A Study of Current Teacher Professionals and their Attitudes towards Promotion and Careers

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of Professional Doctor in Education in the Manchester Institute of Education

2015

Rachel Joy Chard
School of Education, Environment and Development
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Abstract

This study focuses on the career paths and career projections of teacher professionals who are at a stage in their professional roles where they have not embarked upon senior leadership positions in the schools in which they work. Often research has focused retrospectively on the career paths of those already in leadership posts rather than those who are expected to be aspiring to leadership, have discounted this option or are yet to make a decision. Increasing numbers of re-advertisements for headship posts indicates a lack of willing or suitable candidates applying. Changes to school staffing structures and the role of headteachers in recent years have resulted in greater responsibilities including financial matters and the maintenance of premises. Government policies in favour of schools becoming academies has removed local authority support and placed increased pressure on individual school leaders. These factors coupled with the external inspection system and the media focus on so called failing schools has led to the role of head becoming unattractive to many and this study aims to collect the views of a sample of teachers regarding this role.

Six schools of similar type were selected from within one local authority and a survey was utilised in order to collect data. This was initially in the form of a questionnaire completed by seventy nine teachers from which twelve participants took part in two interviews each. Teachers were subsequently organised into one of four career categories; ‘careerist’, ‘serendipity’, ‘active choice’ and ‘stuck’.

Analysis of the data indicates that many teacher professionals do not plan to become senior leaders or heads. This is in agreement with many serving heads who in existing research claim not to have planned their routes to headship. However, the majority of the sample in this study have already ruled out the role of head, finding the pressures and perceived stress of the role unappealing and not wishing to lose their identity as classroom teachers. The underrepresentation of women in headteacher posts does not look likely to be addressed in the near future as females in the study are more likely to feel unable to pursue leadership roles often due to family commitments. A larger proportion of females have made the choice not to pursue leadership roles than males, even when those females did not necessarily have the pressures of home responsibilities. For many females future decisions regarding starting families and seeking promotions produced dilemmas that men did not appear to have to confront. These factors look likely to lead to continued headteacher shortages in the short term with no real incentives to encourage females to pursue such posts now or in the future.
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<td>Managing director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCSL</td>
<td>National College for School Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCTL</td>
<td>National College for Teaching and Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFER</td>
<td>National Foundation for Educational Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPQH</td>
<td>National Professional Qualification for Headship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPQML</td>
<td>National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPQSL</td>
<td>National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofsted</td>
<td>Office for Standards in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGCE</td>
<td>Post Graduate Certificate of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEF</td>
<td>Self evaluation form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENCO</td>
<td>Special educational needs co-ordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLT</td>
<td>Senior leadership team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRB</td>
<td>School Teachers’ Review Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T and L</td>
<td>Teaching and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TES</td>
<td>Time Educational Supplement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLR</td>
<td>Teaching and learning responsibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1
Introduction to the Thesis

1.1 Introduction

The aim of the research reported in this thesis is to gain an understanding of the attitudes towards careers of teacher professionals working in secondary schools and in particular their views on aspiring to senior leadership roles and ultimately headship. Careers are often perceived as a linear journey but breaks for having children, travelling or poor health frequently result in professionals returning at a lower level of seniority. I intend to uncover influences from the lives of a sample of teachers and their reasons for pursuing promotions or ‘staying put’. Impacting factors may include age, relationships and family circumstances but also the culture of the establishment in which they teach. The study will begin by focusing on the perceived career opportunities available to teacher professionals. Differing hierarchical leadership structures paired with various school priorities may affect what paid or unpaid opportunities are available to teachers, subsequently affecting their career attitudes in a positive or negative manner. I will be aiming to uncover similarities and differences regarding attitudes to careers between males and females, experienced and inexperienced professionals and across different age ranges.

National headteacher shortages (Howson, 2010) indicate long term concerns ‘if the number of deputy and assistant headship posts on offer continues to decline to a point where it falls below the replacement levels required’ (p. 18). I aim to probe further into this perceived reluctance to take on roles of significant responsibility, investigating if this is purely a personal choice by teachers or if there are deeper issues within the system. Career uncertainties may indicate that further training is required but a reluctance to pursue promotion may be attributed to personal influences such as responsibilities in the home, perhaps indicating that the system of pursuing careers does not readily support a balance between career and home in the eyes of the teacher.

Five exploratory research questions will provide the structure for the project, the first of which asks ‘what are the career opportunities available for teacher professionals in secondary schools?’ In order to ascertain which opportunities have been pursued, the second research question asks ‘what are the experiences of teacher professionals regarding their career and in applying for promotions?’ Through explaining those experiences research question three will subsequently be
addressed; ‘what are the attitudes of these teacher professionals towards promotion and careers up to headship?’ The research findings from these questions will ultimately inform on research question four, which asks ‘what are the implications of these experiences and attitudes for professional training, induction and development?’ Also of importance throughout the study is research question five which will inform policy makers and researchers on the development of educational leaders, and that is ‘in what ways can the analysis of career attitudes be described and explained through gender perspectives?’

The methodology combines a quantitative and qualitative approach whereby I undertake a questionnaire with teachers, followed by a two phased interview process over a period between one year and eighteen months. I have chosen to focus on those professionals not in senior leadership; those regarded as the pool from which future leaders will be drawn. This may include teachers at the start of their careers or more experienced professionals who hold responsibilities, paid or unpaid, in addition to their usual teaching roles. All will currently teach in the North West of England, drawn from a sample of six secondary schools within one local authority. For those already aspiring to headship, I aim to find out if their training needs are being addressed and if they are aware of the NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship), the standard training currently in place for those already in senior leadership, although not mandatory from early 2012 (NCSL, 2011). For early careers teachers I will investigate their experiences of training or coaching towards leadership and the nature of any provision. These questions may highlight gaps in provision, perhaps within the authority or even nationwide. In terms of linking the conceptual aspects of this study with the fieldwork, policy scholarship as defined by Grace (1995) will inform my thinking, where the circumstances and contexts in which each participant is located will be considered. In my analysis of individual teachers I will also utilise the method of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis, 1997) enabling a greater understanding of the positioning of each participant.

The study should benefit staff members allowing them to contemplate their own career decisions, but should also be of use to me in my own professional role as assistant headteacher and line manager of a number of professionals in my own school. In addition to informing members of the
public sector workforce the study will be of interest to the wider research community including those working in the fields of leadership, career development and gender studies. The study is original in its approach, encompassing an empirical, methodological and conceptual contribution, original to the field. This is developed through the use of mixed methods implemented over a period of eighteen months.

1.2 Rationale for the Study

The reasons for this research including my personal interest and link to my professional background are discussed in this section.

1.2.1 Professional Autobiographical Background

My career in education began in 1998, teaching mathematics in a secondary school in the North West of England. Career advice offered from my PGCE university tutor was that after three years of teaching I should consider my first promotion. However, I achieved this after just one year and during the following twelve years secured five further promotions, three of which involved moving to different establishments. Along this journey I have encountered others who are eager to move up the leadership hierarchy and conversely those who are content to remain in the same role throughout their careers. During this period I have worked for five male headteachers and one female. My own career aspirations can be linked with a desire to learn, and having completed a Masters in Education in 2004, I embarked upon a Professional Doctorate in 2009.

This learning journey also coincided with my introduction to the senior leadership team at my current school, where the continued professional development of staff became one of my responsibilities. A tendency by staff to treat professional development solely as attendance at external courses greeted me, and it became clear that differences existed in the experiences of staff regarding aspirations and progress. My own research on current headteachers (Chard, 2011) highlighted the fact that many leaders do not set out to reach the top role, but are encouraged by others throughout their careers. This led me to consider who had encouraged me along my journey and why I had made certain decisions at certain times.
1.2.2 Professional Context for the Research

The issue of headteacher shortages and the re-advertisement of many leadership posts (Howson, 2010) is a serious concern. If I am unsure about aspiring to the top role, the key to encouraging those further down the hierarchy to strive for headship needs to be examined. By gaining a greater understanding of the influences involved in the career decisions of teachers, policy for identifying and encouraging potential leaders can be developed. An underrepresentation of females in headteacher roles in comparison to the numbers teaching is also of serious concern. McNamara et al. (2008) state that females constitute 58 per cent of the secondary workforce in England yet in 2011 Howson and Sprigade (2011) found that women ‘accounted for 47% of all appointments made in schools with 400 - 1,000 pupils on roll’ but ‘this dropped to 27% in schools with 1,000 to 2,000 pupils on roll’ (p. 24). Numbers of female heads have been shown to differ between regions (Fuller, 2009) with Howson and Sprigade (2011) highlighting that ‘only one of the seven new head teachers in the East Midlands was female’ (p. 25).

The majority of current educational leadership research focuses on those teacher professionals who have already aspired to and achieved the top roles (Ribbins and Marland, 1994; Hall, 1996; Pascal and Ribbins, 1998; Rayner and Ribbins, 1999; Wolcott, 2003). This provides retrospective career stories from those who have experienced successful promotions and whilst these may prove informative in the research field, attitudes of those professionals towards their careers may have changed over time and memories may be somewhat edited. Add to this the existence of very little research regarding those not currently in senior leadership positions and strategies for addressing the lack of headteachers become all the more difficult to devise. Therefore robust research is required to address why so many capable teachers with leadership potential appear to be turning their backs on the opportunities available.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

This introductory chapter is followed by an analysis of careers in education through the review of literatures in chapter two. I focus on the changes over time of the promotion opportunities available in educational establishments and the change in role and perceived accountability of the headteacher. Gender in leadership is analysed, with the lack of specific references to gender in
some earlier literatures providing evidence that male domination in the profession was viewed as unproblematic. I use the literatures to investigate the concept of careers by those in the teaching profession and the career trajectories that have been adopted or adapted over time. These literatures will be utilised throughout this thesis alongside my own findings to strengthen or refute previous conclusions.

In chapter three I explain my research design and methodology. My questionnaire data builds on an initial pilot study where forty two questionnaires and four interviews shape my theoretical framework and enable me to conceptualise what career means to teacher professionals. I explain how my categories of ‘careerist’, ‘serendipitous’, ‘active choice’ and ‘stuck’ with regards to career attitudes were devised and how participants were positioned within these. For this study I use questionnaire data from a further seventy nine teacher professionals and I explain how twelve participants were chosen for interview, followed by a second interview in twelve to eighteen months time.

Chapter four is where I present four stories to illustrate the differing career attitudes of four teacher professionals. Vignettes demonstrate the variety of experiences that the four face in their professional and personal lives and their different opinions towards leadership in education. This leads to chapter five where I present my questionnaire and interview findings in terms of analysing attitudes towards careers. I focus on the professional’s identities as teachers and the importance they place on being in the classroom. Second interviews reveal any shifts in the positioning of these teachers, in particular if any personal circumstances have changed over time.

In chapters six and seven I continue to analyse the questionnaire and interview data in line with recent literatures. Chapter six focuses on perceptions of the role of headteacher and other members of leadership teams. I enquire about possible gaps in training and if the participants feel equipped to make informed choices about leadership now or in the future. In chapter seven I am interested in examining my findings in relation to gender. I analyse the data in terms of any differences in attitude and aspirations between males and females and investigate whether the
underrepresentation of females in headship roles can be attributed to factors early on in females’ careers.

In chapter eight I present my research conclusions and the contribution to knowledge that the outcomes make to this field. I describe the aspirations of those making their way on the first few rungs of the career ladder and include recommendations for future policy and practice, also suggesting areas where further research would be beneficial.
Chapter 2
Educational Career Histories and the Role of Headteacher

2.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the research evidence and literatures surrounding educational career histories and the evolving role of the headteacher. The chapter begins by focusing on how careers are perceived by those possessing educational roles. This provides an insight into how the teacher professionals involved in my research may view the concept of career when responding to the questionnaire or during the interview process. Already embedded thoughts on the word career may have influenced the participant’s professional and personal decisions in the past, along with their perceived career opportunities available, which is addressed in the next section of this chapter. Promotional opportunities in schools can be complex due to a raft of factors including internal politics of a working environment and expectations of applying or not applying for roles as well as the external influences of Government policy. These factors are discussed along with the conflicts that some teachers face between their professional and personal lives. Changes to leadership structures in schools are reviewed over time and how more emphasis is now placed on senior leadership teams. This has coincided with the demise of local authorities, an increase in academies and an increased public and standards driven accountability for headteachers. I argue that this perceived increase in pressure has exacerbated the issue of headteacher shortages particularly as large numbers of heads have taken early retirement in recent years.

Finally I focus on literatures tracking female’s continued underrepresentation at headship level arguing that many of these potential female leaders face career dilemmas that the majority of males do not have to contend with. This leads to the final section on the masculinity of leadership, citing literatures that argue that the association of males with leadership through time are deeply embedded and proving difficult to adjust.

2.2 The Concept of Career

I shall begin by problematising the word career as this can have different meanings for different individuals. In 1960 Wilensky noted that a career can be viewed as ‘a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable
sequence’ (p. 543) implying an image of moving up a career ladder over time to posts with more responsibility and higher pay. However, as Sikes et al. (1985) point out, many of those working in the teaching profession do not view their careers in this manner, but have ‘a strong vocational commitment’ and ‘see their job and their futures purely in terms of the educational effects they have on children’ (p. 1). Rather than careers being recounted as a continuous journey, those narrating their own careers recall individual events by which to describe the experience, as noted by Cohen et al. (2004) who state that individuals choose ‘one version of events over another’ (p. 411), something that is of importance as I question those with a range of experiences during my research. The word career can also intimate a journey over a significant period of time, where those who are starting out in a professional role consider themselves to be at the beginning of their careers. However, some individuals who remain in one role throughout their career may look upon those who have succeeded to higher paid or more responsible roles as viewing their own choices as a failure. This is dependent on the individual and according to James and Whiting (1998) this view is decreasing, as ‘more recent studies acknowledge that while some individuals may strive for the top job (unlimited successors), it is also possible for others to be satisfied, motivated and committed to an occupation without holding the most senior position’ (p. 354). The idea of career may give the impression that each professional is in charge of their route, but their choices can be influenced by an abundance of factors, some beyond the control of that professional. Cohen (2006) analyses how careers are structured by an individual:

My starting point is the notion of the social world, not as a fixed entity, external to individuals and impacting on them in a deterministic way, but as constructed by individuals and groups through their social practices. From this social constructionist perspective a career is not conceptualised as a form or structure that an individual temporarily inhabits, constraining or enabling her journey. Rather, it is constituted by the actor herself. However, this is not to suggest that individuals have free reign as to how they enact their careers (p. 190).

In secondary education the pathway through from a newly qualified teacher to a post of senior responsibility has always appeared to be fairly lineal on paper. However, this is rarely the case with a plethora of route choices to gain promotions. It could be assumed that those pursuing senior leadership posts will continue onto the role of headteacher, as reflected in some senior leadership advertisements and professional development materials. James and Whiting (1998) argue that those reaching headship do so via unmanaged routes where any ‘formal management development programmes at national and local levels characteristically premised on the
assumption that a large number of deputy headteachers will want to seek promotion actively and progress to headship’ (p. 353). In fact their findings revealed that ‘less than half of the respondents were either actively seeking or regarded themselves as potential aspirants for headship’ (p. 358) with many doubting their own ability to do the top job (p. 360). This concurs with the ‘limited successors’ (p. 354) of James and Whiting (1998) indicating that career does not necessarily mean climbing the rungs of a ladder to the very top. Earley and Weindling (1988) also note that very few who have reached headship intended to do so early on in their careers:

Three of our initial 47 interviewees were with female heads who, like the majority of their male counterparts, did not deliberately plan to become heads. Two remarked how they had not given much thought to their career – it was only as deputies they had decided they wanted to become heads – whilst the other had decided on headship at an earlier stage when a head of department (p. 9).

So it would appear that the majority of those entering the teaching profession do not initially consider the role of headteacher as a possible career move; this is contemplated much later on. The issue of recruiting heads is also a concern for the primary sector, with re-advertisements for headteacher posts increasing. The TES (2013) reported that in January 2013 twenty five per cent of such posts were re-advertised, ‘up significantly from 15 per cent for the same period last year, and a higher proportion than in any year since 2000’ (p. 12). In a 2011 survey Howson and Sprigade reported that ‘36% of primary, 19% of secondary and 39% of special school head teacher posts were reported unfilled after an advertisement this year’ (unpaged). Whilst these figures could imply that some view the top job as unappealing, there are those educational professionals who value their identities as classroom teachers and wish to maintain classroom contact with pupils. Sikes et al. (1985) state that ambitions can be realised through successful responses from pupils and a skill for doing the job (p. 242). However this dedication to the role can sometimes be misinterpreted as passivity, as Thody (2000) views the decision to not pursue leadership roles as a willingness to follow:

Following properly is as important to your organisation’s success as are the activities of the principal or any other manager senior to yourself. Valuing followership is also important to your own self-esteem. It is obvious that very few reach the top leadership roles, so confidence in your own self-worth is vital if an organisation is not going to be overwhelmed by disgruntled non-leaders. To follow joyfully is better than to lead (p. 16-17).

Indeed, this view does not take into account the complex reasons for teachers wishing to remain in the classroom, an aspect which I will investigate further throughout my data chapters. Whilst those
In considering career routes those involved in partnerships consider their paths in relation to their personal lives. Evetts (1994) identifies different strategies adopted by individuals and their partners stating that whilst ‘it is common for wives to support their husbands’ careers, it is, as yet, rare for husbands to support their wives’ careers’ (p. 66). In their research Sikes et al. (1985) also identified ‘family life beginning to exert an influence in its own right on motivation for and direction of careers’ (p. 228) in particular as professionals reached aged thirty and above. I will therefore be considering the issues of family responsibilities and age when carrying out my research with a particular focus on the theme of teacher identity. Whilst many teacher professionals are choosing to remain in the classroom, more varied leadership roles are emerging and I shall investigate how these have developed in the following two sections.

2.3 Perceived Career Opportunities

Careers and career opportunities in schools, in particular secondary schools, are not straightforward. The nature of roles has evolved over the years, often under the influence of key policies (see Appendix 1) and opportunities can depend on a range of circumstances. Burgess (1988) states that current analyses ‘fail to come to terms with the dynamics of teachers’ work and teachers’ careers and the micro-political situations in which teachers are located’ (p. 122), with these becoming even more complex in recent years. The practicalities of promotional opportunities available to secondary school teacher professionals include the number of pupils on role, the number of pupils opting to take particular subjects, and those with paid responsibilities who may choose to move on. Factors such as the specialist subjects offered by schools are often influenced greatly by Government policy and the accountability that school leaders and the school’s inspectorate put in place. Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) found that ‘heads from schools in challenging circumstances identified Ofsted reporting as a catalyst for changes in the senior
leadership team’ (p. 388) indicating that some schools are appointing to appease the inspectorate and survive, rather than planning for their own specific future. An example from 2004 was a change in policy when taking a foreign language at GCSE ceased to be compulsory. A decline began in the number of students studying these subjects to the point where French fell out of the top ten GCSE subjects taken for the first time in 2010 (BBC News Website, 2010). Those schools who continued to specify a language as compulsory found themselves at an advantage later on in 2010 when the qualification was used towards the new Ebacc accountability measure. Such actions impact greatly on the decisions of senior leaders when appointing new staff and on those intending to enter the profession. For particular subjects the ratio of boys to girls can also have an effect such as in Burgess’s (1988) case study where for a girls’ PE department ‘the decline in pupil numbers meant fewer lessons and as a result someone would have to leave’ (p. 126). In addition to this are the more subjective factors affecting career opportunities. These can include senior leadership creating a role to entice an individual to remain at their establishment, changes to the leadership structure within schools and departments imposed by governing bodies or not replacing paid roles when an individual leaves. The geographical area in which a school is situated can also influence the possible promotion opportunities of certain groups along with other factors such as faith schools or single sex schools. In terms of headteacher appointments in 2011, Howson and Sprigade report that ‘only one of the seven new head teachers in the East Midlands was female, and only in Eastern England were the numbers of men and women who were appointed equal’ (p. 25), a clear disparity when compared with the number of female teachers at secondary level.

Whilst some career opportunities may present themselves to those who are not actively looking, there are those for whom, through personal circumstances, career doors are closed. It can even be difficult for individuals to identify their own reasons for walking away from such opportunities. Cohen et al. (2004) discovered that whilst some individuals cited their professional role as conflicting with their personal lives, the detailed reasoning was often far more complicated:

Of the women who cited parental duties as their principal reason for leaving, though, it became apparent in the course of their interview that their motivation was far more complex, that motherhood was one in a web of factors that resulted in their decision.... Whereas the desire for more autonomy and greater control at work may not have been seen (by herself or others) as a legitimate reason to leave, the desire to do the best for her children was (p. 416).
So teacher professionals may or may not pursue promotions depending on the perceived views of others and how this may affect their future opportunities. Changing schools to pursue opportunities is not uncommon and yet some teachers feel more comfortable moving establishments to take a step down the hierarchy for fear of how it would appear to colleagues at their current school. Different schools can have different expectations of very similar sounding roles, and this can even include the headteacher which I shall now discuss further.

2.4 Changes to Leadership Structures and the Role of Headteacher

Over the years the structure of leadership in schools has changed drastically and has continued to evolve during the twenty first century. School leadership teams are now larger than twenty years ago since the introduction of assistant headteachers. This change was spurred by the New Labour Green Paper (1998) which stated:

While heads are of crucial importance, leadership in schools is often shared and studies show that this shared leadership responsibility is a characteristic of successful heads. In many schools the members of senior management teams help heads give strategic direction in schools. We believe that governing bodies should have discretion to reflect this by appointing key senior staff to a new leadership pay spine subject to similar terms and conditions as those which currently apply to heads and deputies (p. 25).

Indeed, many new roles have come into force providing more opportunities and greater autonomy for individuals. Teaching and learning responsibility payments (TLRs) were introduced in 2006 (BBC News Website, 2005) replacing the previous management allowances. Heads were advised to review their staffing structures at this time and rather than follow the nationally controlled system for management allowances award TLRs at a rate that they thought suitable for the role (Howson, 2009). A sample of recently advertised roles (TES 2014) and associated salaries are shown in table 2.1:
Table 2.1: Sample of educational roles advertised in 2014 in England.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Advertised Salary</th>
<th>Actual Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject Teacher</td>
<td>Teacher of Key Stages 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>Mainscale (£21,804 to £31,868)</td>
<td>£21,804 to £31,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordinator of Key Stage 4</td>
<td>Oversee progress at Key Stage 4 in mathematics</td>
<td>Mainscale plus TLR 2AA (£3,000)</td>
<td>£24,804 to £34,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordinator of Key Stage 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mainscale plus TLR 2c (£6,028)</td>
<td>£27,832 to £37,896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mathematics department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second in mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mainscale plus TLR 2.1 (£6,257) with additional</td>
<td>£28,061 to £38,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second in mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>recruitment allowance of £5000 available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordinator for pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mainscale plus TLR 1(1) (£7,397)</td>
<td>£29,201 to £39,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with special educational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Headteacher</td>
<td>Join the senior leadership team of an 11-18 school</td>
<td>L11 – L15 (£48,505 to £53,429)</td>
<td>£48,505 to £53,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Headteacher</td>
<td>Join the senior leadership team of an 11-16 school</td>
<td>L17 – L21 (£56,109 to £61,901)</td>
<td>£56,109 to £61,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academy Principal</td>
<td>Lead an 11-18 converter academy</td>
<td>L32 – L37 (£81,047 to £91,612)</td>
<td>£81,047 to £91,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Principal</td>
<td>Lead a new school and contribute to a cluster of schools</td>
<td>Negotiable</td>
<td>Negotiable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This sample of salaries demonstrates that schools now have different labels for their additional management points, such as ‘2AA’, ‘2C’ and ‘2.1’ with the attached actual salary therefore necessary. The wide range in the salary groups remains not only down to teaching experience but from 2014 the headteacher’s decision whether an individual should progress up the pay scale based on performance. The School Teachers’ Review Body report (2014) stated that this provided ‘opportunities for teachers to progress through the framework according to skills, roles and performance, with school leaders given responsibility for setting appropriate individual starting pay and determining individual pay awards based on achievement against school objectives’ (p. 36), creating greater autonomy and flexibility for heads. Conversely this could be seen to add extra pressure to teachers who may suffer if their students do not perform as expected or if they do not feel to be in favour with the particular head making that decision. The three threshold points that experienced teachers could apply for from 2000 were replaced by the upper pay range in 2014 (STRB, p. 40) also approved or refused by the headteacher, whereby the basic salary was increased to between £34,523 and £37,124. A leading practitioner pay scale was also introduced in 2013 to be used at the discretion of the headteacher, ranging from £37,836 to £57,520 (DfE, 2013a), providing heads with even more flexibility in roles and payments for individuals. These
options appear to have been introduced to alleviate shortages in particular subjects and prevent large numbers of teachers leaving the profession. Both recruitment and retention were identified as problematic in the 2014 School Teachers’ Review Body report, which states that ‘there is clear and consistent evidence that both the starting and profession-wide pay of teachers is less competitive relative to other professional occupations in several areas of the country, and this gap is widening’ (p. 33). Other strategies have also been introduced to reward those teachers wishing to remain in the classroom and share their expertise. According to the New Labour Green Paper (1998) advanced skills teacher roles were ‘created in 1998 to provide a career path for excellent teachers who want to remain classroom practitioners’ (p. 26). Whilst the Green Paper predicted figures to reach ‘5,000 by the year 2000 reaching a total of 10,000 in the longer term’ (p. 26) Fuller et al. (2013) reported that just 1400 posts were held in the National College database (p. 466) indicating the scheme had not reached expectations in terms of uptake and those offering the posts. The Excellent Teacher Scheme set up in 2006 suffered a similar fate. The scheme was designed to provide an alternative career path for those not wishing to pursue management roles but by the end of 2008 just 59 posts existed in England and Wales (Hutchings et al., 2009), far below the expectations that 20 per cent of eligible teachers would become excellent teachers. Ultimately, both the advanced skills teacher and excellent teacher schemes were abolished in August 2013, when the School Teachers’ Review Body recommended that they were ended ‘as part of a wider package of reform to give schools greater freedom to determine how teachers are paid’ (DfE, 2013b). Hence the plan to raise the status and autonomy of classroom teachers has now returned from national level to school level.

Hall and Wallace (1996) argue that whilst heads are still in charge of an organisation they are increasingly becoming team leaders (p. 297). Senior management teams, now usually referred to as senior leadership teams have become a key feature in the majority of schools. Hall and Wallace (1996) note the benefits of sharing the leadership responsibilities as ‘faced with the increasing complexity of school management, particularly after the 1988 Education Reform Act in England and Wales, many secondary headteachers have been attracted by the opportunities teamwork offers to share new tasks and decision making, in order to implement the changes arising from central government policies for reform’ (p. 299). The possibility of sharing expertise was a vision
shared by Packwood in 1989 where he demonstrated how headteachers could work across more than one school. To an extent this vision has come into practice with the creation of executive headteacher roles who oversee in some cases five or six schools. However, rather than the remaining senior leaders deputising ‘for the headteacher in his or her absence’ (p. 12) it is a conventional headteacher who runs the day to day systems with a consultant type figure overseeing them. Packwood’s (1989) vision (figure 2.1) demonstrates the levels of seniority and his predictions for the future:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENT PATTERN</th>
<th>FUTURE PATTERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Head of Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Head of Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Head of Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Heads of Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heads of Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heads of Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 2.1: The changes in managerial relationships as predicted by Packwood (1989)](image)

Packwood’s (1989) vision also demonstrates that roles in a school were fairly compact in that the responsibilities only spanned across three and then four levels. Whilst the main structure of senior leaders has adapted with the introduction of assistant headteachers, there have become many further opportunities for promotion lower down the hierarchy, adding many more levels of seniority. Grace (1995) refers to these areas of responsibility as not just senior and middle management but also ‘junior management’ (p. 124). To add to the complexity many schools converting to academy status are now accountable to either academy sponsors in the form of business executives or academy directors, adding yet another layer to the levels of leadership. Figure 2.2 demonstrates such a structure at the school in which I carried out my pilot research:
Figure 2.2: Overview of leadership at pilot school

Whilst the overall levels of Packwood’s 1980s hierarchy are maintained, this structure
demonstrates the increased complexity of roles that headteachers must now oversee and
manage. Whilst they were previously accountable to school governors and parents, they must now
also work with academy and finance staff often from business backgrounds, allowing current
heads to focus on teaching and learning. This model could be seen as allowing heads in England
to compete with those overseas where a more business-like approach to the role is often taken.
Rennie (1986) demonstrates the difference between the traditional English head and the American administrator:

Head teacher, as the title implies, is a teacher; this means he or she is unlikely to
have the background or training of, for example, the US school administrator. This
may give the... principal an educational advantage over his or her American
counterpart but, in theory at least, leaves him in a disadvantageous position in terms
of management expertise (p. 165).
The introduction of business teams to support heads is far from the image portrayed at the turn of the twentieth century, where the head was viewed as the crucial individual in a school’s success. Protherough (1984) explains that ‘the rising status – and matching salaries – of headmasters in the later Victorian age owed much to the notion that they were the dominant factor in determining a school’s fortunes’ (p. 239). The image of a dominant headmaster figure was portrayed in novels of the era and in ‘The Manchester Man’ Banks (1876) describes the ‘unusually severe’ (p. 97) face of Doctor Jeremiah Smith when he confronts boys who have been fighting in the yard. His ‘commanding eye swept the trembling rank from end to end, as he stood with impressive dignity to address them’ (p. 97-8). Banks goes on to add to the image of a powerful individual; ‘Some of the little ones took out their handkerchiefs and began to whimper, fearing condign punishment’ (p.98).

In many literary works of the era Protherough (1984) discovers that the image of the headmaster is one of a very public figure with little involvement in the actual learning taking place in their school:

The most striking fact is perhaps how remote they seem from the actual work of the school, which seems to be delegated to others. Instead of being the leader of a group of ‘assistants’ essentially engaged in the same work as himself, the head is increasingly seen as the organiser of a team of specialists; his authority rests less on scholarship and more on his management skills; in particular he tends to be judged by his public appearances (p. 244).

This image is not dissimilar to how some headteachers are perceived today although in reality they may have far more involvement with pupil learning than is sometimes visible. The switch from classroom teacher to headteacher is viewed as an entirely different role by many and as Thomson (2009) explains, potential heads must be able to visualise themselves with this new identity as ‘deciding to become a headteacher is in part a decision to become someone other than a classroom teacher, and to claim expertise, authority and power in relation to the education of children and young people’ (p. 29). The multitude of skills required to lead a school may sometimes be overlooked by the media of today and this appeared to also be the case over one hundred years ago. As Protherough (1984) reports, the first professional organisation was designed for headmasters rather than for schools and whilst in addition to being ‘energetic and dynamic as well as scholarly’... ‘many were also liberal, witty, reformist, progressive, kindly and understanding’ (p. 239) although these latter qualities were lost in any written recollections of such headmasters. The physical stature of a figure in authority was also seen to be of importance and this can sometimes be viewed as a factor when appointing candidates today. Whilst headmasters
from the nineteenth century were portrayed as large, imposing figures, this may have been based on the recollections of those pupils who were intimidated by the school leaders of the time. Today headteachers can be of any stature and working collegially is no longer viewed as a sign of weakness. In fact in the 1970s a headteacher interviewed by Hughes (1975) stated ‘I never make an important decision without consulting with somebody’ (p. 51).

One major concern in the twenty first century is the number of headteachers reaching retirement age. NCSL (2013) reported that:

In 1997, 40 per cent of heads were over 50 years old and 13 per cent were over 55 years old. But in 2011, 54 per cent of heads were aged over 50 and 30 per cent of heads were aged over 55.

Not only was there an increase in the ages of heads, but many were taking retirement earlier, leaving greater numbers of posts to be filled. NCSL (2013) reported that ‘The College’s supply and demand model predicts an 8 per cent increase in headteachers retiring in 2015 compared to the number retiring in 2012’. The filling of such headship posts quickly can prove problematic as Howson and Sprigade (2011) point out:

There is little evidence of rapid promotion to leadership posts. The need for a minimum of ten years service for a headship, coupled with a maximum age beyond which appointment panels do not seem to recruit first-time head teachers poses career dilemmas for late entrants to the profession, especially in the secondary sector where in large subject areas there may be five or even six steps on the ladder from classroom teacher to a headship. For the 28% of newly qualified teachers who entered service in 2011 after their 30th birthday, becoming a head teacher will be somewhat of a challenge if current trends persist (unpaged).

The continued reluctance to fill headship posts quickly can also be attributed to the importance given to experience gained in an educational setting by potential school leaders. Whilst candidates may have alternative life experiences to offer when applying for headships, it can often be safer for employees to gear their application process to skills developed in a school setting. As Blackmore et al. (2006) point out ‘appointing on potential is a more risky business for panels’ (p. 304). There is also a perception in many literatures (Draper and McMichael, 1998; James and Whiting, 1998; Thomson, 2009) that the role of headteacher appears to be becoming more challenging than ever, discouraging potential applicants from applying until they have more experience or putting them off altogether. Thomson (2009) notes that heads ‘talk openly at their professional conferences and to media about their discontent with policy, about high levels of stress and about leaving the job’ (p.
11). The increased availability of technology now means that headteachers must publish various statistics regarding their schools online, plus various ‘data dashboards’ are now published by the Department for Education for governors and parents and recent inspection reports are just as easy to locate. This constant level of public scrutiny is in addition to the internal issues of running a school including staffing, finance, buildings, safeguarding and teaching and learning, but the use of data in inspections is possibly the most daunting factor due to its open yet crude nature. Thomson (2009) notes that such data, intended to improve learning, is now seen by many as ‘unhelpful, morally dubious, and are impractical – too time-consuming, too paper-driven and too inflexible and prescriptive’ (p. 114). Such data cannot be ignored by headteachers whether they are in agreement with the accountability measures or not, as ultimately this is how schools and their headteachers are now judged.

2.5 Gender and Headship

Striving for equality for female teachers is not a new phenomenon, with the educational newspaper, the *Times Educational Supplement* debating issues of equal pay and curriculum on their front page back in 1930 (TES, 2011). Drastic change was required if females were to adapt from the Victorian image of womanhood as described by Reiger (1993) where the female was:

...the angel in the house, the nurturing figure who was the centre of home and family.... She was irrational, she was nurturing, but primarily wife and mother. She thus provided the ideal complement to the breadwinner, father figure (p 19).

The late Victorian era had seen small numbers of female headteachers leading schools in innovative ways, although Watts (1998) reports that whilst they adopted some aspects of leadership witnessed by male heads, they remained ‘limited by what they thought women should, rather than could, do’ (p. 350). Teaching was one of few professions that women could be accepted into and these women played a key part in the growing public role of a headmistress, involving themselves in all aspects of education, striving to do what Watts (1998) refers to as widening ‘women’s educational experience’ (p. 346). However, the pace of change remained too slow for some, with men in particular still stuck in these past traditions. The 1930s *Times Educational Supplement* front page commented that ‘if the revolt seems to some to make headway too slowly, and to encounter obstacles too unyielding, let the history of women teachers bring, if not patience, at least a little comfort to the women by showing them that they are at war with an
age-long tradition that was unchallenged for centuries, a prejudice that is tightly woven into the texture of men’s minds’ (TES, 2011). Many of those in education today deem any inequalities to be resolving themselves, with male headteachers content that an increase in the number of females in leadership teams will automatically result in more females progressing to the role of head (Chard, 2013). Shakeshaft (1989) agrees that ‘in the near future’ there will be more female headteachers in education than males as it is ‘a woman’s natural field, and she is no longer satisfied to do the greatest part of the work and yet be denied leadership’ (p. 18). However, Blackmore (2005a) demonstrates that this is not necessarily the case as the ‘statistics tell us that while women are increasingly entering the ranks of middle management (school principals) in many educational systems, they have not gained access in the numbers expected’ (p. 184).

Lumby and Coleman (2007) recognise that any reference to equality is superficial where ‘in practice, career breaks and the attendant career difficulties are still being identified with women’ (p. 53). One male headteacher explained that whilst females were once disadvantaged by taking maternity leave, this was no longer the case:

> I’ve seen since I’ve been teaching, most females who started teaching, when they got married and had children and left and then picked up careers again later, so that there was that career break that would stop them from progressing. Now it tends to be that people have the child and come back and then carry on working so they don’t interrupt their career almost. It carries on straight away so I think those people are getting positions far better and I think you will see that that will rectify itself (Chard, 2013, p. 173).

This perception of equal opportunity is noted by Lumby and Coleman (2007) who identify that ‘there is a widely held belief that society has changed sufficiently for women to be ‘on a level playing field’ with men, able to cope as individuals in accessing promotion working alongside men for the same goal of work-life balance’ (p. 53). This observation contrasts with the reality of the twentieth century when the proportion of female heads was seen to decline, only returning to the level of 57 per cent recorded in 1927 in the twenty-first century (TES, 2011). According to Oram (1989) the promotion prospects of females worsened when ‘in 1984 they held only 39 per cent’ (p. 21) of headships. The shortage of female headteachers was evident across both the primary and secondary sectors at this time, as highlighted by Ouston (1993) who states that ‘just under half of the primary schools in England and Wales have a woman headteacher’ whereas ‘in secondary schools around one in six schools has a woman head’ (p. 2). The initial decline in the proportion of female heads could partly be attributed to the ban on female teachers marrying. This rule, imposed
by almost all English authorities in 1915, saw females leaving the profession to marry, or being dismissed if they were found to be married already. Those female teachers widowed during the war became more likely to secure teaching posts whilst other experienced but married female teachers were shut out, hence not reaching headship posts. However, after the lifting of the ban under the 1944 Education Act the proportion of female heads continued to plummet with amalgamated boys and girls’ schools often appointing the male head to continue in role rather than the female (TES, 2011). Schmuck (1986) argues that in all countries at some time teaching has not been considered appropriate for women:

In all countries married women were, at some time, excluded from the profession. It was seen as detracting from their primary role as wife and mother (p. 173).

The conflict between career and running a home was still apparent in research during the 1980s as those with influence over future appointments doubted the commitment of females to their jobs whilst raising families. This was apparent in a case study by Burgess (1988) who found that in the mind of a male head of department, ‘commitment’ was a clear criterion involved in the post but where women were concerned this involved considering family commitments – a factor which he never raised in relation to the men’ (p. 130). Healy and Kraithman (1991) state that whilst a minority of national organisations have introduced initiatives to assist women returners to work ‘it is still true that many employers question the commitment to work of women returning because of the expectation that they will be unreliable because they have children’ (p. 21) Through raising such issues with colleagues and governors involved in such appointments Burgess (1988) argues that such teacher professionals ‘highlighted and used gender divisions and reinforced patriarchal relationships’ (p. 136) when making decisions crucial to the careers of others. The extent to how much damage such attitudes have made to the careers of women is immeasurable but the lack of representation at leadership level shows that this is likely to be a factor. Schmuck (1986) goes on to highlight that due to the working hours and long summer holidays, teaching has more recently evolved into an ideal profession for women, allowing them to ‘contribute to the profession and fulfil their family obligations simultaneously’ (p. 173). Of course, this perceived advantage could be viewed as problematic for women who now not only have to meet the demands of a paid post in education, but also the unpaid running of a household.
Not only have males historically dominated secondary headship posts in England, but until relatively recently male researchers were responsible for producing the majority of work on school leadership, hence such experiences being presented from a male perspective only. Hall (1993) explains that the ‘absence of women authors reflects, no doubt, the relative absence of women from academic life or their more humble positions in the research hierarchy’ (p. 23). Early research into headship was irrespective of gender with an assumption that the experiences of males and females were the same, but the 1980s saw research focusing on the differences between male and female heads. Hall (1999) argues that ‘women researchers have been as slow to focus on men as managers as men have been to examine women as managers’ (p. 174) with both carrying out separate lines of enquiry. Hall and Southworth (1997) agree, stating that male researchers often ignored issues of gender or a ‘gendered construction of headship was sometimes implied’ (p. 155) rather than being made explicit.

Differences in attitudes between males and females during the 1970s and 1980s are noted by Schmuck (1986):

Men entered education to enable them to have career mobility – women entered education to be of service to children; men entered education to earn the family income – women entered education to supplement the family income or to support themselves if they were not married; men tended to remain in education – women left for child bearing and rearing; men needed new challenges and were not satisfied with being classroom teachers – women were content to be classroom teachers (p. 176).

This somewhat generalised view of male and female teachers may go some way to describing the embedded ways in which careers in education were viewed by those in the profession. Hall (1993) notes that these perceived differences in careers remained in the 1980s throughout a continued decline in women gaining promotional posts:

As well as being under-represented at senior level, women’s promotion position has deteriorated over the past 20 years. During the 1980s explanations of their differential position proliferated, with an increasing focus on how their experience of career differed from that of men (p. 27).

Hall (1993) writes that the research remained ‘androcentric’ with researchers failing ‘to question the concept of career in the light of women’s experiences’ (p. 27). Hall (1993) cites researchers who focused primarily on headteachers without using women as a focus for their study, or chose to carry out smaller individual accounts of females and their experiences in reaching headship.

Research such as a 1987 study by Weindling and Earley focusing on the early years of headship
are seen to miss an opportunity by Hall (1993) as they did not investigate ‘whether women's experiences were influenced by whether they followed a man or woman head’ (p. 37). Riddell (1989) does choose to focus on the experiences of female leaders and explains the dilemmas faced in reaching senior positions and the perception that they would not be able to cope with such high levels of responsibility:

This attitude effectively placed women in a no-win situation. If they were proper women and had babies they were unfit to be promoted because of their family responsibilities. If they did not have children and were promoted they were liable to be dismissed as unwomanly, neurotic and hence incompetent (p 135).

Similar reasons for a lack of females reaching headship are raised by Lumby and Coleman (2007), although the lack of a career plan seems prevalent amongst both males and females in education:

Women were being stereotyped into ‘caring’ pastoral roles that were then not seen as fitting them for senior leadership roles. Women were then ‘blamed’ for their lack of progress as they were seen to lack confidence in applying for promotion and were relatively hesitant in making career plans. The issue of their domestic responsibilities as well as providing practical obstacles to promotion added to the stereotype that they are not equipped for the tough job of being a leader (p. 46-7).

This was similar to the findings of many researchers towards the end of the twentieth century, with responsibilities in the home hindering career progress for females. Bradley (1999) states that ‘prevailing domestic arrangements are cited by women themselves as the most significant barrier to gender equality’ (p. 83) whilst Hall (1996) considers it ‘indisputable’ that the responsibility for family members presented many females with career dilemmas (p. 46).

Not only does research cite examples of barriers for females, but males are seen to be advantaged when it is other males appointing new leaders. In discussing the history of women in leadership during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Shakeshaft (1989) refers to such males maintaining large shares of power:

Besides having to continue to fight public prejudice against them, women continued to have to deal with exclusionary practise. Men had the advantage of being able to interact with other men who held power and who were often in positions to hire (p 43).

Evidence of further change in the nature of research emerged during the 1990s. Those females who did find themselves in the running for senior leadership positions were quoted as experiencing prejudiced questions in addition to the expected questions that male candidates would face. Ozga
(1993) examines the interview experiences of female heads where one recalls ‘being interviewed alongside other candidates and being asked – and I was then aged twenty-nine – did I really think I was strong enough to take on a job like this and didn’t I think it was quite possible that I might suddenly go off and get married and have children’ (p. 38). The work of Evetts (2000) also considers the point of view of female heads, investigating how female primary headteachers view career as a concept and how they had constructed their own personal careers. Hall (1993) refers to this as a shift ‘from measuring women’s career performance alongside men’s in teaching to... women rather than men as its starting point’ (p. 29). Much of the later work on gender and leadership makes reference to the gender paradigms devised by Gray (1993) created in order to ‘illustrate conventional prejudices’ (p. 111). Gray (1993) refers to the feminine characteristics as ‘nurturing’ and the masculine traits as ‘defensive’ or ‘aggressive’ and elaborates as to why he has chosen to introduce the paradigms:

I find the familial model with its sex and gender dimensions very helpful in understanding organizational behaviour in schools and colleges because it gets away from the kind of gender stereotyping which has become so sterile when it comes to the practicalities of trying to change gender biases (p. 111).

The phrases chosen by Gray (1993) as nurturing include caring, creative, intuitive, aware of individual differences, non-competitive, tolerant, subjective and informal. These are in contrast with the aggressive phrases of highly regulated, conformist, normative, competitive, evaluative, disciplined, objective and formal (p. 111). Whilst Gray (1993) was intending to move from gender stereotypes, finding it ‘useful for diagnostic purposes to use a pair of gender paradigms which represent the traditional dichotomy of gender characteristics’ (p. 111) the characteristics continue to be associated with femininity and masculinity, which I shall explore further in the next section.

2.6 The Masculinity of Headship

Whilst the experiences of female headteachers became a focus of research towards the end of the twentieth century, the masculine perception of the role of headteacher also became more prevalent and how females have grappled with attempting to fit into deeply embedded frameworks. Connell (2000) considers why the term masculinity exists and argues that the use of the terms masculinity and femininity are necessary in order to make comparisons over time:

Without concepts such as “masculinity” and “femininity” we would be unable to talk about the questions of gender ambiguity that have been so important in recent culture
studies, or about the contradictions in personality that are so important in psychoanalysis. If we give up such terms, we merely create a need for other gender concepts that perform the same tasks (p. 17).

The construction of the term masculinity is considered by Edley and Wetherell (1996) to be affected by external influences such as an individual's situation and surroundings:

A social relations perspective on men views masculinity as a set of distinctive practices that emerge from men's positioning within a variety of social structures – such as work and the family. In other words, a man's identity takes its shape from the various institutions in which he is located or embedded (p. 102).

Connell (2000) agrees stating that gender is a 'way of structuring social practice' where ‘masculinity, understood as a configuration of gender practice... is necessarily a social construction’ (p. 29). This explanation accounts for the variation in the types of masculinities and why masculine qualities are present in many females. Connell (2000) continues that ‘masculinity refers to male bodies (sometimes directly, sometimes symbolically and indirectly), but is not determined by male biology’ (p. 29) and it is crucial that researchers are aware of this distinction, with Connell (1995) arguing that ‘masculinity must be understood as an aspect of large-scale social structures and processes’ (p 38-9).

The social construction of masculinity in relation to male and female divisions of power and labour are focused on by Bourdieu (2001), who uses the phrase ‘rites of passage’ (p. 24) when referring to the continuation of men’s increased status over time:

The masculine order also inscribes itself in bodies through the tacit injunctions that are implied in the routines of the division of labour or of collective or private rituals (consider, for example, the avoidance behaviours imposed on women by their exclusion from male spaces). The regularities of the physical order and the social order impose and inculcate dispositions by excluding women from the noblest tasks (leading the plough, for example), by designating inferior places for them (the edge of the road or embankment, for example), by teaching them how to hold their bodies (for example, bent, with arms folded on the chest, before respectable men), by assigning them menial and drudging tasks (they transport dung, and when olives are harvested, they and the children pick them up from the ground while the men wield the pole to knock them down), and, more generally, by taking advantage, in accordance with the fundamental presuppositions, of biological differences, which thus appear to be at the basis of social differences (p. 24).

This example of early physical labour demonstrates that many male and female responsibilities were kept separate, a trait that has continued in many areas and with particular roles. Today certain occupations are still primarily associated with males, such as company directors, whilst others, such as the personal assistants of those directors, are associated with females.
continued grip on authority may have evolved in nature over time, but the domination still remains for males. Connell (1995) states that ‘men hold predominant authority in business and the state, with a near monopoly of top positions’ (p. 246). Change may be difficult to bring about as according to Cockburn (1991) men will be reticent to give up this high status positioning as they ‘can feel more important as a sex, their status amplified by having women working for them or beneath them’ (p. 18), although these feelings of power are often not replicated by the majority of females. Lumby and Coleman (2007) highlight a further disadvantage of this system in that many of the additional experiences that females possess are from outside of this hierarchy and are usually overlooked and not considered valuable. The widely held view of a career excludes women who do not fit into this mould:

Having career aspiration, then, means wanting to become a principal, not wishing to remain a teacher. These definitions leave out much of female experience and thus may not be accurate for describing women’s participation in the work force. These definitions are also public sphere definitions and, like conceptualizations of self-confidence, they suffer by examining women’s lives only within a public sphere defined by male experience’ (p. 86).

Delanty (1997) explains how feminists are dealing with a workplace and leadership system constructed by such masculine values:

The idea of constructivism is a central epistemological idea in feminism and new social movement theory. Feminist approaches are based on the central insight that social reality is a gender construction and the normative aim of social science should be to deconstruct this and to point to an alternative. Science itself is not transparent for it is a product of a masculine value system (p. 117).

Delanty (1997) goes on to argue that feminists have responded in different ways, some from existing frameworks and others who ‘demand a new epistemology to correspond to the feminist ontology’. He states that feminism has a ‘strong constructivist dimension to it’ and that ‘the aim of the feminist critique is to point to a different way of constructing reality’ (p. 117). The structures in place in the world of work are deeply embedded and Bourdieu (2001) emphasises the challenges women face:

To succeed completely in holding a position, a woman would need to possess not only what is explicitly demanded by the job description, but also a whole set of properties which the male occupants normally bring to the job – a physical stature, a voice, or dispositions such as aggressiveness, self-assurance, ‘role distance’, what is called natural authority, etc., for which men have been tacitly prepared and trained as men (p. 62).

Evetts (1994) agrees that ‘women who enter the world of career and promotion into management are taking part in social relationships determined by masculine values’ (p. 85) whilst Zweigenhaft
and Domhoff (1998) argue that the power elite has strengthened further still in recent years due to the diversification of members. Therefore when a female has been appointed to a headship role, they have often been found to be from similar backgrounds to the men, hence Zweigenhaft and Domhoff (1998) stating that ‘it is not surprising therefore, that when we look at the business practices of the women and minorities who have risen to the top of the corporate world, we find that their perspectives and values do not differ markedly from those of their male counterparts’ (p. 192). It can be difficult for those already established in schools to realise that their policies and procedures may be continuing and even exacerbating the situation. In her study Riddell (1989) discovered that teacher professionals attributed ‘external socializing influences’ (p 136) to their sex-stereotyped curriculum rather than viewing their school as reinforcing these ideas. Riddell (1989) noted that ‘the fact that senior women teachers were just as adamant as the senior men that the school was essentially a neutral institution may have serious implications for the policy of working for change through getting more women into promoted positions’ (p 137). Prichard (1996) refers to these successful women as ‘honorary men’ (p. 230) but acknowledges that there are women attempting to change how things are run. However, in their research involving eight headteachers, Mortimore and Mortimore (1991) found that the stereotypical image of a headteacher prevailed, stating that ‘the traditional image of a white, middle class headmaster is still widely held, despite the increasing numbers of highly effective headteachers who are women or who are members of the black and ethnic minority communities’ (p. 167).

Women achieving leadership status, such as headteachers, suffer in other areas of their lives according to Bourdieu (2001):

The true nature of the structural relations of sexual domination can be glimpsed when one observes, for example, that women who attain very high positions (senior executive, head of a ministry, etc.) have to ‘pay’ in a sense for this professional success with less ‘success’ in the domestic realm (divorce, late marriage or no marriage, difficulties or failures with children, etc.) and in the economy of symbolic goods (p. 107).

These difficulties are appreciated by Evetts (1994) who considers the situation to be unfair to women. She argues that men often focus on their careers whilst it is still less acceptable for women to do so, with rifts created if they do. Evetts (1994) states that ‘when women are heavily involved in their careers, then strains in the partnerships can result, unless realization of the
discrepancy and an acknowledgement of the double standard as it relates to career dedication, enables couples to resolve such conflicts’ (p. 66). Whilst this can also be true of male school leaders, many women have continued to allow these double standards to dominate. Bourdieu (2001) states that something in the unconscious leads to people acting in certain ways with a hidden force activating a trigger to particular behaviour as ‘symbolic force is a form of power that is exerted on bodies, directly and as if by magic, without any physical constraint; but this magic works only on the basis of the dispositions deposited, like springs, at the deepest level of the body’ (p. 38). He argues that this acts like a ‘magical frontier’ between the dominant and the dominated. According to Bourdieu (2001) some authors hold women responsible for their continued conformity, but he argues that it is too embedded for people to radically change as this is not an isolated decision and that the ‘acts of construction of the world and its powers’ (p. 40) must be considered. He highlights the dilemma:

Against the apparently generous temptation, to which so many subversive movements have succumbed, to put forward an idealized representation of the oppressed and the stigmatized in the name of fellow-feeling, solidarity or moral indignation, and to pass over in silence the very effects of domination, especially the most negative ones, one has to take the risk of seeming to justify the established order by bringing to light the properties through which the dominated (women, manual workers, etc.), as domination has made them, may contribute to their own domination (p. 114).

More recently certain authors (Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007; Aboim, 2010) have focused on the perceived work life balance for males and females and how the traditional masculine and feminine aspects of society are changing. Whereas the concept of masculine and feminine was once viewed as straightforward, the area is now far more complex. Aboim (2010) notes the course of change during the twentieth century, stating that ‘through this process of public construction of ‘respectable masculinity’ men’s power was transferred, to a certain extent, to the domains of capitalist labour and politics whereas women stayed in the domestic sphere as symbols of affection’ (p. 79). Despite a rise in the rates of females in paid employment in the twentieth century, Coleman (2003a) argues that ‘there is still an automatic association of women with the domestic and private sphere and with roles associated with support and nurturing, and an association of men with work in the public sphere’ (p. 38). This is amidst some pockets of change such as those observed by Mac an Ghaill and Haywood (2007). They consider the roles of
mothers and fathers to be evolving and state that the view of the male as breadwinner and female as homemaker is not always the case:

From a sociological perspective, current experiences are socially structured and differentiated with, for example, western governments actively persuading women to (re)enter the labour market, thus enabling women access to modern forms of citizenship. At the same time, while some groups of men, such as the unemployed, are being coerced into taking up increased domestic and paternal responsibilities, other men are asserting claims about the pleasure of fathering (p. 45).

These changes in expectations place extra pressures on men, who according to Edley and Wetherell (1996) have been in turmoil for at least fifty years, with masculinity surrounded in defensiveness for males during the 1960s and 1970s. Edley and Wetherell (1996) considered men in that era to be ‘in a constant state of uncertainty about their own gender identities; always in a state of having to prove themselves as men’ (p. 99). Collinson and Hearn (1996a) agree that masculine identities have been under threat lately due to changes in society including equal opportunities policies and technology, which has led to the development of ‘multiple masculinities’ (p. 66). With the introduction of legislation such as the Equal Pay Act in 1970 and the Sex Discrimination Act in 1975, it could be assumed that males and females encounter equal opportunities to obtain leadership posts. Indeed, Oram (1989) states that ‘in theory there are no formal barriers to women’s equality in the teaching profession’. However, in practice she notes that ‘women’s position in teaching remains in many respects much the same as it was at the turn of the century; average salaries are lower than men’s, and women are found in lower status posts’ (p. 21). Despite strategies such as positive discrimination and women only shortlists to address underrepresentation in headship positions, such methods have often undermined those positions and changed perceptions of the role itself. Davis and Johansson (2005) note such a strategy in 1980s Sweden, to increase the proportion of female heads where the idea of using ‘gender as a basis for allocating principal positions’ (p. 38) resulted in concerns from trade unions that ‘increasing the percentage of women in the profession would lower its status’ (p. 38). This is clearly problematic for those females aspiring to the top role as they would need to be confident in the fact that they had been appointed for the right reasons.

A notable change regarding the most recent literatures in the field are those not only addressing multiple masculinities and femininities but the intersectionality of gender, race, class and sexuality (Fuller, 2013). These emerging arguments that move the literatures forward from simply making
comparisons between male and female ways of leading are beginning to take into account the complexities of the lives of teacher professionals. These literatures shall be referred to and discussed in more detail in chapters 6, 7 and 8 where relevant links with the field work are also made.

2.7 Summary

In this chapter I have identified how the evolving structures of senior leadership teams over the years have influenced current positions available in schools. Career opportunities have been reviewed over time and how roles and management have gradually been overlaid by a culture of leadership. Leaders can be many things, as a classroom teacher is a leader in the delivery of their subject, but leadership has come to mean those progressing up the hierarchy of roles in a school and subsequently earning more money. Government initiatives to raise the profile of teachers have been abolished in favour of heads being handed greater autonomy regarding staff responsibilities and pay. However, despite expanding leadership teams, extra pressures and accountability measures placed on heads have been identified as a main factor in difficulties in filling some headship posts.

The continued underrepresentation of females in headteacher roles is attributed to an initial assumption by early researchers that schools and school leadership were gender neutral. A subsequent difficulty in shifting from embedded perceptions of leaders and the role of head being associated with masculine values has hindered many females further still. This combined with the difficulties some face in combining raising a family and attaining and maintaining a post of senior responsibility in a school have exacerbated the situation, enabling males to continue to hold the majority of positions of power. Whilst research has focused on females as headteachers (Hall, 1993; Coleman, 2002) or masculinities associated with leadership (Connell, 1995; Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007), there is little research challenging the stereotypes of males and females leading in particular ways. Recent work by Fuller (2013) has begun to address this issue by drawing on ‘post-structural gender theory recognizing women and men take on multiple femininities and masculinities’ (p. 2), an area in which I position this study. In order to achieve this I view school leadership through a conceptual framework that considers the circumstances that the
teacher professionals find themselves in both personally and professionally and the contexts in which their schools are set.

In the next chapter I focus on my research design and methodology in order to identify the attitudes towards careers and headship of secondary teacher professionals spanning two academic years and explain the development of the conceptual framework for carrying out my detailed analysis.
Chapter 3
The Methodology and Research Design for Fieldwork

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design and methodology used to carry out and analyse the fieldwork element of the study. The collection of data within one local authority will enable the research questions to be addressed by identifying the attitudes of teacher professionals towards their careers, the promotional opportunities available to them and their reasons for making various career decisions. With regards to the methodology the decision to use a survey approach is explained and the subsequent development of the methods utilised which were questionnaires and interviews. A case study research design involves the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data from which narratives will be created and utilised to demonstrate the different attitudes the teacher professionals exhibited towards careers. The use of a mixed methods approach is explained in detail and the rationale behind the sampling decisions along with the reasoning for creating four stories to represent contrasting career attitudes. Accounts from literatures informs on the analysis of questionnaire responses in order to develop a theoretical framework, contributing to further thinking throughout the data analysis chapters. The selection of an initial population from which to draw survey respondents from is explained and how interviewees were subsequently chosen. The chapter explains how the use of questionnaires with teacher professionals from six secondary schools and interviews with twelve participants addresses the research questions in terms of exploring their promotional experiences so far and their attitudes towards their future careers. The same twelve participants were then interviewed again between twelve and eighteen months later. In order to select the most appropriate methodology and carry this out appropriately I draw on the research texts of Cohen and Manion (1994), Cohen et al. (2000), Coleman (2003b), Gronn (2007), Newby (2010) and Ribbins (2007). Throughout the fieldwork ethical issues were of paramount importance and these are discussed. Firstly I shall focus on the theoretical approach of the survey and fieldwork.

3.2 Policy Scholarship

In terms of approaching this fieldwork and analysing findings it was important to consider policy scholarship studies and how the conceptual findings developed in this study in conjunction with the
empirical findings related to discoveries already in the public domain. According to Grace (1995) policy scholarship ‘represents a view that a social-historical approach to research can illuminate the cultural and ideological struggles in which schooling is located’ (p. 3). This is in contrast to policy science where the research is removed from such a context. Grace (1995), a key contributor to policy scholarship, considers the political and cultural surroundings where policies are to be implemented. In his analysis of educational leadership Grace (1995) adopts what Gunter (2001a) refers to as a ‘critical’ approach where a researcher will ‘analyse the interplay between the agency of the role incumbent and the structures that enhance or limit that agency’ (p. 96). Gunter (2001a) also describes the critical knowledge researcher as being ‘open about the origins of their research questions’ (p. 99), my own experience as a female leader resulting in a focus on the identity of leaders and in particular considering gender. The way in which women position themselves in relation to gender and race is considered by Lumby (2015) who in her attempt to make advancements to gender theory in schools notes that some female heads did not acknowledge any disadvantage regarding their sex or race (p. 39). These individual examples show only limited gains however. Indeed all heads continue to face growing issues regarding autonomy as highlighted by Hammersley-Fletcher (2015) who states that ‘neo-liberal agendas have, through the constant bombardment of new initiatives, undermined the spaces within which headteachers are able to think and are able to challenge these dominant ideologies’ (p. 212), an issue still prevalent since highlighted by Grace in 1995. These approaches are in contrast to many examples of educational research which Ball (1997) states ‘dislocates schools and classrooms from their physical and cultural environment’ (p. 267). This implies that where research lacks a sense of cultural setting there can be an assumption by policy makers that ‘one size fits all’ and initiatives are rolled out based on sometimes narrow findings. There is also the issue of a lack of theory from other fields being considered in educational research used to inform policy. Ball (1997) states that theory is required in order to support or challenge practice as ‘theory provides the possibility of a different language, a language which is not caught up with the assumptions and inscriptions of policy-makers or the immediacy of practice…it offers a potential location outside the prevailing discourses of policy and a way of struggling against ‘incorporation’ (p. 269).
In terms of the identity of headteachers Grace (1995) explains that this has shifted over time where historical and cultural aspects are considered. Grace (1995) states that the ability to instil their own values has diminished for heads due to a lack of resources (p. 156) yet they can be viewed externally as an ‘educational saint’ (p. 157). For women heads the situation is exacerbated as they are operating in male dominated surroundings yet many female heads do not make reference to this or to other issues including race or politics (p. 188). Whereas research focusing on educational leadership can fail to focus on education itself, a divergence identified by Gunter (2001b) in that heads and their impact on the education of young people is often overlooked. Gunter (2001b) explains that:

> While humanistic approaches that seek to understand what it feels like to be in a leadership post are officially tolerated, the importance and the recommendation from knowledge workers of more long-term case studies is not being advanced. Research that takes a critical approach to the impact of neo-liberalism on professional identities and the control over work is being marginalised, even though this work is essential to our understanding of how preferred models of educational leadership are being sustained and developed (p. 49).

The individuals involved in this research will be investigated within their own social settings, including the choices that are available to them and how they relate to the power structures surrounding them. Those who have worked in education for longer periods of time will have experienced a greater number of policy changes imposed from Government and subsequently school leaders, possibly under changing Governments seeking to impose their educational ideals. This makes up part of the culture in which the teachers in my research are operating within and will be crucial in order to make sense of their current positions and the reasons behind their career attitudes.

### 3.3 Methodology

In order to address the research questions, my methodology is a survey. As Newby (2010) explains methodology with regards to research ‘is concerned with the assembly of research tools and the application of appropriate research rules’ (p. 51) and so the use of a survey would allow me to focus on the views of secondary teachers with regards to their careers. As Cohen and Manion (1994) explain a survey can gather information at a specific moment in time but can also determine ‘the relationships that exist between specific events’ (p. 127) enabling potential links to
be identified in this research between promotion experiences and future plans. In terms of the methods adopted these are, according to Cohen et al. (2000), the approaches used ‘to gather data which are to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction’ (p. 44). Therefore in order to ascertain the initial views regarding perceptions of careers by teacher professionals, questionnaires were considered to be the most appropriate method. These enabled a large enough sample of teacher professionals working in secondary schools to be targeted. In the chosen local authority of ‘Meadowshire’ a potential three hundred teacher professionals would receive the questionnaire and this would then lead to the second method, interviews, where twelve interviewees would be drawn from the questionnaire respondents. The chosen local authority had low numbers of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and this was also reflected in the teacher professionals at the chosen schools. All those interviewed in the pilot study and for the research were from white British backgrounds. Figure 3.1 shows an overview of the data collection process, the details of which will be discussed later:

**Figure 3.1: Overview of the data collection process**

The use of questionnaires incorporated mainly quantitative data with some qualitative data due to the nature of the questions, whilst interviews were of a qualitative nature only. This combination of
methods allows, according to Morrison (2007) ‘a better understanding of the relationship between variables’ (p. 31) although she does warn of instances where one set of findings may contradict the other. Whilst Bryman (2006) warns of a lack of planning by many using multi-strategy research, he also explains that this method can provide ‘such a wealth of data that researchers discover uses of the ensuing findings that they had not anticipated’ (p. 110). In terms of the research design itself, this is in the form of a case study using an ethnographic approach. Cohen et al. (2000) explain that case studies provide ‘a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles (p. 181). In terms of the case, which Yin (1994) refers to as the ‘unit of analysis’ (p. 137) this will be in the form of a group of teacher professionals working in similar secondary schools and employed within one local authority. Bassey (2007) refers to an analytical account over time as a ‘story-telling case study’ (p. 146) which is reflected in descriptions of how individual teachers have responded to changes in their personal and professional lives in terms of their positioning and attitudes towards their careers. Providing a formal context, such as the political circumstances within which the teachers are working, combined with an informal one, such as the personal stories of the teachers, will serve to provide the framework in which the research is set. Firstly I shall focus on the sampling used for the questionnaires.

3.4 Questionnaires
In order to gain a suitable number of responses from those teacher professionals in the secondary sector, the local authority of ‘Meadowshire’ was selected. This authority contains a large number of schools within reasonable proximity to each other, the majority of which had large numbers of teaching staff in post. Information regarding the school sizes and number of staff was gained from online information and the published prospectuses from each school (Appendix 2) although it was apparent that many of the schools, whilst accommodating pupils of similar ages, were often very diverse in their nature. Therefore the decision was taken to only focus on those schools that were non-selective, non-denominational and mixed. Other schools in the same local authority not selected for the study (eleven in all) had differing systems of school selection where the distinctive character of the schools, such as a religious focus or single sex intake, may have impacted on the promotion opportunities and decisions made by the teacher professionals. This left a total of seven
Table 3.1: Details of secondary schools used in the research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Faith, Selective or Single Sex School</th>
<th>Academy Converter</th>
<th>Sixth Form</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Pupils on Roll</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Teaching Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green Oak School</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash School</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beech College</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larch High School</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Birch School</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sycamore School</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly School (Pilot School)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questionnaires were selected for the first method to gain as much of an overview from a range of teacher professionals as possible. One advantage of questionnaires is highlighted by Coleman (2003b) who warns that participants may be reluctant to reveal certain details face to face stating that ‘the anonymity of questionnaires may actually ensure greater frankness from respondents than could be achieved through an interview (p. 117). This would enable a larger number of teacher professionals to contribute to this initial stage of data collection with only those content to be involved in interviews proceeding to the next stage. Questionnaires were sent out to the six schools after gaining permission from headteachers. This was achieved by firstly posting a letter to explain my intentions (see Appendix 3) and then contacting each personal assistant via telephone to check that permission had been granted and request that an administrative member of staff forward an email from myself to all teaching staff, excluding senior leaders (Appendix 4). This entailed teachers receiving the email explaining my research with a participant information sheet attached (Appendix 5) and a hyperlink to click, resulting in the questionnaire opening in a separate internet browser window using the website ‘Survey Monkey’. In addition to this electronic link and to maximise the number of responses, flyers were dropped off at each school (Appendix 6) to be delivered to staff to encourage them to complete the questionnaire, with paper copies left for any wishing to participate without the use of a computer.

From a potential three hundred respondents, seventy-six questionnaires were completed online with a further three completed on paper at a later date, a response rate of around one in four. This
response rate may appear to be low but there are various factors to consider. Firstly, whilst electronic questionnaires can appear to be more convenient for participants to complete, they can also be easy to ignore. Whilst some researchers have discovered response rates to be higher with face to face questionnaires (Nulty, 2008), others state that electronic versions increase participation rates (Baruch and Holtom, 2008). Secondly, teachers receiving a large number of emails relating to their roles may have considered themselves too busy to complete the questionnaire despite the assurance of this taking just ten minutes and the timing to be after the pressure of external examinations. A request was made to each school approximately two weeks later for the email to be sent out again but thanking those who had already completed the questionnaire, following the advice of Cohen et al. (2000) who recommend following up initial requests to maximise returns (p. 263). Response rates themselves can vary dependent on a number of factors and whilst Baruch and Holtom (2008) calculated an average response rate of 52.6 per cent from 309 studies published in seventeen academic journals (p. 1148), teachers used in this study were contacted through their institutions rather than directly, using a generic greeting rather than a personalised request. This could have impacted negatively on the potential 200 participants who chose not to take part. Whilst it could be argued that the views of those completing the questionnaire could differ from those not completing it, Cohen et al. (2000) argue that this can be ‘checked on and controlled for’ involving ‘follow-up contact with non-respondents’ (p. 265). Indeed three of the eventual twelve interviewees did not respond to the initial online questionnaire and their data was of a similar nature to that of the 76 original respondents. Also, whilst this study yielded a lower return rate than those studied by Baruch and Holtom (2008), a total of 79 questionnaire responses involving over 50 answering each question was sufficient to carry out statistical analyses as according to Cohen and Manion (1994) ‘a sample size of 30 is held by many to be the minimum number of cases if researchers plan to use some form of statistical analysis on their data’ (p. 132).

Questionnaires were designed to identify promotion opportunities, attitudes towards careers and whether the teacher professionals agreed with statements relating to senior leadership and headship (Appendix 7). The questionnaires were tested initially at one school as part of a pilot study (Chard, 2011). These questionnaires were paper versions that staff could complete and they
were encouraged to include comments regarding the clarity of questions. All questionnaires were numbered with only an administrative member of school staff knowing which number questionnaire corresponded to which member of staff. Of seventy three teacher professionals who received the questionnaire, forty responded. Whilst constructing the format of the questionnaires themselves, the advice of Cohen et al. (2000) that ‘the larger the size of the sample, the more structured, closed and numerical the questionnaire may have to be’ (p. 247) was heeded.

The questionnaires consisted of five main sections. The initial section investigated the current status of each teacher professional, including their age group and sex. In her analysis of the career influences on headteachers, Coleman (2002) divided her data into males and females and those above and below fifty years of age (p. 26). Due to the younger ages of the majority of teacher professionals in my study, age groups were divided using the smaller groups specified on the questionnaire and in order to carry out a comparison with Coleman’s findings a threshold of 35 years was used. The second and third sections identified promotional priorities and attitudes towards key statements. Experience of professional development was the focus of the fourth section and home responsibilities and how these affected career choices were questioned in the final section. This design would enable me to compare attitudes with domestic situations such as the number of children, and how others may or may not have influenced career decisions made.

From the pilot study it was clear that adjustments were required with certain questions. Question 31 (see Appendix 7), concerned with looking for promotions, led to some confusion as some staff selected ‘I have already secured a promotion’ if they were currently in post rather than for the future. Therefore the wording was adjusted for the full study. Questions 12 and 13 required respondents to tick boxes in relation to how strongly they agreed or disagreed with key statements. However, two main errors were apparent. Firstly including ‘unsure/NA’ as the centre option led to a score of three being attributed to those who may not have agreed or disagreed and those for whom the statement was not relevant. This option was subsequently removed with ‘NA’ only available for particular statements and a choice of six options so that teachers had to commit to agreeing or disagreeing with each. Briggs and Coleman (2007) refer to such statements as ‘Likert scales’ (p. 229) where they note that many researchers prefer an even number on such
scales so that respondents are forced to ‘avoid the neutral central point’ (p. 229). Secondly the scaling system used was complicated in that ‘strongly disagree’ was awarded the highest score and ‘strongly agree’ the least. During the analysis this was counter intuitive and so these rankings were reversed for the full study with ‘very strongly disagree’ appearing as the first option.

3.5 Questionnaire Analysis

With the majority of questionnaires being completed electronically using the software package ‘Survey Monkey’, the raw results could then be exported into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with summary tables automatically exported to a Microsoft Word document. Reponses to each question were shown clearly across 130 columns and so part of the initial data analysis involved creating separate sheets or tabs to show particular aspects only. A key part of the questionnaire were the statement responses and although there were 79 questionnaire respondents in total, between 51 and 54 participants answered each statement (Appendix 8).

In terms of the development of the conceptual framework utilised in the analysis, two spectrums were devised. Firstly, there were the attitudes towards promotion that could range from negative and wanting to stay put, to having a positive view of advancing one’s career. At any one time it could be assumed that an individual would appear at a particular point along this scale (figure 3.2).

Secondly the planned actions of an individual would need to be considered, so did they have plans in place to carry out their promotion ideals or not? These plans might entail the teacher remaining in their current post or they could be assessing potential job opportunities without any actual intention of pursuing these (figure 3.3).
Positioning individuals towards either end of the two scales provided four differing categories within which the teacher professionals could be placed (figure 3.4).

In terms of developing these concepts further, key literatures, in particular those associated with the careers of females in educational leadership, assisted my thinking. For those individuals who were positive about promotion, they would either have plans in place to move forward or take a more relaxed approach. Studies have shown how many serving headteachers did not plan their steps to headship (Chard, 2013; Coleman, 2002; Earley and Weindling 1988; Ribbins, 2003) but almost accidentally stumbled upon opportunities to progress or were alerted to these by others. These individuals would form a ‘serendipity’ category; positive about promotion but with no career plans. In contrast other individuals would have more structured approaches to reaching their goals and whilst the majority of research suggests that many teacher professionals do not plan ahead, there remain some that do. Indeed Smith (2011a) found that in a sample of forty female secondary
school teachers in England, six were classed as career ‘planners’ who from an early stage had a clear vision of the steps required to ‘achieve their career goals’ (p. 14). Therefore those individuals who were positive about promotion and had a plan in place would be termed ‘careerists’. Literatures relating to career aspirations have at times focused on differences between males and females. Grant (1987) found that males and females applied for internal posts in equal numbers, but it was males who were more persistent applying for a greater number of promotions each (p. 230). Whilst this could indicate a greater keeness for males to move up the promotional ladder and be classed as ‘careerists’, it could also indicate some females being more selective in their applications. Another factor in terms of positioning is taking a career break due to childbirth. In his survey of Primary heads, Hill (1994) discovered that ‘women who take no career break still take longer than men to gain the crucial first headship, though women with a career break do tend to reach their first headship at a later age than do those who do not break their service’ (p. 203). The suggestion that starting a family could be a disadvantage to a career, in particular for women, would suggest an individual who is ‘stuck’, as whilst it may have been their decision to have children this may be detrimental to the speed at which they can progress in their professional life. The same approach can be applied to those females working in academia as Barrett and Barrett (2011) point out that ‘interruptions in continuity of employment and fractional contracts can work to exclude or hinder research activity, an area pivotal for higher progression’ (p. 141). So an individual wishing to gain progression in their career but hindered in such a way could be viewed as ‘stuck’ and this would form the third category. Also of consideration is how individuals regard themselves amongst other professionals and how they think others perceive them. In 1991 Marshall wrote that ‘whether they intend to change the culture or not, women are increasingly threatening as they near senior levels’ (p. 6). Views from males and females of this nature, difficult to shift over time, could prove detrimental to the career aspirations of women and indeed some men, resulting in a resistance to pursue a leadership role and hence adopt a ‘staying put’ attitude. Conversely, Evetts (1987) studied female headteachers who had ‘proceeded one step at a time’ (p. 25) to achieve their career goals. Whilst to an outsider these primary heads could be perceived as ‘careerists’ they may not have viewed themselves in this way. Therefore those who had chosen to ‘stay put’ for the foreseeable future would be classed as ‘active choice’ individuals. A summary of each typology is shown in figure 3.5.
Evetts (1987) explains that many female heads in her research were reluctant to be classed as ambitious as this ‘would be to promote oneself and one’s career at the expense of other important responsibilities, like home and family; to put career first and these and other things second in one’s order of priorities’ (p. 17). Therefore as the labels attributed to each category may be off-putting to some participants and as they were devised to develop my own thinking, it was decided that the categories would not be shared with individuals and neither would their positioning on the grid. This would prevent any influence affecting responses to subsequent questions.

In order to locate the current position of each participant in terms of their career aspirations, key statements developed in the questionnaire would be linked with each of the four categories (Appendix 9). Whilst the conceptual framework was designed to attribute particular career identities to individuals, it was important to note that participants could potentially appear in all four categories and their positioning needed to be regarded as flexible. As responses could easily change over time it would be entirely possible for a teacher to transfer to an entirely different quadrant, as highlighted by Becker and Strauss (1956) in their analysis of adult identity:

Figure 3.5: Final conceptual framework for attitudes towards careers
Central to any account of adult identity is the relation of change in identity to change in social position; for it is characteristic of adult life to afford and force frequent and momentous passages from status to status. Hence members of structures that change, riders on escalators that carry them up, along, and down, to unexpected places and to novel experiences even when in some sense foreseen, must gain, maintain, and regain a sense of personal identity (p. 263).

Questionnaire participants would now have their responses to career aspiration statements analysed in order to position them on the conceptual framework. Each statement fell into one of the four categories, unbeknownst to the participants and were arranged in no particular order (see Appendix 7, Question 13). Scores were then awarded between 1 and 6 for various responses (table 3.2) although the warning of Briggs and Coleman (2007) was acknowledged in that a score of six does not necessarily mean a score six times higher than a score of one (p. 230). This process did, however, allow for useful comparisons to be made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement Allocated</th>
<th>Very Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Very Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score Allocated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Allocated scores for question 13 responses.

As each statement was allocated to one of the four categories it was possible to calculate a mean average score for each respondent for each category (Appendix 10). For example, respondent number 64 had the highest mean average in the ‘careerist’ category (table 3.3) and whilst their second highest average was for the ‘serendipitous’ statements this was not significantly higher than the ‘stuck’ or ‘active choice’ averages. Therefore it was deemed appropriate to place this individual in the ‘careerist’ category.
I am content to remain in my current role for the foreseeable future
If a promotion opportunity came up, I might think about it if it wasn’t too inconvenient
I am too inexperienced to be applying for promotion
There is no point in me applying for promotion as I do not need the money
I have my career path ‘mapped out’
I’m not looking for promotion but something might turn up
I’m not looking for promotion but do not feel ready yet
I am too old to apply for a promotion
I intend to progress to senior leadership
I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home
I am too old to apply for a promotion
I intend to eventually progress to senior leadership
I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home
I don’t know yet about seeking promotion — I will wait and see what happens
My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion
Once my children are older I will consider applying for promotions
My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future
I am unable to apply for promotion due to the young ages of my children
The job of headteacher appeals to me
Others think I should apply for promotion but I do not feel ready yet
I have no intention to pursue any further posts of paid responsibility
I am too inexperienced to be applying for promotion
I do not need the money
I have my career path ‘mapped out’
I am not looking for promotion but something might turn up
I am too old to apply for a promotion
I intend to progress to senior leadership
I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home
I don’t know yet about seeking promotion — I will wait and see what happens
My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion
Once my children are older I will consider applying for promotions
My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future
I am unable to apply for promotion due to the young ages of my children
The job of headteacher appeals to me
Others think I should apply for promotion but I do not feel ready yet
I have no intention to pursue any further posts of paid responsibility
I am too inexperienced to be applying for promotion
I do not need the money
I have my career path ‘mapped out’
I am not looking for promotion but something might turn up
I am too old to apply for a promotion
I intend to progress to senior leadership
I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home
I don’t know yet about seeking promotion — I will wait and see what happens
My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion
Once my children are older I will consider applying for promotions
My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future
I am unable to apply for promotion due to the young ages of my children
The job of headteacher appeals to me
Others think I should apply for promotion but I do not feel ready yet
I have no intention to pursue any further posts of paid responsibility
I am too inexperienced to be applying for promotion
I do not need the money
I have my career path ‘mapped out’
I am not looking for promotion but something might turn up
I am too old to apply for a promotion
I intend to progress to senior leadership
I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home
I don’t know yet about seeking promotion — I will wait and see what happens
My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion
Once my children are older I will consider applying for promotions
My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future
I am unable to apply for promotion due to the young ages of my children

Table 3.3: Scores allocated to respondent 64 for question 13.

This was not an exact science by any means and many other factors could be considered for each individual. Participant 64 had already been teaching for over twenty years and whilst in their forties had not gained a senior leadership post. However, their questionnaire also revealed that they were a faculty leader with other responsibilities and this emphasised that a ‘careerist’ may be positive about promotion and have plans in place but not necessarily be striving for the role of headteacher. In terms of placing participant 64 in a particular position on the conceptual framework, they would appear in the ‘careerist’ quadrant but their second most popular category of ‘serendipity’ would move their position slightly towards having no plans. Therefore they were placed at a value of four for their positivity regarding promotion and one unit towards having plans.

Their resulting position can be seen on figure 3.6.
Figure 3.6: Positioning from questionnaire responses of participant 64.

For each participant their two strongest categories were primarily used to position them on the grid. If these had identical or very similar scores then they were placed on the axes or very close to these. It was never an intention that all participants would fit neatly into one category or another and so overlap was expected. This was especially challenging when a participant appeared strongly in two diagonal categories, such as participant number 74, who had the mean averages shown in table 3.4:

Table 3.4: Average scores allocated to respondent 74 for question 13.

Whilst this respondent had a slightly higher average score for the ‘serendipity’ category than the ‘active choice’ category, both scores were ranked highly compared with other males. However, their ‘careerist’ score was the fifth lowest amongst the eighteen males and their ‘stuck’ score was the joint highest. Therefore the decision was made to place this individual closer to the ‘stay put’
section of the diagram and hence in the ‘active choice’ quadrant. Such decisions had to be taken with three out of the eighteen males and eleven of the thirty five females.

Questionnaire findings will be presented throughout the data chapters in this study but will also be used to inform information in the four stories detailed in chapter 4. The statistical data will be used to make comparisons between different career attitude positions by tabulating the data and presenting the findings graphically where appropriate. Individuals intentionally could not be identified from the data downloaded from ‘Survey Monkey’ and so staff were given the option to include their name and contact details if they were willing to take part in the second method utilised which was interviews, explained in the following section.

3.6 Interviews

Pascal and Ribbins (1998) state that surveys alone do not offer the ‘comprehensive understanding’ that interviews can (p. 7) and so interviews were used to gain further insight into the career attitudes of a sample of teachers. In terms of selecting the sample my intention was to select three participants from each of the four categories, a total of twelve interviewees, selecting those who identified most strongly with each category where possible and using a mixture of males and females. This process took place in two stages. First, from the questionnaires nine respondents from five different schools were willing to be interviewed and had included their contact details. They covered all four categories in the theoretical framework and included a mixture of males and females. The second stage occurred once the interview process began and I recruited the remaining three interviewees through a method of snowball sampling, a definition of which is provided by Fogelman and Comber (2007):

Here, a researcher first has to identify and interview one or two people with relevant characteristics. Those people are then asked to identify others with the same characteristics whom the researcher could contact (p. 136).

This strategy involved interviewees identifying colleagues who would be interested in taking part in an interview similar to their own. This led to three further participants agreeing to be interviewed who were based at two of the schools already being used in the study (see figure 3.1 in section 3.3). These additional participants completed paper questionnaires prior to their interviews so that
their initial data could be included in the overall analysis. The sample of interviewees is shown in table 3.5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years Teaching</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn</td>
<td>Green Oak School</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>31 to 35</td>
<td>11 to 20</td>
<td>Head of Subject and Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Green Oak School</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>41 to 45</td>
<td>21 to 30</td>
<td>Head of Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron</td>
<td>Green Oak School</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>36 to 40</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Deputy Head of Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leanne</td>
<td>Green Oak School</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>26 to 30</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Head of Subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>Green Oak School</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>31 to 35</td>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig</td>
<td>Ash School</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>36 to 40</td>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>Ash School</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>31 to 35</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>Beech College</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>31 to 35</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Head of Subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>Beech College</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>26 to 30</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Head of Subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>Beech College</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>21 to 25</td>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>Silver Birch School</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>36 to 40</td>
<td>11 to 20</td>
<td>Special Needs Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Sycamore School</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White British</td>
<td>26 to 30</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Deputy Head of Subject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5: Details of the twelve interviewees.

The initial random sampling plan would not have been representative of the population of the six schools as from the questionnaire analysis the teachers were not equally represented in the four categories. A stratified sampling method which would have represented the distribution of teachers on the theoretical framework was close to what was achieved through the self-selection and snowball methods used (table 3.6):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Serendipitous</th>
<th>Careerist</th>
<th>Active Choice</th>
<th>Stuck</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of questionnaire respondents</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number required based on stratified sampling method</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual number interviewed</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.6: Number of interviewees compared to a stratified sampling method.
For the interviews themselves a semi-structured approach was adopted. Ribbins (2007) notes that ‘on a practical note, I have taken the view in my own work that if it is possible to undertake only a series of one-off interviews in a research project, this semi-structured format is the best approach to adopt’ (p. 210). Limiting the interviews to be fully structured where each participant would be asked exactly the same set of questions could lead to opportunities being missed to probe further into the reasons behind certain decisions. Conversely, leaving the structure of the interviews too open could lead to limited accounts from the participants which Gronn (2007) warns about, as ‘interview informants build up a very limited mental stock of illustrative incidents and examples concerning their own lives’ (p. 195). Hence the use of semi-structured interviews would allow similar themes to be explored with all twelve participants but could be developed individually in terms of their experiences and aspirations.

3.6.1 Interviews – Stage 1

In order to test the format of the interviews, questions were trialled with four participants during the pilot research (Appendix 11), crucial to address any issues of timing, bias and implementation (p. 257) according to Chenail (2011). The questions were designed to probe further into key areas including influences on career paths, experiences of pursuing promotions and attitudes towards future promotions including training needs (see Appendix 7). One aim was to discover any reasons behind career choices and why participants held particular attitudes towards leadership and headship with the questions designed to reveal more detail than the questionnaires had. During the interviews I used the questionnaire responses to inform my questioning, particularly in relation to the statement responses. The interviews assisted with the positioning of each participant in the theoretical framework in terms of justifying the categories and were useful in identifying if the statement choices were a suitable indicator of each position. However, to ensure each interview was conducted with a similar structure and to check that no detail was omitted, the questions were broken down into shorter prompts (Appendix 12) for the full study. During the pilot study a method of recording each interview via Dictaphone enabled each interview to move at a swift pace whilst fully concentrating on the responses given and asking any follow up probes required; hence this method was subsequently utilised in the full study.
3.6.2 Interviews – Stage 2

For stage two of the interviews the same twelve interviewees were approached in order to ascertain if their views had changed over time. The intention was to visit each teacher approximately one year after their first interview although in some cases this ended up being closer to eighteen months later due to the time taken to gain a response from some participants and the logistics involved in agreeing a meeting time. This was not detrimental however as all second interviews were within the same academic year. None of the twelve interviewees had moved to different schools and so all could be easily contacted. The second interviews, again of a semi structured format, enabled me to investigate if teachers’ roles at those schools had changed and if their future plans and aspirations were any different (Appendix 13). During the second interviews each participant answered the same statements from the questionnaires and this allowed me to position them for a second time on the framework in order to analyse if they had shifted their location over time. The second interview prompts could be more tailored to that individual on this occasion, with data from the first interviews and questionnaires used where appropriate. Pascal and Ribbins (1998) state that surveys do not always offer a full understanding of views of participants and argue that to do so ‘the reader must be offered a much fuller access to their views across a range of themes and issues’ (p. 7), which was more feasible during these second meetings. The dates for which each section of the fieldwork was carried out are shown in table 3.7:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2012</td>
<td>Initial contact with six secondary schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April – July 2012</td>
<td>Distribution and collection of questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August - November 2012</td>
<td>Categorization of data to positions on grid. Selection of interviewees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2012 – March 2013</td>
<td>Interviews with twelve participants. 20 minutes allocated per interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2013 – July 2014</td>
<td>Interviews with same twelve participants. Review of positions on grid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.7: Timescale for fieldwork.

This was broadly in line with the original plan although the second interviews covered a longer period of time than had at first been intended.
3.7 Interview Analysis

All twelve interviews for both stages were transcribed as soon after the interviews as possible so that the experience and recollection of the interview was as recent as it could be. Interviews provided the opportunity to probe into why teachers held certain viewpoints and it was important that whilst participants were answering questions I could concentrate on these rather than making notes. Therefore, each interview was recorded to be transcribed afterwards. This would also allow me to revise over the answers given whilst transcribing each interview. Ribbins (2007) highlights the advantages of this method:

A major benefit of producing one’s own texts, especially in multiple interview projects, is that this enables the generation of a level of knowledge of their content unmatched by any other method. Such knowledge comes into its own when analysing and writing up the study (p. 219).

Whilst Ribbins (2007) also suggests transcribing only relevant information and making ‘ongoing judgements about what to include and what to leave out’ (p. 218), I made the decision to transcribe the entire interviews in order to assist with how best to carry out an analysis. Watling and James (2007) state that such analyses involve making ‘critical choices about the meanings and values of the data you have gathered, and making sure that your decisions can be justified in terms of the research, the context in which it was carried out and the people who were involved in it’ (p. 352). Through the transcriptions common themes could be identified and I chose to use a colour key, consistent with the questionnaire analysis, for each of the four categories of ‘careerist’, ‘serendipity’, ‘active choice’ and ‘stuck’ (Appendix 14). This provided a visual aide when identifying evidence of participants being located in the correct quadrant in the theoretical framework as initially identified from the questionnaires and in all twelve cases their positioning was justified. This method of highlighting also assisted in identifying emerging themes in the data and make comparisons between participants. During the transcription process there were particular occurrences that could be lost when transferring an audio file to a written one. Therefore actions that were of note, such as long pauses or laughter were indicated in the transcriptions. Whilst the first interviews had enabled a picture to be built up of each individual and their attitude towards their career, the second interviews provided an extremely useful follow up where the interviewees often appeared to be more at ease due to their familiarity with the situation and myself as an
interviewer. The information gained justified using the method of interviews and as Ribbins (2007) describes it, the knowledge gained came ‘into its own’ (p. 219) as the report developed.

In order to demonstrate the professional identity of teachers in each of the four quadrants, I chose to use stories based on information gathered after stage 2 of the interview process. These versions of the truth are inspired by the work of Clough (2002) who builds truths around characters he has met incorporating his own imagination to demonstrate a point, referred to as stories:

As a means of educational report, stories can provide a means by which those truths, which cannot be otherwise told, are uncovered. The fictionalization of educational experience offers researchers the opportunity to import fragments of data from various real events in order to speak to the heart of social consciousness – thus providing the protection of anonymity to the research participants without stripping away the rawness of real happenings (p. 8).

Whilst interview participants revealed certain aspects of their personal lives during the interviews it was not often necessary for me to probe these details further and so piecing various events and quotations together served to illustrate somebody typical to that position. The literary techniques that Clough (2002) uses combined with the data led to a creation of ‘the truths of professional and personal lives’ (p. 17) of the participants, although these written accounts are only one version from a possible variety of truths. It is important to note that the creation of stories can involve the author making assumptions from the data presented to them and adding details to demonstrate particular characteristics. For example, for one participant who described her caring nature and interest in mental health, it was appropriate to include a scene from her childhood playing with dolls that had not been made explicit during the interview process, but could be seen to reinforce this characteristic. This aspect of forming the stories was used sparingly but was essential in creating a cohesive version of events.

Whilst it is essential that the method of creating such stories are shared with the reader, Clough (2002) encourages the reading of the stories first, so that the reader can assume his version of events is not simply a fiction. Indeed, the authorisation and analysis of any interview or questionnaire data could be interpreted as a fiction in itself as it is the version of events that the author has chosen to focus on. Therefore in terms of the ethics of such a method I am presenting my versions of these stories and the reader may wish to create theirs. Clough (2002) explains the potential challenges but also advantages in using such a method:
Thus with such a position it becomes possible to conduct research and/or tell stories of educational settings which bear immediate relation to the truths from which they derive. Such research acts become matters of urgency, for they test the moral and political intent of the researcher (and of the reader). The challenge then is to approach the crises of representation with accounts which embody the truths of those situations – as they are read – and without recourse to methodological apologia (p. 100).

In terms of which individuals to focus on, only Helen and Matt represented the stuck and active choice categories exclusively and so these were both chosen. For the serendipitous category there were a possible six interviewees to choose from although some of these were reasonably close to the careerist quadrant. I therefore chose Leanne as her responses to the serendipitous statements in the questionnaires had featured most prominently. In terms of the careerist group, Marilyn had given the most convincing responses originally agreeing with the majority of key careerist statements, but her second interview had seen a significant shift towards the stuck quadrant and so Sam was chosen to represent this category instead. The majority of interview participants had included key details about their upbringing in their interviews, enabling me to use these pieces of information to build up a brief history of how they had reached their current positions. These pieces of information could be viewed as individual jigsaw pieces whereby in order to create the full picture, in this case the story, the missing pieces were constructed by myself (Appendix 15). Whilst all four participants had provided a wealth of information in key areas which could be used to contribute to their stories, not all had spoken so candidly about some areas of their personal lives. For example, Helen had not included details of her upbringing in her interview answers and so a greater number of jigsaw pieces had to be created in this area.

The purpose of the stories is to assist in analysing the key characteristics of each category of teacher professional. This method of analysis, referred to as portraiture, is explained by Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997):

Portraiture is a method of qualitative research that blurs the boundaries of aesthetics and empiricism in an effort to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational life. Portraiture seeks to record and interpret the perspectives and experience of the people they are studying, documenting their voices and their visions – their authority, knowledge, and wisdom (p. xv).

This approach would enable myself as a researcher to be involved in the four stories and whilst I would choose the features of the stories this should not prevent readers from constructing their
own interpretation of the truth. Hackmann (2002) explains that ‘the investigator’s voice purposely is woven into the written document, called a portrait, which is created as a result of the researcher’s interactions with the actors in the research setting’ (p. 52), which should enable a greater understanding of each participant and their situation.

In terms of my own construction of the stories Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) argue that ‘vivid, discerning (and restrained) articulation of the researcher’s stance allows the reader to entertain a contrasting view – to move to a different point on the landscape that might shape a different vision (p. 50). Despite portraiture being presented as one version of a possible many truths, this approach does have its critics. English (2006) argues that a postmodern approach should be taken where life writing is concerned as ‘it is the discontinuities, the ruptures and the dissimilarities which are of most importance’ (p. 142) if a greater understanding of leadership is to be achieved. A context free approach was not my intention in this research however, with participants each having their own stories determining their positions. My own approach echoes the views of Cohen and Mallon (2001) who in using stories in career research state that career accounts are ‘deeply embedded in social and cultural practice’ (p. 63).

Indeed, my own positioning was relevant to the stories in what questions were asked and how the answers were interpreted. In terms of the analysis of the data the construction of the stories would enable comparisons to be made. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) explain that:

The portraitist draws out the refrains and patterns and creates a thematic framework for the construction of the narrative. She gathers, organizes, and scrutinizes the data, searching for convergent threads, illuminating metaphors, and overarching symbols, and often constructing a coherence out of themes that the actors might experience as unrelated or incoherent (p. 185).

These stories will contribute to an understanding of the conceptual framework explained above combined with the relevant literatures.

3.8 Summary of Method of Analysis

In order for a mixed method approach to be successful, the strategy of an explanatory sequential design suggested by Creswell (2009) was adopted, whereby the qualitative data would assist in explaining the quantitative data and vice versa (p. 209). This is demonstrated by figure 3.7:
Whilst the conceptual framework had been developed through key literatures, this was initially utilised through the quantitative data gained from questionnaire question number 13 (Appendix 7). The initial positioning of participants was then used in conjunction with the remaining quantitative data to provide information during phase 2; the first interviews. Qualitative data collected during interviews could then build on the positioning of each participant and was used to agree with or refute questionnaire responses. Utilising question 13 for a second time during stage 2 of the interviews enabled the quantitative data to be reviewed with the interview itself providing explanations for those responses. An example of how the mixed methods data analysis was applied to key themes is illustrated using participant Helen (table 3.8) indicating the chapters in which they are addressed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Theme</th>
<th>Quantitative (Questionnaires)</th>
<th>Qualitative (Interviews-Stage 1)</th>
<th>Qualitative (Interviews-Stage 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards promotion (Chapter 5)</td>
<td>- Encouraged to apply for promotion by head&lt;br&gt;- Ability to lead team important&lt;br&gt;- If a promotion opportunity arose would consider it</td>
<td>- Enjoys certain amount of responsibility, pay and recognition&lt;br&gt;- Considering assistant head in future (4/5 years) but wants to make sure 'doing this post very well' first</td>
<td>- Leadership in school viewed as a 'mini dictatorship'. Felt has to agree with all decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards senior leadership and headship (Chapter 6)</td>
<td>- Intends to progress to senior leadership&lt;br&gt;- Headteacher role not appealing</td>
<td>- Wouldn’t consider a role higher than assistant head&lt;br&gt;- Would only consider leading in an educational setting with 2 or 3 others</td>
<td>- If was fully behind current head would have considered senior leadership&lt;br&gt;- Views school leadership as a ‘bullying culture’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training implications (Chapter 6)</td>
<td>- Attended one recent network meeting&lt;br&gt;- Finds interviews challenging and daunting</td>
<td>- Considers no further training to be required to prepare for leadership&lt;br&gt;- Thinks schools should not work in isolation as much</td>
<td>- Leaving teaching to pursue full time study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender perspectives (Chapter 7)</td>
<td>- Doing job whilst looking after own children is important&lt;br&gt;- Having support of partner is important&lt;br&gt;- Can't apply for promotion now as too much responsibility in the home&lt;br&gt;- Can't apply for promotion now due to ages of children</td>
<td>- In retrospect would have waited until children were older before pursuing promotion&lt;br&gt;- Considered moving closer to parents for help with childcare but not financially viable</td>
<td>- Later finish to the working day means picking up children later&lt;br&gt;- Finding job hard to manage with children; decided ‘it’s not for me, not right now’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.8: Mixed methods approach

Whilst Helen’s questionnaire indicated someone unable to apply for promotions due to her personal circumstances, positioning her as ‘stuck’, it was only through the first interview that the extent of the dilemma she faced could be fully appreciated. Whilst this confirmed her ‘stuck’ position, her predicament of balancing work with home life really came to a head by the second interview, having made the decision to leave mainstream teaching altogether. This indicated the start of Helen making choices rather than being restricted but also demonstrated the impact a leader can have on the career decisions of others, information that a face to face interview was ideal in acquiring. Such cultural surroundings were important to consider particularly in the analysis of the qualitative data, in line with the policy scholarship approach (Grace, 1995) adopted throughout this study. The view of an environment as having been socially constructed is referred
to by Easterby-Smith et al. (1994) as ‘phenomenology’, whereby the researcher appreciates ‘the different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experience’ (p. 78). Utilising this mixed methods approach would allow such meanings to be focused on and a fuller picture of each interview participant could hence be developed and analysed.

3.9 Reliability and Validity

In terms of the reliability of the information gained from questionnaire and interview participants it was important to put the teachers at their ease. The email accompanying the questionnaire link explained my role as a fellow teacher professional so as to gain the trust of each headteacher and subsequently the teacher professionals (Appendix 4). My position as a researcher was also made clear along with the focus of my research. It was important whilst collating questionnaire responses that these were treated as a sample of teachers from a particular local authority area at a particular moment in time and were not intended to provide any generalised results regarding teachers and their careers. The use of percentages was possible when carrying out some analyses but when subgroups were analysed raw data was more suitable due to smaller numbers. Gaining the trust of the participants was paramount as for them to be honest about their career intentions reassurance that their questionnaire responses would remain anonymous was vital. These measures appeared to be successful as nine participants volunteered their contact details in order to take part in the interview element of the research. All twelve interviews were held at the participant’s place of work in a public location, often a classroom or meeting room, during normal school office hours which again was intended to put the teachers at ease. Cohen (2006) explains that for such participants, ‘stories provide a veneer of safety and ontological security’ (p. 191) and the interviews intentionally began with a question regarding past career paths so as to relax each participant in this initial meeting. Cohen (2006) continues that ‘in accounting for their careers in a logical, coherent way, the teller derives a sense of continuity and security’ (p. 191). In terms of the reliability of interviews, Cohen et al. (2000) advise that validity can be increased by minimising bias, including ‘the characteristics of the interviewer, the characteristics of the respondent, and the substantive content of the questions’ (p. 121). Throughout the interviews I was aware that eradicating any bias would be impossible but I did attempt to minimise this by not having personally met the interviewees before the first interviews and by keeping questions brief to allow
thinking time and encouraging more detailed responses. Whilst researchers such as Bush (2007) argue that interviews are more reliable when structured due to ‘the deliberate strategy of treating each participant as a potentially unique respondent’ (p. 95) with less structure, it was suitable for these to be of a semi-structured nature as the teacher professionals were at differing points in their careers. Therefore, the option to pursue a particular line of questioning if it was deemed to be useful was valuable.

Treating such personal accounts of the past with caution was of consideration, as Gronn (2007) notes that ‘interview informants build up a very limited mental stock of illustrative incidents and examples concerning their own lives’ (p. 195). Ellis and Bochner (2000) refer to this disadvantage as ‘given the distortions of memory and the mediation of language, narrative is always a story about the past and not the past itself’ (p. 745). To minimise this effect probing further into these stories was effective in providing more detailed information in addition to the questionnaire responses. Further warning comes from Duberley et al. (2006) who in their data analysis on public sector research scientists identify ‘four scripts’ (p. 1139) upon which the interviewees draw to describe their careers. Cohen (2006) describes these discourses as ‘dynamic, differentially available to people, contradictory and sometimes competing’ (p. 195). However, my analysis enabled comparisons to be made between questionnaire responses and interview information so that consistency between the two could be checked.

3.10 Research Integrity and Ethical Issues

Prior to any schools being approached for the fieldwork, full ethical approval was obtained from the Manchester Institute of Education. This involved the submission of an ‘Ethical Approval Application Form’ and the completion of a risk assessment with the details of both documents forming part of a panel presentation discussion at the University. The schools involved were sent completed University of Manchester forms detailing the purposes of the questionnaires and the research aims with contact details of the researcher and supervisor in case they had any questions or concerns (Appendix 5). Questionnaire responses were all anonymous except where participants chose to include their contact details and these were automatically saved in a password protected website which only I had access to. Similarly each interview participant was sent an information sheet.
(Appendix 16) and consent form to sign (Appendix 17) prior to the meeting itself. The forms clearly stated that participants were under no obligation to answer all questions which follows the advice of Raffe et al. (1989) who state that ‘with respect to data subjects, researchers should be conscious of their intrusive potential, and should seek to minimize any intrusion; the confidentiality of data must be respected and protected by positive measures; and data subjects should be told the purposes of the research and have adequate opportunity to withhold their cooperation’ (p. 14). It was explained to each participant that they would be allocated a pseudonym to ensure anonymity and the names of any schools or local authorities would not be mentioned in the research. Cohen et al. (2000) explain that ‘the essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity’ (p. 61). Following this advice was straightforward as participants represented a small number of schools in an authority that only myself and my supervisors were aware of.

During the interviews it was likely that teachers would discuss their personal reasons for applying or not applying for promotions and there was the potential to mention confidential matters involving other members of staff or family members. As this was within the research tradition of the field it was to be expected and such matters would be treated with sensitivity, with the experience of Hall (1996) taken into consideration:

I felt I was negotiating a constant tightrope between probing for detail and respecting privacy. This is a common problem for qualitative researchers. The heads would tell me things which, probed further, would give me greater insight into the relationship between their personal and professional lives. At the same time they might signal, through body language or explicitly, that further probing would not be appropriate (p. 24).

As a teacher professional myself I did not require any security checks to enter the chosen schools and was signed in as a visitor and accompanied by the interviewees throughout my visits. Each interview was recorded on a Dictaphone and kept in a secure location, locked in a drawer in a private home study. Interview transcriptions were then stored on a personal computer that only I had access to and files were password protected. My University supervisor was made aware of when I was attending interviews at other schools and this information was not shared with colleagues or other interviewees to ensure the anonymity of all participants.
3.11 Summary

This chapter has presented the case for a policy scholarship involving a survey using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. A survey has been identified as the most appropriate methodology for this study and ways in which to minimise any potential issues regarding the sampling and data analysis have been highlighted. The development of the conceptual framework and how this informed the analysis of the questionnaire and interview data has been explained and how a policy scholarship approach has been adopted in order to explain findings within relevant historical and cultural settings. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 will explain this analysis in detail, focusing on the career plans of teacher professionals and their attitudes towards headship and how the findings can be viewed from a gender perspective. I begin with the following chapter where the four career categories of ‘careerist’, ‘serendipity’, ‘active choice’, and ‘stuck’ will be elaborated upon through the use of four stories.
4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the four positions described as ‘stuck’, ‘serendipity’, ‘active choice’ and ‘careerist’ will be focused on in more detail. Those individuals who were interviewed and are typical of a character positioned in that quadrant will be the central character in a story, designed to demonstrate the differences and similarities between those in the various positions. The accounts will involve actual quotations from the interview data and details from the questionnaire responses with small details created in order to demonstrate particular characteristics. The initial positions of the four interviewees can be seen in figure 4.1, with their subsequent positioning after the second interview also indicated.

![Diagram showing the positions of the four interviewees: Helen, Leanne, Matt, and Sam.]

Figure 4.1: Positioning from questionnaire to second interview

In the next four sections the stories of the individuals above will be shared, beginning with the story of ‘careerist’ Sam.
4.2 Sam’s Story

Upon meeting Sam he reminded me of many of the young, keen teachers who arrive in each staff room every September. Having taught for seven years Sam came across as confident and friendly, keen to talk about his life and career experiences. He had certainly not sat still where his career was concerned, already teaching in his fourth educational establishment and planning for the future. Sam’s questionnaire responses had revealed somebody who was confident in their own ability and was keen to move up the promotional ladder, having stated that he was keener on promotion now than when his career had begun. Sam considered ‘higher pay’ and ‘greater autonomy’ as very important when considering promotions and considered himself to have many of the traits identified by Gray (1993) as stereotypically masculine including competitive, ambitious, disciplined and highly regulated (p. 111). However, Sam also selected the qualities caring, informal, creative and easy going from the list indicating that whilst he was determined to progress to further leadership positions, Sam possessed a range of diverse qualities that would assist him in his ambitions. The responses that Sam gave to key statements in the questionnaire and second interview placed him firmly in the ‘careerist’ quadrant of the positioning grid (see figure 4.1), a placement that was justified through more detailed questioning carried out over the two year period that followed.

Sam’s childhood had been a happy one with his parents acting as positive role models. However, once his father’s football career had ended the family had invested in an off-licence; the setting for Sam’s upbringing. Both parents working long hours, seven days a week instilled a work ethic in Sam which had accompanied him into adulthood. He viewed his parent’s hard work as attributing to his success throughout his education and his attitude of ‘be the best you can be’ was at the forefront of Sam’s mind concerning his career.

In our first interview we met in Sam’s classroom. The room was tidy and organised and Sam moved two pupil chairs to one side so that we were sat face to face. As soon as the first question was asked Sam launched into a description of his career so far including details of an interview where he had been unsuccessful; he certainly didn’t need to warm up or gain any confidence in talking to me. Sam had never intended to embark upon a teaching career. His sister, already a
teacher, had mentioned the possibility of teaching after he left university with no full time job and no idea of what industry to pursue. It was a chance meeting in the public house that Sam was working in with the teacher training provider at a local school that alerted him to the opportunities available and he quickly registered on the graduate teacher programme. Sam described his early teaching experience as ‘a shaky start’ and stated that he ‘didn’t enjoy it at first’; indeed he ‘hated it’. Despite his apparent lack of dedication to what others may view as a vocation, Sam had stuck with teaching. Along the way he had considered other roles, even applying for some jobs outside of teaching, but never pursuing them enough to leave. Ultimately it was Sam’s determined attitude plus the encouragement of a head of department that led him to pursue his first promotion to become second in department. However, his ambitions had not been fulfilled and Sam moved to take up a head of department role in a sixth form college, staying for only one year when he realised the sixth form concept just ‘wasn’t for me’. Having moved to his current role as head of department he was again considering his next move stating that an assistant head role would be ‘the natural progression’.

Sam had some very traditional views, which could be perceived as old fashioned. Sam was still living at home with his parents at aged thirty, although he did have a long term girlfriend. He explained that he had persuaded his girlfriend to begin her teacher training as he thought it would be difficult to be with somebody who didn’t understand the experiences he was having in a school.

I asked him about why more males appeared to be prepared to pursue promotional posts. His reply was hesitant, possibly due to his being aware of being interviewed by a female and his eyes flitted around the room as he stumbled over his words and struggled to resume eye contact:

Possibly the family route. You know, women are probably going to have children at some point and so maybe that hinders their career ladder slightly, possibly. Erm, because they have time off and things like that. You couldn’t commit to the department if you knew you were going to be off with a baby soon or something like that, I don’t know, maybe it just plays on the back of their mind... erm... erm... I don’t know, possibly tradition maybe as well comes into it a little bit maybe. Males tend to be the headmaster, well it used to be the headmaster and not the headmistress.

Sam, whilst not wanting to offend, still viewed females as the main child carer and home builder. His own mother had always provided the stability at home as well as assisting with the off-licence and he thought this was the way things should be. If Sam was to ever reach a leadership position
it was impossible to know if his views on males and females and their perceived dedication to the job would influence any appointments he might make, but in light of current views it was difficult to assume that they wouldn’t. Certainly, he was looking to continue to move up to the next rung of the leadership ladder quickly.

It was a Saturday when Sam spotted the advertisement for the leadership role in a school close to his own home. He searched for the details online and found the role to be quite unusual. The school was for pupils aged fourteen to nineteen (no more needy year sevens he had thought to himself) and involved tracking the progress of five subjects, including his own teaching subject of ICT but also his much preferred subject of mathematics. Whilst he needed no encouragement to apply he had called his sister all the same and she had agreed that it was a rare opportunity. If he was as keen as he said he was to get out of his current school, then he should go for it.

Eighteen months after our first meeting I interviewed Sam for the final time and with the end of the academic year looming he was in good spirits, having secured the promotion at the different establishment. This time the interview was held in a meeting room, away from potential interruptions that a classroom setting can bring. Sam was keen to inform me that his new post was to be paid on the leadership scale, even before mentioning what the role actually entailed. The overseeing of five different subjects was something that appealed to Sam and in particular the closer proximity to his home than his current role. Sam had continued to lose his enthusiasm for teaching and welcomed the thought of a reduced timetable:

I find it a lot harder to teach these days. I don’t know if that’s a change in the pupils, the mentality of the pupils, the attitudes of the pupils, whether it’s the schools I’ve been in for the last few years but it’s certainly got a lot harder to... just to fight behaviour management, to actually teach and them wanting to learn.

Whilst Sam had become slightly disillusioned with the pupils at his current school, he was keen to exert his influence on other staff and learn new skills, continuing the journey of bettering himself. His ambition did not stop there and he planned to take those skills and utilise them as a deputy head in three or four year’s time. Sam was not aware of his incessant tapping on the table whilst explaining his situation. His relentless energy and inability to sit still had driven his parents to distraction when he was younger, but he was now using that enthusiasm to pursue a role he felt passionate about, with the status and pay attracting him to the post initially.
In relation to his personal life Sam had also experienced some changes. He had moved out of the family home to live with his girlfriend and he had recently become engaged to be married. He cited this as one reason why he would need to earn more money, stating that ‘with that obviously I need a higher profile job’, a demonstration of Sam feeling responsible as the bread winner in the home. He was not pushed in his career by his partner who he believed to not earn very much and felt a compulsion to provide for both of them, harking back to his own childhood where although his parents had worked as a team, his father had been the head of the household.

Sam was a clear ‘careerist’ with very ‘either or’ views. With only two days left at his current school he felt optimistic about the future. Once he had completed his time as a senior leader he would join his aged thirty-something friends as a deputy head, teaching fewer lessons and analysing the progress of pupils and staff amongst other managerial responsibilities. He could not see as far into the future as headteacher but the option was always there if he wanted it, his fiancé willing to sacrifice her career in order to bring up their children, allowing him to make the career choices he wished.

4.3 Helen’s Story
Helen had always loved spending time with people and as a young girl had enjoyed role play games with her toy dolls, setting up hospital and classroom situations with them. Whilst Helen had an interest in psychology she had pursued her favourite school subject of drama at university. As a naturally shy individual, performing as somebody else was not daunting for Helen and she could become engrossed in the characters and stories involved. However, Helen was unsure about pursuing drama as a career and instead had her heart set on clinical psychology. During a year out Helen gained some experience of working with pupils with special educational needs and this convinced her that teaching was the profession that she should pursue. However, Helen had faced conflict over the years between teaching and working with other agencies and she was to reveal more regarding this in our first interview.
Prior to the interview I focused on Helen's questionnaire responses and she was one of just six participants who were positioned entirely in the stuck category, all six of whom were females out of a total of fifty four individuals who could be placed. Helen's qualities outlined in her questionnaire were creative, intuitive, non competitive, tolerant and aware of individual differences, all nurturing or feminine paradigms as outlined by Gray (1993), although she also selected evaluative, classed more as a defensive or masculine paradigm (p. 111). Helen viewed the higher pay and greater autonomy of promotion as 'quite important' as opposed to 'very important' and considered herself to be jointly responsible with her husband for the running of their household. However, Helen considered having two children to have impacted negatively on her decision to pursue promotion, selecting the option that starting a family had encouraged her not to apply for such posts. Rather than Helen making independent decisions regarding her career, her responses to particular statements indicated that she had little choice due to her family responsibilities. Helen had agreed with the statement ‘I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home’ and strongly agreed with the statement ‘once my children are older I will consider applying for promotion’. This led to her being positioned in the stuck category (see figure 4.1) rather than somebody who had made the active choice to not pursue promotion.

At first Helen struck me as quite a timid individual, softly spoken and very measured in her responses. We met in her shared office which was the hub of her school’s behaviour support unit. Helen had started out teaching English seventeen years ago and during her teaching practice had been approached to lead a project designed to reduce the risks of pupil exclusions. The responsibility was something that Helen enjoyed although juggling this with teaching commitments was not ideal, subsequently leading to her first departure from teaching, to work for a private education company. The role focused on ‘looked after’ children which suited Helen's ambition to help vulnerable young people. I asked why she had left teaching relatively quickly:

I think it was a little bit of naivety I think in that I was... I was shocked I think originally to find out that, basically how some schools and institutions work and that things weren't quite as... were not honestly motivated as I thought they might be and I lost a lot of faith I think in things then. So I left and I was quite happy to leave and go into a slightly different setting and that was really good to start with because it started off as a very small company that was campaigning and not for profit but then as it grew and grew it became increasingly for profit and everything changed.
Helen had returned to a school setting after a twelve year absence although not solely as a classroom teacher. She had applied successfully for the role of special educational needs coordinator; a whole school responsibility. Her reason for seeking such a post was partly due to her own perceived inexperience as a full-time classroom teacher, but also due to some leadership ambitions emerging, coinciding with the birth of her first child:

I began to realise I wanted a little bit more responsibility. I wanted to move up and I wanted to progress. I think I was getting bored staying in the same sort of thing. Then actually I had my second child as well and a lot of it, by that stage I was a manager within that organisation and that was fine, and then I started to disagree with a lot of things that the employers were doing so that was why I left. I didn't want to go... I do like having my views heard. I do like a certain amount of responsibility and pay and promotion and recognition within that.

On paper Helen could be perceived as a careerist, successfully balancing her career with having two children, positive regarding promotion and not afraid to change direction to suit her needs. However, the interview revealed the struggle that Helen had faced. She described balancing a leadership position with having children as 'really difficult' and looking back felt she should have waited two more years until pursuing a role such as her present one. She described her perception of the workload and time commitment required as 'unrealistic' although it was at this time the headteacher had approached her to apply for a senior leadership post which she had subsequently declined to apply for. Helen described the contrasting view she and her husband had of the potential role:

My husband and I argued over it because he said to me you should go for it. You could do it and I said I know I could do it but can I do that and organise a home and feel confident because for me it was about actually establishing my teaching as a whole class teacher. How can I do all of that without actually popping or being very weepy? And I think I just had a much more realistic picture of what it really entailed whereas I think he would just go for it.

Helen was not viewing the role in isolation but how it would correlate with other aspects of her life. Her concerns were not only practical but were somewhat emotional, an anxiety that many potential leaders would either claim to have not experienced or would be keen to conceal for fear of such a display being viewed as a sign of weakness. Helen's considered answers during the interview demonstrated somebody who took a calm approach and it was clear how her patience and thoughtfulness would be an advantage in working with youngsters with behavioural or learning difficulties. However, I left Helen unsure as to whether she would continue in her present post as she was clearly demonstrating unrest. She spoke of possibly pursuing a leadership post in 'four or five years', unable to take on the workload at present due to her home responsibilities.
Fourteen months later I met up with Helen for our second interview. For this meeting we met in her new office, a smaller room to the previous one and in the main part of the school. Helen explained that her role had changed due to her request to focus on learning, but in reality the transformation had not been altogether positive:

Actually what's happened there is the bits I enjoy seem to have filtered off and it is predominantly bureaucratic now. So I'm finding that more frustrating. ... I've realised that what I prefer is actually managing the students and building one to one relationships.

Helen explained that she had found this new role 'very hard' and it had been detrimental to everything including her mental health and her children. She had therefore decided that it wasn't for her, 'not right now'. I asked what alternative plans she had. Helen had applied for various courses in order to fulfil her dream of becoming an educational psychologist, leaving teaching altogether. This drastic change was not dissimilar to her earlier career choice but her reasons were partly attributed to working relations with her current headteacher and a lack of funding for her department. Helen stated that if the deputy head had been in charge, she would have 'looked at moving up to senior leadership' but this combined with the young ages of her children had convinced her that this was impossible. Helen explained how those with older children could dedicate more time to their work and how teenagers could be a help around the home, but it would be four or five years until she was in such a position.

The inflexible way in which many secondary schools are run left Helen with little choice in her career decision. Longer hours in her current role and a sense that necessary resources were not forthcoming had left her disenchanted about mainstream education. Helen had applied for a role in a different establishment with flexible working hours but this had 'made life quite difficult' in terms of her working relationship with her headteacher. Whilst Helen thought her husband wanted her to be happy she also felt 'he'd really rather I just kept going and got on with it and got more money', showing how she had become trapped in a real career dilemma. It was a pity that a talented teacher who clearly cared for young people did not feel in a position to pursue a leadership role because of the circumstances surrounding her. Other females in the positioning grid had been
identified as ‘stuck’ as Helen had, and I left the interview not knowing how many other potential leaders in similar situations had been forced to walk away.

It was six months later when I happened to meet a former colleague of Helen’s at a meeting. She had apparently been successful in gaining a place to study educational psychology full time and had left her school, and her teaching career, that summer. Perhaps now she would feel back in control of her life and find time to spend with her children, visit her relatives on the south coast and return to her favourite pastime of jogging.

4.4 Matt’s Story
Matt loved mathematics. Having studied the subject at university he had gone on to gain a teaching qualification in order to share his enthusiasm for all things mathematical with young people. We met in the office which he shared with his mathematics department colleagues and whilst the furniture and some of the equipment looked unchanged for many years, it was easy to imagine it as a hive of activity during the working day. Having started his teaching career in a very large school seven years previously Matt had been surprised when a member of the senior leadership team had suggested he applied for a promotion after three years in the job. Further responsibility was not something that Matt had considered and it was clear that he benefitted from the push provided by the colleague:

[It] was suggested sort of told that I was going to go for a job, a promotion, which was key stage three co-ordinator in charge of curriculum for eleven to fourteen year olds for maths. I enjoyed that even though I wasn’t specifically looking for promotion. I really enjoyed it because it was a bit of a challenge and it kept me going forward.

Just two years later Matt had been singled out again when a representative from a much smaller partner school approached him with a promotion suggestion. The mystery character had been an assistant headteacher, working at the time in both schools and aware that the post of head of mathematics was available at the smaller school. Matt admitted to never having considered a head of department role and without the encouragement of that member of staff did not believe he would have moved from his initial school. Whilst Matt spoke confidently it was clear that he lacked self-belief in his ability to do justice to the role in which he now found himself. After two years in
post and with positive encouragement from senior leaders Matt still felt unsure of himself although he was aware of being very self-critical:

I’m generally quite a positive person but when it comes to myself I tend to be fairly negative so I thought I need to be doing this job at least fifteen years before I can even think about going for any sort of responsibility. I automatically assumed that someone perhaps older than me or had more experience than me was obviously better than me so I should wait or I’ll wait for John to go for that promotion first and then perhaps I’ll look at it a few years down the line.

From Matt’s questionnaire responses the most important factors when considering a promotion had been greater autonomy and the ability to manage an area with the least important factors being the support of his partner and using promotion as a stepping stone to further things and so it appeared that doing the job well was a priority for Matt and not necessarily the climbing of the promotional hierarchy. Matt had made his own decisions regarding his career with the ongoing support of his wife somewhat taken for granted. Any influence on career decisions had been from his training mentor and more recently his line managers. It was clear that Matt preferred to keep his work decisions in the workplace and felt uncomfortable discussing work related issues at home for fear of his friends and family worrying about him:

I tend to try and compartmentalise my life so I’ve got work and then I’ve got home and I won’t discuss work, even though quite a few of my friends and my wife’s also a teacher, erm, I don’t really like discussing it with them because I think they’ll think the context of the school I’m in and they’ll automatically assume it’s, you know, everyday’s a horrible day and I don’t enjoy my job and nobody will believe me. So, I’m sure people at home will be massively supportive if I’ve told them something as a mumbled comment like oh I’ve got a new job as head of department and brilliant, brilliant, and then I’ve just wanted to brush it under the carpet and ask them about their day.

This methodical approach to life resonated with the qualities that Matt had selected on the questionnaire; tolerant, evaluative, disciplined and formal. Whilst three of these were classed as masculine paradigms by Gray (1993), tolerant was included on the feminine traits list (p. 111). However, it was not surprising that Matt had chosen this quality as the majority of questionnaire respondents had also selected it and Matt, in particular, prided himself on his patience when helping youngsters with challenging mathematical problems. Along with these traits, Matt was not comfortable being in the spotlight and was content to continue doing his job to the best of his ability with occasional praise from those in senior management.
Aside from his career, Matt's personal life was due to change as having married one year previously his wife was expecting their first child. In his present role Matt was happy to maintain a healthy balance between time spent on work and time for himself and with the addition of a baby he was not considering future promotions at present. Having said that he hadn't ruled out working in a larger department or taking on increased responsibility in future, but at this moment in time his family was his priority.

Thirteen months later I met Matt for our second interview. He was in good spirits and was now part way through his fourth year as head of department. His role leading the mathematics department had not changed but he was now shadowing the member of staff in charge of compiling the whole school timetable, with a view to him being responsible for this the following year:

It was done quite informally. I was approached by the head who asked me if I would be interested in taking up the role and this had become vacant due to someone else progressing. It’s not something I’d really thought about strongly so he just asked and I was really pleased to be considered.

Whilst Matt acknowledged the role would entail a lot of extra hours for little financial reward, he appreciated that the experience could stand him in good stead if pursuing a role elsewhere and so he had made the decision to accept the offer on the spot. The other major change for Matt was the birth of his son nine months previously. This had posed a few issues in terms of balancing home and work but had not been detrimental to Matt’s career:

I’ve been supported very well by the department and by senior leadership as well. They’ve been very understanding and have made me feel very valued. They’ve been really good with helping me take time off like paternity leave. I was worrying about it beforehand but I’m really pleased with how it’s all been balanced.

Indeed, Matt was now feeling more confident regarding applying for other posts than before his son had been born. Whilst he might not pursue a promotion he knew that applying for a role closer to home was a possibility with ‘a few good years of results behind me’ and his new whole school experience. Not only had the birth of his son not held Matt back in terms of his career choices, but he was also applying to complete a masters degree qualification. His attendance on the ‘Teaching Leaders’ course had highlighted the opportunity to complete further study and Matt viewed the masters as a further advantage in terms of a possible promotion in future. Matt had faced no real disadvantages since having a son and was still able to make his own decisions regarding his
career. Whilst he had become more positive regarding promotion than previously, I still considered Matt to be positioned in the ‘active choice’ category (see figure 4.1). In his second interview Matt had agreed with many of the statements linked to a serendipitous approach as well as those associated with stuck, but he had scored more highly in the active choice category than all eleven other interviewees. Opportunities were there for him if he wished to pursue them, but for now he was content to continue in his current role:

It’s not the financial side that particularly interests me either, because all that I’ve been told is that I’m going to be getting between an extra two hundred pounds and something a year, so it will probably leave me with a couple of pounds extra off a week with all the stress and the hassle. I think it’s the challenge I thrive on. I think part of me just wants my family to be proud of me and know that I’m doing the best that I can and trying to provide even if it is only a little bit extra a week.

I suspect that many teacher professionals would be envious of the position Matt was in. This was primarily due to his wife, also a teacher, taking a year out of her own career to ensure their child was looked after whilst Matt’s career did not suffer. As I left the interview I left a man with a raft of career opportunities ahead of him and the freedom to choose which of these he pursued.

4.5 Leanne’s Story

Leanne had been teaching for six years when I first met her. She had not set out to be a teacher when she had embarked upon a degree in languages but had plumped to study a post graduate certificate in education so that she could pass on her interest in foreign languages to others. We met in her classroom which, despite the school day being officially over, was a hive of activity with staff and pupils knocking on the door in order to ask Leanne various questions. She was very much in demand it appeared. Leanne had begun teaching at her current school as a newly qualified teacher, working for a very experienced head of department. It was during her second year that the deputy head had approached her, explaining that the head of department who was approaching retirement wished to step down. Therefore Leanne had been earmarked for the role. Leanne’s description of what happened was one of being pushed rather than her seeking out the responsibility:

I was approached by SLT who told me that I would be pushed to become head of department quite soon and to do what I needed to ensure I felt ready for this role... I think it was earlier than I thought it was going to be.
Leanne was very clear on her priorities regarding promotion, as detailed in her questionnaire responses. She considered factors such as higher pay, the support of her partner and combining the role with the running of the home as very important, but factors such as greater autonomy and the ability to lead a team or area were classed as not important at all. This reinforced Leanne's view that the status of the head of department role had not been something that she had actively pursued, but rather it had been thrust upon her. Whilst Leanne was content to remain in her current post for the foreseeable future there were signs that she had not ruled out future promotions. She agreed that she might consider a promotion opportunity if it wasn’t too inconvenient and did intend in future to reach senior leadership, but was going to ‘wait and see what happens’. In terms of Gray’s (1993) paradigms, Leanne selected a mixture of masculine and feminine traits. These were conformist and disciplined from the masculine list and caring and informal from the feminine list (p. 111). Whereas half of the female questionnaire respondents had selected disciplined from the list, less than a third had chosen conformist with Leanne’s choices indicating a professional who wished to be seen as doing the acceptable thing.

In our first interview it was clear that Leanne was a conscientious member of staff who took onboard the advice from others. Having agreed to take on the head of department role with no formal interview, she had also enrolled on a professional development course called ‘Teaching Leaders’ recommended to her by the head and encouraged by her partner, also a teacher. I asked Leanne if her career had affected any personal life decisions:

...erm...no I don’t think it’s stopped me having chil.... it’s something that’s occurred to me actually in the last few weeks that if I am committed to this course which is a two year course, I’m now thirty, I’ll be thirty two, thirty three by the time if finishes so that’s something I’ve thought of, thinking when do I want to start having children because I’m going to have to do this. No I don’t, no I don’t think it has and it’s been nice in a way because it’s given us the extra money to save up for a deposit so swings and roundabouts.

Leanne’s initially slow response showed that her career and personal life were indeed intertwined and whilst by the end of the response she appeared to have convinced herself that her career choice had not impacted on her personal decisions regarding having children it was clearly at the forefront of her mind. Leanne explained her anxiety when considering a leadership role and starting a family but admitted, for the first time she noted, that she was an aspiring senior leader. It was during this first interview that Leanne realised she had already ruled out the job of
headteacher. The main aspects of the role did not appeal to her and she did not see the financial rewards as important enough for her to consider it. As I left our first interview it was clear that Leanne was a hard working teacher who had been identified by senior leaders as having leadership potential, but who was not motivated to drive her career forward at the present time.

Exactly one year later I returned to Leanne’s school for a second interview. Whilst Leanne’s role had not changed she explained that her experience of working in her current school had. External pressures on the school in terms of examination results and an impending visit from the inspectorate along with new criteria had seen a shift in focus to data; an area that filled Leanne with dread. She explained that the perceived increase in accountability had filtered down to heads of department and she described the atmosphere as a ‘pressure cooker’. In terms of analysing data and implementing intervention strategies, Leanne felt that her time was now even more stretched and she in turn was putting more pressure on staff in her department to meet targets. The words Leanne used were ‘worry, concerns, stress, pressure’ which was in contrast to her description of the role one year ago. Leanne explained that she was currently buying a house and having signed up for her first ever mortgage she had no choice but to remain as head of department.

The course Leanne had signed up for was progressing well and it seemed that the coach that had been assigned to her, a previous headteacher, was having a positive influence on her attitude towards managing people and the possibility of a senior leadership role in future:

Managing staff at the beginning of being head of department frightened me to death. I’m a very sensitive person and I’ve gained a lot of skills over the last year both in school and taking part in the teaching leaders course and with my coaching, that have helped to deal with staff but also to let it wash, to not get too wrapped up in things afterwards.

The input of a coach had clearly impacted positively on Leanne and whilst she had signed up for the two year course somewhat apathetically, she was now keen to gain the most out of the experience to progress her career. Ideas regarding promotion had been mentioned by her coach including a suggestion to shadow a senior leader in two years time, but Leanne was keen not to jump into such a position too soon:
I want to be sure I’m doing it properly. I don’t want to be one of these people who moves into a job and does it half heartedly. I want to move into a job knowing that people respect me there because I’ve got the experience and the skills.

A lack of confidence in her own ability was still apparent when talking to Leanne and she explained a somewhat impossible vision of being a ‘great head of department’ who could deal with anything, before moving on. However, she also admitted that those entering senior leadership had probably never reached a stage of feeling that they could not improve in some area. Leanne was still apprehensive about interviews. Having described them as ‘daunting’ and ‘terrifying’ in her questionnaire, the thought of interviews still ‘frightens me to death’ and Leanne was relieved to not have been interviewed for her current role:

I was pushed over the line, I don’t think if I’d had to interview for it at that point I’d have gone for it. I get very nervous, very intimidated and make a mess of things when I’m interviewed. I do not cope well in interview situations at all.

Perhaps the fear of an interview would delay Leanne’s progression to senior leadership, but her turmoil between starting a family and seeking promotion was more pressing. She was in no rush to have children but felt that when this did happen in the next few years she would want to teach part time, presenting another dilemma regarding her role as head of department and whether or not to progress. Leanne explained that there were few females who had successfully combined leadership with a family for very long:

There are people who are full time members of SLT and they teach and they’re brownie guide leaders and they have kids and they seem to do it all but I think they’re few and far between and I don’t think it’s something you can sustain for very long. (Sighs)... I think ... until women have the baby and are able to totally split the role there will never be that ability to just carry on regardless. ...your hormones kick in and you want to be a mum I suppose so that scuppers you.

There were clearly some important career choices that Leanne would need to make over the coming years. Whilst she had the potential to enter senior leadership, her apprehension regarding her ability to do the job plus her fear of interviews had the potential to delay her progressing for some time. Uncertainty about starting a family may delay her leadership plans further still or could even put a halt to them. For now Leanne was firmly positioned in the serendipitous category (see figure 4.1), waiting to see what opportunities arose and how her personal life would develop.
4.6 Positioning Comparisons

Through presenting four stories those typical to each position on the quadrant have been illustrated. In the creation of the stories the advice of Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) was heeded as they explained that to create a believable story it must be plausible, which in terms of validity does not need to be an objective truth (p. 245) but should be a credible account. Comparisons of the scenarios, also a feature of portraiture, and explained by Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) assisted in the development and understanding of the conceptual framework (p. 185) and are demonstrated in table 4.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CAREERIST Sam</th>
<th>STUCK Helen</th>
<th>ACTIVE CHOICE Matt</th>
<th>SERENDIPITY Leanne</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal</strong></td>
<td>Age 26-30. Engaged, lives with fiancé</td>
<td>Age 36-40. Married with two young children</td>
<td>Age 31-35. Supportive wife and new baby</td>
<td>Age 26-30. Partner also a teacher. Is considering starting a family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Status amongst peers at a young age</td>
<td>Love of helping disadvantaged youngsters</td>
<td>Love of subject</td>
<td>Love of subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Experience</strong></td>
<td>Self motivated to continue to seek promotions. Disillusioned with teaching itself</td>
<td>Disillusioned and unsettled in role. Keen to leave the school system</td>
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<td>Gaining confidence in current head of department role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude to Promotion</strong></td>
<td>Keen to move to senior leadership but unsure about role of head</td>
<td>Had potential for senior leadership but too demanding with a young family</td>
<td>Would consider senior leadership but not yet</td>
<td>Hasn’t ruled out senior leadership but would not pursue for a few years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positioning</strong></td>
<td>Job status is a priority whether this is in teaching or not</td>
<td>Family is a priority and has no option but to leave teaching</td>
<td>Family is a priority although this hasn’t been detrimental to ambitions</td>
<td>Wishes to perfect current role but facing dilemma regarding when to start a family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Overview of attitudes and experiences.

Comparisons demonstrate how the colleagues and cultures within which the individuals were operating influence the choices made. For example, Matt’s encouraging manager convinced him to pursue promotion whereas the awkwardness of the relationship between Helen and her headteacher persuaded her to leave teaching altogether. Whilst Matt and Helen’s circumstances may have appeared similar at first, there was a subtle difference in that Helen was restricted in her career choices by her home circumstances and Matt had made a personal decision to focus on his
family and not rush into senior leadership. It could be argued that attitudes from those surrounding the pair may have been due to a focus on gender as Matt’s managers clearly did not see him starting a family as detrimental to his career progression and those around him were very accommodating, but Helen had a perceived further pressure introduced to her role despite her already struggling with the balance between her personal and professional life. Conversely however, these circumstances and the disadvantages that Helen faced could be used to argue that gender should have been taken into account, as Matt had the support of his wife at home to enable his career to continue uninterrupted whereas Helen, as the main carer in the home, was offered no extra support or flexibility.

Sam and Leanne were of similar ages but had somewhat different attitudes to their progression to senior leadership. Whilst Sam was determined to move on quickly and found the status of a leadership role important, Leanne required reassurance that she was doing a good job before even considering a move. Leanne had other concerns when considering her next career move; being able to pay her mortgage and when to start a family, whereas Sam had the full support of his fiancé in striving for the next promotion and in his opinion did not need to consider such factors. Again the issue of gender was apparent as it was the female, Leanne, who bore the brunt of the family versus career decision making and Sam who envisaged being able to combine both with relative ease; indeed this was barely even considered by him. Whilst the issue of prioritising career or family was more apparent for the females than the males in this small sample, this scenario could apply to males and females and will be focused on in more detail throughout chapter 7.

A noticeable contrast between Sam and the other teachers was his lack of considering educating children as central to his ambitions. As those in leadership positions in schools rarely teach perhaps this would not be an issue, but if all ‘careerists’ pursuing headship posts valued their careers above the education of young people, this could be problematic. It is therefore suggested that Sam is an extreme case of a ‘careerist’ in education, whereby leading a school in future whilst maintaining a prime focus on teaching and learning appears unlikely. One factor shared by Matt and Leanne was their lack of confidence in applying for promotions and being able to do their jobs successfully. This contrasted with Helen’s issues as she believed she had the ability to enter
senior leadership but could not commit to it whilst raising a young family; hence her ‘stuck’ positioning. Sam was the most confident of all, his ambition and competitiveness established at an early age as demonstrated through his story.

One key finding from the stories was that the positioning of the individuals was not fixed and the analysis of positioning over time will be investigated in detail in chapter 5. This also raises the question of how an individual can move from a position of being ‘stuck’, as the stories demonstrated that the only way to become ‘unstuck’ was to leave the profession, so fluidity between career categories will be monitored. The stories also demonstrated the importance of influences on the careers choices of individuals and exactly who is carrying out such influencing will be a focus in the questionnaire data analysis of chapter 7. This chapter will also investigate the support provided for males and females wishing to progress, as the stories highlighted how varying levels of support from colleagues or family can enhance or hinder a career.

4.7 Summary

In terms of addressing the characteristics for each category through the construction of stories, I feel that this has been achieved successfully. As Clough (2002) explains whilst they are not exact versions of what might have happened, ‘they are all made from events which are real enough; made with the data of interview, life-historical reflection, observational and other inquiry; enriched with transgressive data from my own experience’ (p. 79). The stories have enabled particular characteristics of each category to be elaborated upon and the particular situations in which the individuals are placed go some way to explaining their current career positions. The main findings are that those individuals who are ‘stuck’ or ‘serendipitous’ may have issues outside of their careers to consider which can impact greatly on their promotion decisions. Those classed as ‘active choice’ and ‘careerist’ appear to have more freedom when considering their next steps.

The stories themselves highlighted some important features of each professional. Sam’s story illustrated how a ‘careerist’ who was young and with no responsibilities in the home could focus entirely on pursuing promotions and could change roles and places of work with ease. Helen’s story demonstrated how the responsibility of family could have a detrimental effect on the career of
a female, leading to feelings of guilt and a sense of being trapped. In contrast Matt’s story illustrated a male able to make free career choices, with a supportive family providing further career opportunities rather than being a hindrance. Leanne’s story showed the uncertainty a ‘serendipitous’ individual could face with regards to their career, in particular when facing a dilemma between pursuing promotion and starting a family. Information gleaned from the four stories will be used in conjunction with the following three chapters where the questionnaire and interview data will be analysed alongside the relevant literatures. Throughout the analysis the findings from the four stories will be considered and more fully engaged with, considering whether individuals in particular locations differed from each other to such an extent as those in the stories. The fact that the females in the stories were those who faced greater career dilemmas than the males will be pursued further in chapter 7. In the following chapter I begin to analyse the attitudes towards careers of all the teacher professionals who completed the initial questionnaires.
Chapter 5
The Attitudes of Teacher Professionals towards their Careers

5.1 Introduction
In this chapter I examine the aspirations, thoughts and plans of teacher professionals, the opportunities available to them and the choices that they have subsequently made. Questionnaire data will assist in addressing the first of my research questions, ‘what are the career opportunities available for teacher professionals in secondary schools?’ I use findings from the questionnaire and interview data to answer research questions three and four; ‘what are the attitudes of these teacher professionals towards promotion and careers up to headship?’ and ‘what are the implications of these experiences and attitudes for professional training, induction and development?’ It is primarily through the twelve interviews that I can address my second research question, ‘what are the experiences of teacher professionals regarding their career and in applying for promotions?’ I interpret the experiences explained by the interview participants and link these to their positioning within the conceptual framework described in chapter three, and if they are classed as being in the ‘careerist’, ‘serendipitous’, ‘active choice’ or ‘stuck’ categories referred to and elaborated upon in chapters three and four.

Questionnaire findings are analysed using various groups to uncover differences between the sexes and different age groups, with comparisons being drawn between these findings and those of Coleman (2002) who interviewed headteachers already in post. The main argument that I present is that the majority of teachers have ruled out the possibility of headship often due to not wishing to lose their identity as a classroom teacher. Many teachers for whom headship is an ambition are still in the infancy of their careers and subsequently their leadership experience so far is limited.

I review the meaning of career to individuals, the simplistic view being to gain promotions, moving up the leadership hierarchy to the ultimate role of headteacher. However, with numerous factors affecting an individual’s opportunities and many posts of responsibility available, this area is far from straightforward. With posts of responsibility often being specific to individual educational establishments I consider the turbulence between colleagues vying for the same positions and
knowing when in their lives to apply for such roles. I take into account both ends of the spectrum where an individual can feel in control of their career path, making plans and pursuing their aspirations, compared with those at the opposite end facing discrimination and barriers, ultimately feeling trapped by the system. In investigating the career decisions of my sample I will consider the conditions specific to their place of work in conjunction with their personal circumstances. Acker (1989) states that if a career is treated as ‘an individual experience’ then it is straightforward to uncover the history of that career, the ambitions of the individual and that person’s perceptions of their career to date. However, she highlights other structural aspects of careers, such as ‘political and economic features and conventions already in place’ (p 7-8), which resonates with the policy scholarship (Grace, 1995) approach that this research is adopting. Whilst interview data will assist in revealing factors affecting those decisions I shall firstly focus on the questionnaire data and the promotion opportunities available.

5.2 Career Opportunities

In order to investigate career histories I have taken into account the ages and number of years teaching of those in my questionnaire sample, containing 79 respondents. The background of each professional is considered so that potential patterns in attitude can be identified. Those responding to the questionnaire covered a wide age range as shown in figure 5.1. The majority of the sample were under 36 years of age, some having gained promotions and others remaining as classroom teachers. For this age range with a potential thirty to forty five years remaining in the teaching profession, their career choices are likely to be at the forefront of their minds, even if they have decided to stay put for the time being.
In terms of the total number of years teaching, over 90 per cent of respondents had taught for twenty years or less, as shown in Table 5.1. This may be partly attributed to those professionals having taught for over twenty years holding senior leadership posts and so not being invited to answer the questionnaire. Also those in the latter stages of their careers may have chosen not to complete the questions due to a lack of interest, believing they had reached their career goals or were not concerned with progressing further. With 18 per cent of the sample aged over 45 years, but under 10 per cent having taught for over twenty years, this would indicate that almost half of that age group had entered the teaching profession later on in life, indicating a possible change in career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Years Teaching</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Total number of years teaching, full or part time, excluding career breaks.

A total of 53 per cent of the questionnaire respondents held paid posts of responsibility as part of their current role. The majority of these were for subject responsibilities (Table 5.2) with the remaining posts of a pastoral nature. Of those stating ‘other’ responsibilities these were sometimes for roles specific to that establishment (such as eco-school co-ordinator) or for professional
mentoring of those training to teach, a post financially rewarded by some schools but not others. Such posts could provide incentives for individuals to stay at a particular establishment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Number with Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of faculty</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of subject</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy head of subject</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other subject responsibility</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of key stage</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of year/house</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy head of year/house</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Nature of posts of responsibility.

One respondent was a head of subject and head of year simultaneously. With the Government’s recent focus on key stage two to key stage four progression, key stage three whole school coordinators are perhaps less common hence no participants holding this role in the sample. Despite twenty five of the respondents being in the first four years of their careers, six already held paid posts of responsibility. This constituted three females out of sixteen, one whose post was subject based with two pastorally based and three males out of seven. All responsibilities for the three males were linked to their subjects, perhaps continuing the theme for males and females highlighted as stereotypical (p. 46) by Lumby and Coleman (2007). All six of these participants were of similar ages with two males and two females between 26 and 30, one female aged 31 to 35 and one male aged 21 to 25. This higher proportion of less experienced males gaining additional paid posts echoes Evett’s (1994) findings where male headteachers had gained promotions earlier on in their careers than their female counterparts (p. 35). Table 5.3 shows how long the posts had been held for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Number of Females</th>
<th>Number of Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 5 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 5 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Length of time that posts of responsibility have been held.

The small number of posts held for over five years may be linked to only half of this group having teaching careers lasting more than ten years. However, this could also demonstrate participants
gaining further promotions once they have experienced success in this area, or returning from career breaks.

Questionnaire participants were asked to agree or disagree with nineteen statements relating to their careers (see question 13 in appendix 7). Of those responding to each statement 50 per cent agreed that they were looking to gain a promotion in the next twelve to eighteen months. However, 79 per cent would have considered a promotion if the opportunity arose and it was not too inconvenient. This combined with 70 per cent content to remain in their current role for the foreseeable future implied that some professionals were not actively seeking promotion but were not against it either. Indeed, 49 per cent of the sample were found to be in the ‘serendipitous’ category, devised from the conceptual framework introduced in chapter 3, from their questionnaire answers. The distribution can be seen in figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Category distribution for questionnaire respondents

This indicated that almost half of the sample were positive about progressing in their careers in the future but were not actively seeking promotions. Of the questionnaire respondents, 60
per cent agreed that a promotional opportunity had arisen at their current school in the last three years, with 57 per cent having ever applied for such a post. This would indicate that promotional opportunities are present within the six schools but almost half of potential candidates are not taking the decision to apply for them. From the sample 22 per cent had no plans to progress to other roles although only thirteen per cent of these appeared to be making this decision without outside influences such as family responsibilities.

The questionnaire findings signify that the teacher professionals in the six schools are aware of promotion opportunities available to them, not only within their subject departments but also those of a pastoral nature. Whilst just over half of respondents held paid posts of responsibility, 80 per cent were more positive about promotions than negative. This finding combined with ‘serendipitous’ as the most popular category indicates that these teacher professionals possess positive attitudes towards promotions but are not necessarily seeking out such posts at the present time. Awareness of and attitudes towards higher responsibility roles will be focused on later in this chapter so I shall now consider the reasons for planning for promotions.

**5.3 Reasons for Promotion**

Questionnaire respondents were asked how important particular factors would be if they were applying for a promotion (table 5.4). Four possible answers were available on a scale ranging from very important to not important at all. A total of sixty one teachers answered this question.
Table 5.4: Reasons for promotion as a percentage of questionnaire sample.

The highest percentages for 'very important' were for areas linked to the participant's personal lives; being able to run the home, looking after their children and having the support of a partner. Higher pay and the ability to lead a team were viewed as the next most important reasons for promotion. However, breaking these down into the four career attitude groups reveals some differences (table 5.5).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Promotion</th>
<th>Stuck</th>
<th>Active Choice</th>
<th>Serendipity</th>
<th>Careerist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher pay</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater autonomy</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to lead an area (e.g. subject, year group)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to lead a team</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to manage a budget</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher status in institution</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Stepping stone’ to further promotions</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The support of my partner</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to do my job and manage the running of the home</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to do my job and find time to look after my children</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance/time travelling if promotion was at a new school</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to stay at the same school</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5: Average scores for the importance of factors if applying for a new post.

Higher scores indicate a greater importance placed on that factor with a score of one allocated to the option ‘not important at all’ up to a score of four representing ‘very important’. The ability to successfully carry out a professional role whilst looking after children was of almost equal importance for those in all four categories. However, gaining greater autonomy and having the ability to lead an area were of greater importance to the ‘stuck’ and ‘careerist’ groups than the others. This could indicate similarities in attitude which would imply that other factors separate these individuals and subsequently hold the ‘stuck’ subjects back. Indeed, the ‘stuck’ category rated managing the running of the home and distance travelling to a new school as more important than the other teacher groups, again indicating that these other factors had a major impact on their career decision making. Two areas that the ‘careerist’ group considered of greater importance than the other groups was the higher status in an institution and using promotion as a stepping stone to further promotions, indicating that the link between promotion and power are significant for this group. The ‘active choice’ group placed less emphasis on some factors than the other groups including higher pay, the ability to lead an area and the support of a partner. However, these professionals emerged as keen not to seek promotion and so it could be argued that these
factors seen as motivational for those looking to move on were of less consequence to these individuals. The ‘active choice’ group did place more importance on being able to stay at the same school and this may have been one reason why they were staying put, an indication that they might be settled in a school convenient to their current lifestyles. I would therefore argue that the different categories of professionals had different priorities when seeking promotion. For example, the status of a leadership role and all the perceived luxuries that come with this such as greater autonomy and higher pay were of greater importance to the ‘careerists’ than the place in which they worked. These perks were also rated highly by the ‘stuck’ group, although they did not share the ‘careerist’s’ enthusiasm for a higher status. If the benefits of such roles are not particularly appealing to large numbers of the teaching profession, such as those in the ‘active choice’ and ‘serendipity’ categories, then it may be unlikely that future leaders will be drawn from professionals who espouse views that are positioned here, limiting the choice in this case to just twenty per cent of the sample (or twenty eight per cent if the stuck become un-stuck) from which future leaders can be drawn.

5.4 Influences on Careers

Influences on careers can be difficult to pinpoint by individuals as it can be that only some factors are recalled and others are forgotten. In making career decisions, those who have already gained promotions such as the headteachers interviewed by Coleman (2002) refer to individuals who have had an impact on their choices, and after a number of years it is likely that they will have been affected by some influential characters. However, there are other life factors that can affect the actions taken in an individual’s career. The diversity of influences is highlighted by Gunter (2001b) who cites not only the options available to the individual as a factor but also where they are situated within that structure:

Asking questions about how a person becomes a head of subject, a senior teacher or a head teacher is a process in which the interplay between agency and structure is revealed. Individual professional and personal choices within the setting of partnerships and family are located in complex settings which are personal and institutional, local and global, historical and political (p. 91).

Gunter (2001b) also considers how professionals respond to the situations that they are in as this can influence their future career choices as ‘how people experience their lives, work and organisations is central to identity and the choices that are made regarding promotion and career’
(p. 81-2). Whilst some individuals may have experienced encouragement to apply for promotions it is also possible that others have been discouraging for a plethora of reasons. Bosley et al. (2009) refer to those who influence another’s career as ‘career shapers’ stating that:

Career shapers might be perceived as facilitating career development, or hindering development if they fail to provide career support when they could have done so. The term embraces colleagues, friends and family who might incidentally or intentionally shape individuals’ careers (p. 1490).

In my study, in order to identify specific individuals who may have influenced the sample of teachers, participants were asked if they had ever been encouraged to apply for a promotion and by whom in the questionnaire. Two thirds of the sixty respondents stated that they had been encouraged to do so (table 5.6):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encouraged to Apply</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colleague</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6: Those who have encouraged teachers to apply for a promotion.

Those who work with the teacher professionals appear to have provided the most encouragement in terms of applying for promotions. Of those teachers whose schools had offered promotion opportunities in the last three years, 78 per cent had received encouragement to apply. Of all those in the sample with paid responsibilities 82 per cent had received encouragement to apply for a role in contrast to just 39 per cent who had received encouragement to apply but did not hold a paid responsibility. However, of those without a paid responsibility who had not received encouragement 57 per cent were in their first four years of teaching indicating that either themselves or their colleagues thought they required more teaching experience before considering a promotion. Of note is the high proportion of females in this group; 23 per cent of females in the questionnaire sample did not currently hold a paid responsibility and had never received encouragement compared to just 7 per cent of males. Consideration must be given to the interpretation of encouragement as it is possible that what one teacher might regard as an encouraging experience, another may not.
In looking back at influences on the careers of female headteachers, Coleman (2002) identified that previous headteachers featured the most often, followed by partners or family. As my sample of teachers covered a broader age range I chose to split the females into two categories; up to thirty five and over thirty five years of age (table 5.7):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Questionnaire Findings</th>
<th>Coleman’s Findings (2002)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Teachers up to 35</td>
<td>Female Teachers over 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.7: Influences on female teachers in comparison with Coleman’s headteachers.

For the younger age group family and friends are highlighted as providing more encouragement than for the over thirty five category but colleagues feature most highly for both age groups. It is perhaps true that as teachers gain more professional experience and begin to climb the leadership ladder they have more contact with their headteacher, possibly accounting for the higher level of encouragement from the head in the over thirty five group. Coleman (2002) states that in the ‘others’ category ‘the most common for both men and women were LEA personnel, officers and advisers’ (p. 26), which with the termination of many of these posts recently and the fact that none of the sample selected this, will continue to be a diminishing source of promotion encouragement.

In addition to the questionnaire data highlighting the influence of others, my interview data allowed me to probe further into the circumstances affecting career decisions. Literatures have highlighted the complexity of these influences (Gunter, 2001b) with personal circumstances considered by Evetts (1994) who explains that whilst males often have support from home to pursue careers, women may not receive such assistance and ‘still have to develop the strategies that might eventually come to be regarded as the normal and the appropriate ways of doing such things’ (p. 52). Therefore those influences close to home would need to be considered alongside the wider societal issues when investigating why teachers had made the decisions they had, a feature of the policy scholarship approach (Grace, 1995). Wolcott (2003) also considers influences across time.
stating that ‘with “leadership career” – essentially a mobility pathway or status passage through
time – as the conceptual anchorage, there is the added advantage of being able to pinpoint the
dialectical interplay between a leader’s own sense of agency (fashioned in part by her or him) and
the social structure (enabling or constraining possibilities for her or him) in which that agency is
embedded’ (p. 465). The desires of an individual and the situation that they may find themselves in
may be at loggerheads or may in fact complement each other, and I shall attempt to uncover such
links in the following interview analyses. In the following discussion, interviewees are analysed
within their career attitude categories, with their initial positions shown in figure 5.3.

![Figure 5.3: Initial positions of interviewees.](image)

In terms of explaining their careers so far, the three ‘careerists’ expressed a sense of urgency in
wanting to move on to the next post. The one female careerist, Marilyn, explained that she was
‘hungry’ to progress in her career. Her attitude was one of ‘what have I got to lose’? She had held
two posts of responsibility, also shadowing a member of the senior leadership team for two years.
Marilyn’s main influence on her career had been her father, stating ‘my Dad’s philosophy is you
can do anything if you put your mind to it. Don’t let anybody stand in your way’. Similarly James

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had already held a number of posts of responsibility and although he had been keen to pursue a leadership role linked to his teaching subject of geography, he realised that the pastoral route held more immediate opportunities and so he had chosen this instead. James explained that he was in a dilemma as the leadership team at his current school thought he 'should be either a deputy or assistant head somewhere' but he was keen not to lose his identity in the classroom. ‘Do I go and lose all my teaching load or do I stay teaching which is the thing I love’? James recalled previous line managers directing him towards promotion opportunities, in particular a deputy head who encouraged him to apply for a head of year post. He emphasised a shift in priorities having had children so his home life was now more important than his work life. Whilst both Marilyn and James showed a real commitment to teaching, Sam had considered leaving teaching on two occasions accepting alternative posts before eventually turning them down. Unlike James, Sam relished the status of leadership posts; ‘I like being able to say I’m head of department at my age and that I’ve got somewhere so quickly’. Two of Sam’s influences had been in the form of male role models, the first a second in department at a previous school, slightly older than himself:

He was amazing basically and just the way he was organised, the way that he spoke to staff, the way that he approached everything, spoke to the kids. He was strict but then at the same time the kids loved him. He just seemed to have everything perfectly done (Interview 1, 2013).

As with the first role model, Sam focused on the age and promotional accomplishments of his second role model:

He’s now a deputy head and he’s the same age as me so he’s just like thirty, just turned thirty. He’s already gone from assistant head to deputy head, head of department, assistant head, deputy head and he’s done that in about three years and he just seems to know how to do the right things perfectly (Interview 1, 2013).

However, Sam cited his parents as his main role models stating that ‘it was drummed into us as kids that, you know, strive to be the best you can be’. This group were clear on their desires to progress to further responsibilities and how their families and educational leaders had influenced their attitudes.

Of the ‘serendipitous’ category, four cited the influence of colleagues as pivotal in their decisions to pursue promotion. Claire was encouraged by an assistant headteacher to apply for an assistant head of year post:
He’s always been like cup of tea in my office at lunchtime and you know, keeping me going because I think you need that sometimes. I can quite easily as a person let that pass by and ‘I don’t think I could really do that’ and ‘I’m not ready for that’, but it’s other people really that encourage that in me because I wouldn’t really do it myself (Interview 1, 2013).

Leanne was also approached by her leadership team due to the previous head of department approaching retirement. Whilst Leanne thought she would have pursued a promotion had she not been approached, she believed this would not have been so early on in her career, possibly in ‘four years as opposed to two’. Sarah had also received support from colleagues when she applied for a key-stage coordinator post after three years of teaching and subsequently a second in department role. Without the reassurance of colleagues Sarah would still have pursued the promotions and ‘was quite ready to have a go at applying for things’. Sharon was less than two years into her teaching career and felt that she would pursue promotions in the future, possibly as head of a department, stating ‘I don’t think I’d want to just stay as a teacher’, but the influence of others was more critical than it was for Sarah. Her current head of department had offered Sharon encouragement in her professional development with a view to her looking at promotions in the next year. When asked if she would have pursued these roles without his encouragement she replied:

Possibly not. I feel very inexperienced and very like I wouldn’t want to take any sort of major responsibility on yet, being in only my second year I don’t feel like I can. But then I suppose I see other members of staff and they do do it after two or three years... you know go for some sort of role. But no it’s certainly his pushing that has made me think about it more (Interview 1, 2013).

Sharon demonstrated a lack of confidence due to her perceived lack of experience. When questioned about promotion she replied ‘I don’t feel like I have the experience or the knowledge or the authority I think to do something like director of learning, head of year or anything like that’.

Maternity leave had played a part in Sarah gaining experience as an acting head of department and this was also true for Ron, as he became head of History temporarily very early on, stating he ‘was thrown in at the deep end... she was pregnant when I started here’. Ron considered promotion to be a natural progression particularly as he had entered teaching after initially working in a bank. Ron cited his earnings as being important when considering his career but explained that he was ambitious also.
I wouldn’t say I’m overly ambitious but I’m ambitious. I don’t want to remain a teacher forever, I like the added responsibility and I think I’m more than capable of taking on the added responsibility. So yeah from my own point of view my own sort of pride if you like, my own ambitions, I do want to move up along the ladder (Interview 1, 2013).

Craig was more sceptical about any encouragement received from colleagues. He attributed his recent promotion to the job specification being ‘written for me’ due to its subject specific nature. Craig had also experienced other careers before teaching and applied for the role partly due to him wanting to ‘improve’ himself, but also for the extra money due to having another child. Craig admitted that his wife and friends had influence on his decisions but he claimed to not be encouraged by the words of his line manager.

Of the twelve interviewees, Matt, the only ‘active choice’ participant, demonstrated the least confidence in his own ability despite holding a head of department role. Senior members of staff had encouraged Matt to apply for his two promotional posts, although he worded this as being ‘told’ to apply. Until being approached Matt had not considered a head of department role:

I don’t think I’d have gone for any promotions. I think that’s my nature a bit because I’m fairly self-deprecating. I don’t think I’d be able to do it and sometimes I need to be told. I’m obviously delighted and I don’t regret going for either of them because it has been very rewarding and I’m glad I was pushed (Interview 1, 2012).

Matt linked the ability to do the job with experience gained, in a similar way to Sharon. He admitted to possessing a negative attitude when it came to himself, stating ‘I automatically assumed that someone perhaps older than me or had more experience than me was obviously better than me so I should wait or I’ll wait for John to go for that promotion first and then perhaps I’ll look at it a few years down the line’. Matt placed a large emphasis on the endorsement of other staff on his work saying that ‘even now I have moments where I think I’m going to be found out’.

The two females most associated with the ‘stuck’ category had contrasting aspirations. After having her first child, Helen realised she wanted to progress but since having a second and pursuing some promotions she had become more cautious. In discussing an assistant head post at her current school Helen explained her decision not to apply:
I was very enthusiastic which I still am, but I think I ran out of energy and the headteacher was particularly keen on me pursuing a leadership role and although on one level I would like to do that I am very cautious I think and I don’t want to bite off more than I can chew and I have to feel ready to do it. So she invited me to apply for the post and actually I chose not to... so... I probably wouldn’t have considered that at that early stage, coming back into mainstream unless she had said I think you should apply. And it was quite a big thing to say well no actually I don’t think so. And I do want to look at possible assistant headship in the future, but I want to make sure that I’m doing this post very well and am very confident in that and then I’ll be ready to move onto something else and also that my children are a bit older perhaps at secondary school (Interview 1, 2013).

So despite encouragement from a leader, Helen’s family life took priority and she felt that she should not apply at this moment in time. Family had also influenced Jenny in that the birth of her child resulted in her missing out on a possible promotion. She had been keen to remain in the classroom at the beginning of her teaching career but had applied for a key stage coordinator post whilst teaching full time. ‘I wasn’t successful but at that point I was kind of thinking I’d probably have a child soon anyway and obviously you don’t go broadcasting things like that because you don’t know it’s going to happen but at some point I thought I might go up a little bit’. Having not appointed either of the two candidates the post was re-advertised whilst Jenny was on maternity leave and she stated that she would now be reluctant to apply for promotions due to her ‘family position’. There appeared to be a difference here between Jenny who seemed to have been disadvantaged in her quest for promotion due to her family life, although she did not necessarily view the situation as such, and Helen who was capable of further roles but did not feel confident to handle them in her current personal position. Both were being held back from possible promotions due to their decisions to have families. Matt on the other hand had chosen to remain in his current role but was aware that there were options available to him showing that the career opportunities varied within this sample dependent on family and personal circumstances.

### 5.5 Career Plans

With so many of the questionnaire sample in the ‘serendipitous’ category it can be challenging to pinpoint the career plans of individuals. However, the percentage of questionnaire participants who had applied for a paid promotional post was 49 percent with six individuals having applied for posts but not currently holding any, indicating that half of the sample were keen to gain paid promotions of some kind. Of these six, three were females in their forties and two were females in their fifties, all jointly or mainly responsible for the running of the household. The sixth was a male
in his early thirties. Just two of the females stated that they were never going to pursue promotion so it is possible that the other mature women had held posts of responsibility in the past, but had stepped down previously for personal reasons. However, none of this group was willing to be interviewed and so the specific reasons remain unknown. Of those applying for promotional posts 84 percent stated that they were successful, although only twenty five of the sample agreed that they had applied for such a role so I suspect the actual percentage achieving success may have been lower.

Of the questionnaire sample 35 per cent stated that they had their career path mapped out, with 74 per cent of these under the age of thirty six. Of those with a career plan just seven had intentions to reach the role of headteacher; four males aged between twenty one and thirty five and three females in their twenties. All of the males currently held a paid role of responsibility whilst one of the females did. The four males with plans to reach the top role represented one seventh of the sample of males whilst the three females represented just one seventeenth of the total females. However, a career plan to attain headteacher status has not been essential in the past as upon interviewing current headteachers Ribbins (2003) found that ‘not many believed they had planned their route to headship’ (p. 64), indicating that others in the sample may progress to the role despite their current apprehensions, this being something I shall discuss further in the following section.

5.6 Attitudes towards Headship

Recent literatures have focused on those teacher professionals who have already secured headship posts (Ribbins and Marland, 1994; Hall, 1996; Pascal and Ribbins, 1998; Rayner and Ribbins, 1999) and their journeys in reaching those posts. In a study on headteachers (Chard, 2013) three current headteachers explained how they could not recall having aspirations to be heads early on in their own careers and it was often the influence of others that encouraged them to pursue the role, with one head being ‘pushed’ into his first promotion and another having a promotion ‘just given to me’ (p. 172). In addition to the influence of others, Rayner and Ribbins (1999) found that when interviewing special school headteachers ‘agencies, particularly those which exert their influence during the early years, shape a prospective leader’s personality by
generating a conception of self, along with the rudiments of a work-style, attitude and outlook’ (p, 10). However, despite career shapers, Coleman (2002) discovered that many headteachers had almost found themselves moving towards headship by accident:

Possibly one of the most surprising findings is the number of heads who have simply ‘drifted’ into headship. This lack of planning is linked in some cases to lack of confidence in their own ability. Lack of confidence was evident amongst both sexes (p. 30). Coleman (2002) found that many heads of both sexes ‘had not considered headship until they were established as a deputy’ (p. 17) but differences were also apparent such as ‘20 per cent of men who decided on their career aspiration at the point of being a teacher, as opposed to the ten per cent of the women who did so at that time’ (p. 17). These proportions were in line with the questionnaire sample as whilst 56 per cent of men agreed that they had their career plan mapped out, just 26 per cent of women did. Indeed Coleman (2002) found that planning early on was rare, in particular for women, with 21.7 per cent of female heads and 14.5 per cent of male heads having never formulated a plan throughout their entire careers (p. 15). Findings from the questionnaire sample were slightly higher as of those with a paid responsibility 37 per cent had a career plan and of those without paid responsibilities 36 per cent had plans, although having a career plan could of course mean remaining as a classroom teacher.

In terms of planning 56 per cent of questionnaire respondents expressed an interest in progressing to senior leadership, although only 17 per cent found the role of headteacher appealing with 18 per cent intending to progress to the post in the future. Closer inspection showed that of the nine participants intending to progress to headship, seven had spent less than ten years in the teaching profession. Of the two with between eleven and twenty years experience one was a supply teacher with no current role of responsibility and the other was about to begin her first maternity leave, indicating that from this sample it would be many years before any were in a position to act upon their intentions of becoming heads. Table 5.8 demonstrates the lack of enthusiasm towards the role of headteacher due to almost half of the sample selecting ‘very strongly disagree’ when asked if they found the job appealing.
Table 5.8: Questionnaire responses of 51 participants regarding leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Very Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I intend to eventually progress to senior leadership</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The job of headteacher appeals to me</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I intend to progress to the role of headteacher in the future</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those intending to progress to headship the proportion of males was greater with 22 per cent of the sample aspiring to headship compared to just 15 per cent of females, representing four males and five females. Age also appeared to be a factor as of ten females and five males aged forty or above, only one female agreed that she intended to progress to the role of headteacher, with 80 per cent of this group choosing ‘very strongly disagree’. However, whilst this female had passed through to the upper pay scale, she did not hold any posts of paid responsibility, making it unlikely that she would progress to headship unless she had returned from a career break. She had indeed held a post of responsibility in the last five years, had no children but lived with her sister, so personal circumstances may have indeed resulted in a break in her career. Whilst it could be argued that those approaching retirement age would not be interested in the role of head, only three of this group were aged over fifty indicating that those teachers in their forties had already ruled the post out.

It is possible that a lack of confidence identified by Coleman (2002) was partly responsible for this reluctance to reach headship, but perceptions of the role itself also appear to be instrumental. The job can be seen as very isolated as Hampson (1995) highlights:

> My impression is that there has recently been a significant reduction in people actually wanting headship. Certainly there seem to be less applications now ... maybe people lower down the school can see the loneliness of the job and how it has changed. You have to be more able to rebuke colleagues now as well as to praise them (given the league table pressures etc.) (p. 127).

The pressure on heads is highlighted by Wale (2003) as ‘there has been a historical assumption in UK policy-making that effective headteachers are fundamental to effective schools and hence to delivering school improvement’ (p. 153). This has certainly appeared true with the increase in knighthoods and appraisals for headteachers whose schools achieve high examination results,
and the increase in resignations of those who experience more turbulent times. The image of a super head is stressed by Thody (2000) who states that ‘principals complain of having to meet impossible expectations; the mythology of the solo-hero has been reborn with principals being regarded as able to save a failing school or single-handedly raise standards’ (p. 15). The perceptions of an isolated and ruthless environment are exacerbated by the view of some females who assume their skills would not match those required of a head. Smith (2011b) found in her study that female teaching staff still maintained the masculine view of the headteacher with perceptions of heads as ‘tough, lonely’ and with ‘no life outside school’ (p. 526) distancing the role from that of a caring classroom teacher. I shall now focus on the perceived inability to see themselves as heads of some of the interviewees.

During the interviews a lack of confidence was displayed by Matt, whose wife was expecting their first child. When asked about the possibility of a senior management post in the future Matt replied ‘I think about it occasionally and then immediately I bat it out of my mind because again the glass is half empty, I’m not good enough’. He considered the role of headteacher to be a choice between having a family and following a career stating that the ‘work life balance’ would put him off as his family and relationships would suffer. Jenny also put her family first insisting that staying part time was a priority for her:

I just see it as my choice. Certainly at this school... yeah. For example, our head of department gives her life. She hasn’t got children. Our head, hasn’t got children. You know it’s a choice for me. I’ve chosen to make it and the people with responsibility, there are very few with young children. Not that they’re told don’t go for it, you’ve got a young child (Interview 1, 2013).

Helen had not ruled out senior leadership at this stage, although she would wait until her family were older and she felt confident in her current role, but she had discounted the role of headteacher:

I don’t think I want the responsibility, I don’t. And headship I think as well is a particularly difficult job balancing so many different things and I’ve observed you have to be relatively tough skinned and perhaps, you know, not terribly self aware all the time in order to fulfil the role appropriately with the sufficient gusto. And also I think it’s self knowledge. Knowing myself that I go up and down and I’ll be very enthusiastic about things so it’s managing myself, all of it (Interview 1, 2013).

This lack of confidence was also displayed by some females in Coleman’s research (2007) where women still believed that males were more likely to achieve senior posts and remained ‘less likely
to plan careers that include senior roles, and still appear to have less confidence in applying for promotion than their male colleagues’ (p. 387).

Of the ‘serendipity’ group there was a mixture of opinions regarding headship, with Leanne and Sharon the only interviewees expressing an interest in reaching senior leadership. Leanne had never admitted to aspiring to an assistant head role before the interview, stating ‘I do think now do I want to be in a position where I’m managing more staff and having more difficult conversations but like I say I’m thirty and I could still be doing this in thirty years time so I’d like to think that I’d maybe change my role and going into SLT or something would possibly be something that will suit me one day and I’ll feel more comfortable with’. Sarah’s focus had changed over her eight year career from teaching to more of a leadership role:

I think in the early days, whether it was the case that I never wanted to go beyond it, it was much more about the teaching and being in a classroom forty hours a fortnight or whatever it is and never really looking past the department but you kind of understand there’s more, more behind it. There’s almost as much pleasure in passing the information and the ideas on as there is just in the delivery of it as well (Interview 1, 2013).

Whilst Sarah was not considering the role of headteacher at the moment, she did think that as her career progressed her attitude might change. Ron also had aspirations for leadership but limited these to the role of assistant headteacher, stating ‘that would be my level’. When questioned about the role of headteacher he appeared to be undecided, giving reasons such as his late start to teaching at age thirty-five to not pursue the role, but then stated ‘I’m not saying that I haven’t got the qualities but I think you have to have the desire and I don’t think I have the desire at this stage to want to have a whole staff underneath me and that responsibility’. Whilst Claire was unsure about senior management her view of the role of headteacher resonated with the findings of Smith (2011b) as she considered it unappealing:

I don’t know if I’d want that amount of responsibility. And I don’t know if I’m the type of person who would be able to... not be affected by the way people spoke about the school or your management because I think that could potentially be very hurtful and there are some people that thrive on whinging, moaning and the phrase is that fish stinks from the head down and that’s where people generally go for first or sometimes it’s the senior leadership as well that they’ll go for first. They’re the easiest people. Blame them as opposed to thinking about the cracks on the way down that were showing as well so I don’t know if I’ve got enough body armour for that job basically (Interview 1, 2013).
Craig was the most adamant that he would not pursue a senior leadership role, prioritising his family as in ‘senior leadership you have to sacrifice too much’. He summarised his view of those with aspirations for the top roles:

To do the job properly you have to commit an awful lot of time and I’m... I find a lot of the people who want to go into that role are doing so because they’ve always aspired. It’s almost like a race to the top and I don’t know why they’re doing it. It’s a race to the top and they say well I earn x thousand pounds and it’s great I’ve got this car and I’m but you’ve not seen your child for three weeks. What’s the point? (Interview 1, 2013).

As with Ron, Craig considered the role to be very political, a side that did not appeal to him. In summary the majority of the serendipity group could not visualise themselves in the headteacher role, ruling the post out of their possible plans.

In contrast the interviewees classed as ‘careerists’ had not ruled out the possibility of senior leadership. James was not lured by the status of the role, but considered himself a possible candidate:

If something which suited me became available then I would do it. I’m not the sort of person who’d say I’m just, I’m going, I want to be a senior leader. The status doesn’t affect me at all. But if something came along which I thought, yes, that really sounds challenging, that would suit my personality, it would suit... it’s a job I can do well, I think that’s, that’s one of my inhibiting factors. If I don’t think I can do it to the best of my ability then I wouldn’t go for it (Interview 1, 2012).

However, James spoke about teaching being a vocation to him, stating that the money, prowess and status were of no importance; ‘I love being in the classroom with the kids and I love to see them do well and try’. His identity as a classroom teacher may prove to be a barrier to James ever applying to be a headteacher and he spoke of the demands on current heads:

Nowadays in a school the headteacher is not just organising the teaching side; it’s your kitchen staff, your cleaning staff, your site facilities, your community based things. It’s all-encompassing, it’s not just about the head teacher in the school anymore, not just the role but the name should be changed. They’re more like a manager of a big industry. I think if I wanted to become a manager of a big industry I would have gone into industry where the rewards, the financial rewards are better (Interview 1, 2012).

Marilyn was keen to progress to a senior leadership role although she was unsure of which area to specialise in, citing her current leadership team as positive inspiration to pursue the role. Aspects such as working with others appealed to Marilyn but she was still unsure about the role:
My Dad thinks I will end up a headteacher. He’s adamant I will. I personally just don’t know if I could give, because to me it seems like you give your life and I personally don’t know whether I could give my life. But I’ll never out rule it. It just depends. Right time, right time and if it fits in and if it’s something that... but I don’t know (Interview 1, 2012).

Of the careerists Sam was the most certain of obtaining a senior leadership position in the future and the timescale with which to reach that role was important to him. However, Sam was the only interviewee to not mention the pupils during the discussion and it was more his thirst for leadership that was apparent rather than the specific role of headteacher:

I’m not sure yet how many years I’m going to do this for. This will be my, two and a half years in now as a head of department role. I don’t know what the general average is before people move up again but certainly I wouldn’t want to be, I’d want to be one of the ones, the younger ones that did it rather than waiting on, thinking I need to do five years of this before I do that job. A deputy head once told me that I should never spend more than three years at a school if I want to get a better chance of getting further employment and if I want to work up the ladder quicker (Interview 1, 2013).

Sam stated that he agreed with this philosophy and that an assistant head post would be ‘the natural progression’. Sam had not made a final decision on the position of headteacher, claiming to not know enough about the role at present:

I’d like to answer that when I was a deputy head, after I’d actually seen what really goes on and what work they really need to do behind the scenes that you don’t see as a head of department, as a, you know dealing with what they deal with. I don’t think I’ve a true insight yet as to if that would be for me or not. I hear about how difficult it is and what pressure they’re under but as a teacher do you really see what they actually do or have to deal with? It’s something I’d definitely consider but whether I’d want to do it after I’d got to a level that would mean I was ready for it, I’d have to reassess then I think (Interview 1, 2013).

Earlier Sam had recalled others who had encouraged him to pursue his current head of department role and perhaps it would take support from elsewhere to give Sam the confidence to apply for such a role as headteacher in the future. In her research Coleman (2002) found that ‘the vast majority (over 90 per cent) of the headteachers had been encouraged to aim for promotion’ (p. 26) and this could be a critical factor for some of the interviewees above regarding their aspirations.

5.7 Changes over Time
As many headteachers had not envisaged themselves in the role early on in their careers, each interviewee took part in a second interview between twelve and eighteen months later in order for
me to identify if their positions had consolidated or changed. Initially I will focus on the changes over time indicated by the questionnaires, which demonstrated a fairly even spread as to whether attitudes towards promotion had changed as shown in table 5.9:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has your attitude towards promotion changed since you began your career in teaching?</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I am more interested in promotion now</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, it has remained the same</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I am less interested in promotion now</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.9: Questionnaire responses to changes in attitude.

The majority of respondents had seen a change in their attitude over time although almost equal numbers were more interested and less interested in promotion. However, analysing those who intended to progress to the role of head teacher compared with those who didn’t showed contrasting results (table 5.10):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has your attitude towards promotion changed since you began your career in teaching?</th>
<th>Those agreeing they intend to progress to headship</th>
<th>Those disagreeing that they intend to progress to headship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I am more interested in promotion now</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, it has remained the same</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I am less interested in promotion now</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.10: Questionnaire responses to changes in attitude via headteacher intentions.

Clearly many more participants with no intentions to progress to headteacher had seen negative swings in their attitudes towards promotion. Indeed, of the fifteen choosing this option thirteen had selected ‘very strongly disagree’ in terms of their intentions to pursue the role of head. In terms of whether the individuals already had posts of responsibility which may have changed their attitudes, of those with no responsibility 44 per cent were now less interested in promotion compared to just 19 per cent of those who did hold additional posts. Negative experiences in applying for such roles may have influenced the opinions of eleven participants who felt less interested. However, of the eleven, eight had never applied for a post of responsibility and of the three that had, they had been successful at the time. Starker results were apparent when comparing the male and female responses ordered by age, shown in table 5.11:
Table 5.11: Questionnaire responses to changes in attitude via age and gender.

For the males it appeared that interest in promotion only subsided as they got older. The younger male (aged 36 to 40) choosing this option was Craig, who I interviewed and I will focus on him later. However, for females their lack of interest in promotion began much earlier on at age 26 upwards. In terms of if family commitments had influenced their decisions, of eight females with children, four were less interested in promotion and of five males just one, namely Craig, was less interested. Whilst these numbers are small as so few who took part in the questionnaire had children, it would indicate that females were more likely to have their attitudes towards their careers affected by commitments such as having children.

In terms of the twelve interviewees, each was asked the same statements (Appendix 7, question 13) during the second interview regarding their career attitudes. Their final distribution can be seen on figure 5.4:
Figure 5.4: Final positions of interviewees.

The majority of interviewees had remained in the same quadrant as when their questionnaires had been completed between eighteen months and two years earlier, with the ‘serendipitous’ category remaining the most popular. However, significant changes had occurred for Marilyn and Sarah which I shall discuss later in this section. Firstly, figure 5.5 demonstrates that the males showed little change in their positioning:
Matt, who remained in the ‘active choice’ group still displayed many of the ‘serendipitous’ characteristics. He had been offered the role of timetabling and had agreed to accept this, despite him still seeing his family as his main priority and continuing to lack confidence regarding his head of department role:

I know with the head of department thing I’ll never have it totally under control but it, I don’t know if getting tired was the right thing but constantly I need a new challenge all the time. So that’s why that appealed to me because I know that is something, a possible skill that might be needed if I was to progress to SLT (Interview 2, 2014).

Matt spoke of wanting his family ‘to be proud’ of him and although he was more positive about a future senior leadership role he still did not feel ready for such a post. His career choices were very much affected by the security of his current role and a loyalty to his employer, although he did appear to be in turmoil about when to move on:

I’m very much split because there’s a part of me that’s saying I’m here, I’m established, it’s a small department, it’s a good school and I know all the children so I know I’ve got it quite easy but there’s another part of me that, I don’t know, I feel like I need a challenge at some point. I need to move on and I’m not sure when that’s going to be, so I’m worried about stagnating a bit. Now I’ve been given the timetable responsibility I feel a bit happier about that. That that’s sort of made me think I’ll hang on here (Interview 2, 2014).

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**Figure 5.5: Changes in position for the male interviewees.**

Matt, who remained in the ‘active choice’ group still displayed many of the ‘serendipitous’ characteristics. He had been offered the role of timetabling and agreed to accept this, despite him still seeing his family as his main priority and continuing to lack confidence regarding his head of department role:

I know with the head of department thing I’ll never have it totally under control but it, I don’t know if getting tired was the right thing but constantly I need a new challenge all the time. So that’s why that appealed to me because I know that is something, a possible skill that might be needed if I was to progress to SLT (Interview 2, 2014).

Matt spoke of wanting his family ‘to be proud’ of him and although he was more positive about a future senior leadership role he still did not feel ready for such a post. His career choices were very much affected by the security of his current role and a loyalty to his employer, although he did appear to be in turmoil about when to move on:

I’m very much split because there’s a part of me that’s saying I’m here, I’m established, it’s a small department, it’s a good school and I know all the children so I know I’ve got it quite easy but there’s another part of me that, I don’t know, I feel like I need a challenge at some point. I need to move on and I’m not sure when that’s going to be, so I’m worried about stagnating a bit. Now I’ve been given the timetable responsibility I feel a bit happier about that. That that’s sort of made me think I’ll hang on here (Interview 2, 2014).
Craig and Ron remained in the ‘serendipity’ group, with Ron gaining a temporary head of year post recently. As the deputy to this position he felt that not applying would show ‘a lack of ambition’ and he did not wish to work for somebody else, but he had struggled with the workload. As with the first interview he saw his age due to joining teaching as a second career as a disadvantage:

I know there’s members of the SLT that are younger than me but they’ve been teaching longer than me so I don’t know. I don’t feel secure enough. Probably at the moment there’s a little bit of a crisis in confidence because I’m struggling with the teaching and being a head of year and I’m not secure enough in either to be confident enough to go for a further promotion (Interview 2, 2014).

Ron’s honesty in having ‘bitten off a little too much’ to chew, was in contrast with Craig’s cynicism regarding his role, where he continued to blame the education system around him for his despondency. Craig cited the money as the main reason that he was continuing in his current role and explained that if he did not have children he would probably leave teaching in the next two or three years, it’s convenience preventing him from doing so at present. Craig spoke of moving onto other roles but had not completed anything formal regarding moving on:

I would want it to be something different; different type of school, more challenging students maybe, ideally it would be a more disadvantaged area because part of the reason I came into teaching was to make a difference and I’m getting to the point here where cynically I’m just making white middle class children’s lives a little bit more comfortable (Interview 2, 2014).

James was also considering his next career move and explained that now his own children were settled in secondary school, he could pick and choose for his next role. He was still keen to pursue a senior leadership post and was ‘looking for professional development for senior management’. There was no urgency to James’s search, unlike the ambitions of Sam who had already secured a post for the next academic year. Sam’s use of language almost showed desperation to move schools, as he described it as a ‘different school, change of school, change of setting, different challenge, new challenge, new build’. He was keen to stress that the new role was paid on the leadership scale and explained his reasons for the move:

I wanted to get on the leadership scale really because a lot of my friends are on that these days. They’ve all gone onto bigger and better things and I wanted to join them really. They’re all similar ages, some are deputy heads, some are assistant heads, some are head of departments but in very large schools and with this being such a small school sometimes that is a bit of a hindrance (Interview 2, 2014).

The status of the role was clearly still important to Sam and rather than regretting losing his teaching time, he was happy about this, explaining that whilst he still liked to teach he was ‘falling
less in love with it’, so what provides a hindrance for some aspiring leaders was not the case for Sam.

The majority of females interviewed also showed only small changes in their positioning or stayed within the same section (figure 5.6):

Figure 5.6: Changes in position for five of the female interviewees.

All four females who remained in the serendipitous category had faced changes in their professional lives since the first interviews. Sharon had applied for two roles and had been successful in the second, due to start as professional mentor at her current school. She agreed that her confidence had grown since achieving the post, but the promotion had encouraged her to stay with her present employer for longer as she was not sure of her next career move. Jenny had also been encouraged to apply for a professional mentor role and whilst her priority remained her family, this specific role to fit in with her part time work had appealed to her. She spoke of the role being ‘partly forced upon’ her, but she preferred things that way as she would not have sought out the role independently. Whilst Leanne’s role had not changed, she had been encouraged by her
headteacher to complete a course which had made her feel more capable of tackling a leadership role in future:

I don’t know whether I’ve been steamrolled into it or whether it’s something I truly want. I’m still to discover that but I think if I can see myself in ten years as an assistant head (Interview 2, 2014).

Leanne was unsure why she had said ten years and in retrospect suggested perhaps five years but claimed to not be ambitious and felt that her current head of department role was within her comfort zone. Claire had moved further towards a careerist perspective having completed a head of department maternity cover. The experience had encouraged her to consider looking to new roles for her ‘own benefit’ and ‘motivation’. Teaching remained her main focus but feeling that she was now capable of managing other people she had ‘the confidence to make those applications now’, something that she didn’t think she would have done without the head of department experience.

Helen was looking to make drastic changes to her career although at the present time was still inhibited by her young family responsibilities. She was very keen to leave her current role and had applied to study full time with a view to eventually moving from teaching to educational psychology. Disagreements with her headteacher regarding her role had also tainted Helen’s view of teaching and she felt that not applying for a leadership role previously had acted against her; hence she was now making choices that fitted with her home responsibilities and that worked for her, moving her towards the active choice group.

Sarah displayed a change in attitude although her role had not changed (figure 5.7). Her statement answers resulted in her moving from the serendipity group to the careerist group demonstrating that she was still as positive about promotion but was clearer about her plans.
Sarah had almost applied for a head of department role in a different school, but had gone with her ‘gut instinct’ that the role was not the right one for her. However, she also stated that her current head was ‘really influential in encouraging me to stay’ and justified this by stating that she was ‘happy in my current job’. Sarah did demonstrate a confidence that she was ready for the next step of her career:

As time continues to pass I know that I could do a more senior role and sometimes I suppose it can get more frustrating, sometimes. When you’re running out of things to do to occupy or stretch yourself as such (Interview 2, 2014).

This was in contrast to her first interview when she had explained that she was happy to wait for a further opportunity to come along and there now seemed more of a sense of urgency to her aspirations, brought about by further time spent in her current post.

Marilyn also demonstrated a shift in her positioning but in a different direction. She had been very strong in answering the careerist statements in her questionnaire but in the second interview her attitude towards promotion had changed, particularly in the short term, due to the birth of her first child (figure 5.8):
Marilyn had returned from maternity leave two months prior to the interview and had continued with her two posts of responsibility. She agreed that she had felt a change in attitude towards her career since the birth of her daughter:

I was very career driven and I suppose selfish driven in the sense of my personal career and I didn’t mind if I worked late and how that affected my husband because I needed to do that whereas now everything’s about doing what’s right for her and as soon as they say do this and I say no, I’ll readdress what I’m doing if you like. She is the priority (Interview 2, 2014).

It was interesting that Marilyn viewed her previous aspirations as selfish, and she now explained that having her daughter had changed her life, resulting in her putting things like her career ‘on hold’ for now. Whilst in her first interview Marilyn spoke of actively seeking promotions and shadowing the leadership team, she now explained that her sense of urgency for promotion had diminished:

I’m not as rushed to go and get it. Before I had a family I was very much, if that job came up wherever it was I’m going for it. Now I’m very much like well that’s what I want to do but I might take time out first and come back to it in a few years time (Interview 2, 2014).

Whilst Marilyn attributed this change in attitude to her family, she also spoke of other disadvantages in changing schools such as travelling time and establishing relationships, although these were additional factors that she had not viewed as negative before starting a family.
5.8 Summary

Across the six schools a variety of posts of responsibility were held. Males were seen to seek promotions earlier on in their careers and generally maintained interest in their careers for longer than females, who became less enthusiastic about promotion much earlier on. The most popular approach to careers was ‘serendipitous’ with many of the sample prepared to go for promotions but not actively seeking one. Attitudes towards careers were mainly influenced by the ability to combine a post with the running of the home, support of a partner and looking after children. The encouragement of colleagues, managers and partners was the most influential when considering a promotion.

A larger proportion of males than females held paid posts of responsibility and more had received encouragement to apply for such posts. Also more than double the proportion of males claimed to have their career paths mapped out than females, indicating that career was higher on the agenda for males than many females. From the interviews it appeared that many promotional posts had been thrust upon some individuals, with the seeking out of posts independently a rarity. However, even pursuing such roles alone were still traced back to the influences of others; either families whilst growing up or witnessing others in such roles early on in their careers.

Many interviewees felt that they had to make a choice between career and family and all of those with families considered these to be a major factor when considering promotions. Just two of the seven females interviewed during stage one had children. Both intended to ‘stay put’ due to the ages of their children and then a third who had her first child prior to the second stage of interviews became much more negative towards promotion due to a shift in priorities. This compared with three of the five male interviewees having children, increasing to four out of five by the second stage interviews, indicating that males are continuing to enjoy career choices irrespective of whether they have children or not, with females still having to make the decision between family and career. I shall return to this theme in chapter 7, with the following chapter focusing on the role of headteacher.
Chapter 6
Aspirations Towards and Preparation for Senior Leadership and Headship

6.1 Introduction
This chapter focuses on the perceptions of the role of headteacher by other teacher professionals and the effect this has on their aspirations to eventually do this job. Research question four will be addressed through questionnaire and interview responses; ‘what are the attitudes of these teacher professionals towards promotion and careers up to headship?’ Throughout the chapter references are made to the high accountability that headteachers face today, widely publicised in the media. I argue that this high pressure role is no longer appealing to the majority of teacher professionals, many of whom believe the role to be unrewarding and disconnected from the job they entered into, namely teaching young people. With the role of head evolving over the years into a more businesslike post, the demands of the inspection regime, the introduction of examinations based league tables and the emphasis placed on the personality of headteachers, I argue that many potential heads do not see the pressures as worth taking on. As Thomson (2009) reports there are many factors contributing to the headteacher supply problems including ‘the unrealistic expectations put on heads, the changing nature of the work, the remuneration offered and the effects of headship on family and lifestyle’ (p. 18). With headteachers in the firing line when examination targets are not met, the role is no longer viewed as secure a post as it may have been in the past and I argue that teachers feel safer in the confines of their classrooms. The chapter also focuses on succession planning and any measures being put in place to secure headteachers for the future. Firstly the role of the head is investigated through recent studies.

6.2 The Role of Headteacher
The role of a headteacher is varied and complex. Traditionally secondary headteachers have been responsible for school staff, school pupils and school buildings whilst being accountable to parents, local authorities and governors. However, changes to secondary school leadership team structures, the introduction of the academies programme plus the importance placed on the school’s inspection service (Ofsted) by successive Governments have led to even greater levels of accountability. Draper and McMichael (1998) comment that as deputy headteachers ‘observe the levels of hard work, stress and diminishing external support offered their headteacher colleagues
they might well regard the prospect of promotion warily’ (p. 161). Ranson (2003) argues that a ‘neo-liberal corporate accountability has dominated the governance of education’ (p. 459) whereby the last three decades have led to a range of different accountability regimes being imposed on schools (p. 463). In order to raise attainment during the 1990s, not only were league tables introduced but Ofsted had replaced the previous HMI inspectors. Thomson (2009) argues that ‘marketized practices of naming and shaming schools via league tables were introduced, together with the notion that headteachers were a key to school improvement’ (p. 115), placing even more accountability at the feet of heads. The inspection system faced another change in 2004, when The Labour Party introduced the SEF, a self evaluation document that school leaders were required to complete to assess their own effectiveness, providing the document for any visiting inspection team. However, this system, supposedly introduced to relieve the burden on heads during an inspection week, has not alleviated the pressure but has increased it. Thomson (2009) reports that ‘emerging evidence suggests that this new ‘light touch’ system is hugely demanding of headteacher time’ (p. 117). The increasing accountability measures have not only been visible through league tables but in some cases heads have seen their leadership undermined by outside sponsors with no history or experience of education. The sponsorship of schools by businesses, faith groups or individuals began with the introduction of city technology colleges in the late 1980s. The Labour Party reinvigorated this idea in 2000 with the term ‘city academy’ and those schools with examination results below a particular threshold for three consecutive years, classed as failing, would be forced to close and reopen under a sponsor. This was followed by additional schools opting to become academies and whilst the initiative was intended to provide greater choice and autonomy for heads, it appears to have increased the vulnerability of some of those in charge. In a five year investigation into the academies programme, Larsen et al. (2011) reported that academy heads were facing many challenges including the implementation of policies and setting up teams:

The demanding nature of the task may explain why principal attrition was high, with 11 of the 27 academies within our sample experiencing a change in leadership, often within the first 12 months of opening. In addition, there were no academy principals from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds in our sample, and just under a quarter of principal appointments were female (p. 114).

Despite the uncertain job security that can accompany a sponsored academy headship, the numbers converting to academy status has continued to rise with Ofsted (2013) reporting that
‘more than half of all secondary schools have become academies’ (p. 6) with 70 per cent of these converter academies (p. 20). The decision to manage funds internally rather than under an authority has proven appealing to some schools and sponsorship has brought new resources and buildings for many. Beckett (2007) discusses the impact the first city technology college had on those schools around it:

The latest classrooms, full of the latest technology, would have turned a teacher in most state schools green with envy. The brochure was glossy and expensive. Nearby stood crumbling, decaying, cash-starved schools for the pupils who could not get in (p. 7).

In many communities the image of a school and of the headteacher have become more prominent of late and decisions regarding whether to pursue sponsorship add further pressure to many heads which could ultimately be the making or breaking of their school and their career. Continued monetary concerns can also exacerbate the shortage of heads if reduced budgets continue to result in reductions to the size of senior leadership teams. Howson (2010) states that ‘of more concern is the longer-term supply of suitable candidates for headship if the number of deputy and assistant headship posts on offer continues to decline to a point where it falls below the replacement levels required’ (p. 18).

The role of the headteacher itself may well be contributing to the apprehension of applying as teachers view the responsibilities as unappealing. In secondary schools it now appears rare for the headteacher to be allocated any teaching time, due to the demands of their role. In their study of new headteachers, Weindling and Dimmock (2006) found the main problems reported during the first years of headship were:

- Difficulties caused by the style and practice of the previous head;
- The school buildings;
- Communication and consultation with staff;
- Creating a better public image of the school;
- Coping with a weak member of the senior team;
- Dealing with incompetent staff; and
- Low staff morale (p. 329)

One observation from this list is the lack of any reference to school pupils, with the focus on the school environment and the staff. This reflects the findings of Bush et al. (2006) who found that new headteachers taking part in the ‘New Visions: Induction to Headship’ programme found their knowledge, skills and leadership practices improved, but had a ‘limited effect on classroom
practice and pupil outcomes’ (p. 185). Indeed an earlier study on the first cohort of ‘New Visions’ participants attending a conference (NCSL, 2004) showed that only a quarter of secondary school heads had a strong belief that their leadership impacted directly on the classroom (p. 8). This perceived impact did increase over time, but the hours invested in staffing and the environment in their early years had reduced the classroom focus. Where a lack of contact with pupils is evident, this could impact on other staff who then build a picture of a headteacher who is out of touch with classroom development due to countless other burdens. Thompson (1995) agrees stating that headteachers spend very little time in contact with pupils yet are held accountable for the success of a school (p. 195). Chaplain (1995) cites the limited time that many headteachers spend with pupils as one reason why their job satisfaction may be lower and their stress levels subsequently higher (p. 224). The emphasis on the importance of the headteacher role to successful outcomes is highlighted in the Ofsted (2013) annual report with a section titled ‘inexperienced or complacent leadership leads to school failure’ (p. 29). The report states that in a quarter of inadequate schools the leader was inexperienced yet in half of the schools the head was well established but had often not ‘updated their own skills in monitoring the quality of teaching’ (p. 21). This immediate pressure on those new to the role highlights the relentless nature of the inspection system, whilst those struggling to keep up with the frequent new initiatives to teaching are also punished. So whilst increased autonomy and being able to influence decisions may improve job satisfaction these could subsequently increase stress levels, again deterring other teacher professionals from aspiring to the role. The heightened importance of school inspections and the increase in accountability faced by heads was highlighted by Southworth back in 1999:

The reform programme diminished the heads’ personal influence over the school’s curriculum, and substituted in its place increased financial and site responsibilities. However, this trade-off had been made more complicated with the introduction of school inspectors which judge the quality of teaching and learning, and which have encouraged heads to re-focus on classroom matters (p. 49).

So whilst the Education Reform Act of 1988 gave schools, in the words of Bush et al. (1999) the opportunity to ‘determine their own policies within that national framework’ (p. 4), with this freedom came increased responsibilities and tougher decisions regarding what areas to focus on. Back in 1994, Ribbins and Marland stated that ‘no other management role within the British education system has been the focus of so much attention over such a long time as that of the headteacher’ (p. 3) and this has only been seen to have increased since. One interviewee in this research, the
careerist James, who was considering a senior leadership role summarised why the role of head was no longer for him:

It just doesn’t appeal to me. I think it’s too stressful a job. There’s too much put on the head and there’s no great rewards from it so as a head you can’t win anyway. You upset the staff or you upset the pupils or you upset the parents or you upset the government so I don’t see me in that role as a headteacher whereas perhaps a few years ago I did. But I don’t now (Interview 1, 2013).

James was one of nine interviewees who claimed to have ruled out the role in future, with just three not having ruled it out, but still feeling unsure. All three spoke of not having a full enough understanding of the role at this point in their careers. However, if many current headteachers did not plan their route to headship as Ribbins (2003) reports (p. 64) then perhaps those interviewees having already ruled out the role will change their opinions as their own lives adapt and the closer the post becomes compared to their own roles. Sarah spoke of the ‘mental toughness’ required to carry out the role and how more potential candidates could be encouraged to consider it:

I think the more training, the more shadowing, the more kind of visible the role can be. I suppose at all stages really the more people who can see how the job’s being done and how they’re done. That’s the only thing, to almost make the job seem manageable as opposed to something that’s completely different from everything else (Interview 1, 2013).

Thomson and Blackmore (2006) also consider whether it is the role itself that requires redesigning, researching current alternative strategies to single headteacher systems running successfully in Australia. Having questioned current principals on how they would redesign their own jobs, Thomson and Blackmore (2006) found the heads reverting ‘to what was problematic about the current job’ (p. 162) and whilst I shall ask interviewees their views on the role of headteacher I will also question them on how the role could be changed.

6.3 Perceptions of the Role of Headteacher

When considering the role of a headteacher, teacher professionals will often look to their own experiences in schools and build an opinion based on heads they have served under. Weindling (1999) refers to this process as developing ‘a conception of headship during their professional socialisation which is learned through both formal and informal processes’ (p. 98). Of the questionnaire sample who responded to the statement ‘The job of headteacher appeals to me’, 52 per cent selected ‘very strongly disagree’ with just 4 per cent selecting ‘very strongly agree’,
attributed to two males both with five to ten years teaching experience. This would imply having relatively little time to build up a picture of the role and it might be questionable how much either was aware of the post itself. Interviews did provide more of an insight into perceptions of the role. Two of the three careerists from the interview sample focused on the outside pressures that impact on being able to carry out the role. Marilyn referred to heads needing to stay calm in a culture where they were often held accountable:

There’s so much rubbish now that has come in that we just need to get rid of. The fact that you have to write up every time that you do anything, parental contact just in case... schools need to be given back the powers to do the job. To take away all that rubbish paperwork that is not necessary, to concentrate on running the school, on leading teachers, on developing teachers. I think until we get that balance right because it’s tipped now, it’s not going to get teachers back on track to do it. Because ultimately if you’re the head you’re the liable one for whatever goes wrong in your school... We’re in this claim culture, it’s about getting a claim in and there’s not many people want that on their... they can’t cope with it because of the stress of it. You’ve got to be a very placid, take it as you come person I think to be able to be a successful headteacher (Interview 1, 2012).

Marilyn was inspired by the work of her current head and praised his ‘personal presence’ around the school, although his success at the role left her unsure as to whether she was suited to it. Sikes et al. (1985) note that ‘working for a charismatic Head is a very special experience, one by which teachers measure their job satisfaction and commitment under other heads’ (p. 133). Indeed Marilyn compared her current head with her first one whom she stated was always ‘in her office’, leaving Marilyn wondering exactly what she was working on all day.

Sam, another ‘careerist’, also appreciated the demands of the role but in his current post it was the deputy who ‘practically’ ran ‘the school day to day’. This experience did vary between different schools for Sam, who had taught in four different establishments over a period of nine years. Sam was asked if more information about the role of headteachers was required for those aspiring to the job:

The head has his things to do and any port of call I always go to the deputy head or the vice principal, whatever they call him here. He has such a range of things to deal with. He’s got behaviour issues that he has to deal with, curriculum issues, he’s got courses if he needs you to go for your CPD and that’s just a couple of things and everything is just ask that person. So, I don’t know. But then again I’ve seen deputy heads in other schools and it’s completely different. They have completely different roles; the head does more or less depending. I mean my last school before that the head only came in for two days a week and he worked from home three days a week and he was getting paid over one hundred thousand pounds a year but his argument was he could do it from home. There were three really good deputies that did what they needed to do during school time (Interview 1, 2013).
This vision of a headteacher dropping into school when it was essential with deputies handling the plethora of day to day challenges was perhaps what Sam was aspiring to. However, this vision of the role of headteacher was not shared by other interviewees, in particular the final ‘careerist’, James, who considered the type of person a head needed to be:

I think it’s an extremely stressful job. I think the headteacher’s got to be completely dedicated to the school and you’ve got to be a special sort of person. Some of the things I would find difficult and I do see heads dealing with is people who are not doing their job as well but the head has to coax them round rather than, I’m quite blunt, I’d put it straight so... there are roles I can see where my personality and my skills I couldn’t fulfil. I also think the better heads... you’re a good head because you’ve based yourself in a school, you’ve worked hard with that school, whereas the current trend seems to be if you’re a good head you then get moved onto a lower, a less well performing school and your workload gets greater and I think really your work life balance as a head isn’t, it’s more work than life so it’s not something I would, at the current time, look at entertaining (Interview 1, 2012).

With the above three interviewees being the ‘careerists’ who were most likely to aspire to headship in the future, there was a lot of focus on the demands of the job, having to be diplomatic when dealing with difficult situations and the dedication required. There was no mention of the positives of the role although both Marilyn and James had agreed in their questionnaires that they found the role appealing. Sam, who had disagreed, explained that he would be better informed regarding the role once he had become a deputy head. Sam was asked about any aspects of the headteacher role that didn’t appeal:

I think the press are out to hound teachers. I think they’re trying to put them down and trying to give them, the profession a bad name really. Just with all the bad press they’ve been getting lately... it’s giving teachers a bad name in that light straight away. You tend to get, if you ring a parent, little Jonny’s being a little darling, I’ve had several times whereas now it’s well it’s nothing to do with me. You’re there to teach him and to sort him out and I think the role of parenting, it’s just the blame is on the school and I think if you’re in charge of the school, if anything goes wrong it’s down to you. Solely down to you. If you’ve not got the right systems in place below you then ultimately you’re answerable to it. So I think as long as you get the right people underneath you, I think that’s a big thing as well. You could walk into a headship and think it’s the best school in the world but if you’ve not got the staff to support you then I don’t think you’ll be there very long (Interview 1, 2013).

This response again reflected Sam’s view on the importance of a supportive leadership team and not just the lone headteacher. Whilst Helen aspired to a leadership role, possibly working with ‘troubled students’, she was keen to be able to share the responsibility with others. She was asked whether it was the role of headteacher itself putting her and others off or were teachers of today lacking the potential:
Erm... a bit of both... it’s just as odd who ends up as a chief executive of various different companies and I’d compare it to that sort of thing really. It’s like anything; there are some good ones and some bad ones but I would probably say that because it’s comes from a teaching, I think there are so many peculiarities among teachers actually and there can be so many different ways of being successful within that, it doesn’t necessarily make you a good manager. And you can get promoted very quickly I think for the wrong reasons at times... a little bit like politicians, the irony being that the nice people or the people with a lot of self awareness don’t go and do those sorts of things (Interview 1, 2013).

Through her comments Helen instigated that many of those applying for headships lacked self awareness and this stereotyping continued with Craig’s opinion on senior leaders:

I think the senior leadership would benefit from having... dragging people like myself into it. Obviously I’m not just saying me but people who don’t necessarily want to be there because we’d add another aspect to it. At the minute it’s a very driven area. It’s full of people who are very driven, very focused, very, almost business orientated and sometimes politically motivated so if we were to change that and bring other people in I think it would benefit, holistically it would benefit the school. It would benefit the students rather than it to be seen as a business it would actually claw them back to think hang on, remember this is about the small people occasionally (Interview 1, 2013).

Craig’s use of the word ‘dragging’ reflected his lack of ambition in reaching a senior leadership post in a school setting but as with Helen, he was keen to progress to a leadership role in an environment for pupils with particular needs such as a pupil referral unit. Helen and Craig shared an apprehension for being the sole individual in charge. Upon interviewing primary school headteachers, Southworth (1999) found that they considered the role to be facing increased accountability even from the 1980s to the mid 1990s, stating that ‘time and again their comments revealed the assumption that they were the individual who was responsible for the school’ (p. 47).

This view was reflected by Leanne who expressed no desire to be the last in line in terms of accountability. She was asked whether she aspired to the role of head:

I don’t... no I don’t think so. It’s ultimately you being one person at the top with the responsibility and you’ve got your deputy heads and your assistant heads but ultimately it’s your head on the chopping block and... and I do get quite stressed. I think, you know, I do manage it but it’s something that I wouldn’t consider worth the money (Interview 1, 2013).

The changing nature of the role of a headteacher was also apparent from comments made during the interviews. Of those in the ‘serendipity’ category, Claire appeared the most exasperated just talking about the role:

(Claire sighs)... Erm, I think it’s... I think you have to be a great business person these days and I don’t think that was the case when I was at school. I think it was a very very different job back then. They’re not just linked to this school... they are responsible for what goes on here but there’s so much liaising, networking, money management, accounting, keeping on top of the latest drives. You know, recently, last
two years, eighteen months there’s been so many changes and it seems like at every staff meeting it’s you’re not to do it this way you’re to do it that way, the new qualification is going to be, we’re going to be starting, you’ve got to teach it this way, you know and everything so... a very difficult job (Interview 1, 2013).

Claire had gained a glimpse of the pressures on the head at her current school through staff meetings, and had witnessed how the senior leadership roles were very segregated. She explained ‘I see the person that does behaviour, I see the person that does data... and I think well I don’t fit the mould with any of that’ although she admitted that at a different school the structure of the leadership hierarchy might be different. There did appear to be a lack of awareness of the actual role of the head, in particular with those interviewees in the earlier stages of their careers.

Ron, a previous banker, had taught for eight years but felt he still did not know enough about the day to day role of the head. This, combined with his later entry to the teaching profession, made him unsure about aspiring to the role; ‘I mean it seems to me a head has to deal with the financial side, dealing with governors, dealing with staff, dealing with pupils, dealing with parents, and I could probably enjoy taking two or three of those things out but whether I’d want the whole package is doubtful I think’.

From this interview data and the lack of questionnaire participants encouraged by the role of head, it appears that those in the infancy of their careers lack an understanding of the role and those with more experience have developed quite negative views of the role. McLay (2008) considers further research is required in order to establish the reasons for so many potential candidates not pursuing headships (p. 370) and I shall now consider the career aspirations towards headship of the sample.

6.4 Headship Aspirations

Whilst 52 per cent of questionnaire respondents very strongly disagreed with the statement that the role of headteacher was appealing, just 47 per cent very strongly disagreed that they intended to progress to the role. This would imply more of a willingness to consider a role that was highly unappealing by three members of the sample although they still disagreed or strongly disagreed with progressing to the role. In addition to this 10 per cent of the sample strongly agreed that they intended to progress to the role of headteacher although none stated that they very strongly
agreed. In 2008 NCSL (2010) found that 31 per cent of secondary teachers responded positively when asked whether they ‘aspired to be a headteacher’ (p. 6) which whilst appearing to be a high figure may not reflect those with the capacity to do the job. According to the November 2012 Workforce in England Report (DfE, 2013c) headteachers accounted for around 4.4 per cent of all full time teaching staff in publicly funded secondary schools (p. 27). This would indicate that interest in the role was reasonably high amongst the sample although of those agreeing or strongly agreeing that they intended to progress to the role, 78 per cent had been teaching for under ten years. In fact the time spent teaching appeared to impact on whether a teacher intended to progress to headship or not (table 6.1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time teaching (years)</th>
<th>Percentage intending to progress to headship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 to 20</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 30</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 6.1: Percentage of questionnaire sample intending to progress to headship

The drop in percentages of those aspiring to headship after ten years of experience could be attributed to some having entered senior leadership and therefore not being included in this survey. However, as just 1.2 per cent and 2.6 per cent (DfE, 2013c) of teaching staff in England are deputy and assistant heads respectively (p. 27) this drop may also be due to changes in personal circumstances such as starting a family, or finding the role of the headteacher less appealing the more they have discovered about it. In light of this evidence I will present the findings from my interviews in ascending order of time teaching.

Firstly, Sharon was in her second year of teaching and although she had not ruled out progressing to senior leadership in future years, she was apprehensive about the role of head, stating ‘I like my time in the classroom’. When questioned about why she was not considering the role of headteacher she replied:

There seems to be a lot of other things involved other than teaching. A lot of headteachers don’t get to teach and it just seems like you’re dealing with an awful lot of politics and paperwork and all that kind of side of things and I don’t really, that doesn’t really interest me. Whereas with some of the other leadership roles you get to deal a lot more with the children and things like that and that side of things and the staff (Interview 1, 2013).
Craig and Claire had both been teaching for three years and Claire could not envisage herself becoming senior management at her current school stating that even watching data presentations made her ‘feel ill’. She referred to heads as being driven with some being drawn by the money involved, the responsibility and the power, but she did not find this appealing and referred to the role as ‘stressful’. Craig considered his family to be his priority, and he would not be prepared to sacrifice this for the role of head:

I look at people who do it and I think how do you do it, because I think the commitment required, it’s more or less a full life because it’s never switching off and ok while it’s financially rewarded I don’t believe they can get the chance to switch off at any point. If, I don’t know, how can I put it... I think it would be sacrificing, if you’re a family of people, the sacrifice would be too big which is why a lot of headteachers I know, not that I know a lot, but the few I know don’t have families or their families have grown up and gone which is why they’re able to do it (Interview 1, 2013).

Jenny shared the same view as Sharon, in that teaching pupils was her priority. She had been teaching for six years and having started a family and changing to part time teaching, her view of senior leadership was a negative one:

I trained to be a teacher and I don’t think they teach. Even, even, they don’t teach enough. Some of them don’t teach at all. I’m not criticising them; they’re not teachers anymore. They are managers or admin and I’ve been trained to be a teacher and that’s what I want to be. Not meetings all day. Even some people turn up in meetings for hours after school and I think what can you talk about for that long?... They meet more than they teach in a day (Interview 1, 2013).

There were no aspects of the senior leader role that appealed to Jenny except for the pay, but she stated that they worked ‘harder than I’m willing to for hours that I’m not willing to give’. She stated that somebody needed to ‘tell us what they do’, which may have been indicative of how things were run at her school but may also have been due to her being part time and missing information that other full time staff received. Leanne was equally dismissive about the role of headteacher. Having taught for seven years there were no aspects of the role that appealed to her at all. She spoke about her current head as not teaching and spending ‘a lot of time doing paperwork and he has to deal with difficult customers every day’. When questioned whether she had ruled out the possibility of becoming a head, Leanne responded:

Yes I think I have. Just now I’ve realised! When you asked me that question about are there any parts of his role that you would like to do, no there aren’t. None at all (Interview 1, 2013).

As with Sharon, Leanne was passionate about teaching, resulting in the headteacher role appearing to be very unappealing:
I think that as teachers we come in to do a teaching job. That is not a teaching job and I think for me that is where the line is drawn. It’s not teaching and it’s nothing to do with teaching. It’s budgeting and planning and all that kind of stuff (Interview 1, 2013).

Not wishing to lose their identities as classroom teachers was apparent with these professionals in the first years of their careers. For Ron and Sarah who had each been teaching for eight years, there were aspects of the leadership role that appealed to them, but they were still apprehensive about the role of head. Ron explained:

I’d like to go on to become a head of year in my own right. I’m sure about, I’m not sure about much further. Possibly middle management, maybe where I’d like to stop. I look at the headteacher. I don’t think I’d ever want to become a headteacher. I think... deputy head, I’m not sure whether I’d want to get to that... possibly assistant headteacher. That would be my level. So that would be my progression up to that point (Interview 1, 2013).

It seemed clear that Ron had not decided which level he should set a ceiling on, and it did appear that he was limiting his ambition for progression. He did rule out the possibility of becoming a head and when questioned about this he struggled to answer at first:

I.... I, I don't know. Erm, I think you have to eat, sleep, breathe the school to be head teacher. And we've got a great headteacher... I genuinely think that there are few better headteachers around in terms of his dealings with staff and what have you. I don't know. A lot of it's politics and I don't particularly enjoy playing that sort of political game (Interview 1, 2013).

Ron appeared to have persuaded himself that he could not live up to the role model of his current head although there were perhaps further reasons for his avoidance of the role that he did not wish to share or could not verbalise. In contrast Sarah was able to speak about the aspects of the job that did appeal to her but was more undecided about if it was the role for her in the future:

Things like the curriculum, staff training, staff development and T and L, the actual working, working with people side and leading people and supporting people in things. That's the more personal aspect to it I think that would appeal. I'm getting gradually better at my administrative work. It's all I seem to do but obviously there's a lot of organising and the statistics which I'm more than capable of doing but I don't feel I enjoy as much (Interview 1, 2013).

James was the interviewee with the most experience having taught for over twenty years. He had experienced senior leadership through running an inclusion unit at a school although this role is often carried out by those from outside the teaching profession. James had returned to the classroom due to missing his teaching but had then shadowed the leadership team at his current school, attending meetings and taking on responsibilities. This had still not persuaded him to pursue a senior leadership role:
As soon as I move into that role which I’ve done as an assistant head I then lose my teaching and I’m actually here for... I enjoy the teaching. If I didn’t enjoy the teaching I’d probably move, I’d probably be more forcefully moving towards a position with more senior responsibility (Interview 1, 2012).

It was clear that the reason James had pursued a career in education was his love of teaching and despite the encouragement of others to pursue a leadership role, the lure of the classroom and his identity as a classroom teacher was too strong. He explained further:

I know some people will need the title, oh yeah; deputy head or assistant head and they quote it all the time. I’ve been to all these meetings and they’ll stand up and they’ll say ‘I’m deputy head of such and such, I’ve done this, I’ve done that’ and to me it’s not about me, it’s about the kids. I’m here for the kids and what I can do with the children to get them to do better. So, yes to answer your question shortly I think I’ve... I’ve made that choice that I’d rather be in the classroom (Interview 1, 2012).

For somebody with the potential to enter senior leadership on a more permanent basis, James was not tempted by the role of headteacher or the pay associated with it:

I think in some respects it’s the role that’s wrong. It demands so much that everything, especially now under academies, that the head has got such great responsibility. I think there is too much of it, and if you look at the equivalent in industry, if you look at all these MDs not paying tax and they’re on twice as much as any headteacher. In big business they’re on more money and if you think of the staff that the head needs (Interview 1, 2012).

As with the majority of interviewees, James viewed the role of headteacher as a huge responsibility not worth the financial reward. Classroom identity had been a major factor for many staff when ruling out the possibility of senior leadership posts and leadership tasks such as handling data were seen as detached from their passion for teaching children. A desire to make a difference to the lives of pupils may not rule out all of those with apprehensions from pursuing headship in the future. Southworth (1999) found that whilst his sample of primary heads were aware of their powerful influence in their schools, they had not entered the role for selfish purposes as ‘these heads did not seek organisational power for its own sake, but as a tool to help them install and develop their educational beliefs and professional values across the school’ (p. 47), indicating that perhaps those in my own sample of teachers could entertain the role in future for similar reasons.

6.5 Succession planning

With so many potential leaders in the teaching profession seemingly unaware of the roles and responsibilities higher up the leadership hierarchy, it is essential that their talent is identified and
they are prepared for possible future promotions. Bush and Moloi (2008) state two methods for identifying potential leaders with the first being candidates applying for positions requiring ‘a sufficient level of confidence to apply’ (p. 106). This first method requires self belief from the candidate as they must initiate the application in the first place. The second approach is a planned one where potential candidates are identified from within their establishments. However this could have the potential for discrimination particularly if those appointing only consider candidates with particular characteristics (p. 107). This resonates with the view of Ortiz (2000) who having researched American public schools found that in the majority of cases succession was ‘controlled by school board members and former superintendents’ the majority of whom were white males (p. 565), potentially limiting the nature of new additions to leadership teams. Potential leaders may not aspire to the role of head if their perceived image of what a head looks like is not one that they can envisage themselves as. In their interviews of human resource professionals in the United States and Canada, Greer and Virick (2008) found that to develop an inclusive culture many employees looked ‘upward in the hierarchy to see if there are people who look like them’ (p. 359).

Research has shown that many serving headteachers did not plan their journey to headship and drifted into the role. Coleman (2002) found with current headteachers, the ‘lack of planning is linked in some cases to a lack of confidence in their own ability’ (p. 30). Many heads have received support and encouragement along their journeys to headship and Coleman (2002) offers the following advice for potential heads:

Planning and being positive about a career; avoiding being pigeon-holed into a pastoral role and ensuring that you have a mentor are some strategies to bear in mind. However, without planning their career, many of the headteachers have ‘drifted’ into their roles, often seeming unaware of their own abilities. Certain people appear to have qualities that are recognised by others and which can lead to their being chosen for leadership positions. Even some of the women and men who have achieved headship seem to lack confidence’ (p. 151).

Training for such a position as headship is problematic as the role is so diverse and requires an array of skills. There are currently potential candidates being overlooked due to not fitting their current school’s vision of what a headteacher looks like. McLay (2008) notes this problem within the independent schools sector as ‘given the impending shortage of high calibre candidates for headship, the co-educational independent sector cannot afford to overlook the talents of its older staff, including women’ (p. 370). Attempts to overcome the problem have come in the form of
training from central Government. However, Glatter (2004) considers this area of education to have been neglected in the past:

A focus on leadership as embedded in relationships (as in the distributed leadership perspective) would suggest that the leadership of people should feature prominently in leadership development. Surprisingly for a ‘business’ that is centrally concerned with people and their development, the human resource aspects of education have received limited attention in either policy or research in the UK, except (in the case of policy) in the arguably narrow and mechanistic sense of performance management (p.216).

The NPQH was introduced to prepare potential heads for leadership by setting out training associated with the key areas of headship. Cubillo (1999) notes that the success of such a scheme is dependent on the qualities required for effective leadership being ‘learnt and improved through appropriate programmes of professional development’ (p. 382). Also the mandatory nature of the NPQH for all first time heads from 2005 up until 2012 may have dissuaded some potential headteachers from pursuing the role and led to others completing the qualification for their own professional development whilst not progressing to headteacher roles. NCSL (2010) found that many potential candidates working towards headships stalled at the deputy head phase. Of those having completed the old style NPQH, ‘half have not moved on to headship and a significant proportion have no immediate plans to do so’ (p. 14). Only one interviewee, Marilyn, made reference to the NPQH when asked about preparation for headship:

The NPQH seems to have gone. There is one leadership course I think because I did leading from the middle, then there’s the next one but I don’t think really there’s much else out there in order to study if you like and to look at philosophies and that type of thing. They seem to have side stepped into this NEL, NLE, the National leadership things and even I... I applied not this year but last time round and then this time round I was just... over fazed by the application form. I thought on a teaching commitment on a full timetable when am I supposed to write all this? You’re not making it easy for people to access who want to. You’re actually switching off because you’re expecting a dissertation before you even know if you’ve got a place... you’re aspiring but you’re still on a full timetable and all your extra-curricular and everything else you’ve got to do... what you can actually do and fit in in your time frame to be able to go and achieve. I think a lot... I hate being out of the classroom, I hate missing the kids so the training as well, the times of the training sessions and things like that really need to be looked at, to start at the right hours (Interview 1, 2012).

The nature and timing of the training mentioned by Marilyn was clearly an issue. Her reference to ‘they’ and the uncertainty of the initials of the National College reflected the fast paced change of the support structures in place, seemingly making it more difficult for potential leaders such as Marilyn to access. Completing leadership training courses whilst fulfilling a full time role was problematic but Marilyn did not wish to miss her lessons either, highlighting the need for flexibility
in any provision. Whilst a qualification such as the NPQH is designed to prepare leaders for a range of circumstances, there is an argument that the majority of training is completed whilst doing the job itself. One headteacher interviewed by McLay (2008) commented ‘you can’t train for upset parents or deciding if a child should be expelled or telling a teacher they have to leave’ (p. 366).

Marilyn agreed that shadowing the senior leadership at her school opened her eyes to the role enabling her to ‘see the bigger picture’ rather than just being aware of what was happening in her own classroom. In contrast Matt, in his seventh year of teaching, was unaware of any qualifications required to progress to senior leadership and unlike the opportunities that Marilyn had encountered he was not aware of any shadowing programmes. Matt was asked whether training was necessary for potential senior leaders such as himself:

I think so. I think something would be useful where you can see what the next jump would be up to assistant headship, 'cos as it stands at the moment I've no idea whether I'd need a formal qualification. I don’t think I do..... I find it quite bewildering that you can, do you need a masters to get right up to the top, do you? I’ve no idea and from school to school obviously it will change, how much information they give you so it would be nice for people who are curious to know what they need, what absolute qualifications and then they could start banking things and considering things (Interview 1, 2012).

Matt incorrectly believed that a master’s level qualification was required to become a headteacher and he was unaware of the existence of the NPQH. An assistant headteacher who had encouraged him to apply for his head of department role had since moved to their partner school and it appeared that Matt had no mentor or colleague he could turn to for career advice at his present school. Sarah also spoke about the gap between teachers and the senior leadership of her school:

I do think maybe there could be more visibility of things like shadowing and working alongside SLT. I think that would be, something like that would be quite interesting because it makes everyone seem more like they’re part of the same team almost, it’s..... Yes, sometimes if there’s too much of a big gap in knowledge people think well what’s there and I just think the more visibility there is I just think everyone ends up singing off the same hymn sheet a bit more (Interview 1, 2013).

Sarah was keen to develop her knowledge of the leadership roles but as with Matt her school did not provide a shadowing scheme. James who had taken part in senior leadership shadowing was keen to assist in developing other leaders but did not seem concerned that others around him were overtaking him on the leadership ladder:
I’ve got staff in my department who just came in as a teacher and now they’re a head of year or, if I see their potential in them... as their line manager I do look for opportunities for them to progress and I’ve done that all along as head of year; I’ve had staff who are now heads of year. There are staff who are senior teachers who have moved on. Some people might say they’ve overtaken me on the ladder but it’s funny, those same people still come back to me for advice although they’re supposed to be more senior. So, I suppose it’s what you’re more comfortable with and if I see someone with potential then yeah, it doesn’t bother me whatsoever. If it’s someone young who comes along and says ‘I want to be ambitious’ then that’s their role. As you say we’re short of heads and deputies and if they want to devote their life to it then fair play to them (Interview 1, 2012).

From these interviews it appeared that the most useful form of leadership preparation for these teacher professionals so far had been shadowing current members of senior leadership teams. However, only one interviewee mentioned the completion of any leadership courses and the majority were unaware of leadership development qualifications available and if any were mandatory for headship. Leadership preparation varied between schools and in the schools where opportunities were more apparent, the teachers could articulate leadership areas they were or were not interested in with more confidence.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter I have focused on the increasing accountability for headteachers and the high stakes nature of the role. Pressure from the Government and governors or sponsors to meet ever rising examination floor targets and balance the financial books are placing strains on headteachers that others in the teaching profession view as unappealing. Decisions regarding converting to academy status provide new dilemmas as heads weigh up the perception of increased autonomy with a role no longer as secure as it once was.

Whilst the attitudes towards their careers were mixed, few teachers viewed the role of headteacher positively, although many had high praise for those carrying it out. Almost all teachers interviewed valued their identity as classroom practitioners highly and used the safety of this environment as the main reason for not considering headship. Interviewees struggled with the concept of them being the final person accountable and some expressed an interest in the role being divided up so that the responsibility was not on one person alone. The importance of a work life balance was also paramount, something which I shall focus on further in the next chapter.
Of those staff still considering the position of headteacher in the future, there was a great deal of apprehension towards the role and a lack of awareness regarding the full extent of the post. Whilst shadowing provided an insight into senior leadership this was only offered in a minority of schools. Nationally led middle leadership courses were viewed very positively, having been recommended by senior colleagues and so it would be hoped that opportunities for senior or headship posts would be directed towards potential candidates later in their careers, as at present very few were aware of further training or qualifications available. With relatively few teachers showing an interest in headship it is essential that schools alert staff to training opportunities. The drop in interest for those teachers with eleven or more years teaching experience is a concern and without local authorities overseeing any training, some geographical areas may see themselves facing continued shortages in the years to come.

In the following chapter I consider any differences in career aspirations between males and females and why such priorities have established themselves. I continue to review the changes over time of the twelve interviewees from a gender perspective and what this implies for the future of headship.
Chapter 7
Career Attitudes and Aspirations from a Gender Perspective

7.1 Introduction
In this chapter the questionnaire and interview findings are analysed through the perspective of gender. Differences between the aspirations and ambitions of males and females are explored and whether variations are apparent between outside influences on careers from the broader lives of the teacher professionals. The characteristics of the questionnaire sample are analysed and compared with the findings from other literatures, considering differences between males, females and those with more or less teaching experience. Positions on the theoretical framework are compared for males and females and if those positions have changed over a twelve to eighteen month period from a gender perspective. I argue that it is primarily females who are influenced by their home and family responsibilities, often prioritising these above their careers whereas males are able to focus on their careers without the burden of family considerations. Females without children factor in their family plans when considering career moves, something not as apparent with the male teachers. Males are more likely to have gained promotions early on in their careers and are more likely to be classed as ‘careerists’, planning ahead and pursuing further promotional posts. I shall firstly focus on some of the historical gender differences regarding leadership, highlighted in recent literatures, and how this has traditionally been viewed from a masculine perspective.

7.2 Masculinity of Leadership
The issue of gender with regard to educational leadership has moved forward in that it is ignored less often in the literatures, but in recent decades has still appeared as an afterthought for some researchers. Comparisons between males and females have often referred to the male position as the norm, with females deviating from this, warned against by Grant (1989) as it does not add to the understanding of career patterns. Hall (1999) argues that researchers concerned with equity in educational leadership have been ‘knocking on educational management doors’ but they have been ‘slow in opening and, even when gender does gain entry, it may be allocated a separate table and remain largely ignored’ (p. 156). According to Grant (1989) ‘the early work on teachers’
careers either ignored gender differences or ‘explained’ them in terms of women’s deficiencies’ (p. 36). As themes regarding gender have emerged, issues surrounding the different experiences of males and females in educational leadership have often been linked to the masculinity of leadership, demonstrating how the nature of school systems and the hierarchical structure of roles are more suited to males. Indeed, the statement ‘most managers in most organizations in most countries are men’ (p. 1) highlighted by Collinson and Hearn (1996b) shows little sign of manoeuvre. Gray (1993) states that ‘it has generally been considered that competitiveness (or, at least, certain forms of it) is a masculine quality, and therefore running a school is likely to demand qualities possessed by men rather than by women’. Morgan (1996) highlights that those achieving status at the top of the hierarchy will have met with competition, through examinations and interviews for example, again reinforcing the competitiveness of climbing this structure; ‘hierarchy reinforces the dominant models of masculinity that are readily associated with men of power’ (p. 50). The masculine view of leadership was one that interviewee Sarah reinforced unknowingly whilst defending the fact that within her department females fared as well as males for promotion:

I’ve never felt I would or wouldn’t get something because of my gender. I’m quite bolshie anyway (laughs). That’s what me and the head of department always say to each other, we’re quite bolshie and wear the trousers in this department so it never seems to have made a difference (Interview 1, 2013).

Whilst the route to headship can be off putting for some females, the shift in the role of headteacher towards administrative duties rather than a pupil focused post has acted as a further disincentive for some females according to Shakeshaft (1989):

The structure of schools is itself antithetical to the ways women work best. Separating teaching from administration so that the power for change is in the administrator’s hands is an organizational format that women did not choose (p. 205).

Blackmore (1989) agrees that the role is unappealing to some women due to their reluctance to make difficult decisions, as ‘they choose not to aspire for such positions, or are excused on the grounds of their moral inadequacy in not being able to make the ‘hard’ decisions in the interests of the organization’ (p. 119). Whilst these masculine models are reinforced through the use of hierarchical leadership models in schools, these masculinities are varied and embedded within societal structures also. The phrase “hegemonic masculinity”, relating to the continued domination in society of a particular group is often used in relation to the male dominance of headteacher roles. Connell (1995) states that hegemony ‘refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims
and sustains a leading position in social life’ (p. 77) which in the case of education would be how males have monopolised headteacher positions, and how this has been widely accepted. The cycle has continued as, according to Woodward (1996) the dynamics of promotion ‘are dominated by men, embody masculinity, and reproduce varying masculinities’ (p. 188). To exacerbate the situation the inverse of masculinity is often used in a derogatory manner. Connell (2000) states that hegemonic masculinity can be described negatively as a direct opposite of femininity: ‘subordinated masculinities are symbolically assimilated to femininity (e.g. abuse of “sissies”, “nancy-boys”)’ (p. 31), putting further pressure on males to act in a particular way. Hall (1993) argues that ‘the conceptualisation as management as masculine’ (p. 30) and the masculine culture in particular in secondary schools, is providing barriers for many females in reaching leadership positions. Blackmore (1999) is against females being trained to conform to these masculine norms and argues that ‘the glass ceiling is perceived as a barrier to be penetrated rather than deconstructed’ (p. 129). The questionnaire and interview data gathered was analysed in light of these comments, within the contexts of the local authority, the wider educational landscape shaped by Government and the personal circumstances of the participants.

The questionnaire data did display some differences between males and females when applying for professional development opportunities. Whilst 82 per cent of males had applied for a course or similar in the last five years, just 66 per cent of females had. Of those applying for courses 93 per cent of the males had been successful whereas only 48 per cent of the females had attended. One male stated that his place of employment had refused attendance compared to six females representing 6 per cent of the males and 17 per cent of the females who applied. If the perception of females is that training leading to promotion is a male dominated arena, then this may account for the relative lack of course applications by females in the sample. However, their relative lack of success in attending can only be attributed to senior staff in schools and whilst reasons for such decisions are unknown, the difference between male and female attendance figures is stark. The nature of professional development was similar for both sexes in terms of examination board meetings and online training, but differed with regards to network meetings. Of those receiving training 29 per cent of females had attended network meetings compared with 57 per cent of males, indicating that the findings of Shakeshaft (1993) that females are far less likely to build and
attend networks than males (p. 50) is still apparent. If such networks are viewed as masculine arenas then some females may have concerns about how they are viewed in such environments. Indeed, females behaving in what is perceived as a masculine manner can have negative consequences. A successful female with potential for further promotion was noted by Cunnison (1989) as was the criticism targeted at her by another female:

[She] criticized her temperament as being cold, that is, in conventional terms unfeminine, and suggested that her future as a woman high up in the male hierarchy would be lonely and isolated, adding, however, that her marriage and interest in sport might save her from such a fate. This observation reveals how some women teachers still see themselves as having a choice about whether to remain feminine or to go for promotion’ (p 159)

In their study on female headteachers in the United States, Young and McLeod (2001) considered training to target women to prepare them for leadership positions was necessary but should also include male representatives from traditionally male-dominated organisations (p. 496). This would require the cooperation and support of males from a range of educational areas who may not perceive training specifically for females as necessary or useful. Males already in power have been viewed as not wanting to adjust their dominance and their perceived manner in which they lead. If status at work is so important to males, then it is not surprising that they are reluctant to relinquish their positions. Collinson and Hearn (1996a) state that:

Studies have emphasized the importance of men's continued domination of power relations in contemporary organizations. Relatedly, they have revealed the importance of paid work as a central source of masculine identity, status and power (p. 62).

Connell (2002) agrees that many males do not wish to surrender their dominant status in many areas of society (p. 99), highlighting that whilst males gain status from positions of authority, women often gain credit for their physical appearance irrelevant of other accomplishments that they may have (p. 113). In addition to this, Hall (1996) argues that family responsibilities have provided females with many difficult decisions regarding their careers (p. 46) indicating that career may be of greater importance to more males than females.

Differences between the sexes were also apparent regarding attitudes towards interviews for professional posts. Whilst 5 out of 17 males considered interviews to be ‘enjoyable’, just 5 out of 34 females did. At the other end of the spectrum just 4 males considered the interview experience
to be ‘daunting’ compared to 16 females, 24 percent of males as opposed to 47 percent of females. However, the factor with the most potential to make a difference to promotional opportunities was those viewing the interview process as ‘terrifying’. Whilst one male considered this to be the case, eight females selected the word, indicating a possible deterrent in applying for internal or external promotions due to a fear of this traditional and embedded part of the selection process.

Coleman (2002) states that the masculine nature of leadership results in further barriers even for those females who reach the top role:

The present research on female secondary headteachers in England and Wales endorses the proposition in the literature that many secondary heads work in a predominantly masculine culture, which has the effect of marginalizing and isolating those women who do become heads and blocking the women who aspire to promotion and eventual headship (p. 95).

Leadership experiences can differ for males and females due to the support provided from females partners for their male partner’s career, seen less often the opposite way around. Coleman (2002) elaborates; ‘the implications of the responses are that the men’s lives are dominated by the demands of work and that, in the majority of cases, this can happen because they have the support of their wives who provide continuity to the family as the main home making partner and who often sacrifice their own career aspirations as a result’ (p. 61). This position reflects those females in the sample making an ‘active choice’ to not pursue promotion in order to focus on their families, or those who had been restricted more unwillingly, hence the ‘stuck’ individuals. Even females without families viewed future children as a possible hindrance to career progression as demonstrated by interviewee Leanne:

I do worry about one day having children. I feel stressed out as it is and I’m quite free and single, what have you, but if I had children I would worry about the workload and whether it would be right for both, you know one head of department one member of SLT, would we be able to manage time wise? As far as other people are concerned I do think that having children and setting up a home and stuff is possibly the reason why men feel more able to do it (Interview 1, 2013).

Whilst the masculinity of leadership is often presented negatively for females in the literatures, Cockburn (1991) notes that ‘pregnancy, childbirth and childbearing are matters on which positive discrimination in favour of women is permitted without any thought that it may be “unfair to men”’ (p. 76). Indeed the sharing of one year of maternity leave between mothers and fathers was a
coalition Government initiative announced in November 2013 (BBC News Website, 2013) and introduced in April 2015, an indication that perhaps times are changing. Aboim (2010) agrees that male identities are evolving as signs emerge of a change in attitude towards family and the home. She argues that ‘to a significant extent, the symbolization of contemporary masculinities has reinforced the links between men and the sphere of family life, in so far as men are being challenged to redefine themselves through categories of emotionality and expressiveness that were once the reserve of stereotypical femininity’ (p. 111). She claims that men feel disorientated due to losing their ‘unquestioned social superiority’ and ‘because they are incorporating traces of femininity’ (p. 21). Indeed masculinity and femininity are complex tools and Hall (1999) warns of the dangers of accepting the idea that leadership means masculinity which in turn means male:

It is important... to challenge the too ready association of management and masculinity as well as recognise its accuracy. It can deter women from applying for promoted posts, to which they might otherwise be attracted. It obscures the possibilities of alternative interpretations of the leader and manager’s role, whether enacted by a woman or a man (p. 160).

Therefore when comparing the qualities of my questionnaire sample I shall not only compare the male and female responses, but I will divide them into the four categories of ‘careerist’, ‘serendipity’, ‘active choice’ and ‘stuck’, the detail of which I will discuss in the next section.

7.3 Conceptual framework for males and females

Based on the responses to statements in the questionnaire, the sample of teacher professionals were positioned on the conceptual framework, as discussed in chapter 5. Splitting the data into separate male and female diagrams revealed some significant differences. The male chart (figure 7.1) revealed almost equal proportions of males in the ‘serendipity’ and ‘careerist’ categories (7 and 8 out of 18 respectively) with just 3 individuals as ‘active choice’. However there were no males who appeared exclusively in the ‘stuck’ category.
Figure 7.1: Distribution of males in the questionnaire sample for the four career categories.

This was in contrast to the females (figure 7.2) for whom the most common category was ‘serendipity’ accounting for 18 out of 35 participants, followed by ‘careerist’ with 7 individuals, a significantly lower proportion than the males. The third most popular group for females was the ‘stuck’ category with 6 individuals and just 4 appeared in the ‘active choice’ group. Those respondents agreeing to be interviewed (represented by black data points and labelled by name) represented all four categories, with a representative number from each category in comparison to the distribution of the sample.
Figure 7.2: Distribution of females in the questionnaire sample for the four career categories.

The reason that Helen’s responses positioned her in the ‘stuck’ category became clear during the first interview. Helen lacked confidence when talking about her current role despite her headteacher encouraging her to apply for a senior role, an offer which she subsequently declined. Helen attributed her home situation as having an influence on her career decisions due to her responsibility to her two children and her husband having ‘a very high pressured job’. She spoke of taking three years for her to feel comfortable in her current role and would not consider a promotional move for another five years. This resonates with the findings of Ouston (1993) who states that ‘able women consider themselves to be average and are not good at promoting themselves or their achievements’ (p. 9). Of further disadvantage are the findings highlighted by Pigford and Tonnsen (1993) who argue that ‘while men generally enter teaching with the intention of moving into administration quickly, women are less likely to express a desire to be school administrators’ (p. 11). This combined with Helen’s lack of confidence, may prevent her, a potentially successful leader, from ever reaching a top role.
Helen spoke of having to consider proximity to her extended family for support in looking after her children and had considered moving house and job to the other end of the country, but financially the option was unviable. Helen sounded frustrated that working through this decision had been left to her rather than her husband and had put extra pressure on her, in addition to her current responsibilities:

I really feel and a lot of my friends, as females in a heterosexual relationship we’re the only ones, I know I’m generalising, we’re the only ones who think about those sorts of things. And I think that’s when you get characterised as a ‘nag’ when you’re pointing out what the barriers are and actually it’s easier to damn you than the barrier (Interview 1, 2013).

Jenny showed similar signs of being stuck explaining that she had made a choice between starting a family and pursuing a responsibility. Having moved to a part time role, Jenny explained that the ‘amount of extra work required’ with a paid responsibility would be more than she was ‘willing to give now that I have got a child’. Jenny spoke of being content with her current role although she might increase her hours ‘maybe when I’ve not got young children’. However unlike Helen, Jenny did not see herself as stuck by her family obligations but attributed her decision to her upbringing:

[It’s] probably just the way I’ve been brought up... All of mine and my husband’s family are all from one tiny village... both of our parents, our Mums didn’t work, which obviously I do but it’s, we just put the family before. But it’s nice to have both. I wouldn’t not work but it’s nice to be able to be part time and to have the best of both I think (Interview 1, 2013).

Putting family first was also highlighted by Matt, the only interviewee in the ‘active choice’ category. However, whilst he explained that his ‘priority will always be family’ this had not prevented him from pursuing his head of department role and he felt that should his current role cease to challenge him he would ‘need to look at moving to a bigger school’. However, it was Matt’s perception of the working hours required that was deterring him from considering a further leadership role at present:

When I do check my emails I see emails on a Sunday morning perhaps from SLT or Saturday at 10pm and I’m thinking if I’m being a Dad, will I just be shutting the children out the room and saying no, I’m doing my work now. So that’s what really puts me off; the work life balance (Interview 1, 2012).

Whilst Matt felt that his family life would have a ‘heavy bearing’ on his career at the present time, he was not restricted by this and in considering a future move in the next eighteen months stated he’d ‘see how I feel’, implying that the decision was ultimately his own.
The largest proportion of females fell into the ‘serendipity’ category, indicating that they did not have career plans. Aisenberg and Harrington (1998) explain that women are less likely to have career maps than males, with females in their research receiving doctorates yet having ‘little clear idea of how to plan a professional life’ (p. 45). Women would take smaller steps in their careers rather than making five or ten year plans as males might. This was apparent from the questionnaire results where 10 out of 18 males (56 percent) stated that they had their career plan mapped out, compared to just 9 out of 35 females (26 percent). Gold (1996) agrees that women rarely have career plans:

While men generally enter teaching with career plans which will eventually make them school leaders, women usually enter teaching without a career map and initially focus on becoming good teachers. Women often only become leaders in education when they have been managed by someone younger or less effective than themselves, or else they just drift into it. Sometimes, it is suggested to them that they should apply for promotion by a more senior educationalist whose professional opinion they value. However, they embark on the journey eventually, they do not usually begin it with active plans for their future (p. 424).

This resonates with the findings of Rowan (1995) who found evidence of confident males pursuing leadership roles early on compared to females achieving such posts without planning:

The pattern which emerges from the eight interviews is that the men tended to be confident from the outset of their careers – or at any rate early on in them – that headship was their goal, whereas the women had no such expectations. They may have got into teaching by accident or default, and then had their self-esteem boosted by signs of respect from outside the school which led them to realise that they had the potential for the top job (p. 177).

The lack of a career plan was the case for interviewees Claire and Sarah. Claire, who had gained a paid pastoral responsibility recently, stated that she wasn’t driven by promotion but when the opportunity arose she’d had ‘a crack at it’, encouraged by one colleague without whom she may not have applied. For Claire the perceptions of others was important in her decision making, resonating with Leanne’s comment of needing ‘other people to think I’m doing well’. Sarah was keen to go ‘with the flow’ and when asked about further promotion stated ‘I’m more than happy to wait for those opportunities to come up’, showing no sense of urgency in progressing upwards. Sharon, in her second year of teaching, admitted to not having a structured career plan at all but was aware of time pressures implying that she should not leave seeking a promotion for too long:

I’m aware that I don’t want to get stuck just teaching for the next ten years or whatever because then it becomes more difficult from what I’ve heard, it becomes more difficult to then get promotions so I’m aware that I need to think about these
things but immediately I'm not too worried. I'll just kind of see what happens really (Interview 1, 2013).

Career plans were evident from female primary teachers that Duncan (1999) interviewed, although these did not involve progressing to headship as ‘they all had plans of one kind or another, but not one expressed a desire to become a headteacher or to take on any kind of role in education which was predominantly administrative’ (p. 130). The role of headteacher did not appeal to any of the ‘serendipitous’ females interviewed, although Sarah was undecided about this in the future. Another ‘serendipitous’ teacher, Ron, was unsure of his career plan highlighting time constraints due to entering the profession at an older age. He admitted to being ambitious and ‘didn’t just want to be a teacher’, stating that ‘part of my character doesn’t want to remain at the bottom; part of my character wants to have an influence on things but also you look around at other people that are doing jobs that, and I look at myself and no disrespect but I can do that job’. It was interesting that whilst many of the teachers had strong classroom identities, Ron referred to remaining in the classroom as the bottom of the hierarchy, perhaps due to his managerial experience in banking. He appeared to be in confusion over how far to progress and when to do so, with his age at the forefront of his decision making:

You could ask me in a year’s time and I might say well actually I think, you know I think I probably left it too late. I left it too late in my career, to start teaching at the age of thirty-five, you’re fifteen years behind a lot of people and I don’t know whether that’s, I don’t know whether I’d want to be a headteacher in my later years. I don’t know (Interview 1, 2013).

Craig was far more relaxed about future promotions, explaining that both he and his wife had secured all posts to date by chance rather than by planning:

The career aspect? I think we’re both quite beautiful in the way that things happen to us and we follow them. I’ve never applied for a job. I’ve never found a job in a paper and applied for it. They’ve always found me and I’ve kind of gone down that path wherever it takes me. (Interview 1, 2013).

In contrast Sam, the first of the three ‘careerists’, had clear ideas regarding his career, stating he ‘just wanted to progress’, viewing his many school moves as stepping stones to further promotions. James had also pursued various promotional opportunities but these seemed more measured than Sam’s choices. James had temporarily chosen a pastoral post to assist with his employability when a curriculum post looked unlikely at his first school. He stated that ‘there’s greater promotion as a head of year or from the pastoral side’ but the fact that James had pursued
this alternative route showed a dedication to progress unlike many in the serendipity category who were only prepared to consider particular roles. The final 'careerist', Marilyn, had only ever wanted to be a teacher, but had started to progress up the hierarchy after praise from others regarding her performance. She attributed her success to the support her school had provided for her, rather than her own ability to do the job:

I do think the best decision I ever made was taking on my role here. I think that what I've achieved... and how far I've come here in seven years and the things that I've done, there's no way, I'd never have been head of year. I'd never have even dreamt that I was capable. It's because they invest in you as a person and you're not just a teacher, if somebody picks up on a quality, they'll push you and push you (Interview 1, 2012).

Marilyn had thought a lot about a senior leadership role and through shadowing had formed ideas about posts she might pursue in future. Whilst the classroom remained her priority the personable approach by her current headteacher appealed to her and so a future role as head had not been ruled out. Atchison (1993) recognises that for many females the fulfilment brought by teaching supersedes pursuing leadership roles, stating that 'there are many factors which affect women's opportunities and career development including women's own understanding about their development and career needs and a belief that there is greater satisfaction to be gained from class teaching' (p. 100-101). Indeed, some of the female interviewees expressed a keenness to remain in the classroom, rating their link with the pupils as their priority. This resonated with the findings of Smith (2011b) who found that women rejected the option of headship due to the role 'renouncing their pupil-centred values, compromising their workplace relationships, becoming tough, unpopular and isolated, and having no life outside school' (p. 517). Jenny stated that she would ‘absolutely never’ contemplate senior leadership, adding ‘they don't really teach’ and ‘their time is done’ to justify her reluctance regarding the role. Claire felt just as strongly about the classroom being her main priority and although she had not ruled out further promotions and was acting head of year during her second interview, she stated that her role would ‘remain [as] a classroom teacher’. There were also male interviewees who valued their teaching time highly. Matt was concerned that a senior leadership role might reduce his teaching load too severely:

I think that would frustrate me a bit because I think I'm happiest when I'm in the classroom. When I come out of the classroom I see, I look in my diary and I see the list of things I've got to do and the time I've got left to do it... as long as I still had some teaching and some kind of spread of ability so that I got to know the children and work with the children, I'd be happy with that (Interview 2, 2014).
Similarly Ron did not feel ready for a senior leadership post mainly due to him lacking in confidence regarding his teaching and examination results:

I’d need to be more secure in my own ability as a teacher before I went on to because, because I know senior leadership, it’s as much about managing teachers and if I felt that I hadn’t been able to give my all to teaching, I don’t think I would be able to advise other people on teaching. Because I know a lot of it is performance managements and I wouldn’t be able to go in and observe a lesson that somebody’s pay depended on if I felt myself, I wouldn’t be able to deliver a better lesson. So I’d struggle with that at the moment (Interview 2, 2014).

Whilst Ron featured highly in the ‘serendipitous’ and ‘careerist’ categories, his selection of words to describe his own qualities of ‘caring’, ‘tolerant’, ‘intuitive’ and ‘aware of individual differences’ are those which Gray (1993) refers to as feminine characteristics, demonstrating further contradictions to the assumption that such traits are associated with females only. These ‘interpersonal skills’ (p.69) favoured by Matt and Ron and demonstrated by Marilyn’s headteacher were also observed by Collinson and Hearn (1996a) amongst insurance sales managers, contradicting the masculine image of management, despite the males wishing to emphasise their power and status. They note that contradictions to the assumptions surrounding power in the workplace ‘reveal the analytical importance of similarities and differences between men, masculinities and managements’ (p, 72).

Aboim (2010) agrees that many men are adopting ‘stereotypical traits of femininity’ (p. 164) but Blackmore (1989) explains that historically leadership has been associated with masculine traits such as ‘aggressiveness, forcefulness, competitiveness and independence’ (p. 100) and this is difficult to adjust. These attitudes may have dissuaded females from admitting that they aspired to headship in the past, but more recent role models such as Marilyn’s headteacher may be going some way to persuading females otherwise.

Whilst clear differences were apparent between interviewees from different categories, there were also variations between the career plans of some of the males and females. Only Sam and Matt spoke of specific time frames in relation to their careers with Claire referring to the timing of starting a family as crucial to her plans. Sam was keen to climb the leadership ladder quickly, reflecting the findings of Brighouse (1995) who having interviewed headteachers found that ‘the men were much more determined to be heads early on, than the women’ (p. 95). According to Blackmore (1993) these views are deeply embedded and only reinforce and sustain the male dominance of those leadership positions:
Administration and policy-making in education have been, and still are, the province of men, although women make up a large proportion of educational workers. Educational theory and administrative practice have been dominated by men, who have acted as ‘gatekeepers’ in setting the standards, producing the social knowledge and decreeing what is significant, relevant and important in the light of their own experience (p. 27).

From my interviews the only evidence to suggest change was the positive influence on Marilyn from her male headteacher. However, clear differences between the male and female distributions across the four categories demonstrated variations between the plans and aspirations of the females compared with those of the males, suggesting ongoing issues regarding the way in which females are positioning themselves. A lower proportion of female ‘careerists’ indicated less career planning whilst only females appearing in the ‘stuck’ category suggested different priorities, where individuals are not seeking promotions, or barriers are present if they are.

7.4 Male and female characteristics

Differences between males and females in leadership are usually described using the term gender, often referring to generalisations regarding the expected actions of the two sexes. Shakeshaft (1993) describes this:

To understand gender differences, it is important to make some distinctions between sex and gender. Sex is a biological description, one that divides most of humankind into two types of people – females and males. Gender is a cultural term. It is socially constructed and describes the characteristics that we ascribe to people because of their sex, the ways we believe they behave or the characteristics we believe they have based upon our cultural expectations of what is male and what is female (p 52).

Therefore in this section males and females will be compared against characteristics that have traditionally been labelled as either masculine or feminine. Firstly, those completing the questionnaire were asked if they possessed paid posts of responsibility (table 7.1), the results of which showed marked differences between the males and females.
Table 7.1: Responses to the question ‘Do you have a paid post of responsibility?’

The larger percentage of males holding responsibility posts may have been attributed to the sample having more years teaching experience than the females. However, the opposite was apparent with a greater majority of these males in their first four years of teaching (table 7.2).

Table 7.2: Response of 1 to 4 years when asked ‘How long have you been teaching?’

These responses would indicate that males in the sample had pursued paid responsibilities earlier in their careers than females working in the same schools and more had successfully pursued those roles overall. These findings were justified when the average number of years in teaching was estimated from the groups in the questionnaires (table 7.3):

Table 7.3: Years of teaching experience using group medians for questionnaire sample.

This indicated males pursuing promotions earlier than the females and females remaining with no paid responsibilities for longer. Draper and McMichael (1998) who interviewed female deputy headteachers discovered that they were reluctant to apply for promotions until they had gained further experience. On interviewing deputy heads, they found that ‘men showed a greater disposition to apply’ (p. 167) concluding that large numbers of women deputies were ‘unwilling to put themselves forwards for promotion in the next five years’ (p. 167). This echoed the findings of Evetts (1994) who found that some males began their promotions earlier in their careers with women slower to gain their first promotions, stating that ‘in contrast the men headteachers... had
assumed responsibilities early in their careers and had achieved significant promotions while in their twenties and thirties’ (p. 35). The questionnaire data would indicate a continuation of this trend with those males pursuing early promotions more likely to pursue future headships than the smaller percentages of females.

The field recognised women’s desire to enter the work sphere many decades ago demonstrated in a section of Wilensky’s (1968) study entitled ‘Why women want it both ways’ (p. 242), although their struggle to balance the running of the home was evident:

> They want fewer hours a week or a day because emancipation, while it has released them for work, has not to an equal extent released them from home and family. We can see this both in the time budgets of housewives and in their feelings about work (p. 242).

Whilst women faced more employment opportunities the stereotypes were still apparent due to the nature of jobs that women were usually pursuing. From the 1970s, studies carried out by Schein (2001) displayed changes in attitude from female workers but not from males. Schein (2001) found that twenty years after her original study:

> Despite all the societal, legal and organizational changes that occurred in the almost 20 years between the studies, male managers continue to perceive that successful managerial characteristics are more likely to be held by men in general than by women in general (p. 678).

Schein (2001) cites the negative impact that stereotypical attitudes can have on the work opportunities for women and calls for further research of ‘managerial sex typing’ (p. 685) at a global level. Grant (1989) warns of a focus on women in educational careers where males are used as a ‘control’ group (p. 234), reinforcing the idea that a male way of working is the norm. More recently Coleman (2012) witnessed a shift in the research field ‘from the barriers themselves towards what helps to overcome them’ (p. 602). Coleman (2012) highlights research focusing on the positive ways that women lead but warns that these are often still written whereby the feminine values held are at odds with managerial expectations (p. 601). Blackmore (2005b) agrees that ‘educators’ careers frequently run against the grain of deep-seated cultural assumptions about gender’ and calls for a shift ‘in the wider policy context of educational reform’ in order to address gender issues in education (p. 180). The traditional masculine and feminine traits have been challenged by other researchers more recently (Atchison, 1993; Coleman, 2002; Lumby and Coleman, 2007), although the features can often remain associated with males and females.
respectively. The way in which males and females perceive themselves can be identified from a list of qualities and then subsequently compared with the area those traits traditionally belong to. In her research on headteachers, Coleman (2002) asked participants to choose words to describe themselves from a list originating from Gray’s gender paradigms (1993). Certain words were viewed as stereotypically feminine and others as masculine (p. 102). In her initial study of five female headteachers, Coleman (1996) found that interviewees viewed themselves as ‘caring, creative, intuitive and aware of individual differences’ from the feminine stereotypes and ‘evaluative, disciplined and objective’ (p. 166) from the masculine. Therefore these female leaders considered themselves to display characteristics from both lists, which was similar to the findings from my questionnaire (figure 7.3) where males and females appeared in every category.

The most striking differences between males and females were that more females considered themselves to be caring, tolerant and ambitious. Caring was also selected by the majority of males as a characteristic but almost double the percentage of females considered themselves ambitious than males. This may reflect some of the female’s ambitions to manage a career and have a family.

Figure 7.3: Questionnaire responses showing the percentages of teacher professionals selecting qualities that applied to them.
and not necessarily ambition to reach leadership roles. Whilst such differences may be apparent between the sexes, self selection of paradigms could indicate a difference in perceptions rather than actual characteristics, and actually demonstrate how individuals associate with the particular stereotypes. Vecchio (2002) asks if such stereotypes are learned and socially constructed:

The heuristic hypothesis suggests that when respondents are asked to describe their own behaviour in a job setting, stereotypical gender differences in anticipated leader inclinations may be difficult to identify. Yet, when subjects/respondents are asked to envision whether gender differences may exist or are asked to generalize over past work experiences, they may be more likely to invoke a gender heuristic to characterize differences among leaders (p. 659).

Whilst the questionnaire data may suggest such challenges being made to the gender paradigms, participants could have been influenced by the contexts in which they worked and the perceived expectations of others. There may also have been conscious decisions by participants to challenge the stereotypes, as experienced by headteacher Lynne Bradbury (2007) who after initially accepting the gender expectations surrounding her, realised the effect these were having on her practice:

As a headteacher I must be overtly female and resist the pressure to be the honorary male; I must insist that the qualitative aspects of female headship are heard, and that the dialogic identities of all are recognised and valued (p. 93).

Other evidence of challenges to the stereotypes were witnessed by Coleman (2003c) when female and male headteachers selected adjectives from Gray’s (1993) paradigms in relation to themselves as leaders. Coleman (2003c) found that ‘overall, there appears to be a greater convergence by both men and women towards the feminine paradigm, although some elements of the male paradigm hold a little stronger for the men’ (p. 335). The restructuring of education in the majority of western countries has led to a ‘re-gendering of educational work’ (p. 443) according to Blackmore (1997), stating that the gender divisions of labour were reasserted during the 1990s, undoing gains made in previous years. Grant (1989) explains that for many females the goal posts are forever moving as their circumstances change, whereas for males their aspirations are less influenced, the system tailored better to their unchanging needs:

The probability is that many women will attempt to juggle family and career roles and that there will be times – possibly in mid-career – when their career advancement may be constrained by family demands... The concept of aspirations levels as a static and objective measure of career intentions which differentiates ambitious teachers from the rest is built on male norms and experiences and serves further to dislocate women from the promotional processes (p 41).
Lumby and Coleman (2007) warn of using masculine and feminine labels for males and females although they acknowledge their importance in developing feminism, stating that ‘there is an inherent danger in stereotyping or ‘essentialising’ women as being caring and nurturing just as there is a danger in stereotyping men as hard and aggressive’ (p. 49). Atchison (1993) also warns of the stereotyping of females as such myths may damage their future career opportunities:

They suggest that women are underqualified, not interested in furthering their careers, do not apply for top jobs, have children and therefore do not seek promotion, take career breaks and therefore lose impetus for a career, will not move house to pursue promotion, are unwilling to undertake INSET, and have different reasons for seeking promotion (p. 101).

Since the stereotypes could be viewed as potentially damaging, it could be argued that their use should not be pursued. Frasher and Frasher (1979) refer to such stereotypes as myths, arguing that whilst women may have been labelled as unable to make decisions, the ‘masculine model of authoritarian decision making and governance is neither particularly effective nor appropriate’ (p. 8) either. However, over time perceived female ways of leading have become increasingly popular as identified by Trinidad and Normore (2005) who state that ‘recognizing women’s styles of leadership represents an important approach to equity as long as they are not stereotyped as ‘the’ ways women lead but as ‘other’ ways of leading’ (p. 575). This distinction is important as alternative characteristics of leadership could be adopted by males or females successfully. Whilst Trinidad and Normore (2005) call for the stereotypes to be ‘challenged and addressed’ (p. 584) their continued use in organisations means they cannot be ignored in research such as this. Wood (2008) explains that ‘gender stereotyping has also been shown to have an impact on the evaluation of women’s performance when they have achieved a management role’ (p. 616) which if continued will have a further detrimental effect on females in leadership posts and those aspiring to such roles. It is not only how females perceive themselves that is important, as males face issues of masculinity in relation to their identities and ways of leading. Whitehead (2001) suggests that ‘before change can take place in men’s practices some movement or transformation must first occur in men’s subjective perception of their own gendered identity: they must come to some appreciation of how ‘being a man’ might effect and influence their expectations and experiences, in a multitude of settings’ (p. 68). Therefore until men recognise that their positions need to change, they will continue to dominate the educational leadership arena governed by masculine values.
Masculine and feminine stereotypes exist amidst other characteristics such as race, ethnicity and sexuality. Fitzgerald (2003) argues that ‘discussions surrounding race and ethnicity are ideologically and methodologically more complex’ (p. 433) and in much the same way that being a male leader has become the norm, being white could also be classed as the norm. To stereotype in these areas would assume that those from differing racial groups behave in particular ways, in much the same way that it is a mistake to assume that all women behave in particular ways. Therefore whilst the masculine and feminine labels exist and they are useful in terms of analysing identity, it is important to maintain a distinction between these and the physicality of males and females themselves.

Since the development of the feminine and masculine labels, there have been more successful styles of leadership emerging which have been viewed as positive, including transformational leadership and collaborative leadership, often associated with female leaders. Grace (1995) argues that whilst these new forms of leadership are emerging, the masculine perceptions are hard to shift:

Patriarchal and male power has shaped the construct of leadership, its culture, discourse, imaging and practice for centuries. Alternative conceptions of leadership have to attempt to legitimate themselves against the pervasive influence of these established models (p. 187).

The ambitious nature of the females in the questionnaire sample (53 percent chose this characteristic) may have been partly due to 45 percent being aged 31 and under and not yet having children to consider. Only 11 percent of those females who considered themselves to be ambitious were aged over 35, whereas 25 per cent of the ambitious males were this age. However, the average ages for each category, calculated using midpoints (table 7.4), show that the ambitious males and females were of similar ages overall, with females considering themselves to not be ambitious at a slightly older age than the males.

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<tr>
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<th>Females selecting Ambitious</th>
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<tr>
<td>Average Age in Years</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>30.5</td>
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Table 7.4: Average age of questionnaire respondents choosing ambitious or not
One notable difference was that all of the males aged under 31 who answered this question considered themselves to be ambitious compared with 12 out of 14 females in this age range agreeing, indicating that some females develop ideas of not progressing in their careers early on. Once the participants were over the age of 40, just 2 out of 10 females and 1 out of 5 males considered themselves to be ambitious indicating a link between ambition and career progression up the pay scale. As these teachers had not progressed to senior leadership by this age, they may have now ruled it out and as the questionnaire was centred around careers, they may have considered their positions to not represent ambition. For the older females who may have had children, their attitude to ambition may have changed. Lumby and Coleman (2007) highlight the difficulties some females face combining senior posts with raising children, stating that ‘those who are ambitious may defer their career’ (p. 48). Having children also made a difference to the attitude towards ambition in the questionnaire sample as 17 out of 22 females with no children considered themselves to be ambitious but none of the five females with children did. This compared to 6 out of 10 males without children viewing themselves as ambitious compared to 2 out of 5 with children. This implies that once females have children their career ambition diminishes to a much greater extent than it does for males. Craig continued to be clear on his attitude towards leadership stating ‘I’m not willing to prioritise hours over my children so I’d rather be poor and see my children than the other way around’, his questionnaire indicating that he was less interested in promotion now than when he entered teaching.

Whilst there is an assumption that males are no longer viewed as the only breadwinners, Coleman (2002) stresses that the ‘stereotypes about male and female roles remain’ (p. 49). The masculine and feminine traits referred to earlier are described by Coleman (2003a); ‘the masculine stereotype is authoritarian and target oriented while the feminine stereotype is collaborative and people oriented’ (p.38). The stereotypical traits are analysed below, using the four career attitude categories. Table 7.5 shows that the males classed as ‘careerists’ viewed themselves as more creative that the other categories. However, they were less evaluative. No males were classed as ‘stuck’ from my questionnaire sample.
Table 7.5: Male questionnaire sample characteristics with totals in brackets.

The female ‘careerists’ (table 7.6) followed a similar pattern to the male ‘careerists’ with more considering themselves creative, but in contrast to the males a larger proportion of females considered themselves evaluative and objective, both masculine traits. This could imply that the female ‘careerists’ viewed themselves from a more masculine perspective than the other categories. The female ‘careerists’ also scored more highly in the competitive category, but most notable was that all female ‘careerists’ considered themselves ambitious compared to 25 per cent of ‘active choice’, 33 per cent of ‘stuck’ and 50 per cent of the ‘serendipity’ category.

Table 7.6: Female questionnaire sample characteristics with totals in brackets.

Table 7.7 summarises this information and shows that there were notable differences between the perceived qualities of the males and females in the different categories. Whilst the ‘active choice’ males displayed equal amounts of feminine and masculine traits, the females strongly favoured the feminine ones. The higher figures for female traits for the ‘stuck’ and ‘active choice’ categories demonstrates a confidence in being a caring and intuitive individual, qualities associated with parenting and often expected of females.
### Mean Averages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Feminine Stereotypes</th>
<th>Masculine Stereotypes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuck</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Choice</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serendipity</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careerist</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7.7: Average percentages of questionnaire sample characteristics, with highest percentages per category indicated in green.**

The seven ‘serendipitous’ males demonstrated more of the female characteristics than the sixteen ‘serendipitous’ females. This was predominantly due to most males considering themselves to be intuitive. The other finding to buck the stereotypes was the percentage of female ‘careerists’ selecting masculine qualities. This was ten per cent higher than the male ‘careerists’ possibly due to the females feeling that they should be demonstrating those traits but also due to the males not wishing to be identified with those traits due to the danger of stereotyping. Figures for being objective were similar for males and females overall, a trait that Coleman (1996) argues is not a way of avoiding confrontation but a method of dealing with the demands of the job (p. 177-8). Hence some teachers will have viewed objectivity as a positive attribute.

The differences in aspirations between the sexes and their self perceptions are illustrated in the following summary diagrams. Figure 7.4 shows negligible difference between the traits favoured by ‘active choice’ males but both ‘serendipitous’ and ‘careerist’ males clearly favoured the feminine traits.
The females from all four categories also favoured the feminine traits (figure 7.5) but there were marked differences in the ‘stuck’ and ‘active choice’ categories where two and three times the proportions selected feminine traits respectively.

Figure 7.4: Male self perceptions from questionnaires

Figure 7.5: Female self perceptions from questionnaires

Whilst ‘active choice’ males selected feminine and masculine traits in equal measure, the ‘active choice’ females favoured the feminine qualities by far (42% of males compared to 75% of females)
indicating those females prioritising their families viewed themselves as having qualities such as ‘caring’, ‘aware of individual differences’ and ‘tolerant’; phrases that it could be argued are essential for motherhood. It was interesting that the masculine traits were chosen by less than half the females in all four categories, a sign that qualities such as ‘competitiveness’ and being ‘disciplined’ and ‘evaluative’ are unappealing to most females; traits often associated with leadership. It is important to note that these were how the teachers perceived themselves and whilst the masculine traits were not selected by large numbers of females, a large proportion of males choosing the female qualities signified the possible start of a shift of the stereotypes. Indeed, a larger proportion of ‘careerist’ females favoured the masculine traits than the ‘careerist’ males.

Whilst more females selected the feminine characteristics and more males favoured the masculine characteristics overall, this was not true for all categories with males and females selecting traits from both lists. Coleman (2002) warns of categorising the qualities:

> The identification of women with particular attributes such as ‘caring’ links them with the emotional and irrational and implicitly inferior status of such ‘female’ work. This work also tends to be more operational rather than strategic compared with the rational, more esoteric and implicitly superior status of ‘male’ work in areas like curriculum and finance (p. 24).

The questionnaire respondent’s chosen qualities may also have been influenced by their perceptions of the words and how this might reflect on them. For example, 83 per cent of females selected tolerant and 13 per cent intolerant. However, 86 per cent of males selected tolerant and none chose intolerant identifying possible differences between the male and female perception of what intolerance entails. Collard (2005) agrees that both males and females subscribe to certain values such as sensitivity to the needs of groups of individuals, but states that ‘men and women perceive their custodial roles in different ways’ (p.22), implying that females apply their skills to situations at home as a priority rather than in a leadership role.

### 7.5 Career Influences on Males and Females

All of the interviewees spoke of those individuals who had influenced their career decisions with ten of the twelve mentioning positive encouragement coming from colleagues. Marilyn and Claire both spoke of the influence of their fathers, both of whom had been teachers themselves, whereas
Leanne, Sarah and Ron spoke of the influence of their partners when making career decisions. Heads interviewed by Ribbins and Marland (1994) showed that it was 'mothers who have most often exerted the most compelling example and influence’ (p. 13) although Hall (1996) argued that women, in contrast to men, considered both of their parents as role models (p. 42), true for Marilyn and Claire. In Coleman’s (2002) headteacher interviews she discovered that women had ‘a wider range of influences and more of a stress on the importance of partners and families’ (p. 18). This was certainly true from the questionnaires with the family providing encouragement for more females than males, but more males had been encouraged by their partners during their careers (table 7.8). A smaller proportion of females had been encouraged in the questionnaires by headteachers than the heads in Coleman’s (2002) study. This may be due to those progressing up the leadership hierarchy having more contact with headteachers the closer they get to that position. Friends also provided more females with encouragement in applying for promotions indicating that they draw on a wider range of influences than males.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Females in questionnaire (out of 38)</th>
<th>Females in Coleman’s study</th>
<th>Males in questionnaire (out of 24)</th>
<th>Males in Coleman’s study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.8: Those who have provided encouragement to apply for a promotion and a comparison with Coleman (2002).

Of those respondents who had not received any encouragement to apply for promotions, a larger proportion were female (37 per cent compared to 27 per cent of males) with half of the females in their first four years of teaching and only one third of the males. Again this suggested that males were being encouraged earlier on in their careers to pursue promotions than females. Many literatures emphasise that women’s responsibilities in the home and being the main carer for children, which I shall refer to as wider responsibilities, make them less appealing when promotion opportunities arise. Shakeshaft (1993) states that women are less likely to receive the encouragement of others:
Women are much less likely than men to have formal or informal networks that let them know about jobs and help them get interviewed. Further, in most families, women are still responsible for the majority of childcare and homemaking. Although there is no documentation that such responsibilities inhibit the ability of women to perform their jobs, there is a belief by many who hire that such responsibilities make women undesirable candidates for administrative positions (p. 50).

I shall now focus on those wider responsibilities including childcare and running a home through the perspective of males and females.

7.6 Wider Influences on Males and Females

Throughout the interviews, families were mentioned by males and females but it was only the females for whom having a family was a major factor in their career decisions. Leanne stumbled when asked if her home life had been affected by her career and whilst she was optimistic that waiting to have children and completing a ‘teaching leaders’ course was financially a good idea, the decision regarding when to have children was clearly at the forefront of her mind. In her second interview the issue was still one that Leanne was grappling with and she appeared to be under pressure to make a decision between career and family:

Say for example in two years, I’m ready to apply for an SLT role, that would probably fall in line with me feeling ready to have children. I’m thirty-one so I’m not the oldest person but in getting towards my mid-thirties, a time when I might start feeling ready to do SLT at exactly the same time as I’d be ready to be a mum, so it’s, yes, it’s... there’s conflict there definitely and if I’m honest at the moment I think I enjoy being a professional more than... and I see my friends all starting to have babies and there’s a few been in today and I’m not jealous... at the moment I think I’d put having the children off if it meant drawing a halt to my career. ... I’m not judging anybody but I’m not sure that I’d want to be a head of department and be a mum because I’d worry that I was doing everything a bit rubbish. So then I’d go part time and I couldn’t be head of department so I almost feel like it’s all or nothing. Like it’s assistant head or part time teacher. I feel like I have to make that decision (Interview 2, 2014).

Leanne felt that the decision was down to her alone, as her male partner did not need to make such choices. She likened the steps of her career to a game of snakes and ladders, where having children would ‘be like a snake on snakes and ladders and I’d have to come straight back down’. She was also concerned that she would find herself to be quite content at the bottom of the board and would choose to stay there. Coleman (2007) found that ‘the way in which society is structured still means that women are likely to take on more domestic responsibility than men, and that bearing and raising children combined with career advancement causes particular tensions for women’ (p. 390), clearly apparent for Leanne at this time. Sam, who also did not have children, did not mention the planning of a family in his career plans. His partner had also started teaching and
Sam spoke of working for three or four hours each night and on Sundays, stating ‘luckily... I’ve got an understanding partner’. When questioned about more males than females pursuing promotions Sam attributed this to women having families. He stated that ‘women are probably going to have children at some point’ adding ‘you couldn’t commit to the department if you knew you were going to be off with a baby soon’. This viewpoint, if shared by those appointing leaders, may be affecting females in their decisions to either pursue promotion or start a family, limiting their belief in being able to do both simultaneously. Coleman (2002) found that that 94 per cent of male heads had children compared to just 52 per cent of female heads (p. 52) stating ‘the situation for women headteachers certainly seems to be inimical to achieving a balance between work and family since so many of them, particularly the younger ones, seem to have effectively opted out of trying to combine the two’ (p. 53). Despite women’s increased involvement in paid work, Kenway (1993) argues that they still take ‘major responsibility for child care and domestic work’ (p. 94), implying more pressure and expectations on females than on many men. Coleman (2002) states that this impacts negatively on the belief of females to be able to progress in their careers (p. 33) and even at headteacher level the shift of responsibility in the home does not totally reverse:

Unlike the younger women headteachers, who shared with their partners a more equal division of responsibilities, the younger male headteachers are more likely to leave most domestic responsibility to their wives (p. 65).

This ongoing exhibition of power is recognised by Bourdieu (2001), not just in the home but in other social settings:

For it seems to me that, while the domestic unit is one of the sites where masculine domination manifests itself most indisputably and most visibly (and not only through recourse to physical violence), the principle of the perpetuation of the material and symbolic power relations exerted there is largely situated outside that unit, in agencies such as the church, the educational system or the state, and in their strictly political actions whether overt or hidden, official or unofficial (p. 116).

Lumby and Coleman (2007) argue that the male and female stereotypes linked with the expectation that females will take responsibility for the home impede them from making progress to influential promotional posts, resulting in women being seen as ‘less appropriate as leaders in a work situation’ (p. 45). In my own study questionnaire respondents were asked when they were likely to look for promotional posts. Figure 7.6 shows that those females without children were looking for promotions in the nearer future compared to those with children who were looking in the longer term.
The graph for males (figure 7.7) shows that those with children were still looking to pursue promotions in the near future despite their family responsibilities.

Whilst 4 out of 34, or 12 percent of females stated that they would never be looking for a promotion, 3 out of 17 males, a greater proportion at 18 percent chose this option. The males were all aged over forty with just one having a paid responsibility. The females, all of whom were aged over thirty six, had no paid responsibilities between them. All those without children stated that
their responsibilities in the home had had no influence on their decision of whether to pursue promotions, but the female with two children stated that her home situation had discouraged her from applying for promotions. The differences between the males and females are most evident when the graphs are combined (figure 7.8) indicating that males are not held back from promotion by having children whilst some females are.

![Graph](image-url)

**Figure 7.8: Males and females with children and their plans for promotion**

Questionnaire participants were asked about their situations at home to ascertain if any differences affected the career decisions of males or females. Figure 7.9 shows that all of the males either lived with a partner or their parents, whereas 8 out of 34 females lived with friends, children or on their own, indicating that they were at least partly responsible for the running of those households.
The differences between the responsibilities are clear in figure 7.10, where only females were solely or mainly responsible for the running of the home with only males who were not responsible at all.

From this data it is clear that the female teachers are in some cases taking on the majority of the household responsibilities when the males are not. The male with no responsibilities was aged in his fifties and lived with his partner. Of the females solely responsible for their households three lived alone, one lived with her children and just one lived with her partner. These results resonate with the findings of Pigford and Tonnsen (1993) who argue that women often do not have the support structures at home to enable them to focus on their careers:
Women also struggle with the impact that success in the workplace might have on their personal lives. To be successful often requires one to make work a priority. This is an accepted and workable practice for men, who can generally depend on their wives to handle daily household responsibilities as well as to provide them with emotional and psychological support. Women, on the other hand, are less likely to have such a support structure and may therefore have to contend with a lack of support on the job as well as at home (p. 13).

In order to ascertain the impact of household responsibilities, questionnaire respondents were asked if their responsibilities in the home had influenced their promotion decisions, either positively or negatively. Figure 7.11 shows the results for females divided into their number of years teaching.

![Figure 7.11: Percentage of females from questionnaire results grouped by years teaching.](image)

For those females in the first four years of their careers it was likely that their home responsibilities had not had any influence on their promotion decisions or had actually influenced them positively. However, as the years in teaching increased, the numbers experiencing no influence or a positive influence began to diminish. In conjunction with this the numbers stating that their responsibilities at home had discouraged them from applying increased, the longer the females had been teaching. This coincided with these females having children as for those teaching between one and ten years only 4 out of 23 had children whereas in the eleven to twenty years category 6 out of 9 had children, an increase from 17 to 67 percent. This contrasts with the responses of the males (figure 7.12) where much smaller percentages were discouraged from applying and these were equally distributed between five and ten and eleven and twenty years teaching experience.
For the males 4 out of 12 with one to ten years experience had children, a higher proportion than the females, but none of the males in the eleven to twenty years category had children. Of two males with three children each, one had not been influenced and the other had been encouraged to pursue promotion. For the two males with two children each, their situation had also encouraged them to apply for promotions, indicating that their families had not affected their careers detrimentally. Having a family may have resulted in these males needing to earn additional money particularly if their partner was not working. Conversely the two females with two children each had both been discouraged from applying for promotions due to their home responsibilities, a clear disadvantage in terms of their careers for these females, both in their early forties. Coleman (2002) also discovered these disadvantages for female headteachers as many appeared to be making a choice between pursuing their headship aspirations or having a family:

Faced with the difficulties, it seems that increasing proportions of the younger women headteachers are choosing not to have children. Following their example would probably mean opting to be childless. Although this choice is open to anyone, it is unlikely that more than 50 per cent of the age group would have made this choice unless circumstances impelled them. It appears that for women, combining children and headship is very difficult so many choose to have a career and not children (p. 152).

In general a larger percentage of males than females had been encouraged to pursue promotions due to their home responsibilities and a greater number of females had been discouraged from applying (figure 7.13).
Figure 7.13: Percentages of females and males influenced by home responsibilities.

These findings were indicative of Jenny who felt that pursuing a promotion now she had a child would be detrimental to her family; her main priority. This was also true of Marilyn during her second interview, as she displayed a major shift in priorities having given birth to her first child recently. Marilyn considered her career aspirations to have changed as her focus was no longer solely on her career:

You want to be in the home. You want to be with her. You don’t want other people bringing her up so you have constant battle between career and motherhood and depending on how you’re feeling on that day depends on which one takes priority (Interview 2, 2014).

Marilyn had not anticipated this shift in priorities before starting a family and explained how her drive to become a senior leader was now less prominent:

I thought, I knew I wanted to go into SLT. I knew very strongly where I was going. I was very driven by where I was going and I suppose I thought I could have my cake and eat it. Thought I could do both. But now, that time is precious... That’s where the shift has gone whereas I would have put in what hours were required to fulfil my role. Now it’s like no, I’m going home, I’ve got family time (Interview 2, 2014).

The role of headteacher had also become less appealing to Marilyn as she considered it to be ‘constantly working for the school’ although she had not ruled it out once her daughter had ‘fled the nest’ although this was likely to be in many years time when Marilyn would have been teaching in excess of thirty years. The postponing of promotion due to family commitments was in line with the research of Shakeshaft (1993) who elaborates:
Women sometimes say that family responsibilities keep them from applying for and assuming administrative positions not because these women don’t think they could do everything, but because they believe the costs would be too high for their families and themselves (p 51).

The support that males receive was evident from this sample, where all males at most shared household responsibilities. Evetts (1994) considers the support men receive to be taken for granted and established, with women receiving less sympathy and resources, as ‘whereas men are expected to combine career achievements with marriage and fatherhood in particular ways, women still have to develop the strategies that might eventually come to be regarded as the normal and the appropriate ways of doing such things’ (p. 52). The difficulties some females face in terms of pursuing promotions and managing the home are exacerbated as Coleman and Fitzgerald (2008) point out, as ‘a number of professional and career development programs occur away from home and in non-teaching times’ (p. 119-120), resulting in those teachers with family commitments unable to take part, in line with the questionnaire findings that a higher proportion of males had recently attended professional development courses. With fewer females applying for this type of professional development than males and a smaller proportion of those females being approved to attend them, the promotion opportunities for females will decrease further still. A change in working hours had also impacted negatively on Helen, who had previously worked more flexible hours. Later finishes to the working day imposed by the headteacher had left Helen finding it more difficult to carry out her role:

I won’t leave here until five, I won’t pick [the children] up until six, I’ve got them home and fed, thinking about baths at seven, I’ve cleared up by about eight and then I really don’t feel ready to start... I know a lot of people do. I know a lot of people do then sit down and carry on with the day’s work but I find that incredibly difficult and I used to find it much easier just to stay here and stay through (Interview 2, 2014).

Helen’s personal wellbeing was also suffering as she no longer had time to go running, which had impacted negatively on her ‘moods’ and ‘resilience’. With her husband pursuing his own career, Helen was struggling to juggle the two responsibilities of work and running a home. It appears that a combination of factors are discouraging and preventing many women from pursuing promotional posts. The burden of childcare and looking after the home is seen as a priority for some whilst others may be restricted by these responsibilities, being forced to sacrifice or postpone their careers, essentially interpreting their choice to be one or the other. For other females, and males, the family may be seen as a ‘get out clause’ rather than pursuing a role that does not appeal to
them, particularly if they do not want to be viewed as not ambitious by senior colleagues. This lack of flexibility in the workplace was also identified by Cahusac and Kanji (2014) who interviewed mothers who had left work or changed roles soon after having their children. In many organisations, even where mothers wished to return to work, Cahusac and Kanji (2014) found that ‘either the mother commits to the working practices of dominant masculinity, that is a boundless time schedule, a suppressed personal life and a reduced investment in care, reinforcing what some mothers feel is a destructive paradigm, or they must accept lower-status work’ (p. 67). Many of the females and males interviewed spoke of the importance of their teacher identities and wishing to remain in the classroom, indicating that perhaps the nature of many leadership roles needs addressing in the first instance. Blackmore (1989) agrees that the perception of leadership is discouraging in itself:

Educational leadership as portrayed in the conventional literature may have little to attract women. That is, the perception of what constitutes leadership is problematic, not women. If administration is no longer treated as separate from teaching, if leadership is not merely equated to formal roles and responsibilities, if what is worthwhile knowledge and experience is not restricted to formal qualifications or institutional experience, then it calls upon a new set of informed judgments which must be brought to bear on the valuing of people’s activities in educational organizations (p. 124).

These factors had a major impact even on this small sample, evident from the differences in promotions gained, career aspirations for the future and the professional development provided between the males and females questioned.

7.7 Summary

Interview and questionnaire findings displayed differences in the aspirations between males and females with a lower percentage of females classed as ‘careerists’ hence women positioning themselves differently to the men. For those females who were ‘stuck’ a different set of priorities were apparent which were external barriers in the case of one interviewee or their perception of promotion as less important. No males were regarded as ‘stuck’ and whilst almost equal numbers of males appeared as ‘careerists’ and ‘serendipitous’ more than half of the female respondents were ‘serendipitous’ and just one fifth ‘careerists’. These differences regarding the positioning of two sexes demonstrates different sets of priorities and different perceptions of themselves as individuals.
Regarding careers and family this was a concern for many females but did not appear to be detrimental to the careers of males where they could make personal decisions without the major impact of a break in service that the females faced. It was only female interviewees who mentioned starting families as a major consideration when planning their careers with many males indicating that starting families had encouraged them to apply for posts of further responsibility. Whilst the majority of males claimed to have their career paths mapped out, just over a quarter of the females did, indicating again that career and promotion were not necessarily as high on the agenda for many females and justifying the high proportion of ‘serendipitous’ females identified. This was reflected in the larger proportion of males with paid responsibilities despite 7 out of 26 males in the sample being in their first four years of teaching. Indeed the average length of time teaching for females with responsibilities was over a year more than the males and those males without responsibilities had over two years less experience than the females without additional posts. Again this indicated males moving into promotional posts sooner in their careers than the females.

As highlighted by many literatures (e.g. Grant, 1989; Hall, 1993; Evetts, 1994; Delanty, 1997; Lumby and Coleman, 2007; Bordieu, 2001; Schein, 2001; Coleman, 2002, 2007, 2012) there is a danger that ‘males as managers’ is viewed as the norm intimating that females should aspire to the role and adopt a so called masculine approach to carrying it out. However, the gendered stereotypes were challenged as males and females appeared in all categories classed as masculine and feminine paradigms by Gray (1993). Whilst a greater proportion of females selected the feminine traits of caring and tolerant and a greater proportion of males chose the masculine quality of disciplined, the stereotypes were often contradicted. For example a larger proportion of females selected the masculine quality of ambitious. It appeared that males and females didn’t necessarily associate with the gendered stereotypes in the ways that a stereotype suggests they should. Indeed they challenged them, with males unafraid to recognise their caring and nurturing sides and females displaying their competitive and ambitious natures. Whilst these gendered stereotypes could therefore be viewed as outdated there were interesting differences apparent between the age groups for both sexes. For example, some females appeared to not consider themselves ambitious at a younger age then the males. Even starker contrasts were evident
between the categories ‘active choice’, ‘serendipity’ and ‘careerist’ and the qualities selected. Of those classed as ‘active choice’ a larger proportion of females chose the feminine traits and a larger proportion of males chose the masculine ones. However, in the ‘serendipitous’ category a larger proportion of males selected traits classed as feminine than masculine, a higher proportion than even the females who chose them. For the ‘careerists’ the distribution was more evenly spread but slightly more females chose the feminine traits and slightly more males chose the masculine ones.

In addition to some females, particularly those in the ‘stuck’ and ‘active choice’ categories, having particular views of their own abilities to pursue promotional posts, the perception of others was clearly a factor. Questionnaire responses suggested that many males were receiving encouragement from others to apply for promotions earlier on in their careers than females. Males and females had received encouragement from a variety of sources but a larger proportion of males had received encouragement from partners whereas for females other family members, perhaps parents, had provided support. Whilst this study could only identify perceived encouragement, it did imply that males were receiving greater support from partners regarding their careers than females were.
8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present the main outcomes from my study and how this work has contributed to the knowledge in this field. Findings from key areas are summarised and the exploratory research questions are addressed. The limited knowledge that many teacher professionals possess regarding leadership roles is discussed and how such knowledge could be disseminated. Perceptions of the headteacher role itself are identified as crucial to potential applicants considering the post. Reasons for not pursuing promotions are summarised with classroom identity a major factor for not climbing the leadership hierarchy. The apprehension of females entering senior leadership posts due to family commitments and the encouragement they may or may not receive is discussed and if the role of headteacher itself requires a fundamental change if posts are to be filled. Throughout the chapter the current political climate is considered as policy continues to place emphasis on school’s positions within communities and the importance and influence of headteachers viewed as possessing greater autonomy within those schools. Finally I explain how my research can impact not only on the teaching profession but on future policy, training and research in the field.

8.2 Key Outcomes

This study has demonstrated that those teacher professionals not in senior leadership have limited knowledge as to the role of senior leaders and headteachers. Shadowing systems appear to be the most effective method for understanding the role of school leaders but the presence of these is sporadic and entirely down to the leadership teams already in place in particular schools. Through shadowing current leaders, potential leaders can make informed choices as to whether senior leadership is something they wish to pursue. Applying for promotions is highly dependent in most cases on encouragement from colleagues and managers and without this many teachers feel less confident in applying for further roles. The interview process itself is daunting to many but in particular to females for whom the procedures for gaining promotion are not appealing at all, dissuading some from pursuing such posts. Teachers value their roles in the classroom and this is a common reason for not wishing to pursue headship. The Conservative Party manifesto (2015) has identified with the professionalism of teaching staff, stating that ‘we want teachers to be
regarded in the same way as other highly skilled professionals, so we are supporting the creation of an independent College of Teaching to promote the highest standards of teaching and school leadership’ (p. 34). Such a scheme may assist in raising the status of the profession externally, but may do little to promote current teacher’s interest in the role of heads.

Successful headteachers can be viewed as inspirational, juggling the ever increasing demands of the job, but this is often dissuading others from aspiring to the role as they do not believe they have the skills to carry out such a diverse post. The role of head is viewed as lonely by many, with little contact with children, conflicting with why many teachers joined the profession in the first place. Increased accountability and an inspection system that is primarily viewed as critical and unsupportive have resulted in the role of head becoming more unappealing than ever. The underrepresentation of females at headteacher level continues and there is little evidence of change in the current climate. Pressure to lead an ‘outstanding’ school or face academy conversion or redundancy is greater than ever and so many potential leaders are turning their backs on what was once a challenging but attractive choice of occupation. I will now address my findings regarding the research questions.

8.2.1 The career opportunities available for teacher professionals in secondary schools

Questionnaire responses highlighted a range of career opportunities, with the introduction of new leadership and responsibility posts adding to those available, although the nature of these varied from school to school. In contrast to when schools could allocate a finite number of old style management points overseen by local authorities, heads now possess more autonomy in awarding paid responsibilities. Indeed, sixty percent (38 out of 63) of the questionnaire respondents stated that a promotion opportunity had been available to them at their current school in the last three years. Initiatives to keep good teachers in the classroom such as the ‘excellent teacher’ and ‘advanced skills teacher’ schemes have fallen by the wayside although the Government pledge of setting up an independent ‘College of Teaching’ (p. 34) to raise the status of the profession may help to put teachers on a par with other high-status professions such as law and medicine (The Conservative Party Manifesto, 2015). However, the contradiction exists that teachers working in ‘Free Schools’ do not require qualified teacher status, providing a possible threat to the view of teaching as a highly regarded profession that potential candidates aspire to.
The Free Schools programme was cited by The Labour Party as ‘wasteful and poorly performing’ (p. 38) in their 2015 manifesto, pledging a return to qualified status for all teachers. Whilst this may endeavour to return the profession to a higher status, those without the required qualifications could be tempted to depart altogether.

The diminishing influence of local authorities was also apparent in terms of encouraging individuals to apply for promotions. Colleagues, managers and partners were now the most influential with some partner schools playing a larger role in recommending individuals. With the growth of academy chains this talent spotting and encouragement amongst clusters looks likely to replace the input by local authorities. Whilst promotion opportunities appeared to be equally available for males and females, a larger proportion of males in the sample held a paid post of responsibility. Males also perceived themselves to have received more encouragement than females in applying for such posts.

8.2.2 The experiences of teacher professionals regarding their career and in applying for promotions

Almost half (25 out of 51) of questionnaire respondents had applied for a paid post of responsibility during their teaching career, indicating positive attitudes towards promotion and careers. Of those applying for such roles 80 percent had been successful although those failing to secure such roles may, of course, have declined to admit to it. Of the five unsuccessful candidates none had been put off applying for promotions in future and so the experience could be summarised as positive from this information.

The least positive aspect of applying for promotions was the interview experience and here there was a difference between the attitudes of males and females. A total of 51 participants responded to the questions regarding interviews with five out of 17 males finding the interview experience ‘enjoyable’ compared to just five of 34 females. Four times more females than males found interviews ‘daunting’ but the starkest difference was regarding the word ‘terrifying’. Whilst one male agreed that this was his feeling towards interviews, eight females selected this word. The interview process, a traditional part of gaining the majority of promotions, could be serving to put some females off applying for roles before even considering them.
8.2.3 The attitudes of these teacher professionals towards promotion and careers up to headship

In the development of my conceptual framework attitudes towards careers could be considered whilst taking into account what Grace (1995) describes as the 'social-historical approach to research', illuminating 'the cultural and ideological struggles in which schooling is located' (p. 3). This policy scholarship approach resulted in changes in positioning regarding attitudes towards careers, as the context in which the professional and personal lives of the participants were located could change over time. The most common attitude to career was a 'serendipitous' one where individuals were positive regarding promotion but did not necessarily plan for these. However, the majority of participants had a change in attitude towards the role of headteacher which was viewed far more negatively. Over half of all questionnaire respondents 'very strongly' disagreed that they found the role of headteacher appealing. Only two participants 'very strongly' agreed that they considered the role to be appealing although with less than ten years of teaching experience these positive attitudes still had the potential to shift over time. Indeed, those respondents with eleven or more years teaching experience displayed a rapid drop in interest regarding the role of head.

Interviews revealed that those participants classed as 'careerists' and 'serendipitous' focused on the negatives of the role of headteacher. Main areas of concern included the unmanageable workload, media intrusion, increased stress, difficulties in managing staff, lack of parental support and the daunting area of finance. Some participants felt that many senior leaders had lost focus on what should be their priority; the children. Others also expressed similar opinions to the literatures (Draper and McMichael, 1998; James and Whiting, 1998; Thomson, 2009) in that the role is too far removed from the classroom and what they set out to do with their career, namely teaching children. Whilst there existed negativity towards senior leadership roles in schools, there was also a lack of awareness of exactly what those roles entailed. Many interviewees could list a plethora of areas that they assumed a headteacher had responsibility for, but this then led to thoughts that the role was too large for one individual. The autonomy that leaders are alleged to have gained from converting to academies is not therefore viewed as a positive but as an extra burden. McGinity (2015) notes that this ‘autonomy and innovation are not about thinking freely to do things
differently but instead are symptomatic of the tightly regulated and bureaucratic conditions developed by the UK government’ (p. 70). Therefore heads are having to either convert to academies and convince their staff that this is the best option for them, or face being sidelined by the Government. This additional pressure does not make the role of head any more appealing.

8.2.4 The implications of these experiences and attitudes for professional training, induction and development

The introduction of the NPQH saw many potential leaders completing the qualification but not necessarily progressing to headship. What is unknown is whether those individuals genuinely intended to reach headteacher status beforehand and changed their minds, or if they viewed the course as a professional development opportunity. Whilst the NPQH is no longer mandatory it is still viewed as desirable although only one of the interviewees, Marilyn, mentioned the qualification unprompted when discussing headship. There were large differences in the awareness of the NPQH and the roles of senior leaders between schools. Where shadowing opportunities were available there was greater awareness although concerns existed that completing a qualification such as the NPQH whilst carrying out a demanding job could present challenges. One interviewee, Matt, lacked a mentor to consult on senior leadership and spent time after our first interview asking me about the role, indicating that some schools could potentially overlook future leaders due to a lack of guidance. It appears that schools are not consistent in alerting staff to leadership qualifications available and in many cases teachers have to find these opportunities themselves. In the absence of local authorities highlighting such professional development, it is now up to clusters of schools, academy chains or individual heads to ensure that staff know where information is located.

8.2.5 The analysis of career attitudes described and explained through gender perspectives

Whilst there were certain aspects of their careers that males and females had in common such as their sharing of particular qualities and their apprehension regarding headship, there were also some stark differences. Males were far more likely to be classed as ‘careerists’, were more likely to plan ahead and also to pursue promotional posts. The males in the sample had, on average, gained promotional posts at an earlier age than the females. The conceptual framework
demonstrated some clear differences between the positioning of males and females. There were no ‘stuck’ males whereas this category was the third most popular with females out of the four. Many of the female interviewees felt that they had to make a choice between promotion and family, leaving some feeling trapped; the case for Helen. Others did not perceive the situation in this way, such as Jenny who chose family to be her priority without additional pressures. However, women in this situation could be seen to be disadvantaging themselves in terms of their careers without realising. What is not known is whether females such as Jenny simply want to look after their families regardless of their careers or if they lack confidence when considering promotions. Females uninterested in climbing the leadership hierarchy could use family responsibilities as a reason to avoid promotion and remain in the classroom, rather than appearing to not be ambitious. From my study just one male, Craig, alluded to putting his family ahead of his thirst for promotion.

With regards to the masculine and feminine stereotypes (Gray, 1993) these were not straightforward. The traditionally feminine traits were favoured by all four categories of females and the ‘serendipitous’ and ‘careerist’ males; those positive about promotion. Words traditionally associated with leadership and masculinity were only chosen by 38% of male ‘careerists’ whereas 57% of this group selected feminine traits. This would indicate that amongst the majority of the teacher professionals many of the masculine qualities have become less appealing and in order to be a successful classroom teacher it is the feminine traits that are favoured. However, interviews demonstrated that many of the masculine stereotypes are still associated with headteacher roles resulting in such teachers feeling distant from the post and believing themselves to be incapable of having the qualities to carry out the role successfully. This was apparent with some of the females (Leanne, Helen and Claire) and also with Matt, who did not think they possessed the emotional robustness that they believed headteachers required.

Overall the evidence indicated that females prioritised their family lives over their careers whereas males with families could continue with their careers regardless. One reason for this was due to men still having support from their partners in the home allowing them to focus on their professional lives. In contrast females without support at home often experienced a lack of support in the workplace and as soon as they had children they felt discouraged from applying for
promotions. Having children did not impact on the males questioned and in the majority of cases having children encouraged them to apply for promotion, possibly to increase their earnings and support their families particularly if their partner was not working. Females without children sought promotions sooner than those with children. This was in contrast to the males where having children again did not appear to impact negatively. Of those males with children all were either currently looking for promotions or would be in the next academic year. Those females without children took family plans into consideration when discussing future promotions, whereas the males without children considered starting a family as another reason to pursue a promotion.

In terms of professional development a larger proportion of males applied for external courses than females. This was possibly due to such events being geographically inaccessible and at inconvenient times for women who had to consider family responsibilities. A larger number of males also attended network meetings than females. Networking can be traditionally viewed as a masculine arena where some individuals enjoy promoting their places of work and their own triumphs in contrast to collaborative working favoured by others, which could deter some females, and males, from applying. However, the difference in attendance may not have been entirely down to a lack of interest in such meetings by females, but due to differences in their line manager’s view of them attending. Whilst 93 percent of males applying for courses had attended, just 48 percent of females had. In addition to this almost three times the percentage of females than males had been refused attendance on a course by their school. Cost could have played a factor here and the number of courses and the nature of them is unknown but these figures do indicate a willingness for schools to give a professional boost to some males in favour of females.

The questionnaires revealed that traits traditionally viewed as masculine or feminine had become blurred over time with males and females recognising both in themselves. However, the stereotypes do remain due to the view by some that women cannot carry out a leadership role if looking after a family or requiring a career break. Whilst this view may be diminishing if it is potential future leaders brandishing it, as it was in this study, then those stereotypes will continue at least in some capacity. New styles of leadership such as transformational and collaborative would favour the qualities labelled as feminine, but if masculine perceptions of leadership are as
ingrained as the literatures show then a change in attitude will be a slow process. Further
hindrance to females acquiring headships were the findings that as the females aged, smaller
proportions viewed themselves as ambitious and once children were born the female’s ambition
diminished to a greater extent than the males. This could be linked to a lack of support from others
as males were seen to receive encouragement earlier on in their careers in terms of applying for
promotions with colleagues the most likely to provide support for both sexes. However, the
questionnaires revealed that double the proportion of males had received encouragement from
partners to apply than females, indicating that males were maintaining the role of breadwinner in
the majority of cases with females retaining most responsibility in the home. This was evident as
females either shared responsibility in the home or were solely responsible whereas males either
shared responsibility or were not responsible at all.

8.3 Contribution to Knowledge

This study has enabled the careers of teacher professionals to be conceptualised in a way that
has not been undertaken before. Whereas the majority of research focuses on leaders and their
reminiscing on how they viewed leadership before they were successful heads, this research has
taken the current views of teacher professionals regarding their careers and identified the
intricacies involved in terms of their aspirations. Through detailed teacher interviews the
importance of home situations was uncovered and in many instances I successfully uncovered
what has been dubbed ‘dark matter’ by Kempster (2011) which refers to the sometimes
subconscious influences on our decisions over time. These included career decisions being made
due to an untenable relationship with a line manager, the need to ‘keep up’ with the promotions of
those around us and most importantly the perceptions teachers have of themselves and why.

The use of a mixed methods approach involved the adaption of Creswell’s (2009) ‘explanatory
sequential design’ (p. 209) which was modified to incorporate three stages of data collection. An
original approach was to not only use the questionnaire data to inform on whom to interview and
how participants were positioned, but also to use the interview data to assist in interpreting the
questionnaire data. Hence the quantitative and qualitative data informed each other.
Whilst previous research has focused on female leaders in particular (Hall, 1993; Coleman, 2002; Fuller, 2009) this research added the dimension of career categories. Through the analysis of those classed as ‘careerist’, ‘serendipitous’, ‘active choice’ and ‘stuck’ a new approach was adopted which applied to both female and male teacher professionals, enabling sophisticated comparisons to be made in addition to those surrounding gender and age. These comparisons involved the analysis of the attitudes of those within each category, how they perceived themselves and influences causing them to remain or change position. Previous studies have taken place in an environment of increasing autonomy for heads, but never one in which all three major political parties prior to the 2015 general election backed the diminishing influence of the local authorities to such an extent. Therefore this study provides unique and detailed views of teacher professionals not in senior leadership positions at this crucial time for those involved in the education system and educational leadership research.

The use of stories to illustrate the career journeys of teacher professionals from each category was a distinctive approach in a study of this nature and demonstrated how the consideration of alternative techniques can provide further insights and enhance the conceptualisation process. The difference between the ‘stuck’ and ‘active choice’ categories was subtle yet significant as identifying those who had chosen to stay put compared to those who were restricted due to their circumstances was an important distinction, justified through the fieldwork.

8.3.1 Contribution and Changes to the Field

Whilst previous research often focused on the careers of male headteachers (Ribbins, 2003; Wolcott, 2003) with less focus on personal circumstances and more on the role itself, or focused on female heads (Rowan, 1995; Gold, 1996; Coleman, 1996, 2002; Smith, 2011b) and their retrospective struggles to the top, the conceptualisation used in this research enabled careers to be viewed from a new dimension. Further research could focus on one specific element of the conceptualisation, such as those females classed as ‘stuck’ and how their situations could be improved, or those making an ‘active choice’ not to pursue promotions and how to ensure that their expertise is not overlooked.
Few researchers are currently addressing issues surrounding the complexities of the lives of those in school leadership positions and the intersectionality of race, class, gender and sexuality. In 1999 Hall described how male and female researchers remained ‘at their separate tables’ (p. 164) in terms of researching each other as school leaders. Hall (1999) argued for research addressing how ‘organisations reproduce and reinforce masculinities and femininities and the consequences of this’ (p. 164). However, whilst masculine and feminine issues in relation to leadership have been considered individually (e.g. Kenway, 1993; Connell, 1995; Collinson and Hearn 1996b) few works have addressed both (Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007), with the majority of researchers remaining at Hall’s (1999) ‘separate tables’ (p. 164). With issues of race, class and sexuality to consider, researchers could be seen to be dining at entirely different restaurants whereby just one aspect is addressed at a time, although there are a handful of individual researchers considering intersectionality as a starting point.

Issues of diversity and power are explored by Shah (2015) whose research investigates leading in multi-ethnic institutions. Morley (2014) has carried out research associated with the academic experiences of women globally as potential leaders in knowledge production, finding that many of the institutional norms that marginalised women still remain. Morley (2014) argues that ‘gender is not simply a demographical variable, but is in continual production via socio-cultural and organisational practices’ (p. 124). The social identities of headteachers is explored by Fuller (2013) who argues that headteachers do not all share an awareness of difference in an environment where issues of class, ethnicity and gender can impact on ways of leading. However, the majority of current research in the field of educational leadership and the training provision in place do not take the issue of intersectionality and diversity into account. The above researchers are an example of a handful of those in the field exploring such issues, but there is no ‘critical mass’ pursuing such matters. There is little work addressing how teacher professionals make decisions amidst the complexities of their lives and there is often no recognition of the power structures in relation to how professionals want to live their lives. Therefore this research moved from a research field where masculine and feminine comparisons were often made to one where the complex issues surrounding career decisions were investigated in detail. A focus on personal lives being prioritised over professional lives is rarely pursued in the literatures and this attitude can
therefore be perceived as disloyal, yet prioritising family over career was the case for a number of the teacher professionals in this study.

Internationally, Blackmore (2014) argues that the barrier to equality in leadership in higher education is the changing nature of the universities themselves, continuing to impede the prioritisation of social inclusion and diversity issues. Blackmore (2014) hypothesises that a looser grip on corporate issues would enable more academics to be involved with leadership matters, enabling the rethinking of ‘research expectations realistically, reduce time-consuming managerialism, take seriously issues of workload and work-life conflict, revalue the pedagogical and research practices of the social sciences and humanities and shift reward systems’ (p. 95). This perspective on leadership is again rare, with Blackmore suggesting ways of halting the disenchantment with leadership in Australian universities.

8.3.2 Changes to the Educational Landscape

In this new deregulated educational landscape it is vital that potential leaders are aware of the role of heads and fully prepared for it; something that is inconsistent across schools even within one local authority. Without the umbrella of a local authority overseeing the work and professional development of teachers working in academies, opportunities to encounter aspects of leadership needs to come from other sources and at present this is lacking. It would be impractical for already stretched headteachers alone to implement programs for aspiring leaders, but shadowing opportunities within and across schools would appear to be of great benefit.

Presenting the identities of four contrasting individuals in the form of four stories was successful in illustrating typical characteristics of examples for each. Whilst this approach is relatively new to the field it demonstrated the complexity of each individual’s identity and how factors such as their early life, the influence of colleagues and home circumstances play a large part in the career decisions of individuals. Whilst utilising stories can be viewed as controversial I agree with the view of Cohen and Mallon (2001) who argue that ‘in the context of career theory, which often seems to smooth over the cracks and inconsistencies through its neat sets of binary oppositions and reductionist models, this emphasis on the subjective, often indecisive, emotional side of life is long overdue’ (p.
66). It was important that the positions of the participants were viewed within the contexts of their lives and the circumstances within which they found themselves for these versions of events at this moment in time to be valid. The use of stories also makes this research more accessible to those working in an educational environment. In his reasoning for the use of portraiture, Hackmann (2002) argues that school leaders sometimes ‘perceive that researchers operate from an ivory tower and are ‘out of touch’ with the real world of administrative practice’ (p. 57). This research enables school leaders to identify with examples of teacher professionals similar to those in their employment and ensure that those who are ‘serendipitous’ or ‘stuck’ are aware of promotional opportunities and receive the support required for them to achieve their aspirations.

Whilst national training opportunities for potential leaders exist these are not widely publicised at teacher level. The Future Leaders Trust has a range of qualifications available including ‘Talented Leaders’ for those ready for headship now, ‘Future Leaders’ for potential heads to lead schools in challenging circumstances and the NPQSL and NPQML for aspiring senior and middle leaders. However, the majority of teacher professionals interviewed in this study were unaware of such opportunities and further qualifications can be viewed as a burden to an already busy teacher. Therefore if shadowing programmes were set up across authorities, teachers could continue to fulfil their roles but also gain experience from other establishments and from the expertise that exists within their own schools.

The very negative image of the role of headteacher by teacher professionals in this study is something that the Government appear to be unaware of, as their focus has been on replacing heads of struggling schools rather than supporting them. Whilst this study focused on schools of a similar type in one local authority, the negativity towards senior leadership roles was stark and due to problems filling such posts nationwide it would be unlikely to find a significantly different picture in other authorities. An initiative highlighted by the NCTL (2014) for current heads to mentor and coach those with schools in challenging circumstances is a step in the right direction but these are not referred to in the Conservative Party Manifesto (2015), despite growing numbers joining the scheme. There are of course no guarantees that assisting other schools will not be detrimental to a head’s own school but such assistance is not currently taken into account by inspection teams,
making such partnerships risky for many. Headship needs to be viewed as a collaborative venture where schools support each other with recognition from Ofsted, rather than the current view that it is a cut throat and lonely endeavour.

The pool from which senior leaders and headteachers can be drawn appears to be drying up in all types of schools. A teacher recruitment crisis highlighted by headteachers and denied by School’s Minister Nick Gibb (TES; 2015) shows that talent spotting for potential heads may be even more rare in future with more posts having to be filled by temporary teachers, non subject specialists and those returning from retirement. This makes it even more vital that current leaders identify those with the potential for headship early on and work to develop them for future leadership roles through shadowing opportunities.

Therefore this study not only highlights issues with the perceived role of headteachers by other teacher professionals but has demonstrated an urgent need for schools to begin working with potential leaders earlier on in their careers, in order for the posts to remain filled in future.

8.4 Recommendations for Future Practice, Policy, Training and Research

This research has shown that fast paced changes to educational policy over recent years resulting in increased accountability for headteachers has produced a workforce of teacher professionals reluctant to strive for the top job. A change from a Coalition Government in 2015 to a Conservative Government shows little chance of change for those in power in English schools. The Conservative Party manifesto (2015) stood by the promotion of academies as a way to improve standards, stating that ‘over a thousand schools that were ranked ‘inadequate’ have become Academies, bringing in new leadership to promote discipline, rigour and higher standards’ (p. 33). The increased autonomy that leading an academy brings, such as power over budgets, can also leave leaders stranded, without the support they had once experienced from local authorities. If conversion to an academy fails to increase standards then ultimately the headteacher will be held accountable and what was once regarded as a secure job will see many more heads forced out. This plan of action is backed up in the Conservative Party manifesto (2015):
Over the next Parliament, we will open at least 500 new free schools, resulting in 270,000 new school places. And we will introduce new powers to force coasting schools to accept new leadership. Any school judged by Ofsted to be requiring improvement will be taken over by the best headteachers – backed by expert sponsors or high-performing neighbouring schools – unless it can demonstrate that it has a plan to improve rapidly (p. 34).

This plan assumes that there will be enough new leaders to not only fill a large number of Free Schools, but also to replace those in so called coasting schools. If successful headteachers are used to assist schools facing poor inspection judgements, then they risk their own schools suffering due to their reduced input. This could then lead to the increased use of sponsors and the continued marketisation of state schools.

The shift in position of schools towards competitive places of business goes against the reasons many teachers entered the profession. A headteacher having to run a school in a competitive environment is at loggerheads with the image of a moral individual doing what is best for all, creating something of an identity crisis for those in charge. However changing such embedded attitudes will not be easy as Grace (1995) states that ‘the emergence of the headteacher as entrepreneurial leader and chief executive in the 1980s and 1990s marks, insofar as these become dominant constructs, the final secularization and commodification of educational process’ (p. 42). Although the move towards marketisation has continued, evidence that academy converters have shown improved results is not apparent, as a recent NFER (2015) study states that ‘the differences in overall school performance between sponsored academies that have been open for between 2 and 4 years and a group of similar maintained schools are generally small and mostly not statistically significant’ (p. 19). Despite this lack of evidence that academies perform more highly, the Queen’s speech (2015) emphasised the focus on academies to improve education, stating that ‘legislation will be brought forward to improve schools and give every child the best start in life, with new powers to take over failing and coasting schools and create more academies’. With potential heads in this study already citing the inspection system and increased accountability as reasons they would not pursue the role, these plans will surely exacerbate the situation and do little to solve the problem of recruiting high quality headteachers.

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The future of inspections looks set to remain the same with all three main political parties in the run up the 2015 general election placing emphasis on standards for headteachers in each of their manifestos. The Labour Party pledged to set up a School Leadership Institute where it would ‘accredit gold-standard headship qualifications, support leadership training and development, and identify and develop the school leaders of the future’ (p. 38). This was not dissimilar to the Liberal Democrat Party’s plan to ‘establish a new National Leadership Institute to promote high quality leadership and help the best leaders into the most challenging schools’ (p. 59). The Liberal Democrat Party took a similar approach to the Conservative Party regarding standards, stating that they would ‘provide rapid support and intervention to help ensure that all schools become good or outstanding’ (p. 57) indicating continued emphasis on inspection outcomes. The Liberal Democrat Party also pledged to expand their ‘Talented Head Teachers programme’ designed to help ‘move top leaders to where they are most needed’ (p. 57), part of the ‘Future Leaders’ initiative that looks set to continue under the Conservative Party. One notable contrast between the other parties was the Labour Party plan to ‘introduce new Directors of School Standards at a local level to monitor performance, intervene in underperforming schools and support them to improve’ (p. 38), reminiscent of the roles local authorities used to possess.

Whilst it is important for headteachers to be accountable, the inspection system needs to be seen as a supportive mechanism whereby weaknesses in educational establishments are addressed and standards are driven up through collaboration across schools. Awareness of the roles of senior leaders and headteachers needs to be higher amongst teacher professionals in order for them to make informed choices about whether to pursue such posts. With the fear of a somewhat ruthless inspection system removed and replaced with a system for improvement, teachers would be less likely to fear the role of head and subsequently rule it out, as many are currently doing. Current high accountability has led to headteachers working relentless hours in order not to ‘fail’ their schools and this is off-putting to males and females with and without families who wish to maintain a life outside of their occupations.

The hierarchical leadership systems that have developed in the majority of schools are unappealing to many and changes to this structure could assist in making the role more attractive.
Indeed many of the interview participants cited the extensive list of responsibilities that a headteacher faces as one reason why the role was unappealing. Increased political involvement in school leadership and an emphasis on replacing headteachers with relative ease has led me to develop two representations of how many headteacher currently operate in schools. Figures 8.1 and 8.2 demonstrate these two possible structures:

![Figure 8.1: The Arch Model](image1)
![Figure 8.2: The Pyramid Model](image2)

Under figure 8.1 the headteacher, indicated in blue, is the ‘keystone’ that underpins the entire leadership of the school. Without the head the structure collapses. This model demonstrates how the headteacher is vital to an organisation, as are the senior leaders surrounding them. However, models such as figure 8.2 are becoming more prevalent in today’s secondary schools where the head, at the pinnacle of the hierarchy, is viewed as being removable and replaceable with relative ease; a view that was taken by many participants in this research. Court (1998) has researched co-principalships in primary schools in New Zealand where two individuals shared one headship role, one method of implementing a flatter leadership model. The new model did raise issues of accountability and lacked parental support in the first instance but over time the shared leadership vision became embedded in one school with a culture based on ‘consultation and collaboration’ (p. 51). This model, though fraught with legal issues in terms of who is actually in charge, does show some headway being made into the introduction of different forms of leadership and in particular ones that are more appealing to women. In order to counter the negativity that participants in this study felt towards headship, I would consider the introduction of a flatter leadership model, such as the hub model in figure 8.3:
Such a model would still see the headteacher at the heart of the leadership decisions and whilst they would still be accountable they would be surrounded by those responsible for wider issues such as business managers to oversee the finances and estates managers to organise the school site. A change in structure could enable teacher professionals to view the role as an opportunity to impact on the education of children rather than a managerial post and future research will be vital in this area as more schools trial alternative structures.

8.4.1 My Research Journey

This research demonstrated how important qualities such as ‘caring’, ‘tolerant’ and ‘creative’ are to teachers and the link between being a head and exercising such traits needs to be re-established. Whereas in the past some female heads have experienced resentment from male and female staff (Coleman, 2000, p. 25), this issue was not mentioned by interviewees in this study. It was the self belief of females in being able to carry out a leadership role that provided a stumbling block and so it is vital that aspects of the role are reviewed and delegated where appropriate and that potential heads experience a taste of what being a head actually entails.

Becoming a member of a senior leadership team and starting a family whilst completing the professional doctorate meant that I was encountering similar challenges to those faced by many of the females involved in this research. I had not formulated a career plan but have continued to take steps to progress up the leadership hierarchy without experiencing any reluctance to move on. The completion of this research highlighted how key factors of a personal or professional nature can easily influence career decisions in different ways for different people. Yet, some significant changes in my own professional and personal life have not swayed my own decision to
continue to progress in educational leadership. Indeed they have actually strengthened my ambition and resolve in this area despite such significant changes.

The development of key literatures in the field have influenced my thinking greatly and whilst early research surrounding male and female leaders assisted in my research design, more recent studies focusing on multiple masculinities and femininities have been critical in identifying the complexities of reasons for pursuing headship or not. Whilst for the purposes of this study in this particular local authority a focus on gender was relevant, future research of this nature, in particular if utilised in different parts of the country, should consider recent literatures regarding intersectionality and diversity.

The shift towards feminine paradigms amongst teachers now needs to be filtered through to those in leadership so that rather than having to hide behind the masculine image of an ‘all singing and dancing’ individual who is accountable for every area demonstrating little or no regard for their personal lives, heads are again viewed as caring and moralistic. Grace (1995) refers to a developing ‘female culture’ (p. 60) of leadership but perhaps this emerging focus on leaders as working collaboratively and not losing sight of why they entered the world of education should be referred to as a ‘caring culture’; one where teaching and learning is at the centre of any headteacher’s priorities. As a researcher working on the educational front line I would recommend that the conceptual framework developed in this study be utilised in future educational leadership training, in order to identify the developmental needs of potential school leaders. Where external factors are holding teacher professionals back, measures could be identified that schools can put in place in order for particular individuals not to be disadvantaged. In order for more females, and in many cases more males, to strive for and achieve headships, more supportive structures need to be in place. This would include earlier identification of potential leaders, the consideration of changes to the role of headteacher and the associated hierarchical structures and a more supportive system of inspections. Such radical changes are going to be essential if headship posts are to be filled in the future.
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<td>Questionnaire Responses to Statements in Question 13</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Key Statements Linked to Categories</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Questionnaire Results for Statements in Question 13</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Interview Structure used for Pilot Study</td>
<td>230</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Interview Schedule Stage 1</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Interview Schedule Stage 2</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Interview Transcript with Colour Coding</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The Construction of Four Stories</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Interview Participant Information Sheet</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Interview Consent Form</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 1
Key Events, Policies and Legislation Affecting the Career Structure of Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Roles and Responsibilities</th>
<th>Details and Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1980s      | Scaled posts with fixed allocations for individual schools. Ability to promote staff to senior teachers in order to award pay rise without changing their role | e.g. Scale 4 Senior teacher  
Scale 3 Head of department  
Scale 2 Assistant head of department  
Scale 1 Teacher  
Headteachers able to delegate to senior teachers |
<p>| 1987       | Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Act                                                           | New contracts for teachers influenced by falling numbers of pupils involving staff being ‘employed and deployed according to expansion or contraction’ (Gunter, 2008, p. 257) |
| 1988       | Education Reform Act                                                                      | Introduction of LMS (Local management of schools). Some heads begin working more within a senior ‘team’ rather than as a lone figure |
| 1990s      | Main pay scale M1 to M6 introduced. Teachers progress up the scale annually. Introduction of more ‘junior management’ (Grace, 1995, p. 124) roles | Greater number of second in command posts created at department and pastoral level. Coordinators for specific areas, often an area of national focus, created such as for numeracy and literacy |
| 1998       | Assistant headteacher posts introduced                                                     | New Labour initiative to give governing bodies power to appoint more senior staff. Provides increased opportunities for experienced staff and encouraged mobility between schools |
| 1998       | Advanced skills teacher status introduced                                                  | New Labour initiative to keep good teachers in the classroom and share expertise |
| 2000       | Threshold (Upper pay spine) introduced                                                     | Experienced staff could apply to move to a higher pay scale without adjusting their job |
| 2000       | Academy status introduced                                                                 | The beginning of sponsored academies leading to executive headteachers and principals leading clusters of schools over the coming years |
| 2003       | School Workforce in England Remodelled                                                     | Over the next two years particular administrative tasks no longer compulsory and planning time introduced in order to improve teacher work-life balance and enable teachers to focus on teaching and learning |
| 2004       | DFES publish National Standards for Headteachers                                           | School improvement the responsibility of heads whose job is now to ‘be inside the tent to implement reforms locally’ (Gunter, 2008, p. 261) |
| 2006       | TLR points introduced                                                                     | Headteachers given greater autonomy to award staff TLRs at a rate they thought suitable |
| 2006       | Excellent teacher scheme introduced                                                       | Designed to create alternative career paths for those not wishing to pursue leadership roles. Target was for 20% of teachers to become excellent teachers |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Academies Act</td>
<td>Enables the expansion of academies at a rapid pace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Introduction of the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) measure after examinations had taken place</td>
<td>Schools influenced to meet the measure by focusing on particular subjects (English, mathematics, Science, languages and history or geography), beginning the ‘squeezing out’ of other subjects from the curriculums offered in some schools and the job opportunities available in the teaching of those subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Education Act</td>
<td>Schools given greater powers regarding exclusions again reducing the involvement of local authorities. The expansion of academies continues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Teachers’ Standards introduced by DfE</td>
<td>Expected standards published by the DfE, involving not just professional standards but personal ones also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Advanced skills teacher and excellent teacher statuses abolished</td>
<td>Both schemes had much lower than expected numbers. Abolished as part of the wider reform by the Conservative Party of schools awarding pay at school level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Leading practitioner pay scale introduced</td>
<td>Headteachers able to use the new scale at their discretion to pay classroom teachers a higher salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Upper pay range introduced to replace threshold</td>
<td>Headteacher again given greater autonomy to move staff onto this new higher pay range</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2
Details of Secondary Schools in the 'Meadowshire' Local Authority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Faith, Selective or Single Sex School</th>
<th>Academy Converter</th>
<th>Sixth Form</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Pupils on Roll</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Teaching Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1290</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Pilot School)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schools used in the research are indicated in yellow.
Appendix 3

Letter to Headteachers Requesting Permission to Distribute Questionnaires

Dear Headteacher (name will be here),

My name is Rachel Chard and I am currently an Assistant Headteacher at (name of School). Alongside my day job I am studying for a Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD) with the University of Manchester. I am currently in my third year of a six year course.

I am about to embark upon the data collection section of my thesis which will involve analysing the attitudes towards careers of teacher professionals. Only members of teaching staff not on the senior leadership team will be asked to take part. My plan is to distribute the questionnaire to various schools in ‘Meadowshire’ so that teachers wishing to take part can reply online or complete a paper version if they wish. The questionnaire should take approximately 10 minutes. Participants can keep replies anonymous or they can include their details if they wish to be considered for a follow up interview lasting no more than 20 minutes (there will be twelve participants chosen from across the authority). The twelve respondents will be contacted again in twelve months time for one final 20 minute interview to review whether their attitudes and experiences have changed. Interviews will take place before or after the school teaching day, on the school grounds, at a time convenient to the participant.

I have attached a copy of the questionnaire for your information. Please be assured that no individual or school will be identified in my final thesis. Pseudonyms will be used for individuals and no real school names or authorities will be used. All interview transcripts will be kept confidential to myself and stored on a computer at home that only I have access to.

I anticipate that my work on this project will commence at the beginning of March 2012 and I shall be in touch at this time to find out if you are willing for me to use staff at your school as possible participants. In the meantime please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Chard.
Appendix 4

Email Sent to Teacher Professionals Including Questionnaire Link

Dear Teacher,

If you can spare 10 minutes I would really appreciate you completing my online survey about the careers of teachers. The survey can be found at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TXDK3PR

The deadline for completion is Friday July 6th. You can choose to keep your answers anonymous and indicate whether or not you'd like to be considered for a 20 minute interview in the Autumn term.

Thank you so much for completing the survey. It is only with your responses that my study can be of use and of interest to those in the teaching profession.

Rachel Chard
Professional Doctoral Student, University of Manchester.
Name of School, Local Authority.

If you prefer to complete the survey on paper, I will leave some copies at your school's reception over half term and I'll collect these on or after July 13th.
Appendix 5
Information Sheet Attached to Email for Questionnaire Participants

A Study of Current Teacher Professionals and their Attitudes towards Promotion and Careers

Questionnaire Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a study focusing on teacher professionals and their attitudes towards careers. It forms part of the work towards the student’s EdD qualification in Leadership and Policy. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the study?

Rachel Chard studying with the University of Manchester

Title of the study

A Study of Current Teacher Professionals and their Attitudes towards Promotion and Careers

What is the aim of the study?

I am hoping to gain an insight into the attitudes of teachers not on the leadership pay scale towards promotion and career. I am interested in factors that may influence these decisions. I am going to compare the views of teachers and look for patterns and themes.

Why have I been chosen?

I am using teaching staff who are not on the leadership pay spine.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

The research consists of a questionnaire that should take less than ten minutes to complete. The questions consist of tick boxes. The questions ask about attitudes towards promotion in education. Names do not have to be included on the questionnaires and your answers will remain anonymous. Twelve respondents from across various schools will be chosen to be interviewed. Respondents can only be chosen to be interviewed if they have ticked the ‘yes’ box on the final page of the questionnaire. If the participant does not wish to answer any question due to it being a sensitive issue then they do not have to.

What happens to the data collected?

All questionnaires will be collated and I shall search for patterns and themes amongst the answers, looking for similarities and/or differences between the findings and literatures on the subject.
How is confidentiality maintained?

The written report will not use the names of schools or teachers throughout. The teachers used in interviews will be given pseudonyms so as not to reveal their identities. Notes will be shredded and recordings deleted one year after gaining my qualification.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do not wish to complete the questionnaire then you do not have to. I will not know who has or hasn’t completed the questionnaire.

Will I be paid for participating in the study?

Unfortunately you will not be paid for taking part but hopefully it will be an enjoyable experience and different in nature to the usual demands of the job!

What is the duration of the study?

My studies will conclude in 2015.

Where will the study be conducted?

I will complete the analysis of the data and the writing up at home.

Will the outcomes of the study be published?

Details from the study may be included in my final Doctoral thesis which I anticipate to be completed in 2015.

Criminal Records Check (if applicable)

As a current teacher I have recently undergone a satisfactory criminal records check.

Contact for further information

If you wish to discuss the details of the interview then please do not hesitate to contact either myself (University email address here) or my supervisor (name here) (email address and telephone number here)

What if something goes wrong?

If you require any help or advice then please contact myself or my supervisor above.

If you wish to make a formal complaint about the conduct of the study then you should contact the Head of the Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL.
Appendix 6

Flyer sent out to Six Participating Schools

Dear Teacher,
If you can spare 10 minutes I would really appreciate you completing my online survey about the careers of teachers. The survey can be found at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TXDK3PR

The deadline for online completion is Friday July 6th. You can choose to keep your answers anonymous and indicate whether or not you'd like to be considered for a 20 minute confidential interview at your place of work in the Autumn term.

Thank you so much for completing the survey. It is only with your responses that my study can be of use and of interest to those in the teaching profession.

Rachel Chard
Professional Doctoral Student, University of Manchester
Name of School, Local Authority

If you prefer to complete the survey on paper, I have left some copies at your school's reception. I will collect these on or after July 13th 2012.
Appendix 7
Questionnaire for Teacher Professionals

The Careers of Educational Professionals

Questionnaire for Teachers not on the Leadership Pay Spine

As part of my Doctorate in Education with the University of Manchester, I am conducting a survey on attitudes towards careers. All information will be treated as confidential and no individual or establishment will be able to be identified from any written report. I will be conducting interviews with a handful of respondents lasting no more than 20 minutes once I have collated the results of the questionnaires. Please include your name and school if you would like to be considered for this, or tick the ‘no’ box at the end if you do not.

Many thanks for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. It should take under ten minutes to complete. The online deadline for completion is July 6th 2012 or return to your school’s reception so that I can collect it by July 13th 2012.

Rachel Chard.

Please tick the appropriate box:

1) Sex  
   Female ☐  Male ☐

2) Age  
   21-25 ☐  26-30 ☐  31-35 ☐  36-40 ☐  41-45 ☐  
   46-50 ☐  51-55 ☐  56-60 ☐  over 60 ☐

3) Counting the current year as one full year, how long have you been teaching (full or part time, excluding careers breaks)?
   1-4 ☐  5-10 ☐  11-20 ☐  21-30 ☐  over 30 ☐

4) Which of the following applies to your school? Tick all that apply
   Mixed ☐  Girls only ☐  Boys only ☐  11-16 ☐  11-18 ☐
   Comprehensive ☐  Academy ☐  Independent ☐  Other age group ☐

5) Do you have any paid managerial responsibilities in your current role (such as TLR points)?
   Yes ☐  No ☐

6) What is the nature of your responsibility?
   Head of faculty ☐  Head of subject ☐  Deputy head of subject ☐  Other subject responsibility ☐
   Head of key stage ☐  Head of year/house ☐  Deputy head of Year/house ☐  Other ☐  None ☐

7) How long have you held this responsibility for?
   Under 1 year ☐  1 to 2 years ☐  2 to 5 years ☐  Over 5 years ☐

8) What is your status in relation to threshold?
   Passed UPS 1, 2 or 3 ☐  Have applied / am applying ☐
   Not eligible ☐  Eligible but not applied ☐
9) **What is the status of your contract?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed term</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Supply</th>
<th>Cover supervisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10) **Have any promotion opportunities been available that you could have applied for at your current school in the last three years?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Approximate Month / Year Advertised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11) **Have you been encouraged at any time to apply for a promotion?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>If yes then by who (tick all that apply)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Colleague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12) **If you have applied or were to apply for a promotion, how important would the following factors be?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Very Unimportant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher pay</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater autonomy</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to lead an area (e.g. subject, year group)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to lead a team</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to manage a budget</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher status in institution</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Stepping stone’ to further promotions</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The support of my partner</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to do my job and manage the running of the home</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to do my job and find time to look after my children</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance/time travelling if promotion was at a new school</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13) How much do you agree with the following statements? (Tick one box for each)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Very Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am content to remain in my current role for the foreseeable future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am looking to gain a promotion in the next 12 – 18 months</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a promotion opportunity came up, I might think about it if it wasn’t too inconvenient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am too inexperienced to be applying for promotion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no point in me applying for promotion as I do not need the money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have my career path ‘mapped out’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once my children are older I will consider applying for promotions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I intend to eventually progress to senior leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I intend to progress to the role of headteacher in the future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know yet about seeking promotion – I will wait and see what happens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no intention to pursue any further posts of paid responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am unable to apply for promotion due to the young ages of my children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others think I should apply for promotion but I do not feel ready yet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am too old to apply for a promotion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not looking for promotion but something might turn up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The job of headteacher appeals to me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14) Have you applied for a course or some other form of professional development that may have enhanced your promotion opportunities in the last 5 years?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

15) What was the outcome of applying for this?

   I attended ☐   Place of employment refused attendance ☐   Not applicable ☐

   Did not attend for another reason ☐   Please state reason ………………………

16) When did you last attend a professional development course that was not part of an INSET day?

   During last 12 months ☐   1 – 2 years ago ☐   Over 2 years ago ☐   Never ☐

17) Did you attend this course with a view to it assisting with a future promotion?

   Yes ☐   No ☐   Partly ☐   Not applicable ☐

18) Have you taken part in any of the following professional development activities in the last 2 years?

   Network Meeting ☐   Exam Board Meeting ☐   Online training ☐

   Being mentored ☐   Being coached ☐   Other ……………………………

19) Have you ever applied for a paid promotional post in education that would be carried out alongside your teaching post? (Such as key stage coordinator, head of a subject etc)

   Yes ☐   No ☐

20) When did you last apply for such a post?

   This academic year ☐   1 to 2 years ago ☐   2 to 5 years ago ☐   Over 10 years ago ☐

   5 to 10 years ago ☐   Not applicable ☐

21) Were you successful in achieving the position?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

22) If you were not successful, has this put you off applying for promotions in the future?

   Yes ☐   No ☐   Possibly ☐   Not applicable ☐

23) When were you last interviewed for a paid promotional post?

   This academic year ☐   1 to 2 years ago ☐   2 to 5 years ago ☐   Over 10 years ago ☐

   5 to 10 years ago ☐   Not applicable ☐

24) Were you successful in achieving this position?

   Yes, same post as mentioned above ☐   No ☐

   Yes, different post to one above ☐   Not applicable ☐

25) Which of these words would you use to describe the interview experience for you as an interviewee?

   Enjoyable ☐   Thorough ☐   Unnecessary ☐   Daunting ☐

   Necessary ☐   Useful ☐   Terrifying ☐   Challenging ☐
26) **Please tick below to indicate your current home situation:**

- Live alone [ ]
- Live with partner [ ]
- Live with parent(s) [ ]
- Live with friends [ ]

27) **How many children under 18 live with you at home and are dependent on you?**

- 0 [ ]
- 1 [ ]
- 2 [ ]
- 3 [ ]
- 4 [ ]
- 5 [ ]
- 6 [ ]
- over 6 [ ]

28) **Has having children influenced your decision to consider promotions?**

- Yes, has encouraged me to apply for promotions [ ]
- Yes, has encouraged me **not** to apply for promotions [ ]
- No, has not influenced my decisions [ ]
- Not applicable [ ]

29) **Are you responsible for the running of your household?**

- Solely responsible [ ]
- Jointly responsible (equally) [ ]
- Mainly responsible [ ]
- Partly responsible [ ]
- Not responsible [ ]

30) **Do you think your responsibilities in the home have influenced your decision of pursuing a promotion?**

- Has encouraged me to apply for promotion [ ]
- Has not had any influence [ ]
- Has discouraged me from applying [ ]

31) **When do you think you might look for a promotion in your career in education?**

- I am currently looking [ ]
- In the next academic year [ ]
- In 1 to 2 years time [ ]
- In 3 to 4 years time [ ]
- In over 4 years time [ ]
- Never [ ]
- I have already secured a promotion to begin at a future date [ ]

32) **Do you think your attitude towards promotion has changed since you began your career in education?**

- Yes I am more interested in promotion now [ ]
- No, it has remained the same [ ]
- Yes I am **less** interested in promotion now [ ]

33) **Please tick from the list below those qualities that you think apply to you**:  

- Caring [ ]
- Non-competitive [ ]
- Subjective [ ]
- Conformist [ ]
- Evaluative [ ]
- Objective [ ]
- Creative [ ]
- Tolerant [ ]
- Informal [ ]
- Competitive [ ]
- Disciplined [ ]
- Easy going [ ]
- Intuitive [ ]
- Tolerant [ ]
- Highly regulated [ ]
- Ambitious [ ]
- Formal [ ]
- Aware of individual differences [ ]

---

If selected, would you be prepared to take part in a 20 minute interview at your place of work?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please complete your name and contact details:

Name ........................................................................................................................

School ........................................................................................................................

Work email address .................................................................................................

All interview and questionnaire results will remain anonymous.
Many thanks for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.
Appendix 8
Questionnaire Responses to Statements in Question 13

How much do you agree with the following statements? (Tick one box for each)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Very Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Very Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>I am content to remain in my current role for the foreseeable future</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am looking to gain a promotion in the next 12 – 18 months</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>If a promotion opportunity came up, I might think about it if it wasn't too inconvenient</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am too inexperienced to be applying for promotion</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is no point in me applying for promotion as I do not need the money</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have my career path 'mapped out'</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'm not looking for promotion but something might turn up</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>The job of headteacher appeals to me</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others think I should apply for promotion but I do not feel ready yet</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am too old to apply for a promotion</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I intend to eventually progress to senior leadership</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>I intend to progress to the role of headteacher in the future</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t know yet about seeking</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
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promotion — I will wait and see what happens

I have no intention to pursue any further posts of paid responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
<th>Very Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<th>Very Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once my children are older I will consider applying for promotions</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am unable to apply for promotion due to the young ages of my children</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
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</table>

answered question 54
skipped question 25

answered question 53
skipped question 26
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am content to remain in my current role for the foreseeable future</td>
<td>Active Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am looking to gain a promotion in the next 12 – 18 months</td>
<td>Careerist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a promotion opportunity came up, I might think about it if it wasn’t too inconvenient</td>
<td>Serendipity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am too inexperienced to be applying for promotion</td>
<td>Active Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no point in me applying for promotion as I do not need the money</td>
<td>Active Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion</td>
<td>Stuck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have my career path 'mapped out'</td>
<td>Careerist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once my children are older I will consider applying for promotions</td>
<td>Stuck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I intend to eventually progress to senior leadership</td>
<td>Careerist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home</td>
<td>Active Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I intend to progress to the role of headteacher in the future</td>
<td>Careerist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know yet about seeking promotion – I will wait and see what happens</td>
<td>Serendipity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no intention to pursue any further posts of paid responsibility</td>
<td>Active Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am unable to apply for promotion due to the young ages of my children</td>
<td>Stuck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others think I should apply for promotion but I do not feel ready yet</td>
<td>Stuck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am too old to apply for a promotion</td>
<td>Stuck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future</td>
<td>Careerist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not looking for promotion but something might turn up</td>
<td>Serendipity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The job of headteacher appeals to me</td>
<td>Careerist</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Appendix 10

**Questionnaire Results for Statements in Question 13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Male or Female</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years Teaching</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I am not interested in my current role for the foreseeable future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I am not interested in my current role for the foreseeable future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I am too inexperienced to apply for promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I am not looking for promotion but something might turn up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>The job of head teacher appeals to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>Others think I should apply for promotion but I do not feel ready yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I am too old to apply for a promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I intend eventually to apply for a promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I don’t know yet about seeking promotion — I will wait and see what happens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future</td>
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### Scores

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### Average Scores

<table>
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<th>Reference</th>
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<th>Age</th>
<th>Years Teaching</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>ACTIVE CHOICE average</th>
<th>CAREERIST average</th>
<th>STUCK average</th>
<th>SERENDIPITY average</th>
<th>UNINTENTIONAL average</th>
<th>UNSTUCK average</th>
<th>UNSTUCK CHOICE average</th>
<th>UNSTUCK CAREERIST average</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I am not interested in my current role for the foreseeable future.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I am not looking for promotion but something might turn up</td>
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<td>The job of head teacher appeals to me</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
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<td>Others think I should apply for promotion but I do not feel ready yet</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I am too old to apply for a promotion</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I intend eventually to apply for a promotion</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I can’t apply for promotion as I have too much responsibility in the home</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>21-25</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>I don’t know yet about seeking promotion — I will wait and see what happens</td>
<td></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21-25</td>
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<td>My partner thinks I should not be pursuing a promotion</td>
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<td>My partner thinks that I should apply for promotion now or in the future</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Notes

- Reference numbers correspond to statements in Question 13.
- Scores range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).
- Average scores calculated based on participant responses.
<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
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Appendix 11
Interview Structure used for Pilot Study

Introduction: I will begin by explaining that this is a project about educational leadership. I am interested in the attitudes of teacher professionals towards careers and their experiences of promotion. I will also be discussing their possible aspirations to senior leadership or headship in the future. The questions will be structured as follows:

1) **Tell me about your career pathway so far.**
   I will ask the route that each teacher took since University and why they have or haven’t pursued promotions. This may lead to questions about influences such as parents, partners and children. Has having a partner and/or children affected their career decisions or has their career affected their lifestyle choices?

2) **Tell me about your experiences of applying for promotions.**
   Have they been encouraged or discouraged to pursue promotions in the future and if so by whom? Does their situation at home have an influence on this?

3) **Do they aspire to a senior leadership position or a Headship post and why?**
   Do they think they would require further training in preparation for this or do they think more training is needed in helping teachers make decision about their careers?
Appendix 12
Interview Schedule Stage 1

(Collectors Signed Consent Form at beginning of interview).

Introduction: I will begin by explaining that this is a project about educational leadership. I am interested in the attitudes of teacher professionals towards careers and their experiences of promotion. I will also be discussing their career aspirations in the future.

1) Tell me about your career pathway so far.
   • Route that each teacher took since University
   • Why have you/haven’t you pursued promotions?
   • What is stopping you? Is it you personally or the culture / moment in time? How have you come to know this?
   • Influences on this decision (parents, partners, children, events, things said)
   • Has having a partner and/or children affected your career decisions?
   • Has your career affected other decisions in their life?

2) Tell me about your experiences of applying for promotions.
   • Have they been encouraged or discouraged to pursue promotions in the future and if so by whom?
   • Why do you/don’t you want to consider future promotions? Is this something you’d thought about and does this matter to you?
   • Does their situation at home have an influence on this?
   • When I analysed the data, it seemed women were sometimes reluctant to go for promotion? Is that your view? Why?
   • Are there any jobs that you wouldn’t consider? Grammar schools etc?

3) Do they aspire to a senior leadership position?
   • Do you aspire to a Headship post?
   • Why?
   • What do they think of the role?
   • Do they think they would require further training/mentoring in preparation for this?
   • Do they think more training is needed in helping teachers make decisions about their careers?
   • Does being a woman/man make any difference to promotion?
   • Have you faced any obstacles? Any advantages?
   • Do you have a plan that you have made with somebody else or have the careers just happened?

Is there anyone else who might be prepared to be interviewed? Name and email address?
Appendix 13
Interview Schedule Stage 2

(Collect Signed Consent Form at beginning of interview).

Last time you said...
Have you had any more thoughts on...

1) Since the last interview has their job changed. Why?
2) Has anything in their broader life changed in the last 12 months that’s made a difference to their career aspirations?
3) Has this affected what they’ve done?
4) Statements. Ask these verbally and compare to the previous answers. Ask why some are the same and why some are different.
5) Have their views changed for any of these or become stronger?
6) What are their future plans for their career?
7) What do they think needs to be done to get more teacher professionals to take on leadership roles? Shortage of females / is the pay enough? Still aren’t enough applying for senior leadership posts. What’s the solution?
8) Ensure asked about views of SLT and Headship. Have their views changed?

Note: Did my meeting them last time change their views at all?
Appendix 14
Interview Transcript with Colour Coding

Interview with James, Dec 6th 2012

Careerist           Serendipitous             Active Choice          Stuck

RC: Would you tell me about your career pathway so far?
J: Right, it’s been up and down really. My pathway... I started as a geography teacher, geography and PE, a long time ago, and progressed through. Unfortunately in the geography side it was waiting for dead man’s shoes. The head of department was... been there for a long time and he wasn’t going until he retired so I was waiting for that so I pursued the pastoral side and became an assistant head of year and head of year at (name of) school in (location) and was head of year there for a good few years. I then really, vocational side, pursued the vocational side and set up vocational courses at (school name) and became the lead teacher in vocational courses. The head at the time who was (name), he said to me in, you know, performance management that I should be a leader rather than a follower. I looked for opportunities then, looked for interviews for senior management, didn’t get it, I applied for my NPQH the year they changed all the system so they said apply next year under the new system so I pursued other courses which are management based; leading from the middle and leading for results and all those, the current ones so I’ve followed all those. And then an opportunity came up here and we have, I don’t know if you’re aware, what’s called a rubicon. We have an internal exclusion unit so where children were being excluded and just seeing it as a jolly, wandering the streets, we then had this unit where those children would have been excluded short term, long term would come and work in isolation. They have a separate day ten o’clock ‘til four and I was attracted to that and I came and established this inclusion unit, worked with that for a couple of years, but the thing that was getting me was I missed my teaching because I was in a room with the so called ‘naughties’. I enjoy teaching and I came into the profession for teaching. So I looked for a movement from there and that role, running this isolation unit was an assistant head position so really I’ve gone down to get out of that. I’ve actually... I then became a head of year and I was the head of year here for several years, for five years, and again it was the academic side... is you’re waiting for dead man’s shoes. There’s limited progression from the academic side whereas there’s greater promotion as a head of year or from the pastoral side. So I pursued pastoral. I was a head of year and then I shadowed the SLT, we have a shadowing system so I shadowed SLT and went to SLT meetings and took on SLT roles and then there was the... there’s few opportunities of movement unless you move to other schools and that’s the dilemma; that I should really be moving to another school to get further promotion, but I’m torn by... as soon as I move into that role which I’ve done as an assistant head I then lose my teaching and I’m actually here for... I enjoy the teaching. If I didn’t enjoy the teaching I’d probably move, I’d probably be more forcefully moving towards a position with more senior responsibility. But, with our professional development, the head and the deputy push me to... they think I should be either a deputy or assistant head somewhere and they keep pushing me on courses and I’m at that dilemma. Do I go and lose all my teaching load or do I stay teaching which is the thing I love?

RC: You used the phrase they’re ‘pushing you’ so without that do you think you would just be carrying on in the role that you’re doing now?
J: I don’t know. When I first started I was very, very ambitious, I wanted to go. When I came here I was quite ambitious as well. Sometimes... it... you could say it’s comfort zone but when I did the shadowing role I actually found I missed the teaching so in some respects I think I’ve decided, in my own mind, that I would prefer to teach. Now we’ve introduced the sixth form, delivering A level, that’s another ‘wow’ for me. I’m actually, I’m in front of pupils who want to learn and I’m teaching a higher level of work. I’m not a person who needs this, I know some people will need the title, oh yeah, deputy head or assistant head and they quote it all the time. I’ve been to all
these meetings and they’ll stand up and they’ll say ‘I’m deputy head of such and such, I’ve done this, I’ve done that’ and to me it’s not about me, it’s about the kids, I’m here for the kids and what I can do with the children to get them to do better. So, yes to answer your question shortly I think I’ve... I’ve made that choice that I’d rather be in the classroom.

RC: Do you think when you started teaching that you had aspirations to work up the hierarchy or did that come later on?

J: Em, when I first started I was quite happy to get a job and to teach really. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I started actually at university doing outdoor pursuits and I worked in an outdoor pursuit centre and that’s where I got the love for teaching. I was actually teaching, I was a canoe instructor and I was teaching canoeing to all from YTS to businesses who came in for development work, and I did all that and that’s when I got the bug for teaching so when I came in really it was the teaching I enjoyed so I hadn’t planned, it wasn’t a planned thing to go for promotion. It was just I enjoyed teaching and then I looked around and thought well, yes, should be doing more so I took on more responsibility. Obviously staff saw me, how I deal with children and they were suggesting to me through professional development, that I should be doing some management type roles so I think rather than pushed, directed, but I didn’t come in with a clear focus that I’m going to do three years then become deputy head and that. I came in to teach.

RC: So was it more that things triggered you going for those promotions?

J: Yes.

RC: You said about different people. Was it more those individuals that made you aware of those promotions available or was it other things that were happening?

J: Well a lot of it was line managers and in the schools I’ve been in the staff have been very good. They’ve really... opportunities have come up and in schools you are directed, some people like for example a deputy head would have said to me, I can still remember him saying, ‘there’s a post coming up for a head of year, you should apply for it’. Now he might have said that to several other people, which I know he did, but he put the thought in my mind. So, again through the schools I’ve worked in the professional development programs have been very good. The staff have looked, well the line managers have looked for opportunities to enhance my career.

RC: Have there been any other influences such as your partner or children? Has that influenced any of your decisions along the way?

J: Em, yes, it probably has. Having children gives a different focus on life. Em, my partner, my wife is very supportive. In fact she actually, when I was head of year, she said ‘why don’t you give it up, it’s so much stress and so much hard work?’ and I said no. So yes she’s supportive but I don’t think she’s... if I’m going for a position, a post, then she’s supportive in that although she has said ‘you don’t need the hassle’. And again she knows I love teaching so she’ll say, she says things to me like ‘have you thought about this, how will it affect your teaching?’

RC: And the kind of reverse of that... has your high pressure job affected your decisions such as having children?

J: No not at all no. You work to work and live to live. The work is here so I can do what I want living, so, I do a lot of travelling, my family does a lot of travelling so a lot of pictures around the room are my photographs which I’ve enlarged which are places I’ve been. It’s to enhance the children as well. I can talk about things which are concrete to me and when they’re watching videos and someone says something I say well, actually when I went... So yes, so no it hasn’t.

RC: So in terms of you going for promotion you’ve experience of lots of different roles. Do you think that it’s made a difference that you’re male? Looking at the data from my questionnaires it did look like more males were keener to go for promotions than females. So do you think it’s made a difference that you’re male?

J: Em, I’d like to say no. I’d like to say the best person gets the position but in some cases I don’t think it does. I think people, I think, when you go for these promotions the senior, whoever’s doing the interview, has got some idea in their head what they want. So I’ve been to interviews
and em, I don’t know how true it is but one person said he didn’t get it because they were looking for a goalkeeper for the staff football team. So, allegedly, perhaps that person had the best qualifications plus they had extra-curricular advantages. But I do think when you go for these jobs they have someone in mind and I don’t think now it affects whether it’s male or female. Although I think primary colleagues might disagree as men get all the promotion. It’s easier to become a primary headteacher if you’re a male than a female. Well, my brother worked in a primary school and he’s actually transferred and come into secondary but he was advised going in primary he’d become a head in a certain number of years so, yeah, I don’t think there is that gender bias. We here certainly have a higher proportion of females so I don’t know whether that’s a positive discrimination by the head or whether they’re the best people for the job.

RC: You mean females in the leadership roles?
J: Yes.
RC: OK. And do you think you’ve faced any barriers along the way. For instance are there any jobs you’ve seen that you’ve thought ‘I wouldn’t get that’ for whatever reason?
J: Em, not ones that I’ve gone for. I will actually pick the jobs that I think I can do, so I will only apply, so when I’m looking for positions internally or externally if I think I can do the best job available then I’ll apply for it. I don’t think I’ve met barriers as such, but if I just went for anything, maybe some people will just go for anything to get out of where they are and they might get bias there, but I’m quite choosy. I look for a specific school, I look for a specific role which I think I can do quite comfortably.
RC: When you say look for a specific school, what type of school is that?
J: I say specific school, I wouldn’t say I’d just go for grammar schools. I’ve always worked with more difficult children since my role in the inclusion centre. Within my teaching I often give, as Head of Department when I’m timetabling I’ll give the more demanding classes to myself. I seem to have a good rapport with the children who require a lot more support, whether that’s behavioural or educational. Yes so yes, so I sound a bit mad, that’s the way I go, I love the challenge really.
RC: More job satisfaction?
J: Definitely yeah.
RC: In terms of you aspiring to senior leadership you’ve mentioned that you’re still in the balance.
J: Yeah, I’m still in the balance. If something which suited me became available then I would do it. I’m not the sort of person who’d say I’m just, I’m going, I want to be a senior leader. The status doesn’t affect me at all. But if something came along which I thought, yes, that really sounds challenging, that would suit my personality, it would suit... it’s a job I can do well, I think that’s, that’s one of my inhibiting factors. If I don’t think I can do it to the best of my ability then I wouldn’t go for it. I’m a bit like that. Did I say I’ve got ADHD, I’ve got attention disorders and everything’s got to be in its place and I’ve got a tidy compulsion people think, because everything’s in order and I think that reflects in what I go for if I think I can do it to the best of my ability and the children will benefit in the school I go to then I will go for it but if I don’t then I wouldn’t even apply so...
RC: So what about the role of headteacher?
J: No.
RC: Why not?
J: I think it’s an extremely stressful job. I think the headteacher’s got to be completed dedicated to the school and you’ve got to be a special sort of person. Some of the things I would find difficult and I do see heads dealing with is people who are not doing their job as well but the head has to coax them round rather than, I’m quite blunt, I’d put it straight so... there are roles I can see where my personality and my skills I couldn’t fulfil. I also think the better heads, are then trying to move onto, the way education’s going, if you’re a good head then you actually, you’re a good head because you’ve based yourself in a school, you’ve worked hard with that school, whereas the current trend seems to be if you’re a good head you then get moved onto a lower,...
less well performing school and your workload gets greater and I think really your work life balance as a head isn’t, it’s more work than life so it’s not something I would, at the current time, look at entertaining.

RC: And has there ever been a time where you’ve thought, actually I could do that, be a head?

J: No. Actually I could see myself quite comfortably being a deputy head. I think the role of deputy head, having shadowed SLT, I could quite comfortably do that.

RC: What is it stopping you going for that deputy head role?

J: The teaching. It is a vocation to me. It’s not the money, it’s not the prowess, it’s not the status. I love the teaching, I love being in the classroom with the kids and I love to see them do well and try. And for me a child who can’t do something and suddenly the penny drops, well, that’s more than anything.

RC: There is a shortage of people aspiring to deputy and headships. Do you think the role should be changed? Is the role that’s wrong or the people that are wrong?

J: Erm, good question...... I think in some respects it’s the role that’s wrong. It demands so much that everything, especially now under Academies, that the head has got such great responsibility. I think there is too much of it, and if you look at the equivalent in industry, if you look at all these MDs not paying tax and they’re on twice as much as any headteacher. In big business they’re on more money and if you think of the staff that the head needs. And again nowadays in a school the headteacher is not just organising the teaching side; it’s your kitchen staff, your cleaning staff, your site facilities, your community based things. It’s all-encompassing, it’s not just about the headteacher in the school anymore, not just the role but the name should be changed. They’re more like a manager of a big industry. I think if I wanted to become a manager of a big industry I would have gone into industry where the rewards, the financial rewards are better.

RC: Would you encourage other teachers to be heads if you saw the potential?

J: Yes, I’ve got staff in my department who just came in as a teacher and now they’re a head of year or, if I see their potential in them, within our, as their line manager I do look for opportunities for them to progress and I’ve done that all along as head of year I’ve had staff who are now heads of year. There are staff who are senior teachers who have moved on. Some people might say they’ve overtaken me on the ladder but it’s funny, those same people still come back to me for advice although they’re supposed to be more senior. So, I suppose it’s what you’re more comfortable with and if I see someone with potential then yeah, it doesn’t bother me whatsoever. If it’s someone young who comes along and says ‘I want to be ambitious’ then that’s their role. As you say we’re short of heads and deputies and if they want to devote their life to it then fair play to them.

RC: It used to be the case that the local authorities played a big part in that, with training days and that sort of thing. Now, should it be that people who work in schools are talent spotting and encouraging others?

J: I think yeah, I think a lot of it goes on now. I think in academies there is a lot of talent spotting and from what I’ve seen in some schools it’s actually, it’s better the devil they know. They’re looking for talent in their own school to develop rather than looking outside. So at least you know the short comings of the people working for me and you know their potential.

RD: Going back to your career, did you always want to be a teacher?

J: No, no. Ask me what I wanted to be. I don’t know what I wanted to be actually at school. I had an opportunity to become a professional sportsman but it was at a time when, in fact it ties into school because it was at a time when I’d just got promotion to head of year and I was asked to go and play professional rugby. I turned the rugby down because I was, it was a point in my career where I’d gone from a teacher, deputies assistant, head of pastoral and then into a head of year role so yes, that was interesting.

Interview time: 22 mins 56 seconds.
Appendix 15
The Construction of Four Stories

An excerpt from Sam’s interview:

RC: You’ve had quite a few positive role models there. Do you think without those role models you would be where you are today?
S: Erm, no. I think my Mum and Dad are my main role models. My Dad was a professional footballer and then it was drummed into us as kids that, you know, strive to be the best you can be. Then after football he had no career because in those days it wasn’t like the money they get today and so they bought an off-licence and that’s where I grew up until I was twenty-one, from being zero. I watched them work seven days a week, seven in the morning until eleven at night every night, every day and I just saw how hard they worked to provide a good lifestyle for us. It just gives you the values that you need for life, mainly that... I don't know, it just got drummed into me to be the best you can be really.

This led to the following section of Sam’s story:

Sam’s childhood had been a happy one with his parents acting as positive role models. However, once his father’s football career had ended the family had invested in an off-licence; the setting for Sam’s upbringing. Both parents working long hours, seven days a week instilled a work ethic in Sam which had accompanied him into adulthood. He viewed his parent’s hard work as attributing to his success throughout his education and his attitude of ‘be the best you can be’ was at the forefront of Sam’s mind concerning his career.

An excerpt from Helen’s interview:

H: Right, I went into teaching originally because I was sort of stalling. Before, I was going to go on to do clinical psychology but through the experience of sort of being involved in teaching and mainly with special needs I realised, well I felt I’d be more useful in a teaching sort of capacity or in an education setting. I think that’s probably the weight of it rather than teaching.
RC: So what did you study at university?
H: I studied drama originally and then I had a year off working with students with severe learning difficulties and then I did my PGCE which was in English and then I went to teach but on my teaching practice I was asked to take up the post of leader of specialist project to reduce the risk of exclusion at key stage three and I did that for two years. Then I left there and joined a private company but it was a teaching organisation that worked with children in care or children that the authority had referred to them so various authorities. So it was either, our contracts were with foster carers and foster care agencies or with local authorities to look after their looked after children

This led to the following section of Helen’s story:

Helen had always loved spending time with people and as a young girl had enjoyed role play games with her toy dolls, setting up hospital and classroom situations with them. Whilst Helen had an interest in psychology she had pursued her favourite school subject of drama at university. As a naturally shy individual, performing as somebody else was not daunting for Helen and she could become engrossed in the characters and stories involved. However, Helen was unsure about pursuing drama as a career and instead had her heart set on clinical psychology. During a year out Helen gained some experienced of working with pupils with special educational needs and this convinced her that teaching was the profession that she should pursue. However, Helen had faced conflict over the years between teaching and working with other agencies and she was to reveal more regarding this in our first interview.
You are being invited to take part in a study focusing on teacher professionals and their attitudes towards careers. It forms part of the work towards the students EdD qualification in Leadership and Policy. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the study?

Rachel Chard studying with the University of Manchester

Title of the study

A Study of Current Teacher Professionals and their Attitudes towards Promotion and Careers

What is the aim of the study?

I am hoping to gain an insight into the attitudes of teachers not on the leadership pay scale towards promotion and career. I am interested in factors that may influence these decisions. I am going to compare the views of teachers and look for patterns and themes.

Why have I been chosen?

I am using teachers from Secondary Schools each of whom completed the initial questionnaire and who were willing to be interviewed. I am using Schools that are similar in nature to each.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

The research consists of one interview that will last no longer than 20 minutes, with a follow up interview of similar length in approximately twelve months time. I will be asking questions about the attitudes towards careers and promotion choices (past and future) of the participants and their views on aspiring to senior leadership. If the participant does not wish to answer any question due to it being a sensitive issue then they do not have to.

What happens to the data collected?

All interviews will be recorded via Dictaphone and I will be searching for patterns and themes from the teachers involved by transcribing sections of the interviews.

How is confidentiality maintained?

The written report will not use the name of any school or teachers throughout. The teachers will be given pseudonyms so as not to reveal their identities. The Dictaphone and computer used for
writing the report are to be kept in a locked office at home. Notes will be shredded and recordings deleted one year after gaining my qualification.

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form on the day of the interview. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

**Will I be paid for participating in the study?**

Unfortunately you will not be paid for taking part but hopefully it will be an enjoyable experience and different in nature to the usual demands of the job!

**What is the duration of the study?**

The study will be completed in 2015

**Where will the study be conducted?**

I would like the interview to take place at your place of work, so as to cause as little inconvenience to yourself. The location in School is to be chosen by the participant. The writing up of the study will then be completed at my home.

**Will the outcomes of the study be published?**

Details from the study may be included in my final Doctoral thesis which I anticipate to be completed in 2015.

**Criminal Records Check (if applicable)**

As a current teacher I have recently undergone a satisfactory criminal records check.

**Contact for further information**

If you wish to discuss the details of the interview then please do not hesitate to contact either myself (University email address here) or my supervisor (name here) (email address and telephone number here)

**What if something goes wrong?**

If you require any help or advice then please contact myself or my supervisor above.

If you wish to make a formal complaint about the conduct of the study then you should contact the Head of the Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL.
Appendix 17
Interview Consent Form

A Study of Current Teacher Professionals and their Attitudes towards Promotion and Careers

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the interviews will be audio/video-recorded

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes

6. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers

7. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree to take part in the above project

Name of participant ___________________ Date ___________________ Signature ___________________

Name of person taking consent ___________________ Date ___________________ Signature ___________________