clusters around accounting and CSR. P4's account of how she became associated with PRME is fairly typical and also highlights factors returned to throughout these findings:

“I'm probably the academic with the most focused interests in CSR, and so I guess I am always an obvious choice for these things ... At least I knew what PRME was, I suppose that was the starting point. I don't see it as something that makes up my future career plan. My identity is not nailed to this. On the other hand, it fits quite well with my professional interests. Career wise.... it certainly won't do any harm ...If I had more time I might try harder to institute some more institutional change.”

For some participants the connection was a result of prior involvement in initiatives such as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). One cited signing up partly as

a means of maintaining the momentum of a completed ESD project and of “keep[ing] our discourse alive” (P17). For many the first contact had been in the UK e.g., at British Academy of Management events, and for others (e.g. P9, P23) at one of a series of international PRME conferences held since the 2007 launch.

Some participants cited a more strategic, organisational development argument for their being asked to take on the role – P19, for example, noting the rationale for her choice being “because the PRME requires activity across different domains I was reasonably well placed...in order to get anything done you need to be able to go to all those people involved ... and to know what their agendas are”. P24 reflected that “it made sense for me to take on a sort of administrator responsibility to work with PRME it just seemed to be a sort of a neat harmony of projects, research feeding into teaching and feeding into administrative responsibilities”.

4.2.2.2 *A values fit*

For some a values fit with PRME was experienced on a continuum going back to childhood. P2 tracked her journey to PRME back to the inculcation of social solidarity principles in her childhood in the former Soviet Union. P15 noted that he had “most of my leftie assumptions because of my family and generations of my family” and that these had informed his association with PRME. P18 cited being “a naturalist since I was 8 years old” and the capacity of PRME to bring together that which was “dear to my heart” with his professional commitments. For others the connection was expressed more as a moral imperative, with P22 expressing this as “I just felt it’s something we should be doing” and P7 making a connection to faith, noting “ I fight quite hard for things I believe in ... and it’s partly religiously linked”.

The values link was also couched in more professional terms, in relation to issues such as sustainability, gender studies, and the purpose of education. So P1 reflected that “it fits in with my value system and the importance of holding business to account”, P14’s interest flowed from her examination of the link between gender and corporate responsibility, P21 grounded his commitment in being not just a “light green but a darker green” accountant and P9 cited decades-long concerns with “justice and fairness and ethics”. P5 gave voice to a view expressed explicitly or indirectly by many when she noted that “Quite often you’ll find it in the educational sector, you know we hold it deep to our hearts, that we are educating people and that’s gonna have an effect in the world and we hope it’s gonna be a good one”.

4.2.2.3 *Requested by managers*

While many who took up PRME roles at the request of senior managers did so with relevant prior interests or knowledge of PRME, for others the knowledge was absent or the link more tenuous. P11 recounted a path to PRME representative of this second group:

“The deputy dean was sort of taking care of PRME, but ... we were not doing anything. So he decided we have to appoint a representative to take care of this ... So, we as the academics, we have to do some administrative role ...and I volunteered for this one”.

P28 recounted that she “didn’t know what it was, so I had to go to a website and look”. P6, a senior academic manager, noted that “when I was putting together this new job description one of the few things (the Dean) did say was ‘you should pick up PRME and this is what I want you to do’”. For him too, PRME was at that point entirely unknown. P29, also initially unaware of PRME, surmised that “in

organisations it's never transparent ... It may be because my research is on these areas ...or perhaps it could be because business schools are tending to become very applied and I am not entirely applied in the last few years, perhaps it was a way to push me a bit to do something applied?"

4.2.2.4 *Acting as instigator*

Of the 10 participants who had actively instigated a PRME signup, it is perhaps unsurprising that five were in senior professorial, dean or deputy dean positions, one acted in close partnership with such an individual and four were amongst the group for whom PRME had a particularly close personal or professional values fit.

Of the senior leader category, two (P20 and P21) had adopted PRME to be a whole-school transformational tool. One, a deputy dean, outlined his approach thus:

“So I was very firm that I wanted it to be part of what we're doing here and fortunately the dean was very supportive ... so now everything we do, PRME runs down it like a spine” (P20).

Another (P12) noted that

“it was very much my motivation and it was both from the point of view of: this is probably one of the things that a professor of ... ought to be doing, but also that, you know, I felt the time was right for the school itself”.

While, as findings later will suggest, having the seniority to ensure a speedy signup to PRME has not meant an uncontested implementation, in the case of those less senior in the hierarchy the pursuit of signatory status often required argument, persistence and sometimes risk taking. P2's first attempt at gaining the support of the Dean having

failed, she returned to the subject two years later with the more entrepreneurial approach demonstrated below:

“So ... we met with the CEO of AMBA and she casually said ‘are you signatories of PRME?’ So I said ‘well we are in the process of signing’, so all eyes were on me, so I thought at the end of this meeting either I am going to be promoted or fired, I didn’t know what was going to happen but I just seized the opportunity to say we were signing... So when I said ‘we are about to sign’, they looked at me like- because they were more senior – ‘what do you know that I don’t know ...?’ Luckily I had the paper trail to show that I had been proposing it for the last two years!” (P2).

4.2.3 Role conceptions: That PRME advocates conceive of and enact their roles in divergent ways and with widely varying degrees of purposiveness.

Participants described a spectrum of commitment levels to PRME related work in their organisations, ranging from reactive/passive to pro-active and highly committed.

4.2.3.1 *From passive and/or occasional*

One participant (P16) attributed her lack of engagement to the size of her business school. Others attributed their inactivity to a lack of resources, with P4 noting, “And so we joined PRME. And then, nothing very much happened for two years, which is partly me because I have no days against it and no real time against it”. There was a continuing refrain about time and the relative importance of PRME to their work, with P13 stating emphatically:

“No, no, I don’t have the time ... I was massively over burdened with both teaching and admin and I do a lot of research as well, so the idea of putting aside two days a week to walk around talking to people about PRME was never going to happen. I didn’t see PRME as sufficiently important ... to sacrifice other parts of what I did”.

At the most passive end of the spectrum, P11 suggested hierarchical factors partly accounted for colleagues not taking her PRME role seriously and her subsequent retreat from engagement:

“I couldn’t even have a meeting with the head of the ... department ...I don’t know how to put this, but I think she didn’t think I am important”.

4.2.3.2 *To high levels of commitment and action*

For a significant number of participants, particularly those brought to PRME by their values, their ongoing involvement was associated with a sense of commitment and calling. As P5 phrased it, “I don’t think it is personally rewarding, I feel it’s my duty. I feel it’s my duty to do what I can”. P9 echoed this sense when describing what continued to drive him:

“I actually chose, or it got chosen for me, to go on this path of developing this whole new area ... and sometimes you’re not given credit for that...I know people who don’t change their slides from one decade to the next, never mind from one year to the next. And actually, going out on a limb and saying we need to do this, seems to be hard, wherever you are .. But you have to be doing it for intrinsic reasons. I mean ... I don’t get any extra money ... And also I figure, my time of life, I’m thinking, you know, I’m not going to be here forever ... I want to do what I can while I’m here”.

Reflecting on his continuing sense of mission despite substantial organisational upheaval and opposition, P7 located his PRME commitments at both a spiritual and identity level in the following excerpt:

“It doesn’t stop me because as Victor Frankl says ... which is about choice being the last thing you have got. You know you can be, he was in Auschwitz, you can be in the most impossible circumstances but your choice and how you face any set of given circumstances is really the last human freedom you have ... And that’s I think what drives certain teachers ...that I know what I believe is right and I’m going to try to do something that’s worthy of that and that might not be supported ... by the institution, but you still got to do it because you are either true to yourself or you are something else”.

Not dissimilarly, P20 drew on notions of what be believed to be the right thing to do, declaring, “...we need to be brave as business educators and business scholars ... and create graduates that are equipped, good global citizens, good, responsible leaders”.

4.2.4 Contingent practices against the grain: That PRME advocates engage in contingent, located practices and strategies that are influenced by their organisational position and generally experienced as going against the organisational grain.

Almost all the strategies and practices described for advancing PRME involved work within specific organisational structures and contexts. As intimated previously and in more detail below, this work crossed a spectrum from the frequent, planned and deliberate to the occasional, unplanned and opportunistic.

4.2.4.1 Working within the system

4.2.4.1 (i) Teaching and Learning

The most common area for seeking to advance PRME goals was in relation to teaching and learning. Participants explored a variety of strategies for influencing and shaping areas such as programme design, module content, module review processes and related staff development needs.

For some of those in senior management positions and/or in top-down decision making cultures, programme changes could be brought about via management influence or via recruitment. So P15 recognised “there was some management oomph behind it from me, albeit most of it was kind of peer pressure... but because I had that role as Director of Academic Development then it did, to an extent, formalise ... PRME.” Amongst other senior managers, P21 appointed what he termed “PRME champions” to bring about curricular change and P20 noted the need for “challenging conversations” about PRME and that it had taken “almost a year to get the colleagues who are now on board, to see beyond what they’ve been doing for many years”. P3 reflected on the benefits of being able to start in his situation “from a blank page”. P11, a lecturer instructed to design a PRME related module, noted how decision making occurred in her university:

“It was top-down. So it was easy. No resistance ... That makes people quite unhappy but ...I would say it’s normally top-down. About this module, it was just I was just informed we are going to do that. That’s all”.

As suggested by P15, some of those in senior management could not rely exclusively on rank to engender programme outcomes. P12 reflected too on his local reality that,

“all I can do even as Deputy Dean is just to promote this and to seek people’s agreement to do something about it”. Thus persuasion and negotiation were often components in management practice just as significant as instruction.

For all of those operating outside management positions, the roads to programme innovation were less direct and involved multiple persuasive practices. Some had actively sought senior support before embarking on efforts, others not. One of the former, P18, noted, “I try to be correct in these things”, which meant working via line and programme managers before approaching module leaders. P19 talked about the need for negotiation with such postholders and how in her case this was aided by a consultative culture. P27 identified the need “to interact with ... the institutional systems of quality assurance” in order to gain “traction” in the embedding process.

The demanding and continuing nature of curricular intervention was highlighted by many. The multifaceted requirements of a detailed business case for a new PRME course was highlighted by P8. Participants P9, P13, P26 and P27 amongst others emphasised the need to maintain a continuing presence on Teaching and Learning (and similar) Committees, in order to introduce PRME at key points of programme design and review. P5 described her work to ensure PRME related questions were introduced to module review forms, which P6 echoed at whole programme level. Reflecting on his approach to PRME work, P6 explained, “what you tend to find in some institutions is you have a champion, who pushes this ... which is fine, but that isn’t really sustainable. The only way you get a sustainable commitment is by embedding it ...in processes”.

P18 and P9 had sought out multiple guest speaker opportunities on modules, both to engage students and module leaders – with P9 identifying positive student feedback as a way of attracting staff attention. In schools where accreditations were a priority, participants had repeatedly used PRME's uptake by these bodies as a lever for engagement (P9, P17, P18). Similarly, P2 had used External Examiner feedback she had received on her PRME innovations as levers to enhance the credibility of PRME related curriculum changes she was seeking from others. Some of the finer, more conceptual work needed to engage in programmatic change was explored by P4 in relation to the challenges of working with a practice rather than theory based MBA programme and with colleagues unaware that "there is a whole intellectual tradition that you can draw upon". P6 explored similar kinds of intellectual engagement in relation to framing PRME developments in such a way that they were not side-tracked into definitional debates between discipline-based academics.

4.2.4.1 (ii) Research-focused strategies and practices

Relative to teaching and learning, this domain had been far less of a site for PRME interventions. So, while all participants had engaged in teaching related activity, just six described strategies related to developing PRME-related research. (Wider perceptions of the role of research in advancing PRME are explored later in this chapter). However, where for historical reasons or as a result of specific interventions research-related progress was made, participants judged this to be particularly beneficial.

P19 attested to the ways in which the energies, academic credibility and reputation of an established CSR research centre had been harnessed to the advancement of PRME.

This association had enabled her and others to generate PRME related curricular and research activity in a positive environment. She spoke too of how her chairing of a university-wide research committee enabled the PRME to be contextualised and promoted within wider research debates. From a different perspective, P14 described how the setting up of a research cluster in which PRME was one of a number of central organising themes enabled those involved to draw on the organisational legitimacy associated with clusters to advance both research and related teaching agendas:

“...we have this research group which brings together people from economics, accounting, HR, organisational theory to debate issues about gender, professions and society. And that, I think, is an example of where some kind of collective interest then becomes greater than the sum of those parts ... so a research cluster has credibility if it can do all the things that research groups are meant to do and therefore you know, using that to perpetuate, inculcate and support PRME activity has been a way forward that gives it that credibility” (P14).

P18 reflected on how the establishment of a supportive research committee at university level was increasingly providing legitimacy for PRME research and teaching. As he explained:

“there’s a sustainability research group ... with just about every professor in the place signed onto it...and that seems to have be the driving force now ... And because it’s got professors who ... their livelihood is to do research ...that’s gonna be more successful than lecturers and tutors getting together”.

P29, from a recent signatory, had deliberately set out to use the research rather than teaching and learning track to engage colleagues –initially by arranging a one day interdisciplinary conference in pursuit of the collaboration she believed to be central to the PRME message.

4.2.4.1 (iii) Third mission work

Comparatively few participants highlighted dialogue, partnership and other forms of industry or third sector involvement as central to their PRME strategies. For three, though, this domain was central to their PRME endeavours. Both P2 and P10 outlined numerous strategies they used to bring business school and third sector organisations into productive partnership, albeit that most of the work was not done directly in the name of PRME. P10, for instance, described her work co-ordinating a forum bringing together public, private and third sector organisations to develop more effective partnerships. In a different vein, P8 drew on a community activist background to inform his practice, using joint events with community bodies to profile the sustainability issues central to his university work.

4.2.4.1(iv) General awareness, profile and constituency building

Almost all participants had in the past or at the time of interview still experienced being one of a very small number of PRME advocates in their schools. Against this backdrop, many recounted strategies and practices to promote wider constituency building. Examples included use of discussions at established student consultative fora (P6), attempted involvement of MBA students and staff in a research programme (P1), involvement in staff and student induction sessions (P9), staff training (P8), use of external speakers on staff development days (P20) and using the PRME SIP report preparation process as a way of building collaborations (P24) or organisational

commitment (P29). Some described unabashedly political lobbying of a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders (P3, P9) in order to raise the PRME profile. Others tactically made use of open discussion items at faculty fora (P4, P5), although as P5 reflected these were not necessarily highly productive and the necessity for them originated in failures elsewhere:

“I’ve held staff briefing meetings because in the absence of being able to get ethically related subjects as compulsory modules, I thought we really need to integrate it across all modules. And for that you need staff to be involved ...but there’s always the same old faces there. ... and not that many. So I have been a bit frustrated by that”.

4.2.4.1 (v) Work with senior management at business school or university level

Work to achieve and then maintain senior level support at both school and university level had usually been required. At school level, in some cases (P2 and P12) it had required a change of Dean before the participant had been able to get PRME membership agreed. Although the engagement of the Dean in the decision ranged from the minimal (P1) corridor type conversation (P4) to the detailed and drawn out (e.g. P2 and P15) there were common elements in the approaches needed. These included to a smaller or greater degree: reputational risk assessments, financial considerations, competitor awareness and workload considerations – and the participants had needed to craft arguments and documents to address these issues. The participants themselves or the Deans, once convinced, then needed to obtain Vice Chancellor support. This was generally presented as a formality, though with some VCs being actively engaged (P20, P21) and others highly supportive, usually because of related personal or professional commitments (P14, P9).

The perceived importance of having senior management support, and of being able to draw on this, varied across participants. All recognised the need for involvement at all levels for PRME to gain traction, but a minority saw risks in too great an association between PRME and senior management. P1, for example, reported that many staff in her school had failed to engage because it was seen as “another managerialist initiative” – thus her future strategy was to maintain a greater distance. P27 likewise noted:

“These initiatives need to come from, not if you like from endorsement at the top of an institution, they need to come from people who are involved in ... what actually happens ... That does have a different sort of impact”.

A more common approach was to seek and see value in endorsement by the Dean. P18’s experience was:

“you have to get a discourse going and it’s been helpful that I’ve been able to use the Dean from time to time. I know she’s only driven by accreditation, to be honest with you, but if I can just get her to send the email for me, it makes people listen a bit more”.

In P17’s view:

“I think essential is that senior management wants to do it ... I know people talk about grass roots, but grass roots doesn’t work in higher education. Because we are too busy. We don’t have a space for grass roots”.

In some cases, managerial fiat was the sole way in which a business school seemed to operate, as the experience of P11 cited earlier suggested.

The implications for having to revise strategies and practices when Deans of signatory schools turned against PRME were explored in detail by P9 and P26. P9 outlined his challenges thus:

“We are having an exodus at the moment of people, which is quite sad. Not just in my area, in lots of areas ...the university mantra is that he’s been brought in to shake things up, and yeah there were probably some people who needed shaking up, but he’s ripping the heart out of what’s really good here”.

Recalling the recent past, P26 noted:

“maybe 18 months ago, the Dean decided to withdraw from PRME, to deregister ... It was partly because ... suddenly more cash was needed from the business school and so he went around cutting everything. But also he has a kind of distaste for anything that is not immediately controllable”.

These withdrawals of support had required administrative, tactical and political manoeuvres inside and outside the schools concerned to preserve the PRME link.

Less defensively, some individuals had used their PRME roles as a springboard to bring issues of responsibility and sustainability into a wider university arena. P9 had used opportunities that became available through his school advocacy role to influence university wide policy on issues such as ethical investments and whistleblowing. P12 had used PRME as a lever to try to improve environmental impact reporting at university level. P19’s experience was that promoting PRME as a cog in a wider wheel of university level work on sustainability had helped her to increase PRME impact at school level.

A frequent focus for work with senior management was the quest for participation in recruitment panels. The potential impact of being able to maintain a PRME perspective there was highlighted by P8, P9, P10, P15, P18, P24 and P25 – even though in many cases it was failure to either join the panel or influence the outcome that was the focus of discussion. Identifying a common factor in such failure (and one returned to in the organisational-level discussion that follows) P24 had this to say:

“There has been massive recruitment recently ... but the recruitment almost always has been done more for how REF-able a particular colleague will be, so the REF-ability of a colleague will tend to take priority over their fit with ... the ethos of the school ... and that in turn has an effect on PRME”.

P10 spoke of other pressures, with similar outcomes:

“And now all business schools are going along a path of recruitment that’s open...and I’ve tried to have debates about ...we need to flag up business ethics, we need to flag up CSR ...and I’ve lost every time.. And it’s not because somebody is strategically trying to stop us from recruiting in those areas, it’s because there’s a fundamental belief ... that the best way to recruit is through open advert. So we haven’t recruited people who’ve replaced the [PRME] areas that we’ve lost.”

4.2.4.1 (vi) Identifying and resourcing the PRME lead role

Strategies to get PRME responsibilities into job descriptions and workload planning systems had been a significant endeavour in a number of settings. Where these had been achieved, enhanced opportunities for achieving impact were reported. In cases where the chief PRME advocate was from the outset a senior manager, there was no perceived need to identify and resource another named PRME advocate. In some other

cases e.g. P2, P9, P10, P17 and P19 an already existing specialist advisory, research or programmatic role with a then added PRME responsibility provided opportunities for influence that partially at least compensated for any lack of hierarchical authority. In five other cases, however, (P4, P5, P18, P22, P24), participants reflected on work to make the case for allocated timetable hours for a named PRME advocate, and how these hours had become a proxy for organisational commitment to the PRME project.

As P22 explained:

“I think my impression of PRME is that other institutions.... resource it more and it’s probably led by professors in the department, whereas here ...we’ve always had meetings with the head of department ... about what we’re doing but it’s never been resourced properly...I was doing it in addition to everything else”.

This had led to an ultimately successful attempt to identify a one day per week commitment to PRME on a colleague’s timetable.

4.2.4.1 (vii) Building core networks

Work to create strong networks, and a perception of their value, was often cited. The impact of poor or missing support networks was also emphasised (a theme returned to later). These networks were identified both within organisations and at field level. So P26 highlighted the value to her of the wider PRME network in this way:

“It has been very, very useful to be connected to PRME because it gives a sense of a connection and community. And a lot of the people I’ve met through PRME events have been very wise and supportive and you know I’ve had good counsel from people”.

At organisational level, P25 confirmed the value of a network of colleagues who cohered around PRME, noting:

“and we could talk about it strategically, around research, curriculum design, but it was really this cluster of people, like-minded people in different disciplines who want to research, to teach about sustainability, responsible leadership, issues in climate change, whatever it is, some like-minded people. ...When it came to doing something in the curriculum instead of taking this forward in the normal way in knocking out a module descriptor it was much more collaborative”.

A strategy for achieving wider impact by such a core network was also alluded to by P25 in the following observations:

“I think everyone who is connected with PRME, there is this cluster of people at the core, at the most maybe 10, and they have all got their tentacles or an arm on somebody else who is interested in an area, trying to influence this area in turn”.

P3 and P21 also attested to the importance of a small group of initial enthusiasts and their success in working together to develop a substantial curricular change programme. P19 gave evidence of the impact on the rest of a business school of a strong, cohesive network of researchers that had PRME as a central focus. Voicing a clear strategy for achieving influence through others, P8 commented:

“As a community activist you work with people who are likely to change, you work with people who are respected and whose views will be taken seriously... So if you can get people who have the ability to be taken seriously to say the right things, then you're on your way”.

4.2.4.2 Challenging the system

A very small number of participants spoke of practices that were more directly challenging of the system, both from within and without. P13 spoke of the frustration caused by none of the established committees in his school taking responsibility for PRME which led him to more confrontational approaches involving:

“being a pain in the arse really ... if I bring it up at the staff council every week, the research committee every week, development committee every week and they tell you to ‘piss off!’, then it goes where it belongs which is the teaching committee”.

P8 by contrast reflected on his changing perception of how he could effect change. The prompt for this change was a concern that even in a school known for its PRME work they lacked “a critical mass of people” and that “the people who do work very hard at it, come to the conclusion that they can’t carry on anymore”. His response was to learn from NGO strategies that “one way to change education is to put pressure on it from outside ... You need people inside the tent doing things and you need people outside the tent as well So, external pressure’s really important”. In pursuit of this perspective, he had turned increasingly to work with external think tanks rather than internally within his university.

4.2.5 That working on PRME can be an isolating and demanding experience, requiring resilience and effective networks to be sustainable.

4.2.5.1 A lonely job

Successful work to create supportive networks was described above. Just as frequently though, support networks were presented as more nebulous and less reliable. As P5

noted, “Yeah, I know the people who care...but we are not in any formal alliance, so I think I’m operating pretty well on my own”. Likewise, referring to her somewhat tenuous internal support network, P10 averred:

“I think we know who each other are ... But we never come together ... part of the problem is that we’re all research active academics ... I think if we weren’t very research active and we were ... really involved in curriculum development, we’d naturally make alliances with each other”.

P11 also noted the dispersion of academics with related research interests across departments and that this had impeded finding common ground in relation to PRME. The existence of other academic groupings in his faculty but none that lent themselves to embedding PRME within teaching was noted by P13:

“We have little conferences and we have little workshops, reading groups and so on but the focus of those would normally be research doctoral students There’s never been anything which has looked at what we teach and how we teach and why we teach it”.

In such contexts a recurring refrain was the description of working on PRME as a “bit of a lonely job” (P4). That loneliness or isolation was expressed in a variety of ways. For instance P18, describing the end point of a great deal of PRME related advocacy, noted, “I’ve had some, I think, some really good results that have pleased me, (but I) don’t think they’ve pleased anybody else”. Even when successful, there had been no one else similarly involved with whom to share the fruits of success. As P18 later also confirmed, “it’s been ... in many ways a lonely journey”, and he acknowledged, “If I fell under a bus, we’d have a problem”. P7 reflected with some sadness, “I don’t think

the institution pays any attention to it as an organisation or thing. You know, if I didn't do it, it would fade". P9 referred to the same phenomenon when he described himself as frequently feeling "like the poor relation" and contrasted this with the feeling of solidarity experienced at PRME meetings:

"I remember someone leaving the Winchester meeting saying it's so nice to spend a couple of days with people who really get this, you know, and really understand what it's about".

Referring to the efforts in her own university, P10 commented also:

"It's fragmented, you know I'll be honest and I think in other institutions, knowing people quite well, I think the situation there too will be that one person pushes it forward all over the place and like works himself to the ground probably trying to do that".

P29 likewise acknowledged, "I think that the main problem we have here still is that we still rely on a very few single people."

4.2.5.2 *Physical and emotional demands*

Parallel to the many references to isolation were references to the physical and emotional demands of working on PRME. PRME as a challenge requiring systematic work was highlighted, such as in P25 observing, "so there has to be a want to do this ... but it is not easy doing this ... you say you are signing up for PRME ... you want this, to sign up to this, but that is when the real hard work starts".

That it felt like hard work even if management support was in principle there was often voiced, as P2 indicated:

“So the management are saying all the right things, go ahead and do it, but the everyday implementation seems to be near impossible. Those who are already doing it are like ‘why do you want to tell me how to do my job...?’ And those who are not are like ‘well why do I need to change things?’ I’m not the most popular person”.

Thus demanding work was not only often met with limited success but also led to a degree of social distancing. Repeated frustrations of this kind, with management and colleagues, threaded their way through the accounts of some 18 participants.

A sense of being overloaded was also frequently articulated, P26 framing this also within the experience of isolation previously discussed:

“I suppose if I’m honest,... the real thing was just thinking for me, not for the sake of PRME ...I can’t cope with another thing to belong to, another set of meetings to go to ...commitments to take up. It was just enough ... And nor could I see a way of inviting others here into that”.

The psychological need to put boundaries around the work undertaken was summarised by P10, who while noting her own successes apologised for not making progress in other areas:

“ I mean I’m not saying we don’t do the other ones, I just think we could do them better ... But I haven’t got the energy ... to push that. I know I should but, you know, I don’t want to be in an early grave, so...”.

Putting herself in the role of an advocate for business ethics and sustainability had led to a different kind of scrutiny and emotional impact for P17, who noted:

“I think whoever becomes a champion ...[and] says that they’re committed to being responsible, they are exposed to criticism ... And that level of scrutiny,

you have to go through it every single day It's kind of tiring and you kind of always think: am I saying the right thing here or am I allowed to actually say something wrong in this capacity?"

4.2.5.3 *Self-criticism*

Alongside the isolation and the demanding nature of the work, many participants also voiced a tendency to hold themselves at least partly responsible for the failure of their organisations to make more progress. P4 for instance deemed herself responsible for not working in a way her school would find appropriate, claiming:

“It's partly my own fault actually. In the sense that I haven't built this up in a way that I think the school would have been amenable to it. if I had argued the case, it probably would have been possible”.

Recognising all the other pressures on her, P5 acknowledged:

“I tend to do it in spurts, when something attracts my attention, and I think right, while I'm doing this I'll follow up with a few other people, but it's not to be honest in a particularly coherent way at the moment”.

P10 wondered out aloud, “Maybe I don't do it very well, maybe I'm going in like a bull in a china shop.” Expressing self-doubt related to his newness to the organisation, P22 mused, “And maybe...maybe because it fell on me to begin with and I was new and I wasn't a strong enough proponent of it, I think that might be the case too”. Reflecting on growing opposition to PRME membership within her school, P26 also wanted to acknowledge:

“I think I probably haven't stopped to do the work internally... I didn't give enough attention to maintaining the constituency ... so that when the Dean

said we don't need it, there wasn't a great bunch of people who had been involved and said oh yes we do ... but it was really [only] me. So I think that is my fault".

4.2.5.4 *Resilience and opportunism*

In the face of self-doubt, isolation, indifference, sometimes hostility, many PRME advocates – whether satisfied with their own performance or otherwise - also voiced or through depictions of their work demonstrated the need for resilience and opportunism. P2's strategies for maintaining that resilience included using her own PhD writing as a reflective process. And despite some of the obstacles previously recounted, she noted that "it's not like hitting my head against a wall. It's not a challenge I wouldn't take on again". Another coping strategy enabling resilience involved creating emotional distance from the work. As P17 explained it:

"I have learnt to take it more, I don't know, not emotionally involved I guess, more...I work on it as a sort of institutional involvement rather than being personally involved".

For P7, the resilience came from a turning inward as well as reliance on what had first led him into management studies, "so the critical management for me is a valuable sanity tool, it's a valuable alternative way of keeping my values". Others put their resilience down to personality, for example with P9 noting, "So, there are hurdles, but I don't know whether I'm just a foolish optimist but you know, I just carry on".

Linked to the need for resilience, some participants also attested to the value of opportunism. Trying to summarise his methods of working, P18 commented, "it's me shoving and pushing and looking for opportunities more often than not". Alluding to

his capacity for having to fit in much of his work “on a wing and a prayer”, P9 also linked an opportunistic mindset to an overall more strategic approach that involved identifying “what are the levers that you can use and when are the opportunities that you can use those”.

4.3 Findings at the level of the organisation

Findings here are presented in two main areas: (1) perceptions of how and why business schools signed up to PRME and (2) perceptions of factors affecting whether PRME gained organisational traction or not.

The decision to sign up

Although intertwined with their own personal stories of encountering PRME, all participants had additional accounts of how and why their business schools came to sign up. The accounts of how and why will be presented separately here but both illuminate in different ways the following thematic proposition:

4.3.1 Signing up: That pragmatism, principles, field forces and failures of articulation have marked the signing up process.

4.3.1.1 *How business schools signed up*

Accounts suggested that in 12 of the 22 universities the impetus towards becoming a signatory had come from one or a small group of senior managers, including senior professors where they had held a dual role in senior management. In the other 10 cases, the impetus was from one or more individuals in other academic roles. Whatever the source of the original impetus, in 15 business schools the decision was made by a very small group of one to four people, with no consultation with a wider staff group. In just four business schools did PRME membership appear to have resulted from a significant groundswell of staff demand.

In those cases where the impulse came from senior managers, there were some reported instances of a visible management process involving: encountering the PRME initiative, being convinced by it and then taking the proposal to relevant Deans and/or Vice Chancellors for discussion and ratification (P12, P14, P15, P20, P21). Just as prominent, however, were accounts of fairly impromptu, hardly researched decision processes. P7 called it a mixture of “serendipity and opportunism” and P13 deemed his Dean to have “joined by mistake” and recalled, “we only discovered about a year after he signed up that in fact we were already signed up”. P1 makes her understanding of this lack of real prior engagement plain:

“I have heard ... it was two colleagues who ... thought that it would be a valuable initiative... put that to the dean ... and it was pretty much a done deal. The impression I got ... was that it was a fairly superficial engagement from senior management”.

P11 recounted, “To begin with, signing up PRME, was done in a very quiet mode. I knew it and deputy dean knew it, but that’s about it. We didn’t announce it”.

Most staff- led moves to join PRME did not seem to lead to any more formal or considered decision making processes. As already cited, P4 referred to her reaching a decision to join with her Dean as a “corridor conversation”. P6 recounted how an individual had “signed the faculty up to PRME ...right at the outset...(but)... he didn’t actually tell anyone, let alone the Dean of the Business School that he had done this”. As with senior management led approaches, however, some staff led moves to sign up (P2, P5, P9) had subsequently led to more considered senior management engagement. Even when staff-led, the impetus tended to come from specific teaching

teams (P9, P25, P26) and the route to membership was taken via advocating to senior management decision but without wider staff involvement. In the four cases where more substantial staff engagement was described, in two of these cases (P14, P19) this had come about as a result of a major research concentration in areas related to PRME and in the other two (P17, P27) as a consequence of school-wide prior involvement in education for sustainable development (ESD) initiatives.

4.3.1.2 *Rationales for joining*

Participants recounted a wide range of organisational rationales for seeking membership, in 17 cases with the benefit of at least some direct involvement in that decision and in 12 cases with the benefit of insights subsequently gained from others. In many cases what emerged were perceptions of a web of rationales, not all of which were articulated at the time of signing up. Broadly these rationales can be summarised as:

- a fit with the values and ethos of the business school
- strategic considerations including an accreditations argument
- perceptions of an easy win at low cost; and not wanting to be left behind.

The following extract suggests how even in one organisation many of these rationales could co-exist. Some two years before the events recounted here, the Deputy Dean speaking had, before becoming a member of the management team, tried unsuccessfully to persuade his then Dean to sign up.

“We began to develop some corporate responsibility modules which also had a sustainability angle to them. ...The university had also what it calls a green space outfit... so there was some support from that. And then, I suppose, the

other drivers for it were largely that we were a triple accredited business school ... and we were aware that EQUIS in particular were thinking to move onto this particular agenda. And therefore PRME might be ... a utilitarian tool for saying 'we're doing something about this because we've signed up for PRME'. And the other thing that changed was that this time round I was a member of the senior management team. And of course that gives you... a much better position to argue for these things from...I also felt that the Dean was likely to be more supportive, because the Dean had changed.... perhaps another reason for signing up was not be seen to be left behind ...we would always do a competitor analysis ...particularly with the Russell Group competitors. So certainly part of the paper that I put included the names of other PRME signatories, just to alert people to the fact that...other people that we would regard as our peer group were also signed up" (P12).

4.3.1.2 (i) *A fit with values and ethos*

P14 articulated this in terms of a fit with the civic university heritage of her business school, and the vice chancellor's commitment to this. In the case of P21, he saw PRME as "something that was very akin to the values of the institution, as a former Anglican foundation". Drawing on an entirely different tradition, P22 and P24 argued the fit between PRME and being a "critical school of management". P19 cited the influence of a related research centre on the values of the whole business school, and P20 made a connection between PRME and his university's mission being "about the common weal and global citizenship".

4.3.1.2 (ii) *Strategic considerations*

Strategic considerations also took multiple forms. As already noted, two senior participants envisaged whole school renewal and PRME fitted because:

“we needed to have something on which to hang our hats. ... it meant that we could innovate and develop both our curriculum development and a research strategy in line with this new agenda”(P21).

In the case of P11, joining PRME and simultaneously the Global Compact had at the time (though subsequently abandoned) been about a school-wide internationalisation strategy. Marketing dimensions had played a part in many decisions too, as P15 noted:

“I had two things in mind ... One was that it’s ... just the right kind of thing to do. But also ... we were pretty much a new school and no real identity or profile ... and we saw it maybe as a vehicle ... to bill ourselves as one of the initial signatories to this big UN initiative”.

The strategic imperative for P25 and P26 was to use PRME as a legitimising device for a new specialist masters programme. More frequently mentioned than any other single strategic consideration was the perceived link between PRME and the three sector accreditation bodies. Apart from P12, cited above, seven other participants identified accreditation as a factor in signing up. In the view of P18, a decision to join was made purely on the recommendation of AACSB at a time of seeking such accreditation. For P9, attending early PRME meetings made him realise that:

“the co-convenors were EFMD, EQUIS, AACSB ... so it seemed to me to have leverage with some of the key kind of players, and certainly here, we are triple accredited and I know we like collecting badges so I knew that ... if they signed up to something they would want to commit to it”.

For P28 and P29, the organisational motivation was clearly accreditation driven and for P2, as previously noted, it was AMBA interest that provided the prompt that concluded a long negotiation in relation to becoming a signatory. Nevertheless, this

rationale should not be overstated as in the case of 21 participants it had played little or no reported role.

4.3.1.2 (iii) *An easy win, low cost, not being left behind*

In the experience of P7, the accreditation argument had accompanied a view that membership was a low cost move, which would ensure his school was not left behind.

As he explained:

“there was one person who received the email and said ... it’s gonna be important, we need to sign up to it, in the same way as AACSB, the EFMD and all that It was like, we better get that badge and get in early before they put some hurdles in a way and we can’t just have it”.

This sense that becoming a signatory would not require much if any immediate investment was conveyed too by P1, who commented, “the impression I got was that ... it could be a retrospective event we could look across our programmes quite easily, and say yes, we are doing PRME”. Likewise P4 identified a number of very pragmatic considerations that informed the “corridor conversation” mentioned earlier.

She noted:

“it wasn’t like a strategic decision ... We were sort of like, yeah ... we are already probably meeting some of these criteria rather better than some of the existing subscribers. So, we might as well add our name to it. It didn’t look like it was a list of universities you needed to shun completely ! ...And it didn’t cost anything”.

Factors affecting whether PRME gained organisational traction or not

Table 12 at the beginning of this chapter indicates in broad brush terms that some 19

of the 29 respondents were dissatisfied in some or all ways with the engagement of their business schools with PRME. So while this part of the Findings Chapter seeks to identify organisational arrangements that either encourage or hinder PRME implementation, the experiences recounted here undoubtedly emphasise obstructions. Even amongst those relatively positive about progress, there was frequent reference to factors not conducive to PRME taking hold. Perhaps summing up well an overall sense of precariousness vis a vis PRME progress, P10 commented that “the bottom line remains that PRME remains very much a minority pursuit”.

Four thematic propositions form the structure of the presentation here:

4.3.2 Recognition and reward tensions: That what universities and their business schools recognise and value as organisations as well as reward in individuals are frequently at odds with what participants believe are essential to gain momentum for PRME.

Many participants perceived that how the wider university and the competitor environment measured business schools set up value systems that worked against PRME-related work being valued or rewarded. P3, P25 and P26 amongst others noted the cash generation expectations put on business schools by their wider HEIs, and how this distorted decision making. Reflecting on recent decision making that had damaged PRME locally, P26 commented:

“But I think what he (the Dean) knows he’ll never lose sight of, whatever he says or does as long as it provides the cash he will be alright. And the moment he doesn’t provide the cash he is gone. And I think he is probably right about that”.

As P25 noted, that his school was able to be a “production line” meeting a “growth market” for trained accountants trumped other considerations. Likewise P18 observed that being able to offer external professional accreditations through course design acted against thematic innovations such as PRME. P14 and P16 talked about the value attached to income generation through research grants eclipsing the perceived value of PRME work. P8, P19 and P25 discussed the cash pressures on specialist CSR masters level programmes, and how non-corporate students were less able to pay higher level fees and on graduation would not have jobs that would show up well in the earnings element of the rankings systems that business schools are evaluated against. In P25’s words:

“And where PRME does not talk to us as well, is around [our] very different cohort of students ... in terms of league tables where these graduates end up means these are not the kind of graduates we want to be showcasing in terms of the salary they are earning”.

In a related vein, P8 explained the financial pressures on his course:

“the programme ...doesn’t actually generate enough money because it’s, at £9000 a year ...(and)...there’s been a lot of discussion ... that all MSc programmes should (move) towards a figure of £15,000 per year, which would kill it off completely. But it wouldn’t kill off other programmes like finance and accounting So the problem with social responsibility is that it’s not a high earner”.

The result here and elsewhere was a constant need to justify the existence of courses that could not meet standard success criteria.

Another dimension of the rankings pressures (picked up again later in the research discussion) was what many participants (e.g. P5, P13, P14, P15, P22, P24) deemed to be an unhealthy emphasis on REF returns and four star journal publishing, leading to recruitment, reward and promotion systems that had tipped the balance against initiatives that are substantially teaching driven as well as collaborative in nature. P5's impression of these factors was, "If I stopped writing papers, or getting grants or teaching, that would be noticed. If I stopped trying to integrate ethics into the curriculum I don't think anyone would notice." P10 summed up many of these pressures succinctly:

"And I think business schools are still driven by accreditation, research income and research publication ...so even though they have value statements which you do adhere to on certain levels ... the overarching culture in business schools is individualistic career progression... these things become so prominent ...that a value commitment sometimes may get lost".

Even in a supportive environment with PRME relatively well embedded, P14 noted :

"what constrains staff more has been...the need to focus on REF submission so in the grand scheme of priorities staff ... have been thinking that when they're going to devote their time to things, they devote it to getting that last publication that they need for REF rather than developing a new masters programme."

A junior academic, reflecting on his and other colleagues' experience, likewise noted:

"But actually what we found was, without it being part of our workload it was really, really difficult to dedicate time to, because you've got REF pressures ... real research pressures" (P22).

One of the senior management participants, who had led a substantial body of PRME curriculum work and related academic recruitment, nevertheless reflected that the core group on whom he could call was no larger in 2014 than it had been in 2008. His reflection on the reasons for this highlights recognition and reward factors:

“In September 2015 we’re going to be launching a sustainable enterprise programme ..and at the moment the battle that we have is getting people involved in it ...I think it’s a reflection of the way the university has gone, that in terms of promotions, in terms of rewards ... it’s research that gets you on and people’s view is that I’m more than happy to continue to publish my sustainability research in a really highly rated journal because that’s what will build my career, but I don’t want to get diverted from that to ... deliver a sustainability module. So the critical mass is much larger around what you would see as being PRME issues but that hasn’t translated into people wanting to get involved in PRME” (P15).

Participants generally perceived that university value systems attached higher value to research outputs than teaching and learning ones (where most PRME advocate energies had been focused). This perception is summarised here by P10:

“PRME itself is very much embedded in teaching; it doesn’t link to research very well and a lot of people who’re in very powerful positions in business schools are research-active ... And I think that PRME suffers from not having enough of a research focus”.

Further performance pressures that were seen to drive school attention and reward systems in an unhelpful way were central university targets in areas such as student

recruitment numbers and National Student Satisfaction (NSS) survey scores (P16, P10, P12, P24). As P12, a participant with considerable experience of working at central university level, put it:

“If you’re not gonna make your student numbers then that’s a serious conversation. If you’re gonna exceed your carbon limits that’s ...probably not gonna be a conversation at all actually”.

Similarly P24 commented:

“there is increasing pressure upon recruitment targets and that has an effect upon the sort of courses we offer... the primary discussion usually would be is this going to be popular with the students, and for whatever reason PRME doesn’t seem to figure along those lines”.

Taken together this set of commercial, largely market-driven factors was seen to drive not only management and academic behaviour but also that of other support functions. Both P24 and P25 recalled experiences where references to PRME in presentations to potential students had been vetoed by marketing departments. Some of the compromises involved are displayed in the account below:

“I had that (PRME) slide for an open day this weekend, and the marketers said we think this will be a confusing message, can we take that slide out? They said, business undergraduates, don’t we want to get them into the degree as business, and once we get them in the door then we start talking about sustainability? I had to do what the marketers tell me reallyso sustainability, but not too much and not too soon” (P25).

Other aspects of wider university cultures were also experienced as hindrances to PRME. P1, P2 and P5 surmised that colleagues' resistance could be a consequence of PRME being seen as just the latest of a long line of centrally mandated change projects. In P5's view, for example:

"we will get an email saying everyone has got to include internationalisation in their modules. And then we will get an email saying everyone has got to include diversity now, then get an email to include ethics. It's like the conscientious amongst us will pay attention ...But I think there are a fair few just plod on with what they have always done and don't pay any attention".

From a different perspective, P5 and P16 highlighted the tradition of academic freedom as being a double-edged sword for PRME. While this tradition encouraged, in their view, a healthy scepticism about being told what to do, it could also lead to a lack of reflexivity about the quality or content of what they offered students. As P16 noted:

"So while it is lovely to have all that freedom, it also means there are no standardisations and it means that colleagues are ...not really being willing to subjugate to any ... principle".

P26 argued too that individualism, a focus on four star publications and related "performance management processes" could lead to a form of "depoliticisation", career risk avoidance and unwillingness to promote marginal concerns such as PRME. In an additional perspective on academic culture, she noted that for senior, established staff:

“If I have options and relationships elsewhere in which I feel empowered, respected, rewarded, desired and able to do things then I will go and do it there and what is the point of wasting my time here if that is not the case?”

All these cultural factors, she suggested, could militate against sustained PRME endeavour when senior PRME actors encountered resistance.

4.3.3 Research and disciplinary tensions: That some of the most consistent progress has been made in the small number of schools where PRME has been research-led, but that more commonly a range of discipline-based practices and research disengagement have led to PRME adoption faltering.

The ways in which research groupings with PRME-related interests had succeeded in supporting PRME teaching and further research in a seemingly durable way has already been recounted in relation to P14 and P19. As also noted, P29 was seeking to emulate this by pursuing research engagement as a core element in her institution’s early actions as a signatory and P18 was increasingly confident of wider traction now that a supportive research committee was in place. More often than not, though, research hierarchies, research practices and disciplinary boundaries were seen as obstacles to PRME engagement. P10 for example noted that in her school CSR, her discipline, was seen as faddish and not on a par with more established social science domains. As she comments here:

“So I have some of my colleagues saying ‘oh yes, but I think the CSR trend is over with now, isn’t it?’ ... you know from the tone of that dialogue that they actually think it’s ... a bit tokenistic, hasn’t really brought about organisational

change ...and they feel that the more critical elements of the role of business are better reflected in Organisational Behaviour approaches” .

P16's experience was that researchers were interested in their disciplines and not in crosscutting themes such as responsible management, while P9 amongst others claimed that the majority of high ranking, mainly US, business journals had not embraced sustainability and responsibility themes and that this then influenced researcher behaviour. The role of disciplinary boundaries in discouraging the interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approaches PRME was deemed to need was regularly highlighted, e.g. P27 saying:

“One of the things I look to undertake is actually to work the sustainable and PRME agendas (together)...so that there is more trans-disciplinary working. That again is a difficult one because of aspects of legitimation amongst if you like narrow subject disciplines that sometimes don't want to see things that way”.

As already noted, a continuing refrain was that academic research culture was also inherently individualistic, hence antagonistic to the more collaborative ways of working implicit in PRME. Despite some successes, P29 affirmed the difficulties of encouraging researchers to engage outside of their research communities. As she reflected:

“An initiative I took here ... is to create a new cross-disciplinary, cross-departmental seminar, for all... who have work related to ethics, sustainability, responsibility, but again, it was very interesting that this first seminar ... although it had 30 colleagues, but if you see the same places where I feel [there are] the little silos as I talked to you about, they were the same places that were

absent from this seminar... I think ... the culture ... is a bit secretive around certain communities that. ...perhaps they don't want the organisation to intervene in their practices”.

Almost every participant identified individuals who had been antagonistic to PRME and its underlying values. 12 participants went further and identified whole disciplinary areas where they had struggled to gain a hearing. While marketing and economics were also cited as such sites of resistance, the most often cited were finance and accounting, despite the significant number of study participants who had environmental and social accounting backgrounds. A typical experience of such opposition was recounted by P15:

“The feedback we got from our accounting and finance group, was that all this is well and good, but accounting is accounting ... and all we do is count the money coming in and count the money going out”.

P24's sense of where the resistance came from was:

“a finance and accounting opposition which would say if we want to do our students a good service we should be teaching them to become technically proficient, and this stuff of ethical and moral speculation they can do that in their spare time”.

P3's view was at the more trenchant end of the spectrum of opinion:

“Finance people just don't get it, they just don't see that the social agenda has anything to do with the techniques and tools that they develop Now it has been taught like that since I was an undergraduate and it will continue to be taught because firstly they don't see this as being any part of their agenda and secondly it is convenient as they've taught it for twenty years and it's easy”.

4.3.4 Consistency of leadership and strategy: That PRME-related progress where seen is often heavily contingent on supportive senior managers, and equally often derailed by unexpected changes in senior personnel and organisational strategy.

Where central university leaders had been experienced as supportive, this was in four out of six instances a case of the VC having personal interests in PRME related areas, or becoming convinced of what PRME could offer the whole institution. In one case, P14, this was in relation to the university's heritage as a civic university that the VC upheld very forcefully. As P14 outlined it:

“He genuinely has a very strong vision for Y University as a whole... I don't think he had this vision because of PRME or maybe wasn't even aware of PRME when he came up with these ideas... But it does tie in with that vision in that he believes that universities should be doing some good in their local community and in a wider society”.

In the case of P9 the VC's support had enabled cross-faculty working and university-wide initiatives prompted by PRME, in relation to ethical investment policies, whistleblowing and sustainability. In the case of P19, P25, P26 and P27 it was a university level senior commitment to sustainability that provided a favourable environment in which to develop PRME's role, even when at school level this had at times been resisted.

At school level senior support took a variety of forms. In the case of senior management participants, they had as previously documented often been the driving forces behind PRME-related changes. Where other participants reflected on the role of

senior managers, they highlighted ways in which Deans had offered PRME advocates organisational legitimacy (P18, P10, P28, P9) or in other ways created environments conducive to a collaborative culture in which PRME might thrive (P14, P19, P29). In both P14's and P19's accounts, the benefits stemmed from the continuity of support from successive Deans and the encouragement to innovate and collaborate at their universities. As P19 described it:

“I think there's quite a light touch approach to management, the leadership has often ended up in the hands of... low-key characters, easy to approach ... And then it just sets an ethos...yeah for good relationships.... People generally are quite collaborative ... and I think it's one of those cultural things, isn't it, that you can't just put in place but once it's there people get kind of brought into that once they join”.

However, the extent to which new and marginal projects such as PRME were subject to the vagaries of changing senior personnel and strategy at school level was also highlighted in many accounts. P7, P11, P17 and P26's accounts gave the starkest indication of how PRME work could be paralysed over a number of years by wider changes in Deans and their priorities that created uncertainty and inertia. P17 gives some indication of the effects of such changes here:

“At the end of the three year project for ESD in 2010, on paper we said we have ESD embedded in our formal curricula ...So we were kind of sat on that and so nobody was actually paying good attention ...so 2010/11, 11/12 we went through restructuring. The dean was there – that dean left, then a new dean, then an interim dean and now the current dean. It was very, very rocky, you know, as an organisation, so no one was really doing PRME”.

The experience of direct opposition by Deans to PRME endeavour at various points after signup had led to significant setbacks in the cases of P8, P9 and P26. P8 recounted that with a recently arrived Dean who believed the principal role of a business school was, “Helping business make money ... This is what our Dean would say, and no, he does say, all the time”, the environment for PRME work had worsened. Evidence of the impact of such opposition on P9 and P26 has been provided elsewhere. Even where there was not outright opposition, the effects of failing to go beyond warm words and of indifference to implementation issues has already been noted in other contexts by P2 and P5. This led, in P13’s words, to a situation in which “PRME has never been part of the psychology of the school” and where:

“People don’t mind PRME. I suppose it would be like a pet dog, you know, it sort of wanders around and people pat it and are quite happy to have it ... but it actually doesn’t have a particularly important function within the school itself”.

P10 commented on how difficult it was to get her Dean to take ownership of PRME at anything other than a level of broad principle. P24’s account of opposition from the marketing department to PRME included these observations on the absence of the Dean from such discussions:

“It would be very helpful if he was in some of these meetings. There is a very strange diplomacy that goes on at the school level where, you know, the insights of marketing professionals often override ... the academic staff ... but at a certain point it should come down to that the school is signed up to a particular view on management education and that has to come first”.

4.3.5 Official narratives and lived experience: That there is frequently a gap between the official narrative and the lived experience of PRME in business schools.

As part of their commentary on senior indifference or unwillingness to provide resourcing, participants often identified the distance between what they called their schools' public PRME stories and what actually happened on a day to day basis. At its most fundamental and most predictable level, P24 and others commented that their VCs looked involved in their PRME SIP reports but just signed the statements written for them. P8 highlighted "a difference between what you see on the webpage, what the marketing people ... write for the senior management, and what actually happens". P29 was acutely aware that in writing her school's first SIP report she was creating a coherent narrative about a set of events and activities that were in fact fragmented and in many ways unrelated to PRME. While participants acknowledged that such gaps existed elsewhere, a number (P2, P4, P10) stressed how they had actively sought to avoid what they considered to be an unacceptable level of dissemblance in SIP reports in particular. Beyond SIPs, P13 reflected on how difficult it was to have challenging conversations about the curriculum despite an apparently open and democratic culture, and where there was pressure always to maintain a "narrative of harmony". Additionally, P7 located his school's approach to PRME within a wider whole university tension between a values rhetoric and unethical practice in employee relations, saying:

"Don't forget this university actually has a religious ethos of Christian values, ...ostensibly ... (but)... in every environment where you get purported value adoption there is a rhetoric and a reality ... And this institute is no different to

that, you know many things happen here which fly in the face of what would seem responsibility or good behaviour”.

4.3.6 Speed and traction: That when embarking on a change project like PRME, achieving traction fast rather than incrementally creates more sustainable success.

This was an observation made directly by only two people, who were in their cases not claiming their own PRME successes but rather reflecting on their wider experience of change of this kind. So P13 noted, “change that isn’t immediately and obviously symbiotic is incredibly difficult”. And P15 argued strongly the case that “With all the universities I’ve been in, for something like PRME to work, you need to get traction very, very quickly or else it will just die on its arse and you’ve signed up for it and you’ve got the certificate and nothing happens”. While only voiced by two people, the insight seemed to have wider salience in the light of experiences recounted by many other participants. The substantial curricular changes in the early years after adoption – as outlined in the contributions of P9, P14, P15, P19, P20, P21 – all seemed to have created or be creating a sustainable foundation on which to build. Factors that had made such early traction possible included strong senior management support and/or pre-existing centres of relevant expertise.

Conversely, where the start had been slow, uncertain or only within small pockets of the school, even those organisations that had been signatories for four to five years or longer seemed still to be grappling with issues of legitimacy and poor engagement – as the experiences recounted elsewhere by P2, P4, P5, P13, P26, P17 and P22-24 all seem in different ways to suggest. The impact of slow and sometimes opaque

university decision making on PRME was often referred to. In P7's case, for instance, he found "something innately porridge and treacle-like about universities". P3 lamented that:

"in universities .. every structure is designed to prevent change, the committees, the time scale, the kind of forward thinking for syllabuses to be prepared... You're thinking about years in advance".

And P16 in turn reflected that:

"It's been my experience that change in universities happens very slowly anyway. At X it's particularly slow... My very first teaching job was at X in the late 80s However, Uni X culture is very strong and it hasn't changed much since then. There is a certain way of doing things, the 'X way',I don't think the 'X way' is a conscious concept, it's just people don't like change and a lot of people go to X or stay in X because they like things the way they are".

4.4 Findings at field level

Participant experiences and perceptions were not just at individual or organisational levels, but also of PRME as a field level project for change in management education. Here I seek to capture these perceptions in relation to five thematic propositions:

4.4.1 Ambiguous commitments: That there are opportunities and risks in PRME being stated as a broad set of principles.

4.4.1.1 *Easy to sign up to*

There was a widespread perception of the principles as being broadly framed, appropriate and uncontroversial. All agreed they seemed intentionally to set very low barriers to entry into PRME membership. P5 referred to them as “solid”, P12 observed, “I don’t think I have any serious problems with them...I think there’s enough within each of them ...I don’t see there’s anything missing”. P3, having reflected on the UN gestation of the Principles in 2006/7, asserted:

“There are now six principles which it is very hard to argue against, is there anything in there that’s controversial, no not at all, it’s easy. It should be the easiest thing in the world to sign up for because who doesn’t want to be responsible, who doesn’t want to be ethical, who doesn’t want to engage with best practice?”

P10 was, like many, pragmatic in noting:

“the thing about being open, having quite broad-reaching principles is that people can engage in the way that they feel doesn’t involve too much extra

work So I think that it ... could be stronger but I don't know whether that would be good for recruiting signatories... It's a very, very minimal ask".

P25 was the participant who referred to them in the most enthusiastic way, believing:

"the UN Global Compact as a framework, with PRME, is really powerful ...and it is good that it is broad as it allows innovation, autonomy, creativity in the faculty and in the individual".

4.4.1.2 *A space for development of discourse and related practices*

The principal benefit that participants identified as arising from being easy to join was that, once members, signatories were part of a conversational space. As P13 noted, PRME involved "a relatively bland set of terms to get people in and talking". P18 referred to this as a "space for discourse", for questioning assumptions. P23 talked about PRME offering a "space for criticality and reflection" and had experienced that "PRME opens a space of conversation about poverty from different business school and business perspectives".

A number of people (P7, P9, P13) referred to PRME as a broad tent, and the benefits of having many people within that tent talking to each other. As P13 phrased it:

"PRME is a large tent in which there will be people who subscribe passionately to, say, strong sustainability, those who subscribe to the idea that CSR is a joke, all the way through to people to whom sustainability is a complete irrelevance ... Now to get everybody inside that tent ... it's got to be quite a big tent".

Using other metaphors, P7 also referred to it as a “flag” people could rally around, as well as a “rave hangar” in which a “gentle maelstrom of views on what responsible management means” could circulate. P17 referred to PRME as “a round table ... so we can discuss the issues ... and maybe gaining the sense of empowerment and to celebrate”. P5 referred to the principles as providing:

“a useful framework ... [and.]...the fact it’s very soft focused, no one’s penalised for not doing anything means it is more likely that schools are gonna sign up ... And we like frameworks, if you got a nice little framework, you can do things under that framework”.

The potential for using PRME’s broadness but also its legitimacy (see below) to create an environment for subsequent more radical change was identified explicitly by three respondents (P1, P13, P24) referring to PRME as a potential “Trojan Horse”. As P1 saw it:

“when you explore PRME in more detail ... I think it is a Trojan horse ... it potentially creates a space in which quite radical change could be produced but maybe not in a way that the instigators of PRME would ... support. That’s the ideal”.

4.4.1.3 *Critiques of the principles*

There were a small number of direct critiques of the content in the principles, even from those recognising the benefits of their encouraging membership in their current form. So P10 referred to them as “light touch, minimalist and conservative” and how colleagues of a CMS orientation as a result saw those working on PRME “as being mainstream, as being co-opted, when actually the work that you’re doing is quite

critical really”. She also believed that “the way PRME articulates itself” needed to be adjusted to emphasise that criticality. P14 thought they were “vague enough to allow everybody to try to address them. But maybe they’re not aspirational enough” and P13 thought that as a result of their wording the set of principles was “so acceptable it is doing nothing”. Likewise P7 found the principles and their underlying philosophy insufficiently critical, transformational or compelling, noting:

“Maybe the philosophy embedded in PRME is not explicit enough. But what is tacitly evident, managerialism, corporatism, whatever, institutionalism, it’s been smelt as pretty much the same as what’s been going on before”.

P29 was alone in critiquing PRME as part of a whole genre of international statements of principle, referring to it as “a bit static, a bit formulaic, a little bit bureaucratic ... almost like... a product of the last decade in a way” as well as lacking specific commitments.

4.4.1.4 *An unclear call to action and responses to this*

The absence of specific commitments identified by P29 (and many others) and the consequences of this for the coherence and impact of the PRME project were highlighted in two dimensions. In the first dimension, the coherence across signatories was the focus. As P24 framed it, “If PRME means something different to every school then what exactly does PRME mean after all?” The second consequence related to the sense that the principles did not provide a firm enough platform for specific change. This was expressed in a variety of ways, for example P2 called for a clearer “framework for working (to) help us to embed it”, and P15 described the perceived deficit thus:

“For me, the heart of the issue is what happens next, once you have signed up what do you do? With the principles, the strength of the principles is that ... they’re not prescriptive, ... And I guess that’s also a weakness ... that it doesn’t tell you what to do, it doesn’t give you direction and ... my experience at the university is there has to be a direction and some element of prescription... for anything to really happen”.

And in the words of P24 again:

“so what is it that a PRME school does that a non-PRME school wouldn’t do, other than filling in a report every two years and paying a subscription fee? What are the sort of formal axioms, they can be moral, they can be curricular, pedagogical, whatever they might be ... it wouldn’t be a bad thing to expect more of institutions because then it might be possible in turn for advocates of PRME to do more within their institutions”.

To address the absence of specific commitments, a number of participants made suggestions for enhancement, mainly of a curricular nature. P27 proposed that PRME should more fully integrate itself within an education for sustainability agenda, P26 stated she was “more interested in things that are practical actions that express the principles rather than the principles themselves”, P29 called for more inter-business school projects aligned to the Global Compact, and P2 likewise called for more joint projects across universities. In P2’s words:

“I would like to see projects ... that would probably be impossible for one institution ... even getting a bit more of a UN type initiative ... Help us to embed it, that is what I am saying ... Because we still work very

disjointedly...between institutions. There is no incentive and when there is no incentive there is no time”.

Two suggestions combined curricular intervention with the perceived sector orientation to competition. P3 argued for the sector-wide use of a sustainability literacy test, which would provide comparable data across schools and engender competitive league tables. P5 similarly proposed a stepped set of curricular interventions at Bronze, Silver and Gold level which would provide a ladder to climb for those entering the PRME sphere. As P5 explained it, this would tap “into the motivational forces of people running schools. If there is a ladder they want to climb it”.

4.4.2 Non-linear impacts: That PRME is reported rarely to be a direct driver of change.

Building on reflections on the PRME as creating a discourse space but lacking specific commitments, there was widespread questioning of the extent to which the PRME project was itself a driver for change. The majority view was that PRME was not a direct driver, but had created a form of environmental legitimacy within which advocates for responsibility and sustainability could act. As P26 explained it:

“I saw PRME as something that is helpful in providing the environment for that to happen, but not as itself a driver of these things...something from which people might take justification ...and legitimacy”.

P2 too believed PRME was not a driver but had given her related work “a bit more legitimacy, more gravitas”. P26 stressed also a view that in terms of “more responsible education ... the proportion that can be explained by the effect of PRME is probably quite small, but it probably has an effect in lots of other non-linear ways” as part of a wider network of change factors. For P25, PRME needed to be seen as both contributing to and benefiting from what he termed a sustainability “megatrend” in society. What constituted and animated such a “megatrend” or wider change network was, however, little explored by most participants.

P28 had experience of using PRME as an “external justification for maintaining a curricular focus on ethics”. P4 and P12 held the view that PRME had more purchase because of its accreditation links (see below) and was thus more successful than similar initiatives in the past, but could never be enough on its own to drive change. P13 took the view that PRME alone would never be a driver and that to be effective it needed “to be appropriated within other strategies”.

Only in a small number of cases (P15, P20, P21) did participants describe using PRME as a significant internal driver for change in its own right. P20 had experienced it as “a powerful message... showing commitment for the need to change the way in which we educate people about management education” and, as previously noted, had devised a whole institutional change plan based on PRME. And, despite the critiques voiced previously, P15 had chosen to apply it as a specific “trigger” for a systematic curriculum change programme. However, just as much as the last three participants attributed their impact to the use of PRME as a management mechanism, so three

other participants (P1, P2, P5), also cited earlier, believed that its capacity for acting as a driver for change had been reduced by its positioning as a managerial initiative.

4.4.3 Light touch accountability: That there was consensus on the phenomenon, but dissensus on a response to perceived weak reporting and accountability built into PRME.

4.4.3.1 *Limited reporting requirements, problematic SIP practices and lack of sanctions*

Participants were unanimous that PRME membership entailed a very light reporting and accountability regime, indeed the PRME project itself uses this aspect as part of its membership marketing (UNPRME, 2013). There was substantial comment on perceived inadequacies of the Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports members have to submit biennially. While two comments were made about their informational or inspirational nature, many more (as briefly alluded to earlier) were made about their superficial, marketing rather than learning orientation. P1 highlighted how, “I got very dispirited and I stopped reading them, probably because they are so superficial ... there is never a problem and it’s always picking off low hanging fruit”. P14 and P19 recognised in the SIPs the same phenomenon as in corporate reporting: the tendency to “disclose good news and hide the bad news” (P14). P4’s experience with the SIPs was mixed:

“I saw the one **that** ... was seven pages of substance. And then I saw one or two other ones ... and if you scratched a little bit under the surface they weren’t really doing very much at all. So this was ... it looked to me, a pure exercise in image creation”.

P7 recounted how, having drafted what he thought was an informative report, he read others and then felt pressure to “jolly up the report” to keep up with the glossier ones. P2 believed lots of SIPS were “show off reports.” and P21 called for more “rigour” in SIPS. The associated problem identified by many was the absence of quality control and sanctions –as P24 recounted, “you get an email back from the office in New York acknowledging receipt and that is it”.

4.4.3.2 The need for more accountability but without being a regulatory framework.

Most participants identified weak reporting and compliance as a challenge to PRME’s impact and credibility. However, opinion as to the desirability or practicability of strengthening the accountability practices and use of sanctions was decidedly mixed.

At one end of the spectrum were participants such as P18 who thought that sanctions and the cost of inspecting would “apply a brake to the development of PRME”. Views like this were echoed by P4, P17, P20, P22 and P23, who all took the view that PRME needed to concentrate on signing schools up at this age, not on enforcement of standards. P26 was convinced that PRME would work best “by enforcing a social identity of PRME-mates as it were, a sort of sense that you’re one of us ...that is how it will operate, not by a regulatory framework”. In similar vein, P9 advised avoiding the infrastructure and audit route and instead concentrating on integrity and trusting in the goodwill of individuals and organisations.

In the middle of the spectrum were participants such as P19 and P29 who believed there should continue to be no bar to joining but more scrutiny of progress involving

some kind of independent evaluation, even perhaps by relevant academic journals. At the more stringent end of the spectrum were participants such as P15 who argued that PRME needed to be “harder to get and harder to keep” and that signing up should involve specific commitments. P13 argued that, given the environmental challenges and slowness of institutional change, PRME to date represented “cosmetic first order change” and needed:

“to consider at what point it goes back on the attack... to think, are we producing any education which is preparing students for a desperately unsustainable planet which might have 20 or 40 years left ..[because]... I don't think PRME's got anything to do with that at all at the moment”.

From an academic cum community activist perspective, P8 took a similar view. P10 also thought:

“it would be good if PRME could have ...more of a compliance arm to it. Because certainly when it comes round to EQUIS and AACSB re-accreditation periods, we're running around like crazy, making sure that we can provide those processes. And if we had to do that for PRME as well ... then those people ...would have these principles right at the forefront of their minds when they make everyday decisions”.

4.4.4 Accreditation dilemmas: That opportunities and risks are perceived in increased association with sector accreditation schemes.

While few envisaged the PRME project developing its own inspection and regulatory framework, there was an array of contrasting opinions as to whether a perceived growing convergence between PRME and sector accreditation agencies was a positive

development vis a vis enforcing PRME implementation.

As noted in Table 8 in Chapter Three, the sample here was broadly representative of PRME UK business school signatories vis a vis level of accreditations. Thus it should be noted that 14 out of the 22 HEIs in this study (63%) had some form of accreditation. Findings are thus skewed towards those with some experience of PRME in the context of accreditation.

A minority took a very sceptical or antagonistic view of the link to accreditation. P1 for instance was of the opinion that the work needed to make PRME effective should come out of the academic body with an academic rationale and not as a result of an accreditation logic. P2 viewed the accreditation link as confirming to sceptics that PRME was a managerial initiative and that this had been destructive of more authentic staff engagement. Those from schools that had intentionally not sought accreditation took a very strong position, with P13 seeing AMBA et al as taking only a “cosmetic interest” in sustainability, and P21 describing them as “always playing catch-up. They’re never at the forefront. I view them as blocks on progress and... stifling innovation”.

However, even some participants with a sceptical view of accreditation per se took a more nuanced view in the light of their perception that nothing was likely to change the sector emphasis on rankings and accreditation. So P15 saw accrediting body interest as good for PRME profile in this context, P11 saw it as a “good argument” to use in a school indifferent to PRME, and P18 saw AACSB as having opened a door to

ethics and sustainability engagement that PRME advocates could take advantage of. As he put it, “but the door’s been opened by AACSB to actually have that fight. Without that accreditation, the fight wouldn’t even exist”. P12 saw accreditation as a lever to bring PRME into business school decision making, and saw it as a bigger future driver of change than PRME itself. Although not the reason for signing up, P4 and P24 saw accrediting body interest as helpful to keeping PRME on the agenda.

Those at the enthusiastic end of the spectrum included P25 who saw the EQUIS link as making it much easier to market the commitment to responsible management education in the future. P16 saw accreditation interest as providing a welcome “nudge that large, slow moving institutions need to actually implement some form of change”. P19 noted that she liked “to press the accreditation button as often as I can. I mean... it’s a good lever, isn’t it?” P3 believed that increased PRME membership would in the short-term come mainly via the prompting of accreditation bodies. Common to most of those who saw opportunity in the accreditation link was a view that any enhanced inspection of PRME progress should be carried out by these bodies. For example, P28, even though unenthusiastic in principle about accreditation, took the view that they were a fact of institutional life and should perform this inspection role.

4.4.5 Field level actors: That the UNPRME office and PRME UK and Ireland Chapter activities are perceived as supportive but poorly resourced and lacking mobilisation capacity.

Only eight participants commented directly on the significance of the connection to

the United Nations and/or the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). Mostly these comments were appreciative, with P4, P7, and P24 identifying the legitimacy conferred on PRME by the UN. As P24 saw it:

“when something like PRME comes along with the sanction of the UN I think all of a sudden it grants an immense amount of legitimacy to what might otherwise be seen as peculiar or excessively idiosyncratic ...the UN comes with an association of not necessarily being pro-market or pro-corporate, there are broader political principles to do with global citizenship”.

P26's position was that:

“having these principles and having the link to Global Compact is very good ... It legitimises engagement because it is the Global Compact of businesses and for people who are not interested ...you can show them ... all the companies that have signed up to the Global Compact, and they say it must be alright then”.

Ranged against these were a small number of comments from P10, P23 and P27, whose impression was that the UNGC association had made PRME too business-orientated for other stakeholders to want to become involved. P23 for example commented on what he considered the “alienating” corporate ethos of the UNGC and its influence on some international PRME events. P27 worked with ESD educationists who saw the connection between PRME, the UNGC and business and responded with “we can't have anything to do with that because that's just wrong”.

There were few comments on the activities of the UNPRME office. Two participants noted the low level of UN resourcing for the office (P13, P14), others focused mainly on the international conferences they had organised; some finding them helpful (P4, P9, P23) and others “a waste of time” (P5) or “smug and cliquy“(P15). There was considerably more comment on the UK and Ireland PRME Chapter as a field level actor, and these comments were principally in relation to (a) its characteristics as a field level player (b) the resources available to it and (c) teaching/research dimensions.

In relation to its characteristics, some participants identified it as playing a very supportive role for otherwise isolated individual advocates. So P6 described it as “creating a community”, P9 as “a supportive network” and P26, as already cited, as a source of good advice and counsel. A number e.g. P5, P6, P9, and P14 cited Chapter conferences, events and publications that encouraged experience sharing as being informative and inspiring. From participants who were not part of the Chapter core group, however, came more critical comments. P7 noted how at meetings leading roles seemed to have been agreed in advance by the inner core to the exclusion of others, P17 had experienced meetings as lacking “a strategic view” and led by “a group of people, close colleagues... who know each other and it’s a closed circuit”, and P11 described the Chapter as “like a gentleman’s club, very white and very British”. P10 noted, “I don’t go very often anymore, because I’ve heard it all before ... you know it’s the same people doing the same presentations”.

In relation to Chapter resources, there was wide recognition that those involved were underfunded and overworked in the same way that many individual advocates were within their own universities and this was impacting on the ability to drive PRME at field level. P14 captured these and related pressures in the following observations:

“It’s very under-resourced ... I think the Chapters could be a strength but without infrastructure, they’ll just fall to the same old people ...to do the work and I do think that because of the pressures on research that we’re all under ...they’re not going to be prepared to give up their time to something like that when their institutions are requiring them to chase the top notch publications”.

Both P13 and P18 identified substantial dependence on a small number of people, with P18 referring to it as a “one man band”. Three participants (P7, P13, P14), as a result of perceived differences of perspective within the Chapter, foresaw the potential for it to splinter in some way in the future. As P7 put it:

“I can see a break away very easily from PRME ... PRME plus or something aligned to PRME but doing something different. I can see that happening ...but we are not there yet and for now people are happy to live under PRME”.

In terms of the teaching/research dimensions, most identified PRME at field level as teaching orientated, mirroring organisational level perceptions. Even where research in related areas was strong in participants’ own business schools, the view expressed by P15 that “no-one has ever started to research because of PRME” had wide resonance. Reasons for why researchers may not be drawn to PRME have been previously explored. At field level P14 agreed that the imbalance existed but thought that research was unlikely ever to be a PRME mainstay. Her reasoning was:

“You know you can bring new things into a curriculum and feel that something’s been achieved, whereas the research agenda...because of the league tables, because of journal rankings, because of the fact that there’s not one, specific, theoretical orientation towards responsible management or social responsibility ...I think it’s hard to come at it [PRME] from a research angle when there’s not ... a consensus on how we should address ... these sorts of issues theoretically”.

P10’s analysis was:

“I think the research elements of it are seriously underplayed and if we’re gonna do effective teaching around PRME, then it needs to be integrated with where the state-of-art research is in that area. And at the moment I think PRME in the UK Chapter is dominated by people who are very good, very active teachers but aren’t particularly that research-active”.

P10 was alone in pointing to ways in which those involved in PRME could use the REF’s focus on impact as a way of improving PRME profile and drawing in more research active participants.

A number of participants also actively argued for a continued teaching and learning focus. P6 advocated this because “ultimately the point of PRME is to change student mind sets”. P20 was assertive in arguing a very similar case:

“Now if I may be a little bit disparaging if you like ... is PRME going to have the same impact in an esoteric peer review journal article ...and I’m not saying that research isn’t important but...in my view that research, that knowledge we

generate has to then translate back into the classroom or boardroom in some way”.

4.4 Concluding comments

This chapter has proposed and illustrated 15 thematic propositions, derived from an analysis at three institutional levels: individual, organisational and field.

The first part of this chapter identified the widely varying routes into association with PRME followed by the 29 PRME advocates interviewed. Their perceptions of their roles varied significantly, ranging from a more limited administrative orientation to a committed activist one. The findings have shown participants engaged in diverse, locally contingent practices and strategies in their search to advance the PRME project, exerting pressure for change across curricular, research and other aspects of business school life. The mixed outcomes of their interventions have been clear throughout. These have highlighted too the emotional dimensions of PRME related work and the personal qualities including resilience experienced as necessary to achieve impact. In the chapter that follows, these findings will be interrogated from the perspectives of the literature on institutional entrepreneurship, the nature of institutional work and emotional work.

The second part of this chapter opened by charting the reported processes and rationales that led to participants’ business schools signing up to PRME. A combination of values-informed, strategic and opportunistic rationales was found. What followed was a detailed exploration of factors identified in the participants’

accounts that had been conducive to or obstructive to PRME gaining organisational traction. The significance of senior management support (or lack of it) emerged as a key theme, as did the ability to engage research-active staff. Above all, what universities and their business schools recognise and value as organisations as well as reward in individuals were reported as often being at odds with what participants believed to be essential to PRME momentum. In the chapter that follows, the ways in which the literature on institutional logics illuminates these themes will be explored.

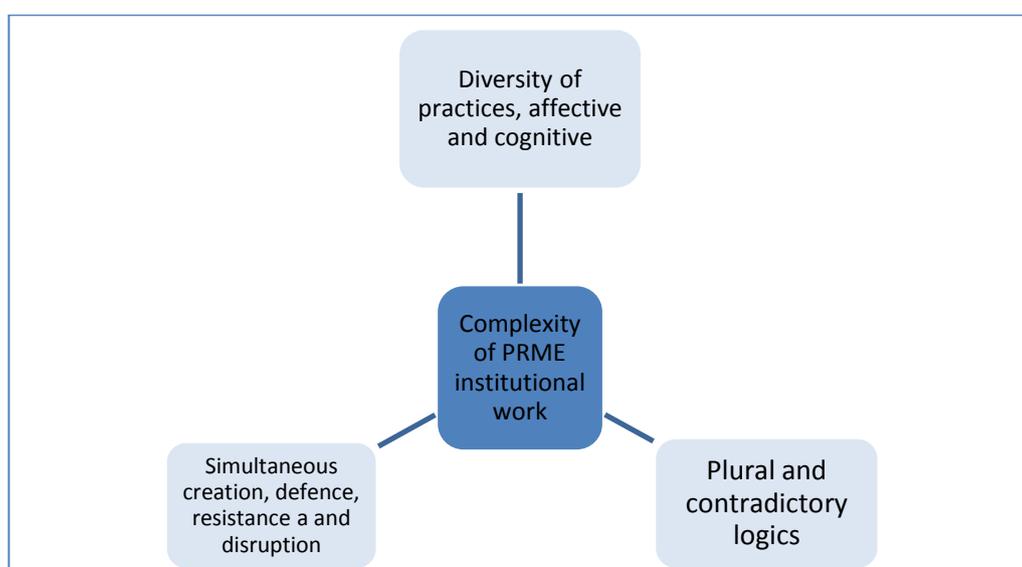
Finally, in the third part of this chapter, the perceived characteristics of PRME as a field level project were examined. Experiences of the PRME as a broad set of principles divorced from a specific action plan, with weak reporting and accountability procedures but increasingly linked with sector accreditation schemes, were explored in some detail. The extent to which the PRME project itself was seen as a driver of change was also considered, as were the perceptions of the UN-related field level entities associated with the initiative. In the chapter that follows these themes will be considered in the context of wider studies of institutional fields and the insights generated by social movement theory.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter has three inter-related purposes. First, to embed findings about individual practice within the literature on institutional entrepreneurship and work and then to highlight insights generated by this study. Particular attention is paid to the emotional labour reported to be part of PRME advocates' institutional work. Second, to identify the constellation of institutional logics that PRME work illustrates and how this advances our understanding of the significance of logics for change projects at business school organisational level. And third, to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the PRME project as a field level initiative and in particular the ways in which social movement theory aids an understanding of what many participants saw as its limited institutional impact.

Figure 1: Complexity of PRME institutional work



Threaded through the discussion here is a recognition of complexity, in ways that amplify recent scholarly interest in institutional complexity and pluralism (Greenwood

et al, 2011; Besharov and Smith, 2014; Lindberg, 2014). In Greenwood et al's terms, institutional complexity is the phenomenon that occurs when organisations "confront incompatible prescriptions from multiple institutional logics" (2011, p.318). Complexity here, however, is understood not only in this but in two related ways that together seem to characterise the complexity of PRME institutional work (see Figure 1 above). First, in terms of the diversity, both cognitive and affective, of the types of work involved in being a PRME institutional entrepreneur. Second, in terms of the complexities involved in simultaneously creating, disrupting and defending particular institutional arrangements in the course of this work. And third, in terms of the complex plural logics within HE and business schools with which a PRME ethics, responsibility and sustainability logic has to successfully engage for PRME work to flourish.

My core argument is centred on the following propositions. I shall suggest that PRME advocates generally act individually rather than collectively, displaying a variety of contingent, located practices and strategies involving significant elements of emotional work. Where they have success it is because of a mix of adept, purposeful entrepreneurial action and locally accessible and adaptable institutional logics. Where, as is more likely, they encounter setbacks and little or no success, it is because of the material and symbolic obstacles encountered in engaging with the complexity of dominant institutional logics at business school and university level. Where individual PRME actors are further constrained, I shall suggest, is both in terms of their own conceptions of what institutional change involves and of the impact of field level factors. Drawing on social movement theory insights, I shall highlight how few individual actors, despite their reported organisational isolation, appeared to seek to

enhance the change dynamic in their organisations by prioritising the mobilisation of networks both within their organisations and with actors on the boundaries of or external to the field. I shall also identify the implications of field-level actors, in particular the UK and Ireland Chapter and UNPRME office, lacking both the resources and the strategy to effectively underpin collective action at organisational or field level.

The structure of this chapter broadly follows the individual, organisational and field pattern of earlier chapters. The discussion seeks to recognise, though, the inter-related impacts of institutions and actions at all societal levels. Thus the question of logics is addressed at all levels of investigation. However, to avoid duplication, certain topics, such as the application of insights from social movement theory, are dealt with principally at one level (in this case the field level) while acknowledging their implications for analysis elsewhere. In the interests of managing word count and the potential scope of the discussion arising from the range of experience highlighted in the findings chapter, the focus here has necessarily been a selective one. Consistent with the research questions, entrepreneurial practice, institutional work, logics and certain aspects of field dynamics remain centre stage. However relevant, worthy of exploration and supported by the findings, detailed considerations of power, positioning, agency, identity and many established areas of institutional debate (such as in relation to isomorphism and legitimacy) are not systematically addressed.

5.2 Individual entrepreneurs' practices and work

The different routes to PRME involvement, the divergent ways those interviewed conceived of and enacted their roles, the spectrum of purposiveness displayed, all

raise questions about the extent to which some participants fit the institutional entrepreneur mould. In terms of DiMaggio's original formulation (1988), one might question to what extent some of the participants were organised and whether in the light of their view of PRME as peripheral to their identity or work they all saw in PRME an opportunity to "realize interests that they value highly" (p. 14). That a substantial minority were appointed to the role without having sought it, and that some on appointment did not know what PRME was, reinforces these cautionary notes. Certainly, in the light of some of the findings about isolation, insufficient time, poor access to decision making fora and budgets one could question whether these actors had the "sufficient resources" stipulated by DiMaggio as a prerequisite for entrepreneurial success. Nonetheless, if we take Battilana et al's (2009) qualifying criteria of initiating divergent changes and then actively participating in the implementation of these changes then I would argue that all interviewed went at least part of the way to meeting those criteria. Even the least proactive of participants, in which category I would include P11, P16 and P28, had made some if limited attempts in these directions. Of those appointed with no prior knowledge, it was also the case that some e.g. P6 appeared to have become very committed proponents of PRME. Indeed it was arguably the very divergence from current logics that even the less proactive articulated in their attempts to bring about institutional engagement that led to their exclusion, marginalisation and subsequent limited impact.

Turning to the nature of the institutional work attested to by these PRME advocates, the principal impression given is that of complexity contingent on local circumstances. This is partly a reflection of the variety of work undertaken. However, this complexity also seems to derive from the requirement, found also by Creed et al (2010), for often

simultaneous disruption, creation and resistance work, the latter aimed at the maintenance work of supporters of the status quo. Where institutional inroads have been made, the need for defensive work to protect those PRME gains has then often been added into this already complex mix.

Drawing on social movement theory insights, there is broad agreement in the institutional entrepreneurship literature that underpinning institutional disruption, creation and maintenance (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006) are three broad areas of practice: the framing of rationales for action, the mobilisation of material and symbolic resources including utilisation of political opportunity, and relational work to support these endeavours (Rao and Giorgi, 2006; Hardy and Maguire, 2008; Battilana et al, 2009). It might be argued that to achieve the kinds of innovations seen in some arenas, mainly curricular, entrepreneurs must have engaged in a sufficient diagnostic as well as prognostic reframing (Benford and Snow, 2000; Misangyi, Weaver and Elms, 2008) to enable some degree of disruption of existing institutions. For instance, advocacy for new modules has proceeded on the basis of more or less explicit critique of beliefs in the adequacy of current offerings (P28, P15, P20, P21) and the acceptance of change confirms some degree of intellectual if not always values-based persuasion of the merits of alternatives (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006).

Where entrepreneurial action seems almost universally to have failed, however, is in disassociating many current practices from their moral foundations and in disconnecting sanctions or rewards from current practices (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). These instances might also be deemed a failure of motivational framing, an

inability to provide compelling reasons to support new practices (Misangyi et al, 2008). This was particularly evident in the arenas of research, high status disciplines, publishing, income generation, student recruitment and corporate marketing where, in ways that will be explored in due course, the PRME project appears to have struggled to disrupt established institutional logics, vested interests and their reward systems.

In terms of early stage institutional creation, many accounts were offered of PRME related curriculum successes. Through patient, persistent action dependent on establishing and maintaining relationships, identifying organisational opportunities (e.g. cyclical programme reviews) and accessing appropriate decision bodies, PRME advocates had in many cases introduced programme themes or specific modules. In most cases these had not replaced current organising principles or programme components but added to them, creating what Goodrick and Reay (2011) might construe as co-operative logics. Alternatively, such additionality could be viewed as a form of incremental logic reconstruction leading to logic integration (Rao and Giorgi, 2006). In all cases participant practices had needed to be informed by local context and history, sensitive to relationships and culture, and work with or around established practices in order to create new normative associations (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006) between responsibility themes and the curricula in question.

The very different emphases to be seen in these innovations and in the overall PRME project in the schools concerned— some focused on business ethics, some CSR oriented, others centred on environmental sustainability, points to how PRME values and practices have taken on such locally specific forms. While, arguably, the multiple

local instantiations of PRME suggest an adaptability that is a strength, participants also highlighted the definitional challenges they encountered trying to bring clarity to what the institutionalisation of PRME meant in practice. As P18 amongst others noted, the success of the PRME project to date has been to create a discourse space in many organisations. But the direction and nature of this discourse and related practices have been shown to vary dramatically. Some have seen it as a Trojan Horse style opportunity for radical change. In other settings the discourse appeared to be scarcely audible.

As seen in accounts of where PRME network materials had been used as prompts, some entrepreneurs had sought to promote proto-institutional form, by establishing new external points of reference for practice, and to encourage a degree of mimicry (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). There were clear limits to the perceived utility of mimicry, however, with most participants emphasising processes of translation (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996; Lindberg, 2014) into their local environments. As seen in the multiple examples of noncurricular interventions to raise the profile of PRME - such as advocacy, information giving, education, and awareness raising – the attempted translation of logics into new settings required inscription or performance (Lindberg, 2014) into local practices and material objects. What the stories of these entrepreneurs also seemed generally to indicate was that disrupting established business school logics in a sustained way was far more difficult than creating new, parallel or complementary institutional practices that however marginally could be brought into coexistence or co-operation (Goodrick and Reay, 2011) with current institutional arrangements. However, in the cases where both significant disruption and incremental logic creation had been possible, this confirmed both Hargrave and

Van de Ven's (2009) and Creed et al's (2010) conclusions about the effectiveness of combining work aimed at both change and stability.

Where PRME entrepreneurs had also faced challenges was in opposing or circumventing the active institutional maintenance work (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006) carried out by actors supporting the status quo. In some cases resistance to change had taken the form of a discourse that dismissed the rigour and seriousness of PRME related research (P10) or dismissed PRME as a managerial initiative (P1, P2). In the realms of curriculum change, the principle of academic freedom had been invoked to resist outside influences (P5, P16). Concerns about relevance or the implications for resourcing had been raised by those sceptical about initial membership (P5, P12, P15). Indifference, inertia, failures to resource or locate PRME responsibility in appropriate decision making fora were frequently cited as examples of more passive forms of institutional maintenance by senior managers content with institutional decoupling (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) in the form of symbolic rather than material commitments to responsibility themes. Whether active or passive, such maintenance work had been experienced as an ongoing challenge to PRME advocates' own institutional work, often of the very political kind identified by Jarzabkowski et al (2009).

What participant accounts also suggest is that more passive forms of resistance have been more difficult to respond to, as the locus of resistance and agency has been harder to identify. The experience of academic recruitment criteria (P10, P24), and of struggles to locate PRME responsibility within a committee structure (P13) are

pertinent here. By contrast, when confronted by specific actors and actions, PRME advocates have sometimes been able to develop recovery strategies, as in P9 and P18's accounts of the techniques and arguments they deployed to convince hostile module leaders.

Some participants' work has been made more complex by the need to defend PRME related gains from renewed institutional maintenance work by senior actors intent on returning to prior institutional arrangements. In the case of P9 and P26 encountering Dean-led attempts either to reburnish corporate values or disembed PRME through revocation of membership respectively, their strategies had been to call upon actors and agenda in the wider university to bolster their positions and provide alternative forms of legitimacy. With new priorities seeming to eclipse prior commitments to PRME, P22 and P24 had used renewed calls to stated organisational values to argue for a resourced PRME role. Not infrequently, though, senior level changes in personnel or philosophy, that made PRME progress difficult to defend, had proven impossible to strategise around successfully (P7, P11, P17).

Strategies have been understood thus far as techniques or methods for achieving PRME related goals. If a tighter, classic definition of strategy, as an attempt through specific plans requiring significant investment to achieve sustainable implementation over the long term, is adopted (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington, 2008), a pertinent question is how many participants demonstrated such an approach in their practices? If profiling the participants in this way, six showed evidence of long term, whole organisational strategic approaches, 13 showed some strategic indicators in particular

domains and 10 showed almost entirely adhoc or sporadic engagement. In the first category were principally those senior managers such as P6, P20 and P21 with a clearly articulated long-term view of the role of PRME in their organisations, and the position and resources to steer their organisations in this direction. In the second category were those with the commitment, the local understanding, sometimes the support networks and crucially the strategic skills to operate effectively in a particular domain in their schools, and the ability to generate sufficient resources over the longer term. Examples of this group included P2, P8 and P10 (in relation to external engagement) and P14 and P29 (in relation to strategies for engaging researchers. In the third grouping were those actors where for a variety of reasons activity had tended to be sporadic and unplanned (e.g. P4, P5 and P13) or else so constrained by organisational resistance or personal inertia (P7, P11, P22) that forward strategising was scarcely apparent.

The discussion thus far has emphasised actors as cognitive agents grappling with the dilemmas of how best to realise the institutional embedding of PRME from their own deeply and specifically embedded positions. However, Creed et al (2014) call for a more holistic, cognitive and affective, perspective on the institutional actor. And Lawrence et al (2013) advise us to avoid seeing those involved in institutional work as “experts skilfully manipulating their institutional environments” and instead focus also on the “cognitive and emotional efforts necessary for actors to ... engage in work to maintain, disrupt and create institutions” (p. 102). Phillips and Lawrence (2012) also suggest the potential benefits of bringing to bear perspectives from different forms of ‘work’ scholarship on each other. With this in mind, and given the unexpected depth and incidence of data about emotions found in participant accounts,

it is to the affective dimensions of institutional work practices that I now turn. Like other scholars of practice, in his identification of social practices as inter alia “forms of bodily activities.... states of emotion (and) motivational knowledge” Reckwitz (2002, p.249) specifically included the affective domain of experience. Time and again participants alluded directly or indirectly to the emotional work or labour (Hochschild, [1983] 2012) associated with PRME, to the emotional price paid for engaging in institutional work, and to the added complexity this brought to their work against the institutional grain. Their accounts also attested to the impact of their varying levels of cognitive and emotional investment in current institutional arrangements (Voronov and Vince, 2012) on the likelihood of engaging in work of a creative or disruptive or maintenance nature.

While feelings of solidarity and common purpose achieved through supportive work groups were highlighted in research (P14, P19), curricular (P3, P21, P25) and wider PRME work (P9, P26) contexts, negative feeling states dominated narratives as a whole. Some of these emotions, both positive and negative, would in terms of the emotional labour construct be characterised as genuine emotional displays (Ashforth and Humphreys, 1993). However, a significant proportion of the negative feelings voiced were a consequence of the emotional labour that PRME advocates engaged in.

Dating from the foundational insights of Hochschild ([1983] 2012), work in this area has largely focused on the emotional self-regulation, behaviours and displays required by employers and workplaces of employees, and the emotional consequences including burnout of the dissonance between what one feels and what one is required

to display. While Hochschild ([1983] 2012) recognised in passing the emotional work of university teachers, much of her and subsequent work has focused on customer-facing occupations such as sales staff or airline stewards (e.g. Taylor and Tyler, 2000). However, Dallas (1999) in the USA and Ogbonna and Harris (2004) in the UK conducted early studies of emotional work in higher education that Mahoney et al (2011) show have subsequently been built on both quantitatively and qualitatively. Ogbonna and Harris (2004) focused principally on the impact of work intensification lecturers' emotional labour. They and Harris (2002) in his study of the emotional labour of barristers suggest that the origins of emotional work in the professions (as distinct from occupations) partly lie in self-imposed professional-ethical standards. Drawing on a framework devised by Harris (2002) and based on the findings in this study, I summarise (see Table 13) and then discuss the most important origins, content and consequences of the emotional work reported by PRME advocates.

Table 13: Framework for understanding PRME emotional work

ORIGINS	EXTENT AND CONTENTS	CONSEQUENCES
Moral obligation/ values commitments	<i>During interaction with</i> Individual colleagues Senior managers Committees/other fora	<i>Negative effects</i> Regret Physical + emotional tiredness
Clash of logics		Distancing Guilt/inadequacy Under scrutiny
Normative nature of proposed institutional changes	<i>Contents</i> Emotional suppression Surface acting	<i>Positive effects</i> Camaraderie Making a difference
Isolation + workload	Need for resilience	
<i>(Framework adapted from Harris, 2002, p 563)</i>		

Ashworth and Humphrey (1993) proposed that the origins of the demand for emotional work lie equally in societal, organisational and occupational expectations. In this case, as Table 13 suggests, findings indicate that organisational and professional values factors were dominant. Harris (2002) proposed that professions “are driven by an espoused intention to serve not only the needs of their clients but also a higher ‘moral’ good” (p 555). Findings here seem to support this contention. A key driver for the emotional engagement of PRME advocates in their work seemed to lie not in the demands of employers but in their own moral or values commitments, albeit that those commitments cannot be traced to a recognised professional code of ethics. That these values led them to posit new normative demands that involved a clash with dominant organisational logics and that such demands met various forms of resistance is at the heart of understanding the kinds of emotional work identified. That holding such values remained, with exceptions, a minority pursuit, led to the experience of organisational isolation and excessive workload that in turn also required particular manifestations of emotional work.

In the profile of entrepreneurial characteristics in Chapter Four, one factor identified was a values-led orientation to PRME work. This orientation lent to some 19 participants varying degrees of moral certainty about the rightness of their actions that underpinned their cognitive and emotional disinvestment in current logics (Voronov and Vince, 2012), willingness to challenge the status quo and, where needed, tolerance for the negative consequences of the emotional work required. Not all of those showing such certainty (e.g. P13, P1) demonstrated particularly high drives to engage in the hard work of institutional change, but an apparent association between moral

certainty on the one hand and resilience/tolerance of emotional adversity on the other was observable.

The isolation that was a source of emotional demands was experienced with varying degrees of intensity that seemed partly related to the centrality of PRME-related endeavour to professional and personal identities. Those with a lesser sense of personal connection (e.g. P4 and P5) thus gave voice to these feelings with less animation and discomfort than those either more obviously committed (P2, P18, P10) or more exposed to organisational setbacks of a particularly personal nature (P7, P26).

The amount of time and effort needed to move PRME forward was a further source of emotional labour. For example, P27 detailed the investment of time needed to model effective transdisciplinary sustainability pedagogies and P2 outlined the years of work it had needed to get her school to sign up to PRME. While not always directly articulated as emotionally demanding, the cumulative impact of the many small, daily efforts required to counter the discourses, values and practices of dominant logics was also conveyed in the non-verbal gestures and asides experienced in many interviews.

Given that this study was not focused on work with students or external stakeholders, the sites of emotional work were in PRME-related interactions with colleagues, whether in one to one or larger gatherings. Seniority was no guarantee of avoiding some of the emotional work involved in advancing a challenger logic as P7 and to a lesser extent P12 indicated. However, in general, cognitive disinvestment from current

logics combined with positions of influence can be said to have both facilitated disruptive work and reduced the need for emotional work in pursuit of embedding PRME. This reinforces from an affective perspective the impressions gained elsewhere about the increased complexity of demands on single PRME entrepreneurs attempting institutional change from positions low in the formal hierarchy and without significant resources (Voronov and Vince, 2012).

The two most prevalent expressions of emotional labour were inter-related phenomena, the repression of emotional response to setback and the related need to draw on emotional energies to display resilience in countering setbacks. Across some 18 interviews there was a pattern of repeated frustration that, for reasons of relationship maintenance and the future reception of PRME, could not be voiced to colleagues and had thus been suppressed. Relatedly, the need for resilience, or sustained persistence drawing on emotional energies, on the part of PRME entrepreneurs was reflected in many accounts in Chapter Four. Resilience was also suggested by a continued optimism about the prospects for PRME, at times on the basis of faith in individuals (P10, P17), and at other times located in an underlying sense that PRME was part of a megatrend, a zeitgeist (P7, P25). Cumulatively these instances of repression and resilience attest to “the many and varied ways institutional prescriptions and roles are subjectively and emotionally ascribed meanings, internalized, enacted and experienced” (Creed et al, 2010, p. 1359).

There was some evidence too of surface acting, e.g. showing optimism by pretending “to feel what we do not...we deceive others about what we really feel, but we do not

deceive ourselves” (Hochschild, 2012, p. 33). Indeed, such was the evidence of repression and need for resilience that the manifestation of such could be construed as a form of surface acting, pretending not to feel the frustration, resentment or exhaustion actually felt. In general, though, this study confirms Harris’s conclusion that rather than focus on the forms, duration and intensity of emotional display as indicators of emotional labour (Morris and Feldman, 1996) studies of professional emotion work should lead theorists to “explicitly recognize that emotional labour is not confined to expression via genuine or feigned display but also encompasses repression” (Harris, 2002, p. 578). These findings about the emotionally repressive dimensions of institutional work point also to the ways in which “local manifestations of institutional logics constrain people’s emotional experiences and limit their opportunities to act as champions of alternative logics” (Voronov, 2014, p. 187). Such constraints undermined entrepreneurial motivation and engagement in subtle, small, cumulative ways that appeared to be just as effective as explicit acts of open hostility.

Positive consequences (see Table 13) of the emotional work reported were the sense of camaraderie and solidarity experienced when PRME advocates discovered that their experiences were shared by others. Some participants felt too a sense of satisfaction with the outcome of their work. As P2 said, “It’s not a challenge I wouldn’t take on again”. Nevertheless, the negative consequences predominated in participant accounts and included feelings related to guilt, inadequacy, regret, physical and emotional tiredness or exhaustion, social distancing from colleagues, and being under close scrutiny. Highlighting a number of these consequences, P17 commented, “that level of scrutiny, you have to go through it every single day It’s kind of

tiring”. For some (P1, P2, P18), the very act of advocating for PRME had set up tensions that led to their feeling resented and in some ways distanced from colleagues.

Experience of a critical reception had in a number of cases also led to that critical lens being turned inwards. This manifested in self-critical statements and apologetic comments about lack of impact. One reading of this phenomenon might be to suggest it demonstrates reflexive honesty about personal shortcomings, as in P26’s reflection about not having done “enough to maintain the constituency”. Another reading would be to see in this tendency the “tacit compliance and emotional accommodation” that Wilson and Holligan (2013, p. 234) identified in academic researchers responses to new public management performance cultures. In this case, PRME actors’ responses could be interpreted as the internalisation of responsibility for the indifference displayed by actors rooted in dominant logics. That some of those displaying this tendency (for instance P4, P5, P11, P29) also voiced a more ambivalent sense of their agentic potential may not be co-incidental.

This study has confirmed the significance of emotional work as a component in the work and micro-institutional practices of entrepreneurs seeking divergent change (Lawrence et al, 2013; Creed et al, 2014). It affirms too how insights from an institutional study might inform wider research into the nature of professionals’ emotional labour. Specifically, it confirms the importance of the moral or ethical impulse that is a driver of emotional work in professions (Harris, 2002). Moreover, findings have illuminated how this work is intensified by the normative nature of PRME advocacy, adding affective perspectives to our understanding of the lived

experience of colliding logics. In this way the study confirms the broader value of a practice focus in building understanding of the everyday work of people trying to balance the demands of different logics (Bjerregaard and Jonasson, 2014). Also reinforced is a recognition that the form of emotional work in these instances is less about display of feigned feeling and more about the suppression of negative feeling (Harris, 2002) and tapping the emotional energy required to maintain resilience in the face of institutional resistance.

5.3 Organisational level logics

The emphasis on contingent, located actor practices thus far and the recognition that organisational context and culture have played a significant role in PRME related outcomes caution against any attempt to portray business schools as homogenous cultural and institutional spaces. Nevertheless, in institutional terms what has broadly emerged from the findings are indicators of a constellation (Goodrick and Reay, 2011) of existing powerful logics that reflect value systems, value hierarchies and related recognition and reward practices not easily aligned to PRME enactment. In this sense, findings here reflect recent emphases in the literature on institutional complexity related to persistent institutional pluralism at organisational level (Jarzabkowski et al, 2009; Greenwood et al, 2011; Besharov and Smith, 2014; Lindberg, 2014; Taylor, 2015). Central to my findings too has been a perception of the PRME as representing a weak institutional logic of its own, and the PRME project as an organisational site where logics collide.

The discussion turns now to the various, existing and generally more powerful logics that PRME discourse and practices encounter at organisational level. Participants have

shown how pressure from the central university to achieve performance metrics related to student numbers and student satisfaction can militate against communicating more challenging messages about business education. A perception of the business school as a cash surplus generator (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007) has also been described as driving expectations of Deans in such a way as to reward financial performance more than any other. This has been reported to lead to knock-on impacts such as favouring postgraduate courses able to charge maximum fees rather than niche specialisms attracting PRME-related but poorer students. The graduate earnings success measures adopted by field level business school ranking surveys, it has been suggested, only serve to strengthen these logics at organisational level.

A hierarchy of values in many business schools that attaches greater status and reward to research and related publications and grant income than to teaching, learning and third mission work has been a consistent finding. The 22 organisations on which participants reflected displayed varying configurations of commitment to these established HE logics, dependent on their histories, age and the impact of other such filters (Greenwood et al, 2011) on the strength of particular logics within specific organisations. They reflected too how varying combinations of logic competition and co-operation can endure over lengthy periods within organisations (Jarzabkowski et al, 2009; Goodrick and Reay, 2011; Lindberg, 2014). Thus institutional pluralism, needing to operate within multiple institutional logics (Kraatz and Block, 2008) was an established fact of life for all 22 organisations. While not invariably the case, this in the main took the form of a research-dominated hierarchy.

This hierarchy has posed challenges to the institutionalisation of PRME in three dimensions. First, PRME work has been largely associated with the lower status teaching and learning agenda. Second, the underlying values-based and potentially transdisciplinary normative agenda within the PRME has posed a threat to established logics with their roots in particular disciplines, values and practices. And third, defining what constitutes a PRME research agenda remains problematic.

In the small number of schools where PRME has been adopted as part of the institutional rationale and *raison d'être* within highly regarded research centres, the overall PRME project appears to have thrived. As demonstrated vividly by P14 and P19, this seems to have been the consequence of actors' ability to appropriate established research logics to the PRME cause. However, these instances are very much exceptions. What is far more common is that the higher status disciplinary domains and their related research agendas, such as in finance and economics, have seen the PRME project as of little relevance, partly because of its challenge to orthodox values and partly because of its association with a teaching and learning agenda. In this discipline-based research context the reward system is based on grant income earned, and publication in four star journals (Thomas, Lee, et al, 2014) that are perceived by participants in this study to have little interest in the more marginal areas of business school research associated with PRME. The PRME agenda has thus little to offer those with research grant income and prestigious journal publishing at the forefront of their attention.

This logic has been reported to play out repeatedly also in the arena of recruitment, where ability to generate priority research and grant outcomes and, additionally, meet REF, ranking systems and accrediting bodies' criteria, has left PRME related criteria (values, teaching commitments, related research) frequently invisible on selection criteria lists. These findings align closely with the isomorphic, disciplining effects of a rankings and accreditation culture described by Wedlin (2010) and Wilson and McKiernan (2011). That these findings are generally most pronounced in research intensive universities confirms too the significance of intra-field differences, especially the stratified nature of the business school field, identified by both Fligstein and McAdam (2012) and Wilkins and Huisman (2012).

Compounding the weakness of the PRME logic from a research perspective, is the definitional challenge noted by a number of participants (P3, P10, P14, P19, P21, P22). Is a PRME research agenda about curriculum and pedagogical innovation? Is it focused on institutional adaptation and change, as this study is? Is it consultancy and knowledge transfer oriented, or conceptual/theoretical in nature? Is the PRME agenda a composite of existing business ethics, CSR and sustainability research areas? Or is there a new 'responsibility' strand with the potential for developing research of a transdisciplinary kind? It is not the intention here to debate the merits of these alternatives (if indeed such they are). And although Greenwood et al (2011) argue that logic ambiguity aids the resolution of tensions between logics, I would argue that in this case the haziness of the domain contributes to the difficulties of advancing a PRME logic at organisational and field level.

A further dimension to the reported culture of many business schools was the absence of reflexive, critical discussion, about the curriculum and its underpinning assumptions. P1 talked about colleagues' lack of reflexivity about their own values, P2 reflected that such issues were just not debated and P13 noted the absence of fora for such discussions. P4 cited the difficulties of having these kinds of conversations within an MBA programme setting, and P16 noted that it was part of the Uni X Way to keep doing things as they had always been done. This was not universally true, and clearly some PRME advocates had created discussions where previously there were none, but the characterisation of many business school cultures as lacking critical reflexivity in relation to values and educational practice confirms many of the wider critiques of management education (Ghoshal, 2005; Morsing and Rovira, 2011; GMAC, 2013) and some of the findings of prior PRME implementation studies (Maloni et al, 2012; Solitander et al, 2012). This portrayal thus further reinforces the sense in which PRME advocacy appears to go against the institutional grain in many organisations. The weariness with and wariness of yet another set of managerial demands for compliance, as PRME was reported to be perceived as in a number of settings, accentuate also the need to keep wider societal and field level logics (in this case market driven, HE managerial and accreditation behaviours) within the analytical frame (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Besharov and Smith, 2014; Meyer and Höllerer, 2014). The latter's past and present enactment will have a direct impact on how any new logic, such as that represented by PRME, is organisationally received. Similarly, one can read into the unwillingness to engage in PRME (yet another initiative) manifestations of the emotional labour found in academics facing work intensification that were addressed by Ogbonna and Harris (2004).

Lest the analysis above seem overly totalising, it is important to emphasise a point made earlier, that the existence of prior logic complexity in business schools has not been an inevitable obstacle to PRME institutionalisation. As Seo and Creed argue, “human agency for institutional change is inseparable from institutional contradiction” (2002, p. 231). Where PRME advocacy has led to ethics, sustainability and responsibility entering teaching practices this has not only been about the adept institutional work of actors but has also been testament to the opportunities provided by the interaction of and with existing logics within business schools. Arguably less specified and more ambiguous (Greenwood et al, 2011) than research and publication logics, teaching and learning logics (be they content or pedagogy driven) are, as previously suggested, more permeable to insurgent values and priorities. Points of intersection, be they about curriculum relevance, employability or pedagogical innovation, are available to PRME advocates to explore and exploit. As evidenced in the last chapter, the responses of EFMD and other accrediting bodies to wider social movements (e.g. the pressure for CSR) that have led to their adopting societal responsibility indicators into their membership criteria have provided further points of intersection. Here, as will be further discussed in the field observations below, the symbolic shifts of accrediting body logics have provided spaces for PRME advocates to engineer symbolic and in some cases material shifts in logics at organisational level. Thus it is that the outcomes of logic multiplicity seem to be organisation specific (Greenwood, Hinings and Whetton, 2014), historically contingent (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008) as well as dependent on local instantiation and on the degree of logic compatibility and conflict that is encountered (Besharov and Smith, 2014).

The distinction between symbolic and material shifts in logics made above is part of a wider gap between rhetoric and reality noted across many participant accounts. As P2 put it, “management are saying all the right things, go ahead and do it, but the everyday implementation seems to be near impossible”. This speaks to the notion of decoupling, the separation of symbolic institutional adoption in the name of field legitimacy from underlying operational practices, that has been a component in institutional debates since Meyer and Rowan (1977). The adoption of PRME for competitive, marketing (UNPRME, 2013) or accreditation reasons and the utilisation of the SIP reports as marketing rather than learning tools, as attested to in many accounts, characterises what Kraatz and Block (2008) deem a compartmentalisation approach to institutional complexity. Involving a variant of the decoupling argument, this denotes how organisations might adopt a symbolic commitment to certain logics but preserve more or less intact a core identity and set of logics. What participant accounts suggest too is that the locus of agency in determining whether or not decoupling occurs can on occasions be individual – as both the contrasting accounts of P26 (decoupled) and P20 (tightly coupled) indicate. As other accounts (P5, P13, P28) indicate, however, decoupling can be much less about individual agency and far more a consequence of widely distributed, embedded institutional practices.

5.4 Field level considerations

Turning to field level considerations, it is helpful to return to Scott’s view that the notion of organisational field “connotes the existence of a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside of the field” (Scott, 1994, p. 207). In the context of PRME and this study, it is worth pausing to stipulate

what the field is taken to be because, as Fligstein and McAdam remark, “any given field (is) embedded in a broader environment consisting of countless proximate or distal fields” (2012, p. 3). For the purposes of this discussion, and given Scott’s (1994, p. 207) “frequently and fatefully” criteria, the core field is taken to be UK business schools in HE settings as well as key organisational actors both nationally and internationally with which they interact in the pursuit of the PRME agenda. These latter organisations include their parent HEIs, the UNPRME office, the UK and Ireland PRME Chapter and sector accreditation bodies such as AACSB, AMBA and EFMD EQUIS.

Early neo-institutional writing focused on the mimetic tendencies and regulative forces that were deemed to lead to isomorphism and stability in organisational fields. Later work has tended to a view of the field in which institutions are seen less as structural constraints but rather as the result of human design and action (Scott, 2008). This has resulted in perspectives on the field that emphasise it as a dynamic site of contestation, competition, agency and continuing change (Seo and Creed, 2002; Schneiberg et al, 2008). What do the findings of this study suggest are the field dynamics that impact on the embedding of the PRME, particularly in the light of the findings about competing and dominant institutional logics at organisational level?

Thornton and Ocasio’s (2008) proposition - within their ‘logics as metatheory’ hypothesis - that which of the six societal level institutions dominate(s) a field varies over time seems borne out by findings here. In ways consistent with other studies of HE and business schools it seems reasonable to conclude that market and corporate logics are in the ascendant. The wider institutional literature sees the HE field both

internationally (e.g. Gumpert, 2000; Reale and Seeber, 2011) and in the UK (Howells et al, 2014) as being the site of multiple, competing and co-existing institutional logics, principally those derived from market, corporate, bureaucratic, professional and New Public Management sources. Howells et al (2014) argue that under these pressures HE in the UK has become an increasingly decentralised and fragmented field as state and bureaucratic logics have diminished in impact and competitive market logics have grown. At a business school field level, Greenwood et al (2011) suggest a similarly fragmented picture, finding multiple nodes of centralised authority including government, corporations, professional associations and ranking organisations. In terms of current findings, the international and national competition for students, a focus on rankings, competition for research funding and increasingly corporate managerial practices were dominant over previously influential bureaucratic state logics and tended to trump professional logics (if discipline-based cultures are understood in this way) even while the latter continued to hold some sway. So, while disciplinary loyalties and ways of working could still thwart PRME's interdisciplinary ethos and normative challenges, both were often subject to corporate and managerial logics and cash generation imperatives that were portrayed as representative of a significant part of the field.

While there remain organisation-specific degrees of discourse space for PRME advocates to challenge, be heard and create alternative logics, at business school field level, I would argue, the space for variation seems more limited. Here the regulative (REF, accrediting bodies), normative (what is taught, the values underpinning this) and mimetic forces (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991) all point towards a pervasive set of logics in which challenger logics have to be particularly effective to thrive. Scott's

(1994) assertion that the essence of the field perspective is to have the capacity to evaluate the ways organisations enact their environment and are at the same time enacted upon by that very environment seems particularly germane here. For in that process of recursive interdependence, in the context of the dominant logics portrayed here, lies if not the iron cage of popular institutional metaphor (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) then certainly the origins of PRME's institutional fragility (of which, more below).

Scott (2008) has suggested that it is the capacity to generate a new collective rationality that is the hallmark of field level evolution. The capacity to frame or reframe institutional logics into a new collective rationality within a field is, as previously noted, one of the characteristics of institutional entrepreneurship drawn from social movement theory (Rao and Giorgi, 2006; Battilana et al 2009). And, I would argue, PRME actors' frequent, relative inability to successfully engage in such framing action (as depicted earlier) draws attention both to their relationship (or lack thereof) with social movements and also to the value of assessing the project at field level in terms of classic social movement criteria.

Schneiberg and Lounsbury (2008) propose two principal ways in which social movements define themselves, either as external forces against institutions or as forces within fields. Arguably, as participants in this study have identified, part of what PRME lacks as potential movement against the institutions of business education is a clear, shared analysis of what is wrong with business schools and a collective strategy to build the resources and develop a wider movement to challenge sector legitimacy

and practices. The soft focus principles concerned with broad but nebulous notions of ‘global social responsibility’, aimed at supporting rather than critiquing corporations and devoid of an associated action plan, mitigate, as I have argued elsewhere (Louw, 2015) against an incisive analysis and collective learning and mobilisation. A contributing factor to this situation is likely to be that individual and organisational PRME actors have owed their livelihoods to these very business schools. Some level of ongoing emotional and cognitive investment in at least part of the current institutional order (Voronov and Vince, 2012) is therefore likely. This also suggests that a reduced propensity to disrupt and some degree of accommodation with current logics is therefore likely to prevail. It potentially accounts for why just one participant saw his future as working with organisations outside the field as a way to put pressure on business school practices. Indeed the apparent lack of engagement with or reference to relevant environmental or corporate accountability social movements could be seen as highly significant. This was despite the biographical components that encouraged such talk in the narrative interview approach.

Business school career academics would appear to have come to ethics, sustainability and related interests via academic career routes that have provided few meeting points with social movement values and practices. Wooten and Hoffman’s (2008) proposition that fields could productively be conceived of as relational spaces rather than as containers provides a number of insights in this regard. PRME advocates’ lack of engagement with social movement actors suggests a relatively narrow and therefore limiting conception of this relational space. A narrower view has implications for influences on field shape and dynamism, and reduced access to the resources (intellectual, organisational) of actors such as NGOs and social movements on the

boundaries of the business school field. If fields are where organisational and individual actors come together to do sense-making work (Weick, 1995), then those actors with whom PRME advocates interact (see also below) are less diverse than they might be, with implications for an inward looking PRME advocate community unable to draw on the political capital and organisational energy of actors in related and overlapping fields (Wooten and Hoffman, 2008).

What all these insider dimensions suggest is that, if PRME is to be seen through a social movement lens at all, it should be viewed not as a movement against but possibly as a movement within an established field. In which case, as such, what indicators are there of it being able to ignite field level change? At individual and organisational level PRME actors' capacity to challenge, change or reframe institutional values and logics has been suggested to be at best partial. At field level the PRME call to action remains largely focused on the act of becoming a signatory, of building through signatory numbers the impression of momentum. While such a framing (Benford and Snow, 2000; Battilana et al, 2009) has the support of many study participants, the symbolic rather than material nature of the commitment and absence of diagnostic specificity has been widely acknowledged as a limitation on effective action and institutional change. Moreover, it appears to lack the framing required to elicit the kinds of emotional resonance successful social movements engage in (Jasper, 2014). More prosaically, the lack of effective reporting and accountability was almost universally cited as a source of institutional weakness.

As already suggested, a further core characteristic of a social movement is its ability to mobilise collectively (Schneiberg and Lounsbury, 2008). A concern with the mechanisms of such distributed agency (Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009) has become increasingly visible at the intersection of institutional and social movement scholarship (Hargrave and Van de Ven, 2006; Lawrence et al, 2011). In terms of this characteristic, the evidence for PRME as a successful movement within a field is at best mixed as well. At organisational level, as noted, actors are usually individuals acting without a collective identity or strategy. At field level, organisational actors such as the UK and Ireland PRME Chapter or the UNPRME office were presented as sources of support, information, experience sharing and at times good practice and inspiration. However, they were not presented as facilitators of strategic, collective action, as some participant accounts directly acknowledged and the call for shared practical initiatives (P2, P15) that demonstrated belonging to a wider change project conveyed. The limited resource base of these field actors was frequently commented on. The UK and Ireland Chapter, one part-time administrator aside, is a small group of volunteers with fulltime commitments elsewhere. The UNPRME office was also characterised as more administrative than academic or strategic in orientation. What these findings cumulatively suggest is that actors at field level, as at organisational level, lack in the areas of framing and mobilisation the collective ability to carry out the purposeful direct institutional work or even indirect enabling work (Bertels et al, 2014) necessary for significant impact as a social movement within the business school field.

Social movement theory also suggests that, for field level change to occur, entrepreneurial actors need to use political opportunities as they arise, and generate

political resources to effect their objectives (McAdam et al, 1996). In this regard, PRME's progress to date could be regarded as more auspicious. While outside the scope of this study, the generation of the principles themselves could be read as an opportunistic and timely response to growing critiques of business school practices. The emphasis subsequently on encouraging AACSB et al to adopt PRME-related concerns into accreditation criteria could also be seen as politically astute. The 60% penetration of PRME within single, double and triple crown accredited schools in the UK (compared to some 37% of all schools- Table 9) indicates an increasing equation of sector legitimacy and status with PRME membership. And legitimacy, as Khurana reminds us, is "the currency of institutions" (2007, p.14).

Given the hierarchical, ranking-oriented nature of the sector frequently commented on (Wedlin, 2010; Masrani et al, 2011), positioning of PRME membership as a signifier of aspiration and quality builds political and institutional capital for the PRME project. Where the impact of this achievement is undermined, however, is in the instrumental way that accreditation processes are perceived and managed in business schools. If accreditation is seen as an unwelcome but unavoidable aspect of institutional life (P28), in which interest in values and mission is superficial and more akin to box ticking (P26) and where the monitoring of multiple different measures required by the accrediting bodies is seen as an academic distraction (P17), then PRME by association risks superficial engagement. Lest we overstate the case, it is worth remembering too that with just over 500 members amongst some 13,000 business schools worldwide (EFMD, 2014) it is clearly not the case that conformity to PRME is essential for field legitimacy. Moreover, with accredited business schools worldwide numbering 219 (AMBA), 149 (EFMD EQUIS) and 736 (AACSB)

accreditation appears to be a top tier pre-occupation rather than a widespread signifier of legitimacy. Thus some field level political capital for the project has been acquired, but whether it is sufficient, particularly given the framing and mobilisation deficits identified, to reshape dominant field level logics and lead to sustainable new path creation is far from certain.

5.5 Concluding comments

In the closing words of his acclaimed study of the institutional development of USA business schools, Khurana declares:

“History, in the meantime, tells us that when institutions lose their legitimacy or find it called into question, the times are ripe for their reinvention. It is more than possible that we live in such times now” (2007, p. 383).

Many commentators have questioned the legitimacy of business schools, as Chapter Two highlighted. Many PRME advocates would share such critiques and claim a potentially central role for PRME in any reinvention of the institutions that comprise business and management education. What this study has suggested, however, is that although the times may be ripe the PRME project as currently articulated, both in discourse and in related practices, lacks the capacity successfully to challenge dominant institutional logics and effect sustained institutional change of a divergent nature.

While some individual entrepreneurs and some organisations are reported to be using the opportunities of signing up to PRME to introduce and embed qualitatively

different institutional values and practices, the broader picture is of fragmented, halting, sometimes imperceptible progress. This, findings suggest, is due to an inter-related set of individual, organisational, field and societal level institutional factors that play out in contingent, located ways. At field level the principles are framed in so broad a way as to make organisational accountability difficult, and symbolic adoption and material decoupling easy. Notwithstanding broadness and lack of specific critique, the PRME are often experienced as a normative challenge to dominant research and teaching and learning logics in organisational environments consisting of already complex, plural logics.

Through the practices of more or less strategic but almost invariably isolated or stretched individual PRME advocates, creative institutional work can nevertheless take place. This usually focuses on teaching and learning, and involves the introduction of co-operative logics based on incremental additionality. However, finding ways to circumvent both passive as well as active institutional resistance demands frequently exhausting amounts of emotional labour that means existing, dominant logics are seldom significantly disrupted.

All of these phenomena are embedded within an inter-institutional system at societal level that currently favours market, competitive and managerial logics that exert influences that permeate across field, organisational and individual levels in ways that frequently undermine PRME work. Multiple experiences of auditing, ranking and other performance managing interventions can additionally lead to behaviours

resistant to yet more institutional change of any kind, and particularly of an ethically-infused nature.

Drawing on social movement theory, despite a problematic framing it is suggested that the PRME project at field level shows some evidence of a politically astute strategy. However, what appear to be absent are the resources, insights, actors, relationships and practices necessary to mobilise significant levels of collective action capable of bringing about wide and deep institutional transformation in the business school field.

Chapter Six: Conclusions and Reflections

The purpose of this chapter is threefold:

1. To reflect on the strengths and limitations of the research design and methods, and justify claims as to their robustness
2. To reflect on the extent to which the research questions have been addressed, and on the potential theoretical and practical contributions made by this study
3. To identify avenues suggested by this study for future research.

6.1 Reflection on research design and methods

6.1.1 Research reliability, validity and credibility

In Chapter Three I cited Thomas and James's (2006) assertion that to argue for the validity of qualitative enquiry is to argue for the validity of interpretation and understanding rather than of methodological certainty. Nonetheless, I would argue that for any interpretation and the empirical findings on which it is based to have validity, or a claim to truthfulness, the reliability of the underpinning research methods needs to be demonstrated. I do not mean reliability in the positivist sense of the replicability of the findings should the same methods be used on a similar population or the same methods be used by a different investigator on the same population. Rather, I see reliability as a judgement arrived at from an assessment of whether the methods were appropriate to the research question(s) and implemented in a sufficiently rigorous, auditable and transparent a manner for the findings and conclusions to be deemed to have plausibility (Knight and Saunders, 1999), validity or credibility (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). If validity is about being able to make a claim to truthfulness, this is not

a claim to what realists and positivists might consider to be objective or scientific truth. Rather, from a social constructionist and interpretivist perspective, it is about trying in a methodologically robust way to access “the ‘truth’ that people at work live through every day”, which emerges from studies of the “lived realities of organizational life” (Rhodes & Brown, 2005, p. 182).

In pursuit of such reliability and robustness, in Chapter Three I sought to justify my choice of a research design based on narrative, dialogic interviewing as appropriate for trying to understand from the inside (Geertz, 1973) the institutional processes that influence PRME advocacy outcomes as well as the practices that enact institutional work on PRME. I would argue that the depth and breadth of data generated, and the insights they have enabled, confirm the defensibility of the research design choices I made. However, I recognise the potential limitations of relying on single interviews at specific moments in time for the reliability of this study. This reliance plus the absence of other stakeholder perspectives on these entrepreneurs’ work and context has made any form of traditional method or data triangulation (Silverman, 2010) impossible. For a constructionist, however, the notion that triangulation will result in a more secure fix on a particular social phenomenon, when reality is viewed as undergoing continuous construction, is of lesser importance. More helpful, I would argue, is trying to ensure a dependable account (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) based on detailed contextual understanding. Such contextual framing was, I would argue, one of the principal objectives and achievements of my interviewing approach; one that proved of real value in helping to ground my sense-making during the analytical phase. The purposive sampling adopted in the study helped here too, ensuring a sufficient variety of contexts across the 22 institutional settings for the key themes that

were generated to be tested and confirmed in a variety of well-documented contexts. No discussion of the merits of a research choice is ever closed, however, and, in the discussion of my reflexive practices below, I continue a reflection on the virtues and limitations of the dialogic interviewing process.

In pursuit of transparency, in Chapter Three I also sought to explain the choices that faced me and the decision I made when my interviews did not result in what I deemed to be sufficiently storied data for me to pursue my original analytical approach. Having opted for a more standard, thematic analysis, I have followed a documented model for thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Both in Chapter Three and in the summary review of my application of this model below, I have sought to provide evidence of the potential confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) of my findings and conclusions should others wish to examine how my data have been ordered, aggregated, analysed and interpreted.

Using Braun and Clarke's (2006, p. 96) 15 criteria for good thematic analysis, I offer a brief review of my study under the five main analytical processes they identify.

Transcription

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and basic non-verbal cues (e.g. laughter) were captured. I completed six and paid others to undertake the other 23 initial transcriptions. However, in all cases I listened to all tapes at least twice in order to confirm or amend a draft transcription. This addressed problems arising from a transcriber who is not the interviewer misunderstanding the sense of a sentence and, for example, punctuating in a very misleading way.

Coding

All data were coded in a sequence of initially holistic followed by a mix of descriptive and theoretically-informed provisional coding (Miles et al, 2014). Through a three stage process outlined in Chapter Three, first order data categories, second order themes and then third order theoretical dimensions were generated from the data, were checked for coherence, consistency and distinctiveness. The data coding examples in Tables 10 and 11 have, with the addition of relevant data excerpts, sought to demonstrate the relationship between these three stages of analysis.

Analysis

Through the analytical process, 15 thematic propositions were identified that sought to make sense of the 29 interviews and more than 1,000 pages of data. As a result of the comprehensive approach i.e. attention to the whole data corpus, efforts were consistently made to avoid the anecdotalism critique often levelled at qualitative studies (Silverman, 2001). Organising data and generating themes at individual, organisational and field level sought to mirror neo-institutional theory's concern with institutional effects at multiple levels, while not precluding the identification and interpretation of related phenomena, particularly in the area of logics, across those different levels.

Written report and overall process reflection

Consistent with Braun and Clarke's (2006) injunctions, I have provided a detailed account of my analytical methods so that the process underpinning the generation of my Findings and Discussion Chapters is clear. In particular, I have sought to maintain consistency with my social constructionist, interpretivist position throughout the analysis and reporting of my data. Specifically, I have avoided, although this has

required consistent effort, taking participant narratives as reflecting facts about an organisation rather than interpretations (Soderberg, 2006). Rather, I emphasise throughout that my thematic and related theoretical interpretations make no objective truth claims, being entirely based on participant perceptions, captured at one specific moment in their experience of PRME advocacy, and on my own contextually influenced ordering and interpretations of these.

6.1.2 Reflexivity in practice

In Chapter Three I identified the need for reflexive practice generated by my multiple insider-outside identities (Adler, 2004) as researcher in this study. The benefits of being a business school insider, and also a PRME advocate in my own school, were demonstrated by the points of reference, terminology, literature and resources that participants and I shared as knowledge and experience in common. In all but one case this appeared to pave the way to an easy, flowing dialogue with participants. What I needed to guard against, by active prompting and checking, were assumptions that my experience (not only of PRME but of working in a business school) would be replicated elsewhere.

One of the benefits of twenty five years working outside of HE, across many other sectors, is that I found it relatively easy to adopt the role of outsider looking in, exploring with the benefit of a variety of organisational experience what phenomena might mean to participants. I have drawn on this other experience not only during data generation but also during data analysis. It was my background in social services working with vulnerable people, for example, that helped to first alert me to the

potential significance of the emotional labour that I encountered. That said, once so alerted, it became necessary to guard in future interviews against the intentional seeking out or undue focus on the affective dimensions of participants' work. In similar vein, it was my experience of social movements, and of the ways that such movements can successfully challenge established institutions, that during the analysis phase sensitised me to the absence of social movement perspectives within participant accounts. Reflecting on the implications of such then led me into a much greater exploration of the intersection between neo-institutional and social movement theories than originally envisaged. Our histories of course pose risks to us as researchers, including in the form of over-reliance on past experience and relative insensitivity to phenomena that do not fit our frames of reference. This is where analytical methods that sought to give full and equal attention to all my data, in ways confirmed here and in Chapter Three, became so important. However, maintaining a recognition of and actively managing the influence of our personal histories in our research must be central and ongoing preoccupations for any researcher of a social constructionist, interpretivist type.

Alluded to already in relation to emotional work, it was also the case that other issues raised in early interviews had the potential to influence the direction of later interviews. This potential became increasingly felt as trends emerged in reported participant experience. The advantage of this was the ability to engage successive participants in different contexts in reflecting on the cumulative insights of the study. The potential disadvantage, that had to be managed, was leading later conversations down avenues in a way that reduced the opportunities for alternative perspectives to surface. Maintaining the same broadly framed opening questions at all times but using

other participant experience as prompt material was my way of handling this balancing act. But I have to recognise that my approach to dialogic interviewing, my role as an active co-producer of each account, and my willingness to conceive of my 29 interviews in part as one evolving conversation, meant that earlier participants potentially had a more formative role in shaping the data corpus and resulting themes than later ones.

In Chapter Three I alluded to the tensions between challenging and reproducing social relations through research that reflexivity can uncover (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009). In this light, I also want to comment in a little more detail on certain aspects of the interview dynamics I experienced. One by-product of the interview process was that participants, often organisationally isolated in relation to PRME, were drawn by me, a fellow traveller or *empathie* (Gabriel, 2000), into a (for them) unusually detailed reflection on their individual and organisational PRME journeys. Whether storied or otherwise, this process encouraged retrospection and involved the development of sense-making narratives of past and present endeavours. In a significant number of instances, and to an extent not envisaged, this also became a process of performance self-evaluation. It was in such contexts that the self-critical, apologetic, sometimes regretful elements arose. While identity has not been a focus of this study, one can from a work perspective see in these interview accounts elements of what Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) have termed narrative identity work, “social efforts to craft self-narratives that meet a person’s identity aims” (p.137). For some, this involved uncovering an uncomfortable dissonance between such aims and the narratives that emerged in interview.

Responding to this posed interesting challenges for me. Was it my role principally to hold up a mirror in which they might examine their identities and what they perceived their PRME performance to have been? Or was it also to empathise, to re-assure and at times to accentuate the positive and the possible? At what point, if memories were troubling, was it appropriate to stop further exploration of the significance of particular events? Particularly as the interview series ran on, and I was accumulating ever more stories of adversity encountered and the consequences of participants' emotional work, I recognised in myself a tendency to re-assure by responding to participants with observations about similar experiences elsewhere. Encouraging me to probe further, though, was my perception that it was in these zones of discomfort that participants were voicing some of the most acute observations about institutional processes and how dominant logics could or could not be challenged. Such observations spoke directly to my own practitioner interests as well. My ongoing management of these tensions attested to some of Elliott, Ryan and Hollway's (2012) findings on the emotional work of researchers. These include how to apply in circumstances such as those outlined the well-established ethical principle of not causing interviewee anxiety and how to practise reflexivity as a means to work productively with the "intensity, embodiedness and complexity of the face-to-face interview encounter" (Elliott et al, 2012, p. 440) and its outcomes.

6.1.3 Generalisability and transferability

Should my methods have been reliable, robust and reflexive enough to lead to valid, credible conclusions about the nature of my research participants' experience from a neo-institutional perspective, the question would still arise as to the generalisability or transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) of these conclusions to other, similar

settings. As noted in Chapter Three though, despite representatives of 22 of the then 43 UK business school signatories to PRME being interviewed, because the focus has been on individual sense-making no claims to generalisability of the empirical findings in any probabilistic sense to other UK business schools would be appropriate.

However, what this analysis and its insights can do is generate claims to generalisability or transferability based on the extent to which they engage with theory and/or might be useful in related areas of policy and practice (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). Given the theoretically informed abductive logic orientation adopted (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009), supportable claims to generalisability based on theoretical engagement would be a desirable outcome. In considering below the extent to which the research questions have been addressed, the nature of any theoretical and practical contributions, and possible future research agendas, any potential for such generalisability is thus highlighted where appropriate.

6.2 Reflection on the research questions and contributions made

I propose to reflect here on the research questions posed as well as on the contribution aspirations stated at the end of the Literature Review.

6.2.1 What are the reported practices and strategies deployed by PRME advocates (here deemed institutional entrepreneurs) in their work to institutionalise PRME in their business schools?

The Literature Review and related searches indicated no empirical studies of UK business schools to date specifically from institutional entrepreneurship and institutional work perspectives. This study has begun to address this gap in our

knowledge of these institutional processes. As such it makes a timely contribution to the modest but growing academic interest in the institutional dimensions of business school development (Khurana, 2007; Pettigrew et al, 2014). Findings here add perspectives to our understanding of the everyday, micro-level practices and work of institutional actors and entrepreneurs (Battilana et al, 2009; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2009; Lindberg, 2014) in these and potentially other HE settings. Moreover, given the critiques of the teaching, research and relevance of business schools also highlighted in Chapter Two, I would argue that the insights gained here about the practices required to bring about divergent change incorporating significant normative re-orientation are helpful too from a business school management practice perspective.

Effectiveness as a PRME institutional entrepreneur has been shown to take diverse forms and require multiple kinds of expertise. What has been common to all of them, though, has been PRME advocates' ability to understand, respond to and take advantage of local opportunities to advocate, develop influence and effect change. Position, degree of networkedness, organisational/political and communication skills and the ways these have been locally enacted have also been reported as helping to determine outcomes, confirming on a wider scale some of the prior findings of Fougère et al (2012). The most successful institutional work has occurred where PRME actors with sufficient resources (DiMaggio, 1988) have been able, through a process of translation (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996), to integrate PRME-related activity within established, well regarded practices already benefiting from institutional legitimacy. Either being an influential senior manager or having access to the active support of such figures has been a contributor to reported engagement in many contexts. However, where PRME has been positioned as a management

initiative but not given active management support in contexts where managerialism is resented, it has suffered in a dual way: by association as well as by absence of implementation.

The least successful PRME entrepreneurship would appear to have taken place where participants acted as isolated individuals, where local contexts contained actors actively resistant to PRME values, where membership has been largely symbolic and decoupled from organisational practice and resources, where senior managers have not recognised and/or challenged any of these factors and where individual PRME advocates have lacked the commitment and/or personal resources to sustain institutional work in the face of adversity. Both PRME advocates and business school managers can learn from these insights. These and related findings about failure have also helped to address the need Powell and Bromley (2013) identified for understanding what leads to unsuccessful entrepreneurial action.

This study has highlighted the emotional components and costs involved in institutional work (Lawrence, Leca and Zilber, 2013) and reinforced the need to take more than just a cognitive view of the embodied micro practices (Creed et al, 2010; Creed et al, 2014) required to bring about institutional change. It may well be, as Scott (2008) suggests, that an indicator of field level change is the existence of a new collective rationality. But, this study would suggest, to promote such a goal can demand a substantial amount of emotional in addition to cognitive labour.

In interpreting this emotional component in the work of PRME advocates, I have drawn on constructs in relation to emotional labour and institutional work, sharing as

they do a common concern with practice. What findings have suggested is that in seeking to understand the purposive action (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006) underpinning institutional work we need to include not only the cognitive but also the affective actions, both purposeful and reactive, that institutional entrepreneurs take to respond to the emotions of others and to harness their own emotions to their goals. The practices involved in so doing appear to demand firstly recognising and then in a variety of ways either expressing, repressing or rechanneling the emotional states (Reckwitz, 2002) aroused by and encountered in the course of institutional work. What has been signalled too is that it is the pressure for change of an ethically divergent nature that has sharpened the tension between dominant and challenger logics, and thus increased the requirement for and intensity of emotional work.

Drawing on the emotional labour literature, I have shown how findings support Harris's (2002) and Ogbonna and Harris's (2004) conclusions about the nature of professionals' emotional labour practices. As in their studies, one of the origins of the emotional work here has lain in normative moral or ethical commitments. Particular practices shown include the repression of emotions in response to sustained frustration, disappointment and setback and the drawing on emotional energies to display resilience. While sustained surface acting (Hochschild, [1983], 2012) in the sense of feigned emotional display required by the employer has not been demonstrated, this is partly because, unlike Ogbonna and Harris (2004), my focus has not been on academics' student-facing work. However, I have argued that a self-imposed repression of emotion and demonstration of resilience in interaction with colleagues are themselves practices involving a form of surface acting.

Findings here seem to confirm the propositions made by Phillips and Lawrence (2012), Voronov and Vince (2012) and Lawrence et al (2013) about the potentially fruitful ways different forms of scholarship on work can be brought into conversation with each other. My amendment to Harris's (2002) framework for understanding the origins, nature and consequences of emotional work in professionals also provides a basis for research in other HE change environments. From a management practice perspective, if managers are committed to PRME implementation then these findings accentuate the need to resource PRME work appropriately, avoid lone working, nominate PRME leads who are already well networked and recruit them with resilience in mind. From an institutional entrepreneur practice perspective, what these findings emphasise is the need to prioritise the building of supportive networks, both inside and outside the organisation, to counteract the isolation and provide moral and practical support when adversity is encountered.

6.2.2 What are the dimensions of institutional logics within business school settings – at both organisational and field levels – that hinder or promote the work of PRME institutional entrepreneurs?

The impact of current logics on the outcome of PRME entrepreneurship has been highlighted at every level of analysis. Findings have thus contributed to an understanding of the importance of maintaining an integrated analytical focus on institutional effects at multiple levels, from the societal to the individual (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Meyer and Höllerer, 2014) within business school contexts. Specifically, what has been suggested is that the shifting landscape of societal level logics in relation to state, markets and corporations within universities (Deem et al, 2007; Shattock, 2010; Enders, 2014) and their business schools has led to a competitive, rankings orientated culture and associated reward

structure that are perceived to create barriers to engaging with PRME. These societal levels logics (their value systems, practices and artefacts) are embedded within a frequently hierarchical set of field level logics in which research and publication dominate over teaching and learning and wider public engagement logics. Fieldwide, competitive ranking, performance management and audit practices that are reflected in the disciplinary based REF and ABS Journal Rankings as well as business school ranking tables in turn diffuse and/or are translated into organisational practice experienced as obstacles to PRME.

Such experience is a consequence of PRME's transdisciplinary ethos and concern with subjects perceived to be at the margins of traditional business school disciplinary scholarship. In addition, PRME has principally been articulated as a teaching and learning agenda, and when what the majority of business schools studied appears to reward is traditional disciplinary research, to advance PRME has required the ability to work imaginatively as well as determinedly against the institutional grain. In short, and in ways underlined by a multi-level understanding of logics in action, PRME work has not been seen as rewarding. Such conclusions add useful institutional perspectives to the PRME implementation research agenda advocated by Forray and Leigh (2012). They also have potential value for understanding the need to establish congruence between established and challenger logics and their associated reward practices in other areas of HE change. Areas such as programme internationalisation and inter-faculty research initiatives come to mind.

Current interest in the experience of logic plurality at organisational level and the complex consequences of such is considerable (Greenwood et al, 2011; Besharov and

Smith, 2014; Lindberg 2014). Identifying the difficulties within business school contexts of articulating and enacting a relatively new and divergent (PRME) logic in the context of an existing plurality of other strong logics already in competition with each other has, as summarised above, been one of the outcomes of this study. But if plurality and already existing hierarchies of logics are one dimension to the complexity of PRME institutional work, others concern the diversity of cognitive and affective work dimensions as well as the need for simultaneous logic disruption, creation, defence and resistance work. To be a PRME institutional entrepreneur appears to require multiple kinds of logic (re)configuration expertise. This has been shown by the findings to be mainly centred on creation and resistance work. Creating incrementally additional, co-operative logics (Goodrick and Reay, 2011) within teaching and learning appears to be the most common and achievable strategy. At the same time work is required to resist both passive and more actively agentic forms of institutional maintenance work that continue unabatedly around any PRME innovations. Less often needed but no less critical when called upon is the capacity to defend what appear to be PRME logic gains from unexpected renewed undermining. While much entrepreneurial energy might be expended on attempting to disrupt or transform current value systems and practices, particularly through morally informed advocacy and the positing of alternative foci for business education and research, the evidence here is that current research and publishing logics in particular are near impermeable and meaningful levels of disruption rare. Overall, this study has generated a useful initial set of empirical data about the multiple forms of complexity involved in seeking to change established logics in business school settings.

If current logics are strong, findings also suggest the PRME logic is relatively fragile. Broad principles, disparate roots in ethics, sustainability and CSR, the absence of a clearly articulated underlying critique either of business education or business, its promotion as a marketing device, openness to decoupling, and absence of meaningful accountability mechanisms cumulatively make PRME a frequently tenuous logic in organisational settings. The effects of this are compounded by the responsibility for promoting PRME frequently lying with isolated individuals. Also problematic are the field level weaknesses noted below.

6.2.3 How do PRME's field level characteristics affect PRME outcomes at organisational level?

In addition to insights into field level logics already mentioned, analysis has confirmed the wider significance of field characteristics (Hardy and Maguire, 2008) for organisational level PRME outcomes. In this regard, findings have in particular confirmed the contribution that social movement theory can make to understanding field level institutional change (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012). Drawing on concepts of framing, collective mobilisation and political analysis/strategy in the social movement literature (McAdam et al, 1996), I have argued that PRME's weaknesses at field level both parallel organisational level weaknesses and add to them. Whether assessed as a movement against current business school education or as a movement for change within the business school field, the PRME project appears hampered by a number of characteristics. Its framing is light on diagnostic, prognostic and, critically, motivational components (Benford and Snow, 2000). PRME actors' engagement with actors outside the business school field appears limited, and their ability to draw on external insights and resources restricted. The infrastructure at field level (UK and

Ireland PRME Chapter, UNPRME office) is not well resourced, and these actors' conceptualisation of their roles appears to be focused on soft-sell recruitment and good practice rather than collective mobilisation of bodies inside and outside the field to challenge the status quo. Although some legitimacy with accreditation bodies has been achieved, reflecting enhanced political capital for PRME, accreditations are not a realistic aspiration for more than 90% of business schools worldwide. As a strategy for widespread institutional impact, therefore, legitimation via adoption into accreditation agency standards appears to have limited value.

From an institutional entrepreneur practice perspective, what these findings also suggest is the value of (1) seeking to reconceptualise the field with a view to engaging with a wider set of actors, (2) reviewing and enhancing field level strategy and resources, and (3) re-invigorating with the help of social movement theory field level collective mobilisation approaches.

6.2.4 Overall contribution of this study

Findings here have added helpful empirical contributions to our previously limited collective understanding of the nature of institutional entrepreneurs' work and the role of logics in UK business schools. From a PRME practitioner perspective, they have provided supportive business school managers and PRME advocates with useful knowledge about the strategies and practices associated with PRME success and failure. Such learning has potential implications for and transferability to similar, normatively challenging, divergent change projects within business school and wider HE settings.

From an institutional theory perspective, this study has confirmed the conclusions or validated the recommendations of a number of previous studies and also added two specific contributions. It has confirmed the value of a practice approach in understanding the day to day actions involved in institutional change work. It has affirmed the value of investigating practices from both a cognitive as well as an affective perspective. The exploration of logics and their impacts has emphasised the fruitfulness of analysing the progress of institutional change projects through such a lens. The application of concepts derived from social movement literature has confirmed the richness of insights available through analysis at the intersection of institutional and social movement theory.

Apart from a new dataset supportive of the outcomes above, two particular contributions to the institutional literature are noted. First, a revised, institutionally-infused, version of Harris's (2002) framework for understanding emotional work is offered as the basis for future research into the affective dimensions of the institutional work undertaken by professional groups seeking normatively divergent change. And second, a model for understanding the multi-faceted complexity involved in PRME (and potentially similar) institutional work is offered. This model draws on the literature on the organisational implications of logic pluralism and complexity, but additionally frames it from an institutional work perspective.

6.3 Avenues for future research suggested by this study

With the recent injunctions of Pettigrew et al (2014) in mind, I have, notwithstanding the main Organisation Studies framing of this research, sought where possible to locate this study within wider HE research literatures inside and outside the

institutional studies field. This has had particular benefits in terms of embedding a consideration of business school logics within the debates about the changing purposes, policies and practices that mark HE in the UK (e.g. Lynch, 2006; Deem et al, 2007; Collini, 2012). Maintaining this broader engagement would be one general recommendation for future institutional studies of the business school field.

An acknowledged limitation of this study has been its reliance on actor reports of their own practices. While offering valuable insights into institutional change processes, my findings have therefore not benefited from other actors' experiences of PRME actors' practices. Nor has the benefit of observation and recording of such practices been possible. Both would have required an investment of resources beyond the scope of this study, but could through further studies potentially contribute from practice, institutional work and in particular logic disruption perspectives to the recent call by Powell and Bromley (2013) for empirical evaluation of micro theories that portray individuals and institutions as mutually constitutive. Case study type research projects in these areas could also contribute institutional perspectives to complement previous single organisation PRME implementation studies conducted from other perspectives (e.g. Kirby, 2012; Maloni et al, 2012; Young and Nagpal, 2013).

The findings on logic plurality and complexity in business school settings have potential implications for norm challenging, divergent change projects emanating from out-of-field or relatively marginal field actors that resonate beyond PRME and business school settings. Comparable studies from logics and entrepreneurship perspectives of other emerging field calls, for instance in relation to investigating

black students' relative academic underperformance UK universities, could provide useful comparative data to aid understanding of institutional dynamics in business school and wider HE settings.

Identity, power, agency and legitimacy were four areas of investigation not actively pursued in this study, on manageability grounds rather than because of any conceptual irrelevance. Despite this exclusion, there have been intimations throughout the findings of the potential value in future PRME studies of bringing these factors into closer focus and of so addressing, in a way I have not, Clegg's (2010) critique that power and agency dimensions are too often undeveloped in institutional analyses.

My amendment to Harris's (2002) framework to capture my understanding of the origins, nature and consequences of emotional work amongst PRME advocates could usefully be tested in other contexts. These might be in relation to PRME entrepreneur settings, other HE change agent settings as well as studies of institutional transformation work by professional groups more widely.

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With both future research and practice priorities in mind, Meyer and Höllerer's recent (2014) reminder about the nature of institutions is worth repeating. They remark that "across all conceptual approaches, and despite all differences between the various schools of thought, notions of recurrence, typification, solidified patterns and relative durability are at the core of what institutions are" (p. 1229). Even in the current changing landscape that is HE, it is those qualities of recurrence, solidity and durability amongst established, dominant HE and business school logics that are the source of the multi-faceted obstacles to the work of PRME's institutional

entrepreneurs highlighted here. This study suggests that only if PRME actors both individually and collectively are able to frame, mobilise support for and enact the PRME project at organisational and field level in a more compelling, substantive and sustainable fashion might this current institutional ordering change in a meaningful way. And what rings true for PRME at this time may have resonance for divergent HE change projects elsewhere and at other times as well.

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