Preparing for and Entering Headship in England:
A Study of Career Transition

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This work is dedicated to my father
- a kind and generous man who is forever in my thoughts.

Abstract

This is a study of career transition into first-time headship in England, informed by a large-scale survey of serving headteachers. The literature review establishes that the transition to a position of formal leadership requires preparation and support along three dimensions of career transition: the personal, organisational and occupational; dimensions established through examination of theories of self, identity and socialisation. The study demonstrates that the high levels of accountability and responsibility associated with headship, caused by legal and societal expectations, distinguishes it from similar jobs in other occupations and school systems. This induces additional challenges in adapting to the demands of headship and to becoming effective as the *de facto* formal leader in the school to which the headteacher is appointed. Processes and systems of preparation and induction for beginning headteachers are shown to be inadequate along the three dimensions of career transition.

The study extends the range of small-scale research previously conducted by the author and others in the last decade of the twentieth century when the nature of headship was undergoing rapid change mainly as a result of the 1988 Education Reform Act, which transferred the locus of power and decision-making to the school. The empirical research undertaken for this study, which provides evidence not available elsewhere, was conducted through a self-completion survey directed at a stratified, random sample of serving headteachers in England. The sample is deemed representative and the findings, based on a response rate of over 60 per cent, are considered generalisable. The survey sought to establish the perceptions of headteachers as to their state of preparedness on entry to the job and what contributed to that state of preparedness. Opinion was also sought from the sample as to how systems and processes could be further developed to assist that state of preparedness. The responses to the survey are analysed against the components of the three dimensions of career transition. The study concludes by comparing the findings with the formal systems and processes for preparation and induction in England at the time of writing and by making a series of recommendations for individuals, school communities, local education authorities and central government and its agencies that, if implemented, should allow headteachers to become effective earlier in their new occupation than was the case when the survey was conducted.

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1. All direct quotations in this text are verbatim, including spelling.

2. Referencing follows the conventions of the American Psychological Association (APA).

The central government department responsible for education has undergone several changes of title during the period that this study covers. For consistency it is referred to throughout this study as the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), irrespective of the various titles it has enjoyed over the years. The choice of DfES was because that was the title at the time of submitting this thesis.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study examines the systems and processes that have assisted the preparation for and induction to the position of headteacher of maintained schools in England. The study is informed by a survey of serving headteachers that investigated their perceived level of preparedness for the job, what contributed to that state of preparedness and sought their opinions as to how systems and processes could be further developed to assist that state of preparedness.

The study is primarily focused on the last quarter of the twentieth century and early years of the twenty-first century, although reference is made to historical features contributing to the formulation of headship as a social construct. The job expectations of headteachers evolved rapidly throughout this period and included the requirement, expressed both explicitly and implicitly, to be responsible and accountable for tasks that had traditionally not been associated with the most senior position in school. Central among these tasks was the need to manage, in conjunction with their governing body, the business of the school as well as the teaching and learning processes effected within them. The business side of a school's operation included the responsibility for virtually all recurrent expenditure and the management of resources and was encompassed within the notion of site-based management, a principle based on the relocation of decision-making to the point of delivery. It was a transition that induced pressure for headteachers to be more directly involved in an executive capacity than as the senior professional responsible for leading learning, described as a shift along a continuum from Lead Professional to Chief Executive (Hughes, 1975).

The major impetus for this shift in expectations was a series of government strategies during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s aimed at restructuring public services for greater effectiveness and efficiency, mainly through the principle of 'market forces' (Ball, 1994). Government sponsored public debate conducted through the latter stages of the 1970s led to legislation throughout the next decade that radically transformed the nature of school governance and management. The impact on the position was substantial and included explicit job expectations within their published terms and conditions of service and the implicit expectation that headteachers occupied the 'pivotal' role in school effectiveness (Department of Education and Science, 1977; House of Commons, 1998; Southworth, 2000).

For most of the twentieth century headteachers had not held such levels of accountability and responsibility occupying, instead, the position of leading practitioner within the school. Maintained schools worked within the confines of a local education authority (LEA), with an elected education committee taking responsibility for the allocation of resources through LEA officers. That framework of local government policy and management left the headteacher with the task of determining and managing the curriculum and acting as the main liaison link between the school and the LEA officers. There were few controls emanating from either central or local government that impacted on the decisions made by the headteacher with regard to the determination and implementation of the curriculum. Although there was a formal system of school inspections conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), generally governments confined themselves to advice and support, rather than control. A strong tradition of headteacher as autocrat and leading professional had evolved from the history of the last two centuries to become what

has commonly been referred to as the 'headmaster tradition' (Baron, 1956; Peters, 1976), a tradition based on models provided by famous public school headmasters such as Arnold of Rugby or Thring of Uppingham who famously declared "I am supreme here and will brook no interference" (cited in Bernbaum, 1976: 34). The model that emerged by the end of the Victorian era was a "powerful and distinctive one", described as:

> A benevolent autocrat, feared and loved by staff and pupils, a leader of undisputed authority but also very much the teacher, particularly of seniors, who adopted a paternalistic, pastoral relationship to assistant staff as well as to pupils. (Baron, 1956: 23)

So influential was this model that the pamphlet produced by the Headmaster's Association [in 1960], entitled *The Position of a Headmaster*:

> Urge(s) the new head to remember that 'he is in charge of the school and it is for him to say who may enter it' (cited in Bernbaum, 1976: 23)

Until the 1988 Education Reform Act it was unusual for headteachers in maintained schools to be associated with management tasks relating to the business side of the school, concentrating instead on curricular provision and teacher education. Goodwin may, for example, be considered part of a wider school of thought in the earlier part of the century, rejecting the emerging managerial and administrative approaches tasks of being a head in favour of an approach reflecting the traditional and historical development of the job (Goodwin, 1968). Later, Taylor suggested that managerial supervision of teachers was largely unnecessary as to work on an assumption other than their expected professionalism would be counter-productive, as those who were subject to such supervision would soon learn how to subvert it in much the same way as occupied countries "have managed to subvert official doctrine whilst maintaining a

superficial compliance" (Taylor, 1976: 44). The teaching profession, he claimed, was one "over which it is almost impossible to exercise direct external supervision". It was an attitude that could be considered as populist at the time even though changing school circumstances were beginning to require organisational and managerial skills that were generally deemed to be novel and, sometimes, alien to the headteacher. This stance, seemingly adopted by the headteachers themselves, is perhaps encapsulated in the description of job focus offered in the mid 1970s:

> It is part of the traditional concept of headship in Britain that the head is considered a teacher rather than an administrator (an emphasis symbolised by the use of the term head*teacher*). (Coulson, 1976: 44)

This model of headteacher as the symbolic, central, key figure – the personification of the school – has been reinforced by a national culture that reifies the notion of a singular organisational leader. Major studies conducted into national culture have demonstrated distinguishable differences between nations that are greater than those between social or ethnic groupings within the nation state (Hofstede, 1980, 1994; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997). In reflecting those findings as part of an international research project, I was able to identify a set of societal expectations for headship as requiring a strong, individual character who expects and tolerates debate from colleagues, and other stakeholders, and can operate within an environment where there is a great deal of uncertainty (Male, 1998). In a later work Hofstede differentiated between workers within organisations in regard to their expectations of managers and leaders (Hofstede, 1994). There were significantly higher expectations that managers would demonstrate their authority from those with the lowest socio-economic status and level of educational achievement (generally the unskilled and semi-skilled workers), with a contrasting set of expectations from professional

workers and co-managers. Translating these findings into the everyday expectations of the school leader we can anticipate English society in general to expect the headteacher to act as the head, while teachers and other educational professionals expect consultation and democracy.

The manifestation of the twin influences of site-based management and cultural expectations on the nature of headship has placed the headteacher in an invidious, frequently isolated, position as they seek to satisfy society in general and their professional colleagues through their behaviour. Not only are they are expected to be the symbolic leader, the personification of the school, but with the shift of accountability and responsibility to the school level they have been expected to act in an executive capacity. Both influences have militated against the traditional model of headship and have required the postholder to adjust the proportion of their activities accordingly and, in some cases, at the expense of their daily commitment to the management of teaching and learning. Research (e.g. Bullock and Thomas, 1995; Southworth, 1995; Lomax, 1996) demonstrates that the majority of headteachers have seen the demands caused by the legislation of the 1980s as having fundamentally changed their role and restricted the opportunity to remain in close touch with classroom practice, to the point where headteachers are frequently considered more as a 'head' rather than 'headteacher':

> There is sufficient evidence here to warrant the claim that the changing role of the head has influenced the balance between being a head or a headteacher. The increase in management appears to have happened with a concomitant reduction in teaching. (Southworth, 1995: 27)

Headteacher preparation and induction

Until April 2004, there were no formal requirements for headship, except that applicants should hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and until very late in the twentieth century there was no explicit expectation of the job. Greater clarification of the requirements and expectations of the post emerged through the 1990s firstly with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act 1991, which delineated the headteacher's duties and responsibilities and, secondly, through the requirement contained in the Education (Teachers) Regulations, 1993 that the staff of a maintained school "shall include a headteacher". Attempts to formalise the job definition were furthered through the work of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) who published a set of National Standards for Headteachers (Teacher Training Agency, 1998a) which were specifically designed to underwrite the agency's programmes of preparation, induction and continuing professional development for headteachers, but were also used more generally as a template by others in determining headteacher competence and capability. Further definition of job expectations was provided through the ninth report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education and Employment which investigated the role of headteachers late in the decade, taking advice and guidance from a very wide range of contributors (House of Commons, 1998).

The consequence, I concluded after some 12 years of working on headteacher development programmes and through evidence collected from a series of small scale research studies I had conducted, was that for most of the twentieth century, school governing bodies, as the agency making headteacher appointments, had been the single determiner of job requirements (Daresh and Male, 2000). Preparation for headship had been an individual responsibility typically based on the apprenticeship

model of 'moving up the ranks' from classroom teachers through a number of intermediate positions to deputy headship and then on to headship (Daresh and Male, 2000). Commonly candidates for headships exhibited a portfolio of experience in senior positions in one or more schools and, in the latter stages of the twentieth century in particular, evidence of continuing education. Induction, where it featured formally, was generally confined to the administrative dimensions of the post rather than the professional elements of the job.

External support for the preparation, induction and continuing professional development of headteachers only began to emerge from the late 1960s firstly with university-based programmes of management education and, later in the decade, through courses sponsored by central government agencies. The range of support expanded during the 1980s with the injection of significant sums of government funding into specific programmes of management training, development and education and into specific grants for LEA-directed activities in the same field. The impact on the workforce was small throughout this period, however, with only 11 per cent of potential participants having engaged in formally funded activities by the beginning of the next decade (School Management Task Force, 1990). The major support mechanisms for headteacher preparation through the first seven years of the 1990s were contained in programmes of management development supported by central government agencies, such as the SMTF, which left headteachers largely managing their own development in response to the demands of the role, with formal opportunities being described by closely associated observers as "patchy" (Bolam, 1997: 227; Hobson, Brown, Ashby, Keys and Sharp, 2003: 17), "haphazard" (Bush, 1999: 244) and "disjointed and insubstantial" (Male, 1997a: 6).

Evidence of more focused efforts did emerge through this period of the 1990s, however, with headteacher induction receiving separate attention through the Headteacher Mentoring Scheme (1992-94), managed by the SMTF in an extension to their original remit, and the Headteacher Leadership and Management Programme (Headlamp) introduced by the TTA in 1995 as its first major programme for headteacher support. Government support for headteacher preparation became specifically focused in 1997 with the introduction of the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), based on the national standards for headteachers which were subsequently revised and formally published in 1998. Both Headlamp and the NPQH were still in place as the principal elements of headteacher preparation and induction at the beginning of the twenty-first century, albeit with some modifications, with the NPQH set to become a mandatory requirement for newly appointed headteachers (Department for Education and Skills and National College for School leadership, 2002).

Establishing a picture of headteacher preparation and induction

Generally research findings into headship have been limited in scale, particularly since the introduction of site-based management through Local Management of Schools, contained within the 1988 Education Reform Act. This is surprising, given the claimed centrality of the post in the establishment and maintenance of effective schools.

Interest in headship as the pivotal role during the later stages of the twentieth century had emanated from the HMI report 'Ten Good Schools' which had identified the

quality of leadership exhibited by the headteacher as central to the success of the school (Department of Education and Science, 1977).   Prior to this, the work of Hughes (1972), Richardson (1973) and Lyons (1976) were cited as the only substantial contributors to this field of research with other contemporary works (e.g. Allen, 1968; Barry and Tye, 1972; Poster, 1976) being described as largely prescriptive in nature (Hall, Mackay and Morgan, 1986). All such studies were either small-scale or anecdotal in nature.

Despite the fact that by its own admission the HMI report was a small scale non-representative study, much emphasis was laid on this report by government which led the DfES to commission Birmingham University to conduct a survey (Hughes, 1981) of training provision, a review of the selection of secondary school headteachers (Morgan, Hall and Mackay, 1983) and to fund the National Development Centre for Schools' Senior Management Training at Bristol (Bolam, 1986). A Leverhulme Trust funded investigation into the nature of secondary school headship followed in 1986 and was prompted by the "absence of an empirical foundation for descriptions of secondary headship in Britain in the 1980s" (Hall, Mackay and Morgan, 1986: 4). That ethnographic study involved 15 headteachers in all, four of whom were studied in depth over the course of a year. The study was an attempt to view "headship as it was practised" (Hall, Mackay and Morgan, 1986: 4) and was an extension of their earlier work which they deemed to be largely theoretical in nature (Morgan, Hall and Mackay, 1983).

Two large-scale studies were conducted on headship prior to the 1988 Education Reform Act.   The principal study, conducted by the National Foundation for

Educational Research (NFER), was extensive both in the number of respondents and in the range of investigative techniques employed, even if it only focused on those from the secondary phase (Weindling and Earley, 1987). Jones (1987) also studied the experiences of secondary school headteacher and received 400 responses to her postal questionnaire sent to 500 members of the Secondary Headteachers Association in two regions of the country. She attributes the quality of the responses and the high response rate to the fact that she was a serving head, something which allowed her colleagues to offer observations "more honest and less defensive than the kinds of comments Headteachers normally make in public" (Jones, 1987: 55).

During the rest of the twentieth century, empirical research reported in the public domain consisted of a range of small-scale studies, including aspects of the work environment for headteachers (e.g. Clerkin, 1985 and Harvey, 1986), training programmes (e.g. Gunraj and Rutherford, 1999; Blandford and Squire, 2000) and the nature of headship (e.g. Southworth, 1995; Male, 1996; Male and Merchant, 2000). The exception to this common trend was the work of Coleman (2002) who undertook two large-scale surveys of secondary headteachers in 1999, firstly asking questions of all 670 women in service and, later, a random sample of a similar number of men. With response rates of over 70 per cent for women and over 60 per cent for men, her investigation can be deemed representative of secondary school headteachers. There have been few investigations that have focused exclusively on primary headteachers, however, despite there being nearly 20,000 of them, and at the time the survey was undertaken for this study only one investigation had been conducted into the nature of headship in special schools (Rayner and Ribbins, 1998).

Work on beginning headship during the twentieth century was even more limited. The research undertaken by NFER has remained the most comprehensive study (Weindling and Earley, 1987), although its relevance is reducing as the data were gathered in the early 1980s and the data subjects were all from secondary schools. Small-scale studies undertaken post-1988, however, have indicated issues with regard to the adaptation needed by successful headteacher applicants to their new occupational identity. Dunning (1996), for example, reported on the management problems faced by newly appointed headteachers in Wales, while Draper and McMichael (1998) reported on the 'surprise' newly appointed headteachers in Scotland experienced and Daresh and Male (2000) reported on the 'culture shock' associated by English headteachers and US principals with the transition to the new job.

A comprehensive review of the problems facing those entering headship and the range of support strategies available to them was commissioned by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) early in the twenty-first century (Hobson *et al.*, 2003). The report described the job of headteacher as being inherently complex and problematic in nature, particularly for those new to the position. The early stages of headship were found often to be characterised by feelings of 'isolation' (Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington and Weindling, 1993; Weindling and Pocklington, 1996; Bolam, Dunning and Karstanje, 2000) and 'surprise' where there is considerable difference between the job as expected and as experienced (Draper and McMichael, 2000; Daresh and Male, 2000). The NCSL report also highlighted a range of other issues faced, including dealing with the legacy, practice and style of the previous headteacher, dealing with multiple tasks, managing time and priorities, dealing with

the school budget, dealing with ineffective staff, implementing new government initiatives and dealing with site management. Whilst the report indicated that some problems were more prevalent at particular points in time, it concluded that those problems illustrated above were the ones most commonly experienced by new headteachers in England and Wales. In a separate study the challenges facing newly appointed headteachers were attributed to the complexity presented by the range of tasks and responsibilities, the external pressures and demands of the job and poor access to training and support both before and after appointment (Bolam, Dunning and Karstanje, 2000).   Such findings were deemed to be reasonably robust as they were either based on the direct contributions of headteachers who were participants in the research or on the researchers'/authors' conclusions, which tended to have been informed by their own research findings and by their broader knowledge and understanding of the field of study (Hobson *et al.*, 2003).

The clearest picture of the changing nature of headship at the end of the twentieth century, however, was provided by the parliamentary select committee on Education and Employment (House of Commons, 1998). Contained in two volumes, the Select Committee Report contained a wealth of primary data, evidence and opinion from all government education bodies and from other groups and individuals as well as the findings and conclusions of the committee itself. The report provided a summary of the debate surrounding the development of headteachers over the previous 20 years and reviewed the range and pattern of professional development and training activities available to prospective and serving headteachers at that time. The picture of the present and future nature of headship that emerged from this investigation suggested

an inadequacy of existing development and training opportunities and support mechanisms for headteachers (House of Commons, 1998).

There had also been an absence of research and evaluation findings relating to headship from central government agencies, with the review of professional development and training activities conducted by the Select Committee containing the sole substantive published evaluation of the TTA programmes for preparation and induction, which had been the only centrally funded support available to prospective and newly appointed headteachers at the end of the twentieth century. Where empirical research had been commissioned by government agencies for the evaluation of headteacher preparation and induction programmes the data or findings were not generally made available for public scrutiny. The formal evaluation of the NPQH scheme, undertaken by the NFER during 1998, for example, has never been published, nor were investigations into the scheme by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) made public during the twentieth century. A resumé of the Ofsted findings from the inspection into the first seven cohorts of NPQH and the induction of new headteachers was eventually published in the HMI report on leadership and management training for headteachers (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). Evaluative studies of the Headlamp scheme available for public inspection, meanwhile, had been three paragraphs in the annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) in 1996-7 (Office for Standards in Education, 1998: paragraphs 292-294). In 1998, the TTA commissioned an independent evaluation of Headlamp by Professors Law (Nottingham Trent University) and Lawlor (Canterbury Christ Church College) which was completed and submitted to the TTA in September of that year and was due for consideration at the November meeting of the Board. The

publication of the Green Paper (Department for Education and Employment, 1998a) intervened, however, and the report was shelved and remained unavailable to the public.

Similarly the TTA, the government agency responsible for headship training and development from 1994-99, did not publish any of its findings from a wealth of data that was collected as a by-product of its activities in the field during this time. Despite the fact that all Headlamp-funded activities have to be evaluated by the participant, for example, none of these data has ever been made available and there has been no feedback on the reviews of the training provision and assessment processes which were systematically conducted by the TTA as a part of its quality control procedures. The review of Headlamp undertaken by the NCSL (Newton, 2001), as a part of the determination of the Leadership Development Framework that was to underpin the college's work, did allude to the findings from these evaluations, but only in vague terms. None of the published material emanating from the government agencies regarding the preparation and induction of headteachers was published in time to inform this study, for which a survey of serving headteachers was conducted in 1999.

It is against this backdrop of insubstantial data that the study conducted here was first conceived. Research I had previously conducted (Male, 1996; Daresh and Male, 2000; Male and Merchant, 2000) had produced data which seemed to suggest that beginning headteachers were not fully prepared for the role, particularly in being able to deal with the transition to the formal leadership position that was integral to the

concept of the post. Similar findings were reflected in similar, contemporary studies (Dunning, 1996; Draper and McMichael, 1998).

The induction and transition of headteachers into the job is of great concern, especially if there are particular events and/or circumstances that either encourage or discourage capable educators from seeking the position. Learning to be a headteacher, it has been claimed, includes the two content areas of technical and cultural elements of the job (Greenfield, 1985). Technical skills include such matters as budgeting and marketing (Crow and Southworth, 2002), but the job also includes the skills and disposition related to the cultural or moral context of the organisation. The conclusion I have been able to draw is that the job of headteacher involves something more than management and administration and includes values and dispositions to move the school forward and to encourage the development of organisational norms and mores. This element of the job has been seen to be essential as the demands of the post have changed in recent times in line with changes to the nature of work in general and to education in particular (Crow and Southworth, 2002). Work in the twenty-first century emphasises complexity and requires leaders who can live with ambiguity, work flexibility and encourage creativity (Crainer, 1996; Hage and Powers, 1992; Leithwood, Begley and Cousin, 1994; Schön, 1987).

The transition to headship is a mid-career move for which there is no natural path of progression. Unlike some other occupations (e.g. medical doctors or lawyers), the initial training and early experiences of a teacher are not the foundation for headship, so much learning has to be undertaken whilst in service in order for potential headteachers to emerge. Through the discussion I conduct in Chapter 2, I will

formulate a conceptual framework that illustrates the learning experiences necessary for the preparation of headteachers. The pre-service learning is but a part of the transition process, however, with newly appointed headteachers frequently having to review and adjust their understanding in order to deal with a world where multiple realities co-exist, often leading to dilemmas in terms of decision making. The transition is considered complete when the newly appointed headteacher feels confident and competent in their position as formal leader of the school. This is referred to as the formation of their occupational identity as a headteacher.

In arriving at this definition, I draw on some psychological constructs of identity and the formation of situated and substantial self. Identity is defined as a way of being in the world, a locus of social selfhood and social power (Wenger, 1998). The successful creation of an occupational identity is where the postholder, in this case the headteacher, experiences feelings of comfort and effectiveness in their new position. A distinction is drawn between situational and substantial self in order to illustrate this state, with situational self relating to the demands and expectations of a particular job or role whilst substantial self relates to the core of self-defining beliefs that remain fairly constant at the individual level (Southworth, 1995). The absence of dissonance in the relationship between the situational and substantial selves is considered as further evidence of successfully achieving occupational identity.

Learning experiences associated with the creation of the new occupational identity in the transition to headship are demonstrated to have three dimensions: the personal, organisational and occupational. Issues within the personal dimension relate to the way in which previous life experiences have to be reviewed in order to adapt to the

new job. Organisational issues relate to the demands of the organisation and the system to which the person is appointed. Occupational issues are related to the generic range of skills, attributes, knowledge and understanding needed for the new job. When exploring the learning experiences of aspirant and beginning headteachers, I draw on socialisation theory and explore the impact of competence-based approaches on headteacher preparation and induction programmes. Socialisation theory refers to the processes by which people are assimilated into groups, where a competence-based approach to headteacher development refers to the relationship between technical capability and the development of attitudes, values and beliefs appropriate for the job.

The major concern for beginning headteachers is how best to prepare for the new job and where best to look for support once in post. The reduction in supportive advisory services, coupled with the increased level of competition between schools fostered by the 1988 Education Reform Act, were identified as the key factors that had frequently left newly appointed headteachers feeling isolated (Weindling and Pocklington, 1996), whereas the surprises for new headteachers emerging from the empirical data of Draper and McMichael (1998), for example, were categorised in terms of role perceptions, the majority of which had not eliminated the 'shock' of the actual job. More than half of new headteachers featuring in that research were surprised to find, for example, that procedures that had worked for them in their previous school did not work in their new school, whilst a majority were surprised by the respect given to them (Draper and McMichael, 1998).

Establishing the research questions

As previously indicated, I had been closely associated since the mid-1980s with most initiatives in leadership and management development for headteachers, having served as an LEA officer responsible for professional development, as a liaison officer to a central government task force for school management, as an accredited trainer for the NPQH, as a Headlamp provider and as a full-time academic in higher education responsible for implementing programmes in educational leadership and management at doctoral and masters levels. In addition to those experiences I have accumulated a wealth of unpublished documentary evidence through engagement with the development of these initiatives.

Previous research activity during the 1990s had established the state of readiness for headship in maintained schools as a key area of investigation (Dunning, 1996; Draper and McMichael, 1998; Daresh and Male, 2000; Male and Merchant, 2000). Similarly, evidence had emerged that suggested the type of support available to beginning headteachers was variable in quantity and impact (Rutherford and Gunraj, 1997; Squire and Blandford, 1998). All such studies had been typified, however, by small numbers of respondents, frequently opportunity samples. Primary research for the Male and Merchant study, for example, consisted of semi-structured interviews conducted between November 1994 and September 1996, involving a total of 24 respondents, drawn from the US and England. All English headteachers interviewed for that study were drawn from one LEA and represented a convenience sample. In the Daresh and Male study, using interviews with 16 headteachers and principals taking up their first post at that level, the sample of headteachers was confined to those with whom I was working in the Headlamp scheme and were thus an

opportunity sample, as were the participants in the two studies on Headlamp by Rutherford and Gunraj and by Squire and Blandford who employed the same criteria in sample selection. The work of Dunning (1996) sought a more representative sample, with questionnaires being sent during the summer of 1994 to 150 newly appointed headteachers in Wales. With a 40 per cent response rate, the study could claim to be reasonably representative of newly appointed headteachers in Wales, except that under the terms of the funding for the project he was only required to report on the first 50 responses, which reduces the potential for generalisation. Draper and McMichael (1998), in addition to enquiries directed at deputies, surveyed all newly appointed headteachers in the Lothian region of Scotland as well as setting up a number of focus groups, chosen on the grounds of their recent appointment to headship, an approach which gave them a sample size of 43 respondents. Whilst representative of those in the Lothian region, it is difficult to generalise from this study as the sample was still a relatively small number and was located in a school system that operated under different regulations than those in English schools.

I made an early decision, therefore, to elicit a set of data through this study that would be sufficient in size to be representative, and consequently for the findings to be generalisable to schools in England. Given that the empirical research I had previously conducted was illustrating the lack of readiness of the candidates for the intensity of the headship and the lack of evidence from government sponsored evaluations, I felt it was important to:

    i)   investigate headteacher perceptions of preparedness for the job,

ii) investigate headteacher perceptions as to what contributed to that state of preparedeness,

iii) seek opinion from headteachers as to how systems and processes could be further developed to assist that state of preparedness.

The context for research

One of my key objectives was to establish an independent study, as it had been considered by two well-informed observers (Bolam, 1997; Glatter, 1999),who had been closely involved in the determination of national programmes, that much of the discussion around the nature of headship had been heavily influenced by political factors rather than empirical research. Policy-making since the beginning of the 1980s, it was argued, had been "erratic and short-termist" and determined more by expediency than by rationality (Glatter 1999: 254). The suggestion that the subsequent agenda for determining the nature of headship training, development and education had been dominated by political considerations was further supported by the actions of Ofsted and the TTA throughout the 1990s. In a major review of headship, Bolam argued that Ofsted was the principal architect of a preferred model of headship through the application of the formal inspection process. In basing their reports on outcomes and contributory factors, Ofsted had established a model of operation and management to which all schools were expected to subscribe (Bolam, 1997). Glatter meanwhile drew attention to the domination by the TTA of professional development funding during this period that allowed them to develop a model of headship through the publication of national standards for headteachers (Glatter, 1999: 260).

The implications of these arguments were that there was a restricted view of the headship position, with the expectations of postholders largely being determined by government policy. Given the changing nature of the job, particularly since the 1988 Education Reform Act, there had been little research undertaken or published that would change this perception. The result had been the prescription of skills, knowledge and attributes by a central government agency, accompanied by the introduction of a training regime (NPQH) that aimed to prepare potential headteachers for that perceived job.

My interest in undertaking an independent study was largely formed by the combination of these factors and was satisfied by identifying and utilising funding from within the university in which I was both employed and registered as a student. All expenditure on the project, including that needed for data collection, analysis and interpretation, was provided from Faculty or Departmental funds. In this way it proved possible for me to investigate the research questions generated for the survey without being dominated by factors emanating from outside the university.

Research Methodology

The empirical evidence that informs this investigation was collected principally through a survey of serving headteachers conducted in 1999. This involved the distribution of a self-completion postal questionnaire to a stratified, random sample of headteachers in maintained schools in England. The questionnaire sought to establish the perceptions of headteachers with regard to their role readiness on entry to the post and the attribution of preparation where their perceived role preparation was adequate

or better. The questionnaire also sought to elicit opinion on systems and processes that could help to develop further that state of preparedness.

My decision to undertake a large-scale survey was in response to the issues explored earlier in this chapter and summarised here. There had been no independent or funded studies conducted since the introduction of LMS in 1988, government sponsored research and evaluations had belatedly been available only in summary form and the few empirical studies that had been published were small-scale and illustrative. With the exception of the report of the parliamentary select committee (House of Commons, 1998), there was no substantial evidence base on which to draw when configuring programmes of preparation and support for aspiring and beginning headteachers.   Although   the   survey   conducted   by   Coleman   (2002)   was contemporaneous with my own I was not aware of her activities or the focus of her study when commencing my own investigation. Consequently I wished to produce data that would allow for generalisation and could be demonstrably independent. In part, that decision was governed by the perceived views of the government agencies as to the nature of headship. As argued earlier in this chapter, government agencies had been accused of acting politically in the construction and maintenance of the nature of headship. On that basis, I adjudged their epistemological, axiological and ontological stances to be biased potentially and unsupportive of a critical review of the model of headship contained in the national standards, or of the programmes or preparation and support they provided or supported financially. I was also influenced in this debate by the review of the contemporary literature I present in Chapter 2 and by my previously conducted formal and informal investigations of the job.

The first two research questions identified lent themselves most readily to a quantitative approach and provided me with the opportunity to categorise personal characteristics and job competencies to establish a set of standard questions which could form the content of either a structured interview or a self-completion questionnaire. Conversely, the nature of the third research question required an approach that would allow potentially for the emergence of new information and thus lent itself more to a qualitative approach. The richness of data commonly found in a qualitative approach, particularly with use of semi-structured or open interviews, would be an advantage in establishing respondents' suggestions for improvements in the level of support available for beginning headteachers. My conclusion was that the study should be mainly quantitative in nature, so questions were drawn up that reflected leadership and management skill-development of headteachers that were not constrained by the views and actions of government agencies. In order to allow for the emergence of new, grounded, theory I included questions that aimed to investigate the multiple realities of those who occupied the role of headteacher. The instrument designed to meet these demands was a self-completion questionnaire that allowed for open ended responses as well as pre-determined categories of personal characteristics and job competencies. Central in my decision to formulate and distribute a self-completion questionnaire was the limitation of available resources. I was to undertake data collection as a part-time activity within my other employment responsibilities with only a small amount of funding available, which was to pay for incidental expenses. I was fortunate to receive the support of a graduate student from the USA who had chosen to undertake part of her doctoral studies in England and had been assigned to my employing university. With the agreement of both universities I acted as her mentor and guide during this period when she took a largely administrative role

in the design and piloting of the survey instrument and during data collection. I was responsible for eliciting the funding for the survey and took overall management responsibility for questionnaire design, data collection and entry, before personally checking the accuracy of data entry. Data analysis was conducted separately, with all findings and subsequent interpretation reported here being my sole responsibility. The working relationship is described in detail in Chapter 3.

The study is significant in that it is the only survey of headteacher opinion involving substantial numbers that investigates how well prepared respondents felt for the job and how preparation and induction could be improved that has been published since the introduction of the 1988 Education Reform Act. Headteacher opinion in the years following this landmark legislation had been either restricted to small-scale independent research studies or were part of unpublished government agency evaluations. This survey is considered to be the largest data set established on headteacher perceptions (Mansell, 2002) and provides, therefore, empirical data not available elsewhere.

Data collection

A stratified random sample of ten per cent of all serving headteachers in England was established ('n' = 2285), each of whom were notified of the intention to survey them by means of a letter. The sample population received the questionnaire in February, 1999 and two follow up mailings were conducted with non-respondents during the next three months. Data collection was formally finished in August, 1999, by which time a total of 1405 completed questionnaires had been received, giving an overall response rate of 62 per cent. The total of completed questionnaires was supplemented

by information from non-respondents ('n'=99) that allowed me to account for 66 per cent of the sample population. The most consistent reason offered for non-completion was a lack of time. Such a response was not surprising, given the statutory demands on headteachers for information returns, especially on target-setting for their school. The second most popular reason for non-completion was changed circumstances at the school, particularly caused by a change of headteacher. Sixteen messages were received from Acting Headteachers who were, of course, not eligible for the study.

Data analysis and interpretation

Quantitative data yielded by the questionnaire were analysed using a variety of statistical techniques. Qualitative data were subjected to content analysis through the use of open coding (Strauss, 1987), thus enabling unexpected elements of the data to be analysed.

Limitations of the study

A number of limitations relating to the study are identified and discussed in depth in Chapter 3. These include the problems commonly associated with the use of a questionnaire as a major instrument of data collection and its reliance on respondent perception, in some cases requiring respondents to recall those perceptions after an extended period. Issues of triangulation, the potential for bias and data contamination are also examined. Conversely a number of strengths with regard to the veridicality of the data are reported, including the volume of quantitative responses and the depth of qualitative responses. Consequently when taking account of the limitations presented, I conclude that the data are secure and have been reported responsibly.

Organisation of the study

This initial chapter is followed by a literature review in Chapter 2 that investigates the issues relating to the career transition, in this case to headship. In this review the transition is established as having a number of features in common with other occupations and school systems, but one that has features unique to England. Three dimensions of career transition are established that are examined through the survey. The methodological framework is established in Chapter 3, with findings from the survey reported in Chapter 4. The findings are related in Chapter 5 to the conceptual framework emerging from the literature review and interpreted for understanding. Emergent issues are reported here, of which the principal issue is the relationship between headteachers and governing bodies, particularly the chair of governors. The implications of this interpretation are considered in Chapter 6 where the outcomes of this study are compared to the developments that have taken place conceptually and in practice since the survey was undertaken. Central in the discussion undertaken in this chapter are the programmes of preparation and support that have been sponsored by central government and its agencies up to April, 2004. The study culminates with a series of recommendations for future action.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The impetus for this study is the belief that beginning headteachers in England are not fully prepared for the position through prior training or experience and, consequently, require access to a range of development activities and support before appointment and during induction that will make them more effective in their new job. That belief has been established as a result of previous research I had carried out, singly and jointly, in the period preceding the data collection for this study (Male, 1996; Daresh and Male, 2000; Male and Merchant, 2000). That body of research had produced data that suggested that beginning headteachers were not fully prepared for the job, particularly in being able to deal with the transition to the formal leadership position that was integral to the concept of the post, findings that were also reflected in similar, contemporary studies (Dunning, 1996; Draper and McMichael, 1998).

The evidence base accumulated by the end of the twentieth century, including my own research, corresponded with the earlier study of the transition to headship conducted during the early 1980s (Weindling and Earley, 1987). Their work, however, was confined to beginning headteachers in secondary schools and took place prior to the implementation of the 1988 Education Reform Act which introduced a radical change to the nature of headship. There was a need, therefore, to conduct a more contemporary investigation into the preparation and support needs for aspirant and newly appointed headteachers as they made the transition to the job and on a wider basis to include headteachers from different phases and aspects of schooling in the maintained sector.

Despite the many investigations and substantial debate into the nature of headship, particularly during the 1990s, there is still no agreement as to what combination of

personal qualities and work-oriented skills constitute the necessary ingredients for successful job performance. My contention is that we do not have a commonly accepted theory of headship, with the result that a number of researchers and commentators in the field have sought to explain the nature of headship in action in relation to other theory bases, to other school systems and to other occupations.

The theory base most commonly used in relation to headship is leadership theory. Extensive discourse and policy making in the latter stages of the twentieth century has used 'leadership' to explain the purpose of headship and to justify a series of national policy decisions with regard to the training and development of headteachers. The creation of the National College for School Leadership, first signalled by the Prime Minister in 1998, and its subsequent centrality to programmes of training and development for headteachers, is testimony to the assertion that leadership theory has perhaps been seen as a substitute for a theory of headship. Crow (2003), in his review of preparation programmes, attempts to explain some of issues relating to the establishment of a knowledge base for school leadership but, like most reports on the topic, his work draws on theory bases drawn from other occupations or school systems. His conclusions are not based on empirical research in England, although he does implicitly claim an applicability of his evidence base to the nature of headship. His report is indicative of the way in which headship is understood either through extrapolations of associated theories, through conclusions based on limited data sources or through assumptions. My conclusion, based on a review of research conducted by myself and others, was that a gap remained in the knowledge base of headship that limited the effectiveness of the modes of preparation and support for induction in place for the nation's headteachers at the end of the twentieth century.

The move into headship appears, and has often been treated, as similar in nature to the transition needed for any leadership or management position where the incumbent is to be the chief officer of the organisation. I intend to test that supposition in this chapter by examining the relevance of the literature and research findings from a range of occupations, including headship, in aiding understanding of the needs of newly appointed headteachers in England.

The transition to formal leadership

The general trend of the literature is to suggest that in order to be successful a new postholder must have a range of personal capabilities and skills sufficient for the demands of the job. Particularly helpful in the framing of this transition from aspirant to practising principal officer, are the conclusions of Gronn (1993) who, in studies of leadership succession, developed a four stage model that begins with Formation, passes through Accession to Incumbency and finally ends with Divestiture. During the formative stage the future leader is subject to a range of early influences from agencies such as the family, school and other reference groups which shape their personality as a leader. During accession to the post, the prospective leader makes progress to their future position through the creation of knowledge and expertise appropriate to the post. In some instances this is a planned accession by the individual, but it may also be a path that is unplanned with the prospective leader not necessarily recognising themselves as a putative postholder during the learning process. The period of incumbency covers the total period of the post, from appointment to leaving. The period of divestiture covers the period of leaving for the retiring and the disenchanted or a period of re-invention for the enchanted. This study

seeks to investigate the period of headship to the point where the new postholder successfully achieves an occupational identity, which feels both comfortable and effective, and will thus be concentrating on issues from the formative, accession and early stages of succession.

Identity in practice is a way of being in the world, although it is not equivalent to self-image, suggests Wenger (1998) who sees experience and its social interpretation informing each other in the formation of occupational identity. Identity, therefore, is "a locus of social selfhood and, by the same token, a locus of social power" that includes the power to belong, to be legitimate and recognises the vulnerability of belonging (Wenger, 1998: 207). Consequently, the definition of occupational identity used in this study is an individual assessment by the headteacher of the point where she or he feels confident and competent in the job and experiences feelings of comfort and effectiveness with regard to the demands of the position. In reaching this state, the incumbent will inevitably have filtered the feedback, views and opinions offered by others, particularly those who are personally and occupationally close to them, but will have ultimately satisfied their own criteria of effectiveness.

Southworth (1995), in an ethnographic study of a male primary headteacher, explored notions of self in order to establish the concept of occupational identity for his subject. Primarily using a psychodynamic model, the work is useful in distinguishing differences between personal and social self, situational self and substantial self. In establishing a concept of occupational identity for the headteacher studied, Southworth draws on the work of Nias (1989), particularly to explore differences between situational and substantial selves. Situational selves are developed from

interaction with others whilst the substantial self is a core of self-defining beliefs relatively impervious to change (Southworth 1995). The conclusion I draw is that the point where a headteacher feels comfortable with the demands of the new position is where situational self is aligned with substantial self. Fundamental to this conclusion is the way in which headteachers perceive themselves and how they are perceived.

Socialisation Theory

Other investigations into the succession to formal leadership have drawn on alternative theory bases and Barnett (2001) points to the way that socialisation theory has been touted as a means of distinguishing between the aspects of personal development that relate to joining an organisation and adopting an occupational identity. Most commentators make use of Merton's (1968) definition of socialisation:

> The process by which people selectively acquire the values, attitudes, the interests, skills and knowledge – in short the culture – current in groups to which they are, or seek to become, a member.

'Socialisation', however, has been described as one of the vaguest terms employed in the vocabulary of the social sciences and has included descriptors drawn from psychology, sociology, anthropology, ethology, pedagogy, social work and political science (Brezinha, 1994). Merton's definition corresponds mostly to social situations, has been interpreted narrowly in examining issues relating to entering headship and is described as having two aspects: 'professional' and 'organisational' (Weindling, 2000: 1). Organisational socialisation is defined by Schein (1988) as the process by which one learns the knowledge, values, and behaviours required to perform a specific role within a particular organisation. 'Professional socialisation', however,

attempts to describe the process which involves learning what it is to be a headteacher, becoming familiar with the real and potential power and authority associated with the position and adopting the mantle of 'boss'; (Daresh, 2002: 116). A person begins to learn this prior to taking up the role, from their own experience of schooling and teaching, as well as through formal courses, but organisational socialisation can only, by definition, begin after taking up the post (Weindling, 2000: 1).

Professional socialisation

Whilst useful as a descriptor of the process of adaptation to an occupational identity, particularly to a senior role in a social organisation, 'professional socialisation' is too loose a construct to describe the transition to effective headship in maintained schools in England.

Attempts to explore the development and support needed for the transition to headship have drawn on a number of other occupations where high-level decision-making in relation to other humans is a concomitant part of the job. Daresh (1995), for example, explored law, medicine and training for the priesthood, searching for possible lessons for the development and support of future principals in the USA. Eraut (1994) talks of professional knowledge and competence, but uses a wider field of alternative occupations, taking account of what he calls 'semi-professions' which do not have the range of traits associated with the 'ideal' professions of medicine and law. Studies such as these remain inappropriate to headship for several reasons, however, principally on the grounds that there has been no requirement formally to prepare for headship and it is a mid-career development that requires a different range of

knowledge and behaviours than those needed to enter teaching as a career. Members of the 'ideal' professions undertake vocationally oriented studies prior to entering the job as do most, if not all, of the occupations that could claim to be professions. Whilst it is possible to draw some parallels with other careers, there is a fundamental difference in that headteachers do not necessarily begin their career with headship in mind. All pre-qualified doctors, for example, expect to become doctors in time and so can manage the transition into the job in line with the development of their knowledge base and competence.

The notion of 'profession' is problematic, therefore, as there is no clear defining combination of traits that distinguishes between one occupation and another. Indeed there is enough dialogue and debate about the notion of 'profession' that use of the term has to be clarified for sense to be made of the lessons to be drawn from other occupations. Eraut (1994: 1) draws on the work of Johnson (1972; 1984) in order to define 'professionalism' as an ideology, rather than an accepted state, and 'professionalisation' as the process by which occupations seek to gain status and privilege in accord with that ideology. Professionalism defined as an ideology means that no agreed criteria exist that allow for the classification of an occupation as a profession. Consequently 'professionalism' is a state of mind, rather than a classified occupation, characterised by the behaviours of those who occupy the job. Acceptance of the occupation as a profession will thus be determined by the manner in which its members manage themselves and through the way in which society in general is prepared to accept this process of self-management as security for the anticipated actions and behaviours of its members. Following this definition of 'profession',

notions of 'professionalism' thus describe the manner by which members of the profession subscribe to, and exhibit behaviours that correspond to, their agreed mores.

The debate about professions is important as attempts to define the nature of occupations, particularly those in the field of education, frequently make liberal, yet unqualified, use of the word in order to aid sense-making. It is common, for example to see the classification of teaching as a profession and of the actions of members of the teaching profession, including headteachers, as 'professional'. Such use of the terminology surrounding notions of profession tend to overlook, however, another, perhaps central, component of this 'ideology of professionalism'. Eraut (1994) argues that this ideology is aligned to models of professionalism which accord primacy of place to the professional knowledge base and do not take account of social control of expertise that 'ideal' professions follow whereby clients are protected against incompetence, carelessness and exploitation by the experts themselves who thus exhibit moral probity, service orientation and codes of conduct as evidence of their professionalism (Eraut, 1994: 2). In other words the definition of a 'profession' is frequently conducted through examination of the preparation for the occupation, the creation of an appropriate and effective knowledge base, rather than also looking at the modes of self management and control of the behaviours of members of that occupation when they are doing the job. 'Ideal professions' would thus exhibit both an appropriate knowledge base and self-control mechanisms that ensure member behaviours correspond to the mores of the profession.

The move to headship is thus disqualified on both these counts of professionalism as there is no common knowledge base and no mechanism for self-control of

headteacher expertise. Consequently any use of the word 'profession' in this study in relation to preparing to become a headteacher, or relation to a serving headteacher, will be considered as a convenient shorthand for the knowledge base and levels of competence associated with the position, as other authors use the term, and is not a tacit acceptance by me that the job is a 'profession'.

Weindling (2000: 1) makes use of professional socialisation to describe the transition to headship, however, and can be adjudged to have tacitly accepted the link between the 'professions' and headship. If we accept that as another example of convenient shorthand, the key point that Weindling makes is that 'professional' socialisation can be learnt, at least in part, prior to taking up role. This has been described as a process of 'anticipatory socialisation' (Taylor, 1968: 147; Greenfield, 1985: 100; Eraut, 1994: 31) whereby the prospective postholder prepares themselves through gathering social and technical experiences that will qualify them for the role. Most discussion of anticipatory socialisation is posited on the notion that this is a deliberate process by upwardly mobile aspirants, but Merton draws attention to this process having the propensity to be both conscious and unconscious. In his discussion of anticipatory socialisation, he states:

> Conducing to this stage of anticipatory socialization is the structural circumstances of what can be called role gradations. The individual moves more or less continuously through a sequence of statuses and associated roles, each of which does not differ greatly from the one which has gone before. (Merton, 1968: 239)

Greenfield interprets Merton as suggesting that these gradations may serve as informal antecedent preparation that is unnoticed by the individual performer. In short, it may be an unconscious process that brings the individual to a position where

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there is a high likelihood of acquiring some of the values and orientations associated with new, but related roles and statuses (Greenfield 1977). Although Greenfield's work at that time was not tested empirically, the hypothesis bears a striking similarity to the way in which teachers pass through a number of graded roles on route to headship (Daresh and Male, 2000) and may go some way to explaining how beginning headteachers appear to have assimilated a comprehensive range of technical and personal skills and capabilities despite often having no formal programme of occupationally focused training and development. Whilst it is inevitably true that some teachers enter the 'profession' with ambitions to be a headteacher, and thereby systematically prepare themselves in terms of knowledge and experience appropriate to the anticipated job, there is nothing inherent in their preparation as teachers that would lead to that conclusion. Not all of the qualities that make them successful as a teacher, therefore, will automatically transfer to headship.

Use of the notion of professional socialisation as the theory base that explains the succession to headship has an attractiveness, however, as it can be demonstrated to cover the periods of formation, accession and the early days of incumbency, thus covering the period prior to achieving an occupational identity as well as the period of 'situational adjustment', the process by which individuals take on the characteristics required by the situation in which they participate (Becker, 1964) some of which are contingent on earlier life experiences. The contributing features of personal formation from earlier experiences in life have not been a major area of investigation in the study of succession to headship, although use of small numbers of individual life histories has been made for headship in general by Ribbins and Marland (1994), in special schools by Rayner and Ribbins (1998) and in tracking the career development

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of women in education and headship by Hall (1996) and Coleman (1996). More investigations have been conducted on the period of preparation undertaken as an adult, particularly those learning experiences considered as anticipatory. Greenfield (1985: 100) provides a useful perspective on the pre-entry stage of the career of principals in the USA; he makes a distinction between the 'technical' and 'moral' socialisation undertaken in preparation. He defines moral socialisation as the development of attitudes, values and beliefs required for adequate performance in role, whilst technical socialisation is concerned with the development of knowledge and behaviour that reflect technical, conceptual and social skills and activities associated with role enactment. The combination of these two socialisation processes, he argues, provide individuals with the knowledge, ability and dispositions needed for performance in role.

Organisational socialisation

The discussion conducted on the transition to headship through socialisation has focused, so far, on the processes by which the individual comes to terms with the demands of a job – in this case as a headteacher. An over-emphasis on formal leaders as single, self-conscious and self-actualised people, however, runs the risk of missing major components of the succession process (Weaver-Hart, 1993). There is a specificity of headship in England, however, that moves it beyond the generic field in that each appointment is to a school, rather than a system. The dynamics of becoming a part of that organisation are complex and interactive; to take on the mantle of formal leader for the same organisation is even more complicated. Socialisation theory, in this instance organisational socialisation, has again been used to explain the process

and to assist newcomers with effecting successful transitions to the job as formal leader of the school.

A large body of work exists on this aspect of the socialisation process where previous writers have suggested stage theories to explain aspects of transition to the job experienced by formal school leaders. Weaver-Hart (1993), for example, made an extensive theoretical and empirical study of principals in the USA entering their new role that illustrated the range of influences that shaped the position. In completing the study, she drew on the concept of organisational socialisation to examine the effects of leaders and organisations from many directions, recognizing that leader successors are newcomers who must be integrated into existing groups, validated by social processes, and granted legitimacy by subordinates and superiors before they can have significant impacts on actions taken by others. Her work allowed her to emphasise the two-way interaction between the new leader and the organisation and to delineate a three stage process of Encounter, Adjustment and Stabilisation. The arrival stage, or encounter, begins immediately after appointment and requires much learning by the new leaders of the social setting in the school. The second stage, of adjustment, involves the task of fitting in. The new leader must reach an accommodation with the work role, the people with whom he or she interacts and the existing school culture. More stable patterns begin to emerge in the third stage by which time new leaders would have resolved conflicts about how their approach fits into the organisation and will have located themselves within the context.

Whilst there is much to be learned from the Weaver-Hart study, there are differences between the nature of headship in England and the nature of principalship in the USA

which must be considered. Headteachers have much more in the way of direct responsibility than their American counterparts. Principals are appointed to a system, the school district, and have a direct, upward line-management relationship with the superintendent. It is not uncommon to find a principal being appointed to a school by the superintendent and for the same principal to serve at that level in several schools within the same district. Governance is at a district, rather than school level, with an elected school board taking responsibility for all schools in the district. These governance and management structures contrast with those to be found in the maintained school system in England which is far more localised, particularly since the implementation of the 1988 Education Reform Act. English headteachers in state maintained schools often find it difficult to nominate their 'superior' in the system and when asked to choose are torn between the governing body and the chief education officer of the LEA. The consequence is that many of the issues referred to by Weaver-Hart regarding relationships with 'superiors' are only either tangentially relevant or largely irrelevant in using her work to understand the transition to headship in England.

In pointing out, however, that first-time principals experience a double socialization experience – professional socialisation to school administration and organisational socialisation to their immediate work setting (Weaver-Hart, 1993) – she does provide us with an important lens by which we can view the transition to headship in England for beginning headteachers. The essential difference is the way in which the incoming principal or headteacher is viewed by those with whom they work most closely. As discussed in Chapter 1, the general societal view of leaders in the UK is shaped by a national culture that expects the postholder to be the decision-maker or

arbiter of collective decisions where there is conflict. The more senior the colleague in the school, or the higher the socio-economic status of those interacting with the headteacher, the more it appears there will be anticipation that decisions will be open to discussion and debate (Hofstede, 1994).   Whilst there are strong similarities between US and UK national cultures in their view of the formal leadership position, there is much more scope within the British education systems for local, institutional decision-making than with their American colleagues with a concomitant higher level of personal accountability for the headteacher.   There is more scope for passing decisions upwards, therefore, and a greater possibility of adaptation to the existing social mores in the US school system than exists for English headteachers who are frequently appointed on the expectation that they will provide new vision and change.

Irrespective of the cultural differences, incoming school leaders need to establish both their own occupational identity and manage the relationships with people who have influence if the transition is to be both effective and comfortable. They must come to terms with current modes and methods of school and administration, particularly if they are new to the LEA, at the same time they are familiarising themselves with the individual adaptation to the position of authority which, in the case of English headteachers, is often viewed as ultimate. The identification of stages of adaptation, and in some instances accompanying time frames, is useful in determining the modes of development and support that would be most appropriate for beginning headteachers.   Parkay and Hall (1992), in replicating the NFER study of headship (Weindling and Earley, 1987) for example, established a five stage developmental model to describe the career patterns of new principals culminating in what they labelled 'professional actualisation'.   The first three stages – survival, control and

stability – bearing a close resemblance to those of Weaver-Hart. Day and Bakioglu (1996) surveyed the perceptions of headteachers in an English region in regard to their development and received 196 responses to a self-completion questionnaire (62.4 per cent response rate). This was followed by interviews with an opportunity sample of 34 of those respondents, further follow-up interviews with five from that sample and an examination of relevant school documentation. In employing this methodology, they claimed a secure data set from which they were able to suggest that headteachers in England pass through several developmental phases from taking up post to retirement. Phase 1, they concluded, was initiation with headteachers passing through idealism, uncertainty and adjustment over a period of about three years, with the remaining phases describing the period of incumbency to divestiture. Reeves, Moos, and Forrest (1998) interviewed 29 headteachers (5 in Denmark and 24 from England and Scotland) to show a fairly consistent developmental pattern which the researchers divided into eight stages, each of which seemed to mark a qualitative change in the school leaders' experience and orientation to practice. The first six are relevant to this study, whilst the last two refer to the latter stages of incumbency in role:

Stage 1	The Warm Up	(Pre-entry)
Stage 2	Entry	(0 – 6 months)
Stage 3	Digging the Foundations	(6 months – 1 year)

During the first three stages headteachers are trying to come to terms with the school and the school is trying to get the measure of the new leader.

Stage 4	Taking Action	(9 months – 2 years)
Stage 5	Getting above Floor Level	(18 months – 3 years)
Stage 6	The Crunch	(2 years – 5 years)

The consensus to emerge from these studies was that the early stages of incumbency, the period of establishing their occupational identity, lasted for between two and three years for the principals and headteachers studied. The first year of their induction was characterised by a period of cognitive dissonance as personal aspirations and expectations were tempered by the demands of the job and of the organisation. The outcome was for the individual headteacher to reappraise their ambitions and, frequently, to make a rapid adjustment in order to match the reality of the job in action before being able to effect real change. The realignment of substantial and situational selves, in this context, was usually complete by the end of the third year.

Work on the principle of organisational socialisation was carried out in a non-educational setting by Gabarro (1987), although his work can be shown to be of relevance in most fields. He conducted research on 17 senior management successions in business and industry in the US and Europe (including three case studies in the UK). Gabarro pointed out that while there has been research on management succession, very little work had examined the activities and problems facing a new manager after taking up post. His study tries to fill this gap in the succession process. Gabarro (1987: 6) calls the process 'taking charge' which he defines in the following way;

> By taking charge, I do not mean just orienting oneself to a new assignment. Taking charge, as I use the term, refers to the process by which a manager establishes mastery and influence in a new assignment. By mastery, I mean acquiring a grounded understanding of the organisation, its tasks, people, environment, and problems. By influence, I mean having an impact on the organisation, its structure, practices, and performance. The process begins when a manager starts a new assignment and ends when he or she has mastered it in sufficient depth to be managing the organisation as efficiently as the resources, constraints and the manager's own ability allow.

Using his data Gabarro found that patterns stood out and formed a series of five chronological stages. The taking-charge process can be characterised as occurring in a series of predictable stages of learning and action. These stages are:

- *Taking Hold* (the first 6 months): A period of intense learning as the manager develops a cognitive map, or mental model, of the organisation. This involves a process of orientation to the organisation, and a process of evaluation - an assessment of staff, understanding where the problems lie, and establishing priorities. There are lots of management actions during this stage as well as learning. There are corrective actions to address the problems which become apparent as the manager develops their cognitive map. 'Turnaround' situations often involved immediate changes to deal with urgent problems;

- *Immersion* (from approx. 6 to 12 months): This is a very important period of deeper learning and diagnosis. It involves relatively little organisational change activity. Managers develop a much better understanding of the basic issues and underlying problems. They often question more sharply if they have the right people in place as they will have now gained an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the staff;

- *Reshaping* (from approx. 12 to 21 months): The time of major change when the new manager attempts to reconfigure various aspects of the organisation to implement the ideas from the previous period of immersion. The transition between immersion and reshaping often involves the use of task groups and external consultants;

- *Consolidation* (from approx. 21 to 27 months): A period in which earlier changes are consolidated. The learning and diagnosis here tend to be evaluative. The manager and key colleagues assess the consequences of the changes made earlier and take corrective actions. They need to deal with any unanticipated problems which arose;

- *Refinement* (from approx. 27 to 36 months): A period of fine-tuning with relatively little major additional learning. The managers had by this point 'taken charge' and were no longer a new manager. By now, they had either established their credibility and power base, or they had not. In addition, the relative calm could be disturbed by changes in the external world.

Gabarro found that the organisational changes managers made as they worked through these stages characteristically occurred in three waves: the first wave occurs during the Taking-Hold stage, the second, and typically largest, during the Reshaping stage, and the last and smallest during the Consolidation stage. These stage and wave patterns are found in successful transitions regardless of the kind of succession, the type of industry of the organisation involved, or the manager's prior functional background.

Weindling (2000) made use of the data collected over a ten-year period from headteachers involved in the original NFER study (Weindling and Earley, 1987) to consolidate these studies of the socialisation process into stages of headship development. He considers the process begins before appointment (Stage 0 -

Preparation) and is discernibly different after entry between Stage 1 (Entry and Encounter) and Stage 4 (Refinement) which, he concludes, is achieved in approximately the third or fourth year and thus follows the early part of incumbency that forms the focus of this study. The first three stages of headship after appointment correspond, therefore, to the adaptation the individual makes to the nature of the role and the school within which they work. The Entry and Encounter stage covers the first few months and is characterised by the centrality of the sense-making process whereby the new headteacher develops a cognitive map of the complexities of the situation, the people, the problems and the school culture. Stage 2, Taking Hold, usually happens during the first year and is the time when the headteacher develops a deeper understanding of key issues and begins to challenge the taken-for-granted nature of the school. This stage was frequently characterised by a period of leniency in terms of staff response to change initiated by the new headteacher, a time Weindling refers to as the 'honeymoon period', although this was not universally true with many negative situations also being reported during this stage. Stage 3 he labels Reshaping, a process that typically begun during the second year. By this time the new headteacher had experienced a complete annual cycle of school events and had learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the staff. Conversely, the staff had also learned about the strengths and weakness of the new head, and the expectations of both the new head and the staff had become more realistic. Stage 4 is seen as the time somewhere in the third or fourth year when most structural change was in place and the headteachers were 'hitting their stride'.

Weindling's model of stage development is thus more attuned to the situation faced by English headteachers than can be perceived in socialisation studies conducted in

other school or social systems, as it is more sympathetic to the opportunities for determining action within the school that are inherent in the nature of headship. It recognises the tension between being accepted within the organisation, the process of organisational socialisation, and the anticipation that the newly appointed headteacher will provide leadership and direction that will change the existing organisation. The reconciliation of those competing demands produces a period of dissonance in establishing an occupational identity that most studies conclude is usually completed during the first three years in post. Programmes of preparation and support for the induction should include learning processes, it can be concluded, that will help beginning headteachers with the resolution of these early experiences and develop an occupational identity that shows a high correlation between substantive and situational self.

Caution needs to be exhibited with regard to the Weindling model, however, if only for the longevity of the original data. First collection of the data began in the early 1980s, extended over a three-year period, and was later extended to include five-year and ten-year reviews of the same respondents. All respondents were from secondary schools and thus were appointed long before the enactment of the landmark legislation of the 1988 Education Reform Act which fundamentally changed the management and governance relationships in England. The model should thus be considered as illustrative and informative rather than generalisable. Further work needs to be conducted in order to investigate the potential for different learning and development needs for beginning headteachers from other phases of schooling and other possible differentiating factors, such as gender and cultural background. Further investigation is also essential to take account of the changed context following the

1988 Education Reform Act and other subsequent legislation and government actions that have taken effect in the last decade of the twentieth century.

There are other factors that are inherent to the nature of social systems, however, that need to be considered before concluding this exploration of the process of organisational socialisation. Weaver-Hart (1993) cites the work of Van Maanen (1978) who demonstrated that organisations, unconsciously or consciously, apply a number of tactics to integrate new members. Later work by Van Maanen and Schein (1979) categorised socialisation tactics into paired comparisons such as collective or individual; formal or informal; sequential or random; fixed in time or variable; serial or disjunctive, or; demanding investiture or divestiture. Jones (1986) modified this classification to produce the three broad areas of Context, Content and Sociality. The context related to whether the socialisation was collective or individual and formal or informal. The body of knowledge to be learnt (the content) was either sequential or random and fixed or variable in time. The sociality of socialisation was either serial or disjunctive and involves investiture or divestiture. Weaver-Hart (1993) translates these terms into a clearer understanding. The context a person encounters can either be individual or in a group of other new members (collective or individual). The content may be set up in sequence and each new aspect of knowledge builds upon previous learning or may consist of unplanned or random learning opportunities. This learning may need to be undertaken in a fixed amount of time or be open to individual need. The context can impart a strong influence on the socialisation process through the use of role models (serial) or be free from role models (disjunctive). When following on from a strong role model, the social pressure (sociality) requires the new member to become a part of a serial socialisation process; where no significant role

models exist the new member may build a whole new role. Social pressures may also require that the new member divest old identities and concepts of self (divestiture) or reaffirm and reinforce the existing self-concept (investiture). When the new occupation offers little challenge to their skills and values their existing sense of self, the new member is reinforced and affirmed (investiture). When the demands of the new position are such that there is a need to make substantial adjustments to the new member's self concept and their professional identity is challenged, divestiture occurs.

Adapting these aspects of the socialisation process to the work situation immediately demonstrates the potential for a large range of responses from the organisation itself and from the attendant organisations in the social system. Beginning headteachers in England are generally appointed to the school (the organisation) to follow a previous incumbent who may have been a positive or negative role model and one who may have left for a multitude of reasons (e.g. promoted, sacked, retired, dead) with an accompanying image and memory. Consequently they may be expected to do nothing, something or everything in terms of style, social interactions and leading change. New headteachers can also experience disjunctive socialisation if they differ significantly from the characteristics of those commonly appointed to the position. Women appointed to be head of a secondary school, for example, or the appointment of someone from an ethnic minority to the position of headteacher may have to negotiate their way through ambiguity with less support as there have been few similar role models and sources of support (Coleman, 1996; Ortiz and Marshall, 1988; Scheurich, 1995; Shakeshaft, 1987; Valverde, 1980).

The demands of the larger system also impact on the expectations of the new headteacher, with national and local government both contributing to the creation of the environment that determines both the means and the ends of the school process. LEAs are usually keen to ensure that administrative routines are understood, with much in the way of their sponsorship for induction processes favouring those ends rather than wider issues. Central government has made a significant impact on the school process in the last quarter of the twentieth century through a raft of legislation and the introduction of the genre of the market (Ball, 1994) and a national system of inspection that has become the principal enforcement mechanism for government policies and, consequently, has largely determined the management structure and process of maintained schools (Bolam, 1997: 270).

The existence of such a wide range of intervening variables makes it extremely difficult to predict the induction and development needs of a new headteacher. Some issues are personal and relate to the development of their self-concept and self-image in their quest for an occupational identity. Some issues are specific to the context of the school and are set largely within a local social system that does not lend itself to generalisation in terms of determining a framework of preparation and support on a national scale. Finally, some of the agenda of national government may have stifled creativity at the local level, producing a custodial orientation whereby innovation is curtailed by the need to ensure minimum standards of performance (Jones, 1986). Beginning headteachers face issues of divestiture, therefore, as they realign their previous experience and expertise with the demands of their new job, requiring them to have some personal support in preparation and through the early stages of incumbency.

The training, development and education of beginning headteachers

Formal programmes of preparation and induction for headteachers remained absent from the English maintained school system until the end of the twentieth century, thus placing the onus on the individual to manage the transition process. The absence of a commonly accepted body of knowledge similarly inclined the transition process to a set of unplanned, even random learning experiences that took place (or not) in an individual time-frame. Issues of serial or disjunctive succession and investiture or divestiture were, by definition, a part of the transition process associated with joining an organisation but, again, were generally resolved at an individual level as few systems or resources existed to support the aspirant and beginning headteacher through the learning experience necessary for their role in that organisation. Major studies into the transition process engaged in by and for beginning principals in the USA (Duke, Isaacson, Sagor and Schmuck, 1984), in Canada (Leithwood, Begley and Cousins, 1994) and of headteachers in England (Weindling and Earley, 1987) indicated that informal experiences dominated their experience.

This benign approach to preparation and support where "the decision to leave the process to chance, dependent on the mix of people, issues, power and events that happen to coincide" is described as a 'tactic' by Weaver-Hart (1993: 21), but it was an approach that was shown by Ofsted inspections to be problematic. Ofsted concluded that although the quality of headteacher leadership and management had continually improved since inspections began in 1994, some headteachers (one in 12 primary headteachers and one in 20 secondary headteachers) had still been found to be wanting in their capability to fulfil the expectations of the role (Office for Standards

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in Education, 2002a). This finding raised concerns about the random nature of this model of preparation which Duke *et al.* (1984) likened to the analogy of 'sink or swim' as a process of socialisation, whilst Lortie (1975: 79) suggests "this kind of socialisation leaves room for the emergence and reinforcement of idiosyncratic experience and personal synthesis".

History shows that systemic responses to the development of school-based senior staff for their leadership and management role (delineated below) began to emerge only in the second half of the twentieth century. Initially these responses consisted of knowledge transition through university-based, HMI-sponsored and LEA courses which were mainly off-site and off-the-job. In other words, most development activities were knowledge-based and took place at a venue separate to the school and thus were limited in the encouragement or support for the application of that knowledge to practice. Central government funding became available during the 1980s in attempts to both widen and standardise theory-based programmes, but it was the 1990s before government policy shifted to the development of managers through a range of on-site and on-the-job activities, designed to encourage the development of more effective practice through the more direct application of theory to practice. This strategy continued to shift government-funded training and development activities mainly toward a competence-based model of assessment and development through the last decade of the twentieth century, ultimately culminating in a series of formal programmes for aspirant and serving headteachers. The formal programmes were characterised by close definition of development objectives although two, more open approaches, the Headteacher Mentoring and Headlamp schemes, were also offered to support beginning headteachers.

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Consistency of experience was not an option during the first part of this recent history with only a small proportion of the population of senior school managers being able to engage in any formal programmes. A DfES-commissioned survey of in-service training conducted in 1967 showed only about 3 per cent of teachers to have attended courses in school organisation in the period 1964-7, and almost all these courses were less than one week in length (cited in Weindling and Earley, 1987). The NFER study, conducted in the early 1980s, reported induction processes (offered only by the LEAs) as being very perfunctory and short-term, with only 26 per cent of headteachers studied reporting any formal procedures lasting longer than one day (Weindling and Earley, 1987). A review of programmes designed to enhance school management undertaken by a central government task force, the SMTF, at the end of the 1980s demonstrated that only 11 per cent of the target population of headteachers and other school-based senior staff had attended government sponsored courses (School Management Task Force, 1990). By the time the research was conducted for this study in 1999 just over 400 headteachers had 'graduated from the NPQH and just over 3500 had completed Headlamp (Appendix 1). These figures meant that the vast majority of serving headteachers in England had experienced unplanned, random and informal processes that constituted their induction as a beginning headteacher.

Early programmes of development

As indicated above, provision and opportunities for headteachers to engage in formal training, development or education opportunities for senior staff in schools were not evident in the first half of the twentieth century. The earliest apparent thoughts on the topic during the second half of the twentieth century only appeared in 1950 in a paper

published by the University of London Institute of Education, which tentatively suggested:

> That teachers of experience should be able to follow courses designed to illuminate in a liberal way problems of educational organisation and administration [and that] such courses should serve education much as the Staff College serves the Army as a preparation for leadership. (W.O.Lester Smith, cited in Baron 1956: 299)

There were few attempts to establish a staff college during the remainder of the century and effort was focused instead, particularly those of central government, on producing formal programmes of education, training and professional development. HMI organised various programmes, including the one week course organised by the Committee on Staffing and Management of Secondary Schools (COSMOS), which was the most frequently cited aspect of formal management education in this early period (Weindling and Earley, 1987: 43). The 'COSMOS group' organised sixteen one-week courses which attracted some one thousand headteachers and LEA officers by 1971 (Glatter, 1972: 2). Some COSMOS courses were still running well into the 1980s. Weindling and Earley reported LEAs as also running management courses of varying length and intensity which largely concentrated on local issues or the sharing of experience, ideas and good practice.

One of the early programmes of management education to appear was at the University of London Institute of Education in 1967. Although the programme was funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation, which had charitable status, it fell into the category of typical higher education provision for leadership and management where the programme was university-based and dealt with abstract rather than concrete

examples of management issues. During this period universities dominated the provision for the development of senior staff. Typically this was achieved through the provision of (usually higher) degree level programmes which investigated management education and administrative/policy studies. For funding reasons, most participants in such degree level provision were part-time students, often at the Open University. Figures collected for a further DfES-commissioned study into the in-service education of teachers (INSET) conducted by the University of Birmingham showed some 4600 students studying for advanced status awards in universities in 1980, including 3000 on Open University courses, although there was no breakdown as to the subject status of those awards (Hughes, 1981).

Towards Management Development

During the 1980s, however, there was a shift in the patterns of activity from management education to management development, defined as a process of furthering the capability of people in post to undertake and be successful at management tasks and activities. In a response to the DfES commissioned survey (Hughes, 1981), the department funded the establishment of the National Development Centre for School Management Training (NDC-SMT) in 1983, based at the University of Bristol. The role of NDC-SMT was to establish a resource bank of materials and set up an information network, undertake the evaluation of some of the new courses, develop new training materials, disseminate findings and offer support to LEAs (Bolam, 1986). Although heavily concerned with the new programmes of school management training in the early stages, the NDC-SMT soon widened its contribution towards the broader perspective of management development, defined as the enhancement of management capability rather than just knowledge, particularly in

terms of supporting school-based work. A number of local projects made use of different approaches, including self-development, action learning, team-building, organisational development, job rotation and action research.

In addition to the establishment of NDC-SMT as a resource base, the DfES also invested in the in-depth study of educational administration and management by senior staff in schools. Pennington and Bell (1982) had reported only 40 primary headteachers and five secondary teachers being able to study full-time, whilst on secondment from school, during 1979-80. DfES Circular 3/83, however, established a fund of £2m for LEAs to release headteachers for one-term training opportunities (OTTO) or to send them to a 20-day basic course in management training. Twenty institutes of higher education were approved by the DfES as providers of OTTO and 20-day courses which were designed to improve individual management skills and to provide professional and personal development. The provision was coordinated nationally by the NDC-SMT. Those completing OTTO courses were expected to contribute to the 20-day basic courses and to LEA INSET provision. The initiative was supported again in subsequent years.

The review undertaken by the SMTF at the end of the decade signalled a shift in tactics in order to widen the audience. Subsequently charged with the responsibility to enact the recommendations of their report, the SMTF changed the intent and nature of government-sponsored support to management development in schools, as they sought to enable the majority of headteachers and senior staff to engage in activities designed to improve both their individual and school performance. The work of the SMTF is an important development, building on the work of NDC-SMT, as the key

issue to emerge from their work was a belief that practitioners had sufficient capability, knowledge and expertise to help other practitioners develop their leadership and management capability. The recommendation contained within their final report that management development should move from off-site, off-job provision to on-site, on-job support signalled a likely end to the dominance of higher education in terms of providing opportunities to enhance leadership and management capability in schools, particularly those of the headteacher (School Management Task Force, 1990).

Practitioner knowledge and expertise was to be the driving force for improving the leadership and management capability of the nation's headteachers and other senior staff in schools. This was to become the conventional wisdom throughout the rest of the decade as subsequent government agencies continued to adopt and support this approach. The development of a practitioner-based approach was based on a conceptual framework of competence and competency, initiated through work study and job analyses. Subsequent programmes of preparation and support for headteachers were seemingly underwritten by notions of competence (Bush, 1998; Brundrett, 2001), with protestations from government agencies that this was not the case being dismissed as 'semantic nervousness' (Lumby, 1995: 11).

Competence-based approaches to headteacher development

Attempts to explain the relationship between technical capability and the development of attitudes, values and beliefs appropriate for the job have tended to draw on a range of professions and occupations through job analysis to establish models of 'competence'. Once determined, models of competence provide a template for

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training and development for and into the relevant occupation. The comparison between occupations most commonly used in England has been senior managerial positions in a range of occupations and headship, particularly in the form of competency-based assessment (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996). Such assessment consists of two major approaches, the use of 'personal qualities' emanating mainly from the work of Boyzatis (1982) or the use of an occupational standards approach that details the standards required for the accreditation or evaluation of aspects of work roles. Advocates of a competence-based approach claim that it will provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of an "education manager's job" and will contribute towards theory building and the creation of a framework for appraising performance (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996).

Potentially the job of a headteacher is being examined in this approach only in the light of their management role and not in the wholeness of their role, particularly with regard to teaching and learning. The alignment of headship with management is seemingly based on the premise that teaching and headship are two different occupations. It is a requirement for all headteachers in maintained schools to have qualified teacher status (School Teachers Pay and Conditions Act, 2002). We can be sure, therefore, that all headteachers have served time as a classroom practitioner. The preparation for teaching bears little comparison with the preparation for headship, however, unlike the vocational preparation for many other professional or management-focused occupations. Southworth (1995) argues that headship is the combination of occupational self as teacher with the occupational self as headteacher, with the one informing and supporting the other, arguing that in both selves control of others is a key feature. Southworth's position is, in part, formed by research of

headship in a primary school at the end of the 1980s and the question of appropriateness a decade later features when most schools now operate with a team of senior staff. In order to accept that there is a strong relationship between occupational self as teacher and occupational self as headteacher, we need to examine the job in some detail. This is where the work on competence becomes useful in understanding headship, based as it is on job analysis.

Eraut (1994) draws on the work of Norris (1991) to distinguish between three concepts in the field of competence: a behaviourist approach applied to competence-based training, a generic competence tradition based mainly in management education and a cognitive competence tradition, most clearly articulated in linguistics. Behaviourist approaches were popular in industrial/occupational psychology, particularly in the USA since the late 1960s, but it is the application of a generic competence tradition to the assessment and development of managers that has been used widely in England. Behaviourist approaches have tended to atomise jobs into a range of tasks and skills, viewing the process as a purely technical matter, and have ignored the social and political dimensions of working life. Constructs of cognitive competence have been rooted in linguistics and research into higher education which have tended, suggests Eraut, to have marginalised this construct of competence although he does see certain relevance in the field for leaders and managers, particularly in the field of education. The construct has yet to make a significant impact on the field of management education, however, and it has been the adaptation of the early work on generic management competences in the identification of leadership and management potential (McLelland, 1973) that has had the most impact on the assessment and development of headteachers in England. As part of a

consultancy project commissioned by the American Management Association during the 1970s, the McBer Corporation built upon McLelland's work when conducting a major research exercise to determine the characteristics of managers who, it was claimed, were superior performers to the average (Boyzatis, 1982). This was the development of the personal qualities approach, which became a critical component of effective management action and performance. In this model it was the combination of the competencies exhibited by the individual, together with the demands of job and the context of the organisation that determined effectiveness in action or performance. When all three components were aligned there was superior performance; where there was dissonance between the components there was average, limited or ineffective performance.

Building on a definition of a competency as "an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job" (Klemp, 1980), Boyzatis was able to describe several important features of a competency:

- A competency can be a motive, trait, skill, aspect of one's self-image or social role, or a body of knowledge which he or she uses;
- Each competency may exist within the individual at various levels, with motives and traits at the unconscious level, and skills at the behavioural level;
- A competency is context dependent, that is, given a different organizational environment, the competency may be evident through other specific actions. (Boyzatis, 1982)

The occupational standards approach to competence differs from the personal qualities approach in that it describes the outcomes that a manager or management team has to achieve in order to demonstrate competent performance. The standards thus attempt to define benchmarks or specifications against which performance can be

assessed.   Both approaches start from a process of job analysis, but the approach adopted by the McBer Corporation sees the identification of tasks/skills as an intermediate step in the identification of personal qualities. Thus the McBer approach describes those components of the person that enable them to be competent, while the occupational standards approach describes those functions of the job at which the person must be competent.

The occupational standards approach, in general management terms, tends to define any characteristic that enhances a job holder's ability to perform effectively and thus divides into progressively smaller parts that have been used to detail the standards of work roles. There was a trend of determining and utilising such standards in the UK by government agencies who established lead bodies and systems of accreditation. The lead body most closely associated with management standards, and thereby headship, was the Management Charter Initiative (MCI), the operating arm of the National Forum for Management Education and Development (NFMED). The system of accreditation employed in determining management capability was devised by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NVCQ) who administered the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), available at a number of levels. Adaptation of this process of competency definition to the job of headteachers was undertaken principally through the work of School Management South, a consortium of 14 LEAs funded by the SMTF in the early 1990s, which employed functional analysis to produce a set of occupational standards for headteachers for school management that contained 41 elements emanating from four key roles (Earley, 1992). 'Competency' thus tended to atomise the jobs and reduce them to lists of highly circumscribed task elements, skills or personal characteristics.

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There is a distinction to be made, therefore, between 'Competency' and 'Competence', with the latter term representing an overarching description. It differs from 'competency' in that it is used to refer to the possession of a specified set of competencies conceptualised either as part of the person performing the job or as part of the job being performed. Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) extend this argument to present a competency as a spectrum with underlying traits and motives at one end and skills, knowledge and output functions at the other end. Competence models, they argue, would draw on a given competency at any point along the spectrum. The quota of traits and skills will thus vary across different competence models. The competence approach thus builds upon behaviour, knowledge, skill, motive, trait and ability. Motives, traits and abilities are more difficult to measure. Definitions of competence which rely on behaviours, knowledge and skills are more visible, observable and conscious and are thus more amenable to measurement, assessment and training.

Spencer and Spencer (1983) attempted to draw the two approaches together through the metaphor of the iceberg. The behaviours, knowledge and skills are visible, 'above the water-line', and are thus observable. The traits, motives and abilities 'sit below the water-line' and contribute, in an invisible way, to skilled behaviour. The consequence is that there is a divergence in the description that is offered by each approach. The personal qualities approach describes those components of a person that enable him or her to be competent, while the occupational standards approach describes those functions of the job at which a person must be competent (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996). The adaptation of this discussion to the definition of a

headteacher's role can be adjudged during the 1990s as having proceeded more towards the occupational standards approach, as there were a number of efforts to establish task definition rather than the range of personal qualities needed to enact the role. The end point in this debate was the national standards for headteachers (Teacher Training Agency, 1997), although the process of defining what Greenfield (1985) suggested as the 'technical' components of headship had passed through a number of intermediate classification systems including a DfES-funded project on the criteria that should be employed in the selection of secondary school headteachers (Morgan, Hall and Mackay, 1983), the management competencies of School Management South (Earley, 1992), the National Education Assessment Centre (NEAC) standards and Headlamp on route to the publication of the national standards in 1997, with a revised version a year later (Teacher Training Agency, 1998a).

NEAC was the first organisation to employ the findings of a competence-based assessment process for headteachers in England, establishing a base in Oxford from which they initially conducted the assessment process before franchising the work more widely. This was a charged service, originally set up by the Secondary Headteachers Association (SHA) in conjunction with Oxford Polytechnic (later Oxford Brookes University), that applied the pioneering work of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in the USA who had been using the assessment centre approach for almost 20 years by the time NEAC started their work in 1992 (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996). Both NASSP and NEAC used 12 identified competencies which, they claimed, experience and research had proved necessary for successful senior management in schools. The assessment centre approach was perceived to have been influential on government thinking in the

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drawing up of the list of tasks and abilities for the Headlamp scheme, launched in 1995, which are described as the first publication of 'headteacher competencies' (West-Burnham and O'Sullivan, 1998). The provenance trail of the competence-based approach grows cold at this point, as no attribution is provided for the development of headteacher 'competencies' within Headlamp or the National Standards for Headteachers. The conclusion that the respective government agencies subscribed to a competence-based approach is supposition, therefore, although the antecedent events would tend to suggest this was the case.

The applicability of a competence-based approach to headteacher development

Extensive claims have been made for a competence-based approach to developing headteacher capability, particularly those emerging from the work of Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) and the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) (Teacher Training Agency, 1998b). Other processes have similarly invested in the personal qualities approach to developing leadership competence and reflecting that into headship (e.g. NEAC, Headlamp). The framework developed by the Hay McBer corporation is credited, for example, with identifying 80-90 per cent of the distinguishing characteristics of superior performance through the 20 competencies, with the remaining amount comprising competence that differs from job to job (West-Burnham and O'Sullivan, 1998). Competence is perceived as generic here, therefore, and transferable between occupations. The logic contained in this argument suggests that a competence-based approach to headteacher development would only be, at best, 20 per cent vocationally specific.

The adoption of a generic competence-based approach to assessment and development in education through the establishment of NEAC in the early 1990s was probably influential and seemingly causal in the development of the list of skills and attributes employed by Headlamp and the National Standards for Headteachers although, as noted earlier, there was no published attribution. Clearer evidence of their influence is evident in the development of the competences for the LPSH programme, however, where research was conducted by the Hay McBer organisation into headship in England with the resulting list of 15 competences emerging from the process (Teacher Training Agency, 1998b). This venture by Hay McBer appears to be the only overt attempt sponsored by government agencies to identify a range of competences that are specific to the occupation of headteacher in England, although the independent study conducted by Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) can lay claim to a similar process.

The process of adaptation employed by Hay McBer in the development of LPSH actually reduced the number of competences from their generic model and, perhaps more importantly, absorbed the occupationally specific aspects of the job into the whole range rather than develop separate competences that are specific to headship. This is an important distinction for it is possible to conclude that a combination of personal qualities and technical skills exist for headship that make it a specific career, rather than one that could theoretically be occupied by someone from another occupation even if the requirement for a headteacher to have qualified teacher status were to be dropped.

The competence approach has been subject to a range of criticism, however, particularly with regard to the underlying concepts on which the framework for superior job performance is created. Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996), for example, detail a range of criticism and alternative perspectives that place a question over the validity of a competence-based approach to assessment and development. The fundamental issue in this regard would appear to be the nature of competence as a construct. Competence-based approaches tend to reduce jobs to lists of highly circumscribed tasks, skills or personal characteristics that will not necessarily reflect the subtleties of the individual context or social environment in which jobs are performed (Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996). The formation of lists of skills, attributes and traits needed for school leadership have exercised the academic community in the USA for over a century as they have sought to establish a knowledge base for school administration (Culbertson, 1988). The process of categorisation has always been compromised by the basic legitimacy of the paradigm on which such a knowledge base has been built. The discourse has been located in the positivist, functionalist paradigm, concludes Scheurich (1995), and has tended to deny the views elicited from other paradigms. Greenfield (1975) argued, however, that educational organisations are mental constructs that reflect the perceptions and interpretations of their members. In short, organisations can be understood only through interpretive modes of enquiry and the application of generic competences to the task of leading a school is difficult, if not impossible, as each school is unique. A view of leadership capabilities is also shaped by the lens through which the process is viewed. Critical theorists, for example, begin with a commitment to emancipatory interests and thus judge events against that ideal, suggests Scheurich (1995), who points out that the determination of a knowledge base is value laden and reflects the locus of power in a society (Littrell and Foster, 1995).

Not only do positivist, functionalist approaches ignore context and notions of liberty, argues Scheurich (1995), but such investigations have also paid little heed to views from other groups of society such as women or ethnic minorities. The knowledge base that has emerged in the USA, and informs the preparation and selection of principals in many states of the union, is argued to be "based on observations and assumptions drawn primarily by males from male experiences" (Shakeshaft, 1987: 150). Similar accusations have been made by researchers and commentators with regard to the potential for Euro-American ethnocentricity of the same knowledge base (Ikpa, 1995; Scheurich, 1995).

Gray (1989) postulated the notion of a 'feminine' or 'nurturing' paradigm as one half of the classification for understanding management styles and approaches, whilst Shakeshaft and others have stressed the importance of these attributes to school effectiveness. As a group "women are more likely to evidence behaviour associated with effective leadership" (Fullan, 1991: 165), although such claims were perceived to be from a limited research base and mainly from the United States (Hall, 1996). Fullan, and others, argued Hall, drew extensively on the work of Rosener (1990) whose study identified characteristics usually associated with women in organisations (e.g. encouraging collaboration, consensus-building) with transformational leadership as a panacea for schools' problems. It was a leadership approach and management style encapsulated by Shakeshaft when describing women's use of language:

> Women tend to use language that encourages community building and is more polite and cheerful than the language of men. A number of studies have documented that in verbal discourse, women are more likely than men to

> express courtesy, gratitude, respect and appreciation. Women show respect for their audience through listening, echoing, summarizing, polite speech and non-antagonistic responses. (Shakeshaft, 1987: 181)

This discussion suggests that women, as a group, exhibit greater capacity to display advanced inter-personal skills than their male counterparts. With the traditional view of effective management and leadership, a largely male dominated paradigm, being substantially challenged, 'feminine' attributes have been elevated to a higher status. Murgatroyd and Gray, for example, suggested effectiveness of schools was linked with qualities such as empathy, warmth, genuineness and concreteness, qualities found in the 'feminine' paradigm (Murgatroyd and Gray, 1984: 41). In her overview of the debate Hall recognised the possibility of such attributes not being gender specific but, perhaps more importantly, writes of the "pervasive quality" of gender and of the importance of gender socialisation in establishing the adult person (Hall, 1996: 3). Women, it is argued, tend to have these attributes embedded in their behaviour patterns and "unlike males apply only for jobs for which they are fully qualified" (Shakeshaft, 1993: 51). In other words, women who move into headship role do so when they feel confident of their ability to fulfil the requirements of the job.

Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) also point to the variety of experiences and methods employed by people in achieving similar ends as a further criticism of a competence-based approach. Differences in individual cognitive processes and strategies have not always been taken account of when establishing a range of competences through job analyses, neither has the potential for the relationship between competences been fully explored. Furthermore, the process of leading and managing is frequently collaborative and interactive, reliant on other individuals and team work. Divorcing

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the individual from the collective in pursuit of competence identification creates an artificial construct when attempting to delineate competence. The strength of the collective approach to school leadership was highlighted in the report of HMCI, published in 2003, which criticised the NCSL for taking a singular view of leadership development with its programmes (Office for Standards in Education, 2003). Finally, the competence movement is accused of maintaining the status quo, underemphasising innovation and creativity and fostering a regulative view of managing. In times of rapid change these limitations reduce the capability of individuals and the system to take appropriate action.

The competence-based approach to the assessment and development of headteachers is problematic, therefore, as it appears to be based largely in a structural-functionalist paradigm that results in a techno-rational approach (Schön, 1983). Although advocates for a competence-based approach lay claim to the development of personal qualities as being central to the process, too many unknowns exist, as can be seen from the discussion on socialisation processes conducted above, for this to be judged a full response to the needs of headteachers in England as they pass through the formative, accession and early stages of incumbency of their new role. The competence-based approach places too little emphasis on other processes of achieving an effective occupational identity. There is little provision for the recognition of prior life experiences and learning, particularly where such learning is incidental and unconscious. The establishment of values and attitudes encompassed in the formation of substantial self appears to be a largely affective and individual process of which experiences and learning accrued as situational self are contributing, rather than determining factors. To understand and meet the needs of beginning headteachers we

will need more specific information about their personal and occupational contexts than is contained within a generic programme as exemplified by the competence-based approach in its application to headship in England.

Headlamp and Mentoring

Two schemes funded by central government during the 1990s in many ways sat outside the description of being driven or shaped by a competence-based approach to assessment and development in that much discretion was given to the participants in determining their preferred pattern of support. The Headteacher Mentoring scheme, introduced by SMTF in 1992, was funded through a specific national priority grant and aimed to help headteachers taking up a new post. The scheme offered the support of an experienced colleague to work alongside the new headteacher on an individual basis as a critical friend. Both partners in the process took part in a preparation programme and the ensuing mentoring arrangement was funded in terms of release time and travel costs. The scheme ran for two years and received very positive feedback in the commissioned, independent evaluation (Bolam *et al.*, 1993). This scheme quickly folded as a national initiative, however, after the withdrawal of specific grant funding at the end of 1992-93. Some regional groups attempted to continue local schemes in the following years (Bush, Coleman, Wall and West-Burnham, 1996*)*, but these too tended to fail as specific funding streams disappeared. INSET funding became more diffuse during this period as central government funding earmarked for teacher professional development began to lose much of its specificity in terms of supporting particular groups and became ever more generalised. The early stages of central grant funding for INSET (1987 and onwards) had delineated specific groups but, as the decade of 1990s wore on, more was consolidated into much broader areas and allowed for a wider interpretation of eligibility amongst the teacher workforce. One consequence was that the opportunity for headteachers to take advantage of formal preparation programmes tended to become more remote over the ensuing years.

The Headteacher Leadership and Management Programme (Headlamp) was funded separately to central government grants for INSET and became, arguably, the successor to the Headteacher Mentoring Scheme in that it allowed for the participant to spend at least 80 per cent of their personal grant allocation with registered providers, with the rest to be spent elsewhere if they desired. The only additional criterion was that subsequent programmes should reflect the individual needs assessment process each participant was expected to undertake after registration. The needs assessment was to be posited on a list of skills and attributes determined for the scheme, which drew it back to the notion of competence-based assessment, but the freedom to undertake programmes and activities that matched identified needs gave considerable scope for choosing support that was personally and contextually relevant.

Both schemes provided extensive opportunities for those new to post to work closely with a colleague who acted as a mentor in identifying and resolving dilemmas caused by the combination of personal and situational adjustment needed to be effective in the role. In their evaluation of the Headteacher Mentoring scheme, Bolam *et al.* (1993) describe mentoring as a generic term, covering a variety of activities, all aimed at providing support for new entrants to a job. The list of such activities includes advising, counselling, coaching and training although there was a strong steer from the sponsoring SMTF that the processes within the scheme were to be both 'non-evaluative and non-prescriptive'. The scheme differed from ones used in commerce and industry where the onus was typically on inducting a new person into organisational norms. Here the onus was on the postholders resolving their own

problems and issues within their organisational context, thus providing the opportunity for the scheme to be specifically focused rather than contingent on a set of generic competences. The opportunity to use a mentor was an option in the subsequent Headlamp scheme, thus once more allowing for responses to specific needs.

Headlamp continued with the same regulations, and funding, for the remainder of the twentieth century. LEAs, it was suggested in a two-phase small scale study of Headlamp-funded headteachers appointed in 1995-96, were the major providers under the scheme and remained central to determining the induction programme for beginning headteachers despite government intentions to look further afield in ensuring that they had the opportunity to fulfil the range of identified skills and attributes (Blandford and Squire, 2000). Ofsted was critical of LEAs' efforts in relation to headteacher induction, however, none of which was rated 'very good' (Office for Standards in Education, 2002b: 367). LEA-induction programmes failed to differentiate effectively for headteachers from different phases and where there was good practice it was inconsistently applied (ibid). Engagement by beginning headteachers was variable. All LEAs provided basic information about the Headlamp scheme, but there was not much monitoring and evaluation of individual headteacher's spending or of its impact on the headteacher's capacity to take the school forward. About a quarter of headteachers had made no firm decisions about how to spend Headlamp money to best effect, with many reporting a lack of information about providers and courses. Most headteachers spent the Headlamp money on a mixed programme of support and courses, from LEAs, universities and private consultants. (paragraph 372). Good practice, where it was seen, included good

early contacts, good introductory meetings, support from link advisers and clear, relevant identification of needs, specific to the headteacher and the school (ibid). Networks of headteachers, meeting in phase groups, provided valuable support on the more wide-ranging aspects of headship. Link advisers' support was also valuable in most LEAs and in all phases, often because the focus of the visit was jointly agreed and specific to the headteacher's and the school's needs (ibid).

Learning to be a headteacher

The majority of headteachers in England have managed their own preparation and induction to the point where they have achieved their occupational identity. Learning to be a headteacher has typically been "dependent on the mix of people, issues, power and events that happen to coincide" (Weaver-Hart, 1993: 21). It also appears to have been posited largely on conscious and unconscious learning experiences, some as a result of life histories as well as during the period of work-related anticipatory socialisation. Adaptation of prior learning to the new role and the ability to learn whilst doing are aligned to the process of learning in action, labelled 'situated learning' by Lave and Wenger (1991), and the use of theory in practice (Argyris and Schön, 1974).

A wide-ranging investigation into the formulation of effective theories for action for increasing professional effectiveness established that individuals seek to establish a number of governing variables that allow them to establish a degree of constancy in their environment (Argyris and Schön, 1974). Various strategies are then employed to keep the value of those variables within a range that is acceptable to them which frequently, they conclude, results in what they term 'Model I' behaviour. Model I

behaviours are posited on unilateral design and management of the environment, with self-protection a key motive. In establishing and maintaining such an environment the individual engages in a number of activities that are manifested as defensive and political behaviours with a consequent restriction on innovation and creativity (Argyris and Schön, 1974). If the individual is the lead person in that environment then the organisational effectiveness is similarly affected.

Headship in English schools is characterised, however, by conflict and challenge, much of which emanates from other individuals in the social system who may resist being controlled and may seek to influence the decision-making processes for the organisation. As previously discussed, the willingness of colleagues in England to submit to individual authority becomes less as their own status and standing grows. The consequence for headteachers is that they will have a reduced capability to control the range of governing variables and may find their own values questioned in their new role whereas in their previous experience they were more capable of sustaining those values and variables (Arygyris and Schön, 1974). Their response should be to adopt Model II behaviours, whereby they seek to design environments where other participants can develop responses to the various challenges faced by the organisation and can gain experience of making things happen. In such organisations tasks are controlled jointly and protection of the individual and each other becomes a joint enterprise, with the organisation and the individuals within it oriented toward growth.

The attractiveness of Model II is its acceptance of a non-linear environment. Its application to the role of a headteacher in England is relevant given an understanding

of organisational dynamics, but it becomes even more relevant when considering the extent and rate of change that has been a feature of the maintained school system in England in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Occupational competence as a headteacher in this context requires the development of an individual theory of practice, consisting of the combination of practical technique and interpersonal capability. Interpenetration of interpersonal theories and technical theories is so great in teaching that every technical theory is also an interpersonal theory (Argyris and Schön, 1974). A similar conclusion could be reached in assessing the practice of effective headship in that each approach to the role will be so intertwined with the relationships within the organisation as to be inseparable. Headteachers, therefore, should be exemplars of Model II behaviours, a challenge that may prove difficult if their previous experience (and success) was posited on Model I behaviours.

Assuming the argument for Model II behaviours to be acceptable, even desirable, for headteachers in England, help and guidance for making the transition are deemed variable, according to personal circumstances, but are usually based on the principles of effective professional learning which:

1. is based on personally caused experience;
2. is usually produced by expressing and examining dilemmas;
3. values individuality and expression of conflicts;
4. must be guided by an instructor who has more faith in the participants than they have in themselves;
5. who recognizes the limits of participants' learning methodologies;
6. whose idea of rationality integrates feelings and ideas, and;
7. who can encourage spontaneity. (Argyris and Schön, 1974: 98).

Implications for programmes of preparation and support

Arguments have been put forward that those moving into the role of institutional leader need a combination of formal education, apprenticeship and learning by doing

(Lortie, 1975). Daresh and Playko (1990) later developed these ideas to take account of the differing demands on institutional leaders in both the preparation phase and in the early stages of their new career, developing a tri-dimensional model for professional development, and advancing the argument that people must receive preparation and support for their leadership roles through equal attention to strong academic preparation, realistic guided practice in the field and the formulation of personal and professional capabilities to cope with the ambiguities associated with the responsibilities of school leadership (see figure 2.1, below):

Figure 2.1: The tri-dimensional conceptualisation of professional development for school leaders

Academic Preparation
e.g. university programmes,
management courses etc.

Field based learning
e.g. internships, planned field experiences

Professional formation
e.g. mentoring, reflection, style analysis,
personal and professional development
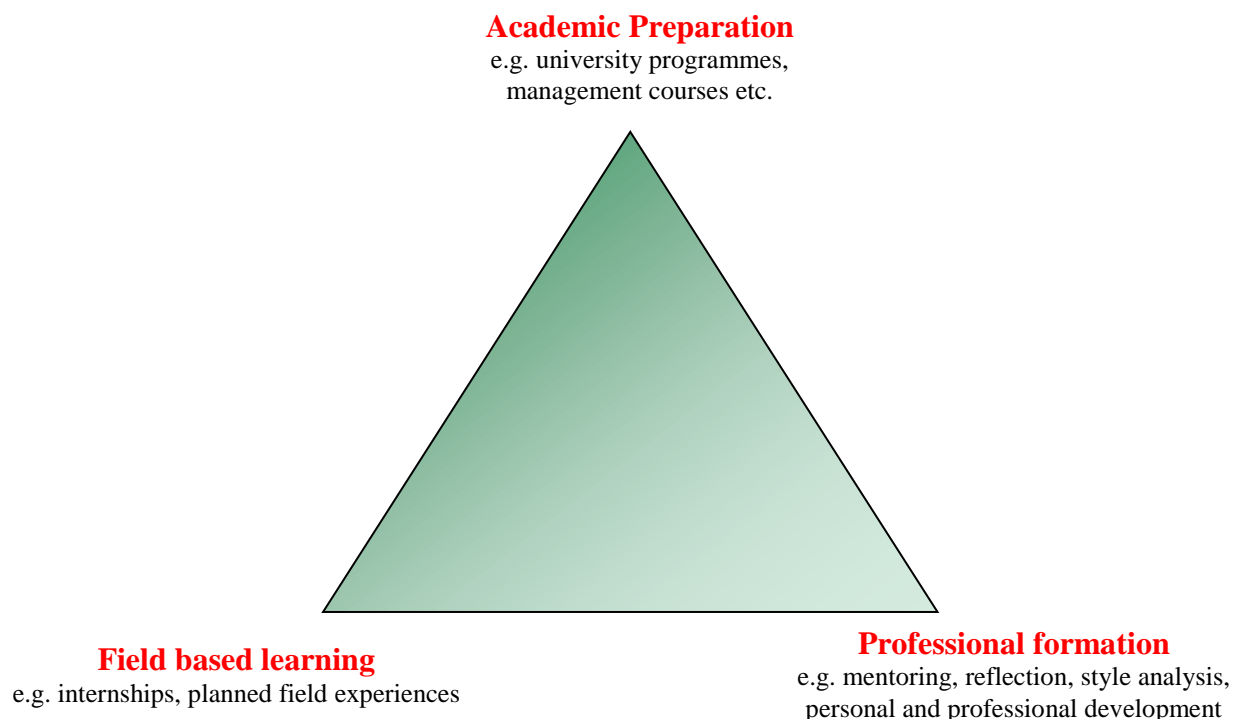
Source = Daresh, and Playko (1990: 18)

The tri-dimensional model of professional development is then applied to the three commonly defined phases of school leadership: pre-service, induction and in-service to demonstrate an appropriate balance of activity for each phase. The relative strengths of education, field-based learning and personal and professional formation differ as a person moves from pre-service through induction to the in-service phase. All of the elements of the tri-dimensional conceptualisation may be included in all three phases, with differing needs at different stages. As people move through the phases of their careers, however, learning is likely to occur more frequently from an experiential base. There is never a point, however, when either formal or field-based learning disappears entirely. The balance of each element at each phase is portrayed in figure 2.2 (below):

Figure 2.2 The tri-dimensional model of professional development and career development
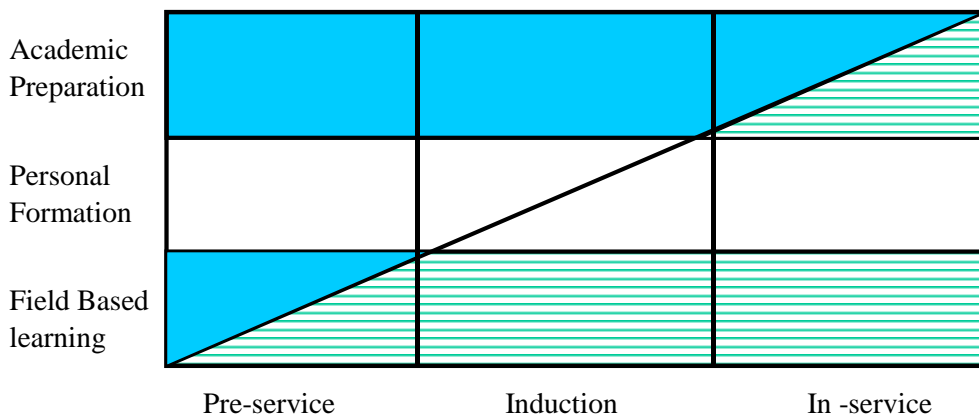
Source = Daresh and Playko, 1990: 20

The work of Daresh and Playko (1990) is useful in suggesting the creation of an appropriate knowledge base through formal and informal learning experiences, coupled with awareness and support for the continuing formation of personal and

occupational identity is balanced appropriately through the periods of pre-service, induction and in-service. The model is not entirely appropriate for application to the English situation, however, as the nature of principal preparation in the USA is heavily dependent on university-led programmes in the pre-service stage. The emphasis on such programmes is generally on higher degree programmes with supplemental field-based learning experiences, such as a period of internship, required for those seeking certification as a principal. The formation of an appropriate knowledge base in pre-service in England has been much less formal and, as has been demonstrated previously in this study, is largely field-based and informal. The strength of the tri-dimensional model is the recognition that the dimension that tends to remain constant throughout all phases of a person's career is personal and occupational formation (Daresh and Playko, 1990) that brings with it the need to engage in reflection, to think about one's personal ethical stances and one's commitment to the occupation. Whilst this aspect of personal and occupational identity formation is considered constant, it is recognised that the issues that might be considered will differ at an individual level.

The tri-dimensional model does exhibit a strong relationship to the principles of effective professional learning (Argyris and Schön, 1974), however, in that it recognises the need for a theory base that becomes consolidated through action. Field-based learning can form a part of the preparation process though a form of apprenticeship, for example, as well as being a feature of practice once appointed. An external model of apprenticeship can be seen with internship programmes, which are usually a part of principal preparation in the USA, which theoretically allow for a monitored exploration of the forthcoming position, in effect a simulation. Simulation

is a higher order activity in adult learning, resulting in some transfer of skill as well as knowledge (Joyce and Showers, 1988). An internship model that takes the aspirant headteacher into another institution has not been a part of any formal preparation programme in England and has seldom featured in individual preparation processes. It has been more common for aspirant headteachers to develop their field-based learning in their own school, an internal model of apprenticeship, with a range of consequences.

Although there are many examples of good or satisfactory experiences of internal apprenticeships, the NFER study of beginning headteachers found that beginning headteachers had learned more about "how not to do things" from their previous headteacher than experiencing positive learning outcomes (Weindling and Pocklington, 1996: 175), a finding that was mirrored through the analysis of 34 headteachers' views on deputy heads where the majority saw their previous headteacher as a negative role model (Ribbins, 1997). Furthermore, empirical research had shown aspirant headteachers in primary schools having fewer opportunities to engage in meaningful development activities, usually because they also had a heavy teaching load (Coulson and Cox, 1972; Craig, 1987; James and Whiting, 1998; Shipton and Male, 1998). Typically, deputy headteachers in primary schools have been classroom-based teachers whose whole school management/leadership responsibilities have tended to be in administrative roles, rather than in strategic policy and decision-making (Purvis and Dennison, 1993; Jayne, 1995; Webb and Vuillamy, 1995).

The monitoring of practical experience through involvement in internal or external apprenticeship models could be matched by the personal learning typically engaged in by candidates in the process of anticipatory socialisation by continuing and extending that into the induction phase. It is here that the processes of networking and mentoring become increasingly vital as they allow for the expression and examination of dilemmas and provide support for the resolution of conflicts, whilst also allowing for continuing occupational and personal formation – the career constant. Mentoring as a process of supporting and challenging in a non-evaluative and non-prescriptive manner has the potential to fulfil the remaining principles of the Argyris and Schön model of effective learning.

The evaluation of the headteacher mentoring scheme showed the importance of this post-appointment learning when reporting on a range of problems discussed by the new headteachers ('n' = 238) with their mentor (Bolam *et al.*, 1993). The most pressing problem was the practice and style of their predecessor for 64 per cent of respondents, with associated staffing issues also featuring heavily in a number of ways. In drawing comparison with the earlier NFER study, it has been shown that the majority of the issues emerging for the new headteacher were related to the school, rather than to more generic issues, which consequently required the type of personalised support provided by mentoring (Weindling and Pocklington, 1996).

Conclusions

Attempts to define the nature of the transition to headship through the extrapolation of psychodynamic and socialisation theories derived mainly from other occupations and school systems is shown to be informative, but incomplete. There are commonalities

of need between aspirant and beginning headteachers that can be aligned to those experienced in other occupations and school systems, but these are not parallel in nature and are informative rather than definitive in relation to headship. There is a consequent need to improve the knowledge base surrounding headship as too little data have been collected from beginning and serving headteachers since the introduction of the 1988 Education Reform Act, particularly those from primary and special schools, to justify claims that studies into other school systems and occupations have provided an understanding of the nature of the transition to headship in England. Such findings will also provide guidance on subsequent programmes of training, development and support.

In conclusion there is no commonly accepted theory of headship, although a combination of a range of personal qualities and the specification of job requirements has been established, if not completed. Even so, such an approach does not recognise the reality of school leadership in action which has been demonstrated through this literature review to be variable in relation to the individual and the organisation to which they are appointed, rather than being a generic set of circumstances. Attempts to define the nature of headship through competence-based approaches to assessment and development have focused on the personal qualities of the aspirant and beginning headteacher, rather than the location of those postholders in the context of an organisation and the enactment of leadership as a collective activity.

The use of management standards as the basis for understanding the nature of the task and the behaviours consequently required is thus problematic as such an approach has tended to focus more on the development of technical skills, or competencies, than on

the development of a wider range of personal qualities that would lead to competence. The narrow focus on management emanating from such programmes of training and development further exacerbates the challenge of meeting the needs of beginning headteachers who have to conduct a wider remit than administrative competence and develop a range of deeper personal qualities than others in seemingly similar positions. Headteachers in England carry larger amounts of personal responsibility than their theoretical counterparts in the USA, for example, where most studies of school leadership succession have been located. Headteachers are also the pivotal person in determining the nature of the school, particularly with regard to the nature and content of student learning. Consequently they have been demonstrated to need a strong personal values base, a high level of pedagogical knowledge and the ability to continually explore their beliefs in the face of active dialogue with colleagues and significant others as they lead their school. Such attributes and capabilities move them beyond the range of generic leadership and management competences and into a more specific occupational world and context, one that still needs further definition and one that empirical research into headship has still to determine.

The generic notion of headship also needs closer examination as most investigations have been of secondary headteachers, with a consequent need to investigate the experience and understanding from other school phases and from role occupants who do not match the typical profile of a serving headteacher in England. The vast majority of role occupants in England are in primary schools which range in size from an all-age single class school to large, stratified organisations capable of sustaining many posts of responsibility. Special schools are also varied in nature, though more frequently through their provision than a difference in style. At a personal level most

secondary headteachers are men, whilst the majority of primary headteachers are women. The number of women headteachers had continually grown through the 1990s, although the proportion of women headteachers had remained below a quarter in secondary schools (Department for Education and Employment, 1998b: 28-29). The potential need for a differentiated approach to the training, development and support needs of women had probably been subsumed, therefore, within an evidence base that was largely male dominated. Concerns regarding a differentiated pattern of training, development and support for headteachers emerging from a different cultural background, including issues of ethnicity, also need to be examined. No statistics of ethnic origin of headteachers are kept in a collated form, however, so this issue remained hypothetical at the end of the twentieth century. Given the pattern of immigration and the growth of ethnic minorities in the country during the second half of the century it is likely that more headteachers have emerged, or will emerge, from this source soon, bringing with them potentially different needs.

This discussion signals a limit to the appropriateness of professional socialisation theory and competence-based approaches to assessment and development in supporting the successful transition to headship in England and heighten the need for adaptive programmes of preparation and personalised support through induction. The review conducted here identifies the key differences between headship in England and similar or equal positions elsewhere as being that:

- the move is a mid-career transition with few inherent characteristics of foundation study that pre-qualify the new postholder for the job;

- cultural and systemic mores posit higher levels of individual accountability with English headteachers than those typically seen in other school systems or occupations;

- individual life histories and organisationally based issues contain too many variables for there to be a systemic response that is universally applicable to all postholders.

The consequence of the review of related empirical research and associated literature has been to indicate that the successful transition to the new post appears to be effected along three dimensions: personal, organisational and occupational, each of which has a number of inherent components.

The personal dimension is illustrated in the preparation stage by issues relating to the formation of attitudes and values and the need for differentiated development activities according to previous experience, gender, ethnicity and age. Differentiation in need on the same issues is continued during the early stages of incumbency and is accompanied by feelings of isolation and surprise, the seeming inevitable need for divestiture, a period of cognitive dissonance in relation to understanding the situational self and indications of changed behaviour patterns affecting personal and social life. Divestiture appears to be the common response by beginning headteachers in that they need to realign their values, attitudes and capabilities in relation to the demands of the new post, with few opportunities for shaping the job during accession and the early stages of incumbency.

The organisational dimension, largely informed by socialisation theory, highlights issues relating to understanding the culture of the organisation, including recognising the influence of the previous incumbent, and encouraging the exploration of alternative structures and systems as the new headteacher begins to influence the culture of the school. Central in these issues is the need for acceptance and the support of the existing staff, particularly the more senior members.

The occupational dimension demonstrates the generic issues relating to the adaptation required by the aspirant headteacher to become effective in post. The review conducted above shows these to include the development of a range of skills in the preparation stage, with the probable need for differentiation according to the phase or type of school, and for that preparation to provide a range of learning activities appropriate to the reality of the job in action. During accession and early stages of incumbency, there is a need to provide support systems that will allow beginning headteachers to explore their values in relation to the job as experienced and to recognise the staged development of their occupational identity. Such support systems are likely to include mentoring and networking with peers and more experienced colleagues to explore and resolve dilemmas and challenges emerging at a personal or organisational level.

The three dimensions, with the internal range of issues related to above, thus form a conceptual lens with which to view the data gathered for this study. The analysis of data in Chapter 5 will make use of the following categories in exploring the findings:

Personal

- development needs in relation to gender, ethnicity and age,

- the formation of values and attitudes,

- feelings of isolation and surprise,

- investiture and divestiture,

- a period of individual cognitive dissonance,

- changed behaviour patterns in relation to personal and social life.

Organisational

- a period for understanding the culture of the organisation ('sense-making'),

- the influence of previous incumbent'

- opportunities to explore alternative structures and systems.

Occupational

- a range of technical and interpersonal skills,

- differentiated needs according to phase of schooling,

- appropriate previous learning experiences,

- the exploration of personal values and attitudes in concert with others who understand or have experience of the role,

- a staged approach to the formation of occupational identity.

I will employ these three dimensions as a framework for investigating the transition to headship in England and will thus add to the limited database of previous empirical investigations of headteachers since the 1988 Education Reform Act. That framework

will allow for the exploration of lived experience through seeking the views of serving headteachers. The analysis of psychological theories conducted by Nias (1989) indicate the difference between 'self-as-subject', which she sees as largely to do with notions of ego and not being dependent upon social conditions for its existence, and 'self-as-object'. Southworth's work is concerned with occupational self-as-object as he deemed himself not equipped to investigate self-as-subject (Southworth, 1995). The same conclusion has been reached with this study as the data collection routines necessary to investigate such phenomena do not form a part of this study. The determination of occupational identity in this study will be contingent, therefore, on self-perceptions offered by headteachers.

The areas of planned investigation will concentrate on the perceived levels of technical and moral competence and the achievement of an adequate knowledge base on taking up post whilst also seeking comment on the challenges faced by beginning headteachers. This investigation thus seeks to examine the issues arising from this conceptual analysis in the light of evidence emerging from the data and will report on the possible implications for programmes of training, development and support for beginning headteachers.

Chapter 3

The Research

Establishing the research questions

The discussion conducted in Chapter 1 regarding the limited nature of empirical research into headship, particularly with investigations regarding the preparation and induction of headteachers in England, resulted in the formulation of three questions that:

      i) investigate headteacher perceptions of preparedness for the job,

      ii) investigate headteacher perceptions as to what contributed to that state of preparedness,

      iii) seek opinion from headteachers as to how systems and processes could be further developed to assist that state of preparedness.

The impetus for this line of enquiry had emanated from earlier empirical research conducted by myself and others that had seemingly indicated a lack of readiness of the candidates for the intensity of the job as headteacher (Weindling and Earley, 1987; Dunning, 1996; Male, 1996; Draper and McMichael, 1998; Daresh and Male, 2000; Male and Merchant, 2000). This had led to the early formulation of the question:

      How well prepared did headteachers feel for their new job?

Such a question could have been interpreted in many ways and needed refinement. The simple response to this problem of open-endedness was addressed by asking:

      How well prepared did headteachers feel for certain aspects of their new job?

That refined question allowed examination of aspects of their new occupation, which could be aligned to a number of job categories and competencies.

The secondary line of enquiry to flow out of this first question was to seek reasons for their state of readiness in the chosen categories. The discussion conducted in Chapter 2 had indicated that learning to become a headteacher, both in preparing and adapting to the position after appointment, was largely an individual and informal affair. This secondary line of enquiry gave rise to the question:

What antecedents would lend themselves to this state or preparedness?

A negative response to the first question would make such a question redundant, however. The identification of a cohort of serving headteachers who did not feel prepared for the position would indicate only the need for further research as so many variables existed, including psychological factors that were non-related to the job. By refining the second question to be answered only by those who considered themselves to be adequately or well prepared I allowed for the allocation of the respondent opinion between two polar factors, training and experience. The choice of these factors was based on my interpretation of training as consisting of an event or process having a specific focus on aspects of knowledge, skill or expertise where subsequent performance levels are predictable or pre-defined. In using this definition I viewed training as a formal process of preparation where an intervention in a person's learning had taken place in order to equip her or him for the job. This is a definition that parallels dictionary entries that describe training as teaching or preparing a person to do something and describe a trainee as somebody who is being prepared for a job. Using the same logic of definition, I viewed experience as an informal process whereby knowledge, skill and practice were developed through direct participation or

observation. As indicated through the discussion in Chapter 2, at times this was an unconscious process of preparation. These two, implicit, definitions of modes of preparation formed the initial baseline for the investigation that follows. Both definitions were tested in the trialling of the research instruments subsequently devised for this study.

The third question to emerge revolved around the need to gather opinion that illustrated the views of practitioners. Although attempts had been made to transfer the responsibility for the professional development of headteachers to the profession, this proved to be more in the way of rhetoric than reality. The Headteacher Mentoring Scheme of the early 1990s, for example, was enacted on the principle that it was for headteachers and should be run by headteachers. A letter from the DfES to LEA Chief Education Officers (25th September, 1991) stated:

> Ministers are concerned that the scheme should as far as possible be controlled at local level by headteachers themselves. Bids will need to show evidence of plans to delegate control to local groups of heads. (Bolam *et al.*, 1993)

The reality of that aspiration in practice was that although headteachers were in an executive capacity for all regional consortia and in a majority on those committees, it was contingent on LEA officers to bring coherence to the management and administration of the scheme as headteachers were too busy to play anything more than a strategic role (Bolam *et al.*, 1993).

In addition to headteachers' being too busy for anything more than strategic involvement in the Headteacher Mentoring Scheme, it needs to be recognised that there was no easily accessible forum for the collective opinion of serving

headteachers. No progress had been made on the development of a general council by the teaching profession, for example, with multiple professional associations competing for members. No coherent view on headship was available from headteacher associations, therefore, at a time when the changes to the nature of the job were being dominated by policies and agendas emanating from central government. Having a General Teaching Council introduced by statute in 2001 was an irony that perhaps demonstrated the dominance of central government and its agencies. These factors gave rise to the determination of the question:

What sort of support is needed for beginning headteachers?

In seeking to elicit the views of serving headteachers , I expected that evidence could be compiled to explore the hypothesis posited in Chapter 2 that the career transition experienced by beginning headteachers in England was of a different nature to that experienced in other occupations and school systems. The data likely to be gathered through this question could thus help inform and shape the systems and processes needed to support that transition which had been deemed contextually specific in Chapter 2.

Research design

Given the history of empirical research in the field there were limitations with regard to the potential range of sources for relevant data. There was no existing body of data or findings that would allow for re-analysis, nor was there a body of research-based literature that would allow for a meta-analysis. Government agencies were unable or unwilling to provide source data that would reveal information in this chosen area of

study and LEAs were no longer in a position to provide coherent data on newly appointed headteachers following the diminution of their power and levels of responsibility toward maintained schools that had resulted from the 1988 Education Reform Act and subsequent legislation. Professional associations, including the specialist headteacher organisations, were not active in the field, with the exception of the project inquiring into LMS funded by the NAHT which had examined only the role of headteachers as an incidental artefact of that research (Bullock and Thomas, 1997). I made an early decision, therefore, to generate a new body of data that could inform the field.

The classic decision underpinning research design is whether the study is to be deductive or inductive. A process of deduction will allow for a theory or hypothesis to be tested through the gathering of empirical data with the outcomes extending, reinforcing or challenging previous knowledge. Typically a deductive approach is linked with quantitative methods. Conversely, an inductive approach would seek to generate theory out of data and is typically associated with a qualitative domain (Bryman, 2001). Neither approach can be considered a pure discipline, however, as both are iterative. A pure deductive approach, for example, would be linear, but only to the point where the theory becomes contested. Given that all theory is contestable this negates the potential for a pure approach. More importantly, however, the final stage of even the most deductive approach still relies on the researchers inferring the implications of their findings for the theory that prompted the whole exercise. The result is that they inevitably employ induction when establishing conclusions in order to relate the data to existing theory. Such research can only be considered as predominately deductive, at best, even in the most positivistic and rational studies.

Consequently it is advisable, when designing research, to decide on the degree to which either approach could be considered.

A key issue I had to resolve in establishing my own research was the strength of existing theory in relation to headteacher preparation and induction. In seeking to establish greater understanding of the issues, with an aim to improving the systems and processes that could support the mid-career transition to headship, I had to be conscious of the veracity of the theory base relating to the nature of the occupation and make allowances accordingly when designing my empirical research. As can be seen from the discussion I conducted in Chapter 2, there have been many attempts to define competence and the competencies associated with headship in England and there have also been attempts to align headship with other theory bases, occupations and similar positions in other school systems. The consequence, I argued, is that whilst we can be assured of some of the attributes of occupation, particularly a range of competencies, we still do not have a commonly accepted theory of headship in England. A major consideration in designing my research, therefore, was whether I could investigate the extent to which English headteachers perceived themselves to be prepared on measures that were demonstrable from previous research and the existing theory base whilst, at the same time, creating new perspectives in understanding the nature of headship and the attendant preparation and support needs for those new to the post. In effect I would be managing a study that was both deductive and inductive.

The categorisation of the job competencies associated with headship in England was one task to be achieved through my research as I was unable to find the provenance of

many of the lists that did exist. The most complete empirical study to inform the field was provided by the study undertaken by School Management South and sponsored by SMTF (Earley, 1992). As described in Chapter 2, the study employed functional analysis and determined occupational standards on 41 elements emanating from four key roles and effectively atomised the job of headteacher. The findings had no impact on the school system subsequently, however, and were not manifested in any formal vocational qualification or training programme. Conversely the lists of knowledge, skills, understanding and capabilities that did emerge in government-sponsored programmes of preparation and support for headteachers had no evident empirical base to them, yet became the means by which the capability of headteachers and their readiness for post were measured. As an active participant in the generation of the NPQH and its training and assessment processes, I can testify that the national standards for headteachers were largely determined through the interaction of those engaged in the discussion at a national level, with the final decision on their content being taken in camera and without consultation. The outcome for this study was that I did not apply the categories identified by School Management South as I deemed them to be no longer relevant, both in terms of impact and time, nor did I use those employed within the National Standards for Headteachers as they had no clear provenance. I did wish to explore the perceptions of serving headteachers on the dimensions emerging from the literature review conducted in Chapter 2, however, particularly those elements that lent themselves to a deductive approach. Consequently I developed a range of questions relating to skills, values, attitudes and the knowledge base for headship as a part of the overall process of determining the preparation and support needs for aspirant and beginning headteachers. Those questions were included in the final research instruments.

I also felt there was a need for an independent study as many of the issues relevant to headteacher preparation and induction were still not evident despite several years of central government funded programmes. As reported earlier, the few studies that did provide a general picture were undertaken or sponsored by central government agencies, with the final reports not being available for public scrutiny. I deemed the need to establish independence as essential to the validity of this study as I perceived the actions of government agencies to have been determined through an ontological and epistemological stance to the nature of headship which was not demonstrably supported by an evidential base. This foregrounds the issue of bias, a concern not only for adjudging government and its agencies, but also for considering the viewpoint from which I am operating as a researcher. My views on the nature of headship and the processes by which aspirant and beginning headteachers could be prepared and supported had been formulated through an understanding of relevant literature and through contemporary research undertaken by myself and others in the field. I had reservations about the appropriateness of government-sponsored programmes of preparation and induction that, to me, seemed to be motivated more by systemic than individual concerns. In other words, there was greater emphasis on those aspects of preparation and induction which related to the type of headteacher that was needed for the school system than to headship that was particular to the individual and to the school to which they were appointed. I had thus seen the response from central government agencies in the latter stages of the 1990s to be more concerned with the occupational dimension of the mid-career transition than the personal and organisational dimensions. I had voiced these concerns publicly and had published extensively on the topic during the period leading up to the commencement

of this study (Male, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1999, 2000). The drive for independence was for the determination, therefore, of a study that was free from government influence.   My own position was biased, in terms of values and conceptual understanding, so the need to recognise and account for that bias remains within the design of this research.

The basic principles underpinning the potential for bias in my study were to formulate the research questions from sustainable theory bases, to use the data to support any conclusions and to seek the generation of theory that conforms to some of the basic tenets of the 'grounded theory' approach first described by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The determination of specific questions used in this research has been informed by the conceptual framework established in Chapter 2 and through extensive trialling and piloting of the final research instruments employed. Extensive efforts are made to substantiate conclusions reached through use of empirical data and, where this is not possible, by appropriate limitation of the claims. The basic rule of grounded theory is to consider the importance of all data whether they confirm or disconfirm the hypotheses generated at the outset of the study, so it will be my policy to consider all aspects of the data in analysis.

My decision on research design was principally influenced, however, by my desire for the findings to be generalisable as there had been no major survey, or substantive research project, conducted on the issues relating to aspiring and beginning headteachers in England since the introduction of LMS in the 1988 Education Reform Act.   The work of Weindling and Earley (1987) had been the most significant contribution to the field prior to this but, even when taking account of the substantial

and illustrative nature of the findings at the time of publication, the importance of their work has diminished subsequently. My intention, therefore, was to investigate the issues relevant to aspirant and beginning headteachers who were working in an era where financial delegation was the norm and to make the study representative.

The issue of generalisability is often assumed to be best addressed by ensuring that a representative sample of data responses are gathered from the entire population, a principle that lends itself to a quantitative approach. It is equally possible, however, to achieve generalisable outcomes with an inductive stance where, by definition, theory is deemed the planned outcome of research and is an attempt to generalise inferences out of observations. Caution needs to be exhibited here as such 'theory' may be little more than empirical generalisations (Bryman, 2001). The generation of new theory is best achieved where comparison is made between the weight of evidence that confirms or disconfirms a case with both sets of evidence being used to modify hypotheses generated from existing theory (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). Generalisation to theory, rather than to populations, is an accepted measure of qualitative research (Bryman, 2001), a process sometimes referred to as analytic or theoretical generalisation (Robson, 2002).

The implication of this discussion for my planned investigation was that I could accumulate a data set that had external generalisability if I could combine the canons of fixed and flexible research designs. The first two research questions I had identified lent themselves most readily to a deductive approach; the third to an inductive approach. The categorisation of personal characteristics and job competencies allowed me to produce a set of standard questions which could have

formed the content of either a structured interview or a self-completion questionnaire. The richness of data commonly found in a qualitative approach, particularly with use of semi-structured or open interviews, would be an advantage in establishing respondents' suggestions for improvements in the level of support available for beginning headteachers, the third of the research questions. The need for a combination of deductive and inductive approaches led me to adopt a survey approach and to choose a self-completion questionnaire as the desired instrument. My decision to formulate and distribute a self-completion questionnaire was reached after consideration of the twin issues of independence and generalisation, discussed above, but was ultimately governed by limitations of available resources. I considered external funding for such a project to be unlikely. Effectively, the research was to be undertaken by myself with access only to resources available from the faculty and university which was both my employer and my accrediting institution.

My conclusion was to conduct the survey through use of a self-completion questionnaire as this allowed for larger numbers and could be constructed in such a way that all three research questions could be addressed. The identification of personal characteristics and job characteristics would allow for respondents to address an identical set of questions. The opportunity to provide open response questions, which sought to establish personal opinion and comment from the respondents, would allow for the collection of qualitative data and thus answer the third of the research questions.

Questionnaires are used extensively in education to collect information that is not directly observable and typically inquire about the feelings, motivations, attitudes,

accomplishments and experiences of individuals (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996).

Traditionally, in research terms, questionnaires are seen as cost effective, convenient and generalisable. Objectivity is supported through the use of common questions that limit the effect of researcher 'contamination' (Scott, 1996: 57). Large amounts of data can be collected relatively quickly, usually allowing for a wider geographical spread than other data-collection techniques.

Surveys based on questionnaires are problematic for a number of reasons, however, including issues of validity, reliability and test stability (Creswell, 1994). They are often based on a series of assumptions regarding the correspondence of world views between researcher and researched (and among the respondents themselves), the a-theoretical nature of the data in contrast to grounded and emergent theory, the conflation of correlation with casuality and the prospect of researcher distortion and bias in the establishment of the questions that could lead to data contamination (Scott, 1996). The potential for technical weaknesses in the design and application of the questionnaire is high and this can lead to low response rates, missing data and respondent fatigue (e.g. Bryman, 2001; Robson, 1993). Robson's view, for example, is that questionnaires often enjoy a status that is "falsely prestigious because of their quantitative nature", going on to suggest that the findings are seen as a product of largely uninvolved respondents whose answers owe more to some unknown mixture of politeness, boredom and their desire to be seen in a good light than their true feelings, beliefs or behaviour (Robson, 1993: 125).

The quality of data emerging from a questionnaire is largely contingent, therefore, upon the technical ability of the researcher to successfully address the following range

of key issues if the findings are to have veridicality. The instrument firstly should have internal validity, a concept that Creswell (1994) identified as having several aspects:

Content validity   (do the items measure the content they were intended to measure?)

Construct validity   (do the items measure hypothetical constructs or concepts?)

Face validity   (do the items appear to measure what the instrument purports to measure?)

Secondly the data should have external validity, in that there is a prospect of generalisability, again a concept with more than one aspect:

Concurrent validity   (do results correlate with other results?)

Predictive validity   (do scores predict a criterion measure?)

The issue of reliability is central to success in terms of *item consistency* (how far item responses remain consistent across constructs), *test stability* (whether individuals vary in their responses when the instrument is administered a second time) and *consistency in test administration* (whether errors were caused by carelessness in administration or scoring). Response bias can also play a role here, bringing with it the need to undertake both *respondent/non-respondent analysis* and *wave analysis* (Creswell, 1994). Both aspects of response bias relate to how non-respondents might have substantially changed the overall results of the survey. With wave analysis the procedure assumes that those who return surveys in the last stages are almost non-respondents. If their responses are not different from those received earlier, a strong case for absence of response bias can be established. Alternatively, a few non-

respondents could be contacted to determine whether their responses differ substantially from those of respondents. The procedure constitutes a respondent/non-respondent check for response bias.

In evaluating the questionnaire used for this survey and arriving at a statement of limitation, I will make use of the criteria identified above.

The research approach

The determination of the research methodology and instruments that were to flow from the research questions of the survey were initially based on work undertaken by colleagues from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) who had experience of studying the principalship in school districts in and around a major conurbation in the state of Texas (Daresh, Dunlap, Gantner, & Hvizdak, 1998). The experience of working closely with the UTEP team leader (e.g. Daresh and Male, 2000) was extended through collaboration with another member of the UTEP team who undertook a portion of her doctoral studies in England and was thus available for the planned period of investigation between February, 1998 and August, 1999. The findings from the survey inform this study, whilst the collaborating research colleague has reported on the research design and process elsewhere (Hvizdak, 2001). The relationship during the process was collaborative in the design and piloting of the survey instrument and during data collection. Data analysis was conducted separately, with all findings and subsequent interpretation reported here being the sole responsibility of the author.

Hvizdak was a graduate student from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) who enrolled on units of a Masters programme at the University of Lincoln in order to further the aims of her doctoral programme, particularly through gaining a portion of the credit necessary to satisfy the assessment requirements for the taught part of her degree. The author of this study acted as her mentor and guide, whilst supervision was continued through her doctoral committee in the USA, with the chair of her committee acting as first supervisor to her planned doctoral dissertation. Her role in the formulation of the survey instrument and data collection was largely administrative, although ideas were inevitably exchanged. This author's understanding of the task in relation to her doctoral dissertation was that she was to report on the methodological issues emanating from the challenge of researching headteachers in England.

In establishing and conducting the survey she was responsible for the administration and physical formulation of the research instrument, a process that entailed design layout of pilot questionnaires and the management of the piloting process. She then took responsibility for the production, distribution and collection of the self-completion questionnaire that formed the principal survey instrument. She also organised the data entry routines, which were undertaken by temporary employees contracted solely for that task.

As has been indicated above, Hvizdak had been a member of a research project run by UTEP whose questionnaire on Principal Preparation had provided a template for the survey conducted for this study. I took responsibility for locating the original survey instrument in the context of the English school system and for planning and leading

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the processes of adaptation and enhancement that followed in the design of a related survey. I was also responsible for eliciting the funding for the survey and took overall management responsibility for questionnaire design, data collection and entry. Finally, in the joint working relationship, I undertook the task of checking the accuracy of data entry. We then created a common version of the accumulated data in electronic format and made copies of the completed questionnaires for each of us before parting company. Subsequent activities relating to the data set were of an individual nature.

Developing the questionnaire

Work began on the design of the questionnaire in January, 1998. The design was based on the work conducted by the research team from the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) (Daresh, *et al.*, 1998). The UTEP team had applied the Delphi technique (Robson, 1993) to solicit information about effective principal preparation from 30 practising principals in the El Paso area identified by peers, supervisors, and university colleagues as effective leaders.

The Delphi technique included the following steps. First, the UTEP research team mailed a sample of the initial survey inviting them to respond to the question:

> What curriculum components do you think should be included in an effective principal preparation program?

The UTEP research team then compiled the replies and mailed respondents the results, asking them to add, delete, combine, or otherwise clarify the list as needed.

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The team then revised the list of responses following suggestions made by the principals and again sent copies to participants for their approval. This process was repeated twice, at which point participants recommended no further revisions. The finalised list included 28 items.

The UTEP team then grouped the 28 items into three categories which they entitled:

(a)   Development of Skills,

(b)   Formation of Attitudes and Values,

(c)   Increase of Knowledge.

These 28 items organised in three categories were the basis for the UTEP questionnaire entitled *Principal Preparation Program Survey*. In adapting the UTEP survey for this study, the first step was to consider the appropriateness of the original instrument for addressing both the purpose of this study and its intended audience. My decision to stay with the three categories of the personal characteristics and job competencies was based on the desire to explore the possibilities for improving the preparation for and induction into headship which is central to this thesis. The decision thus aligns itself to the two aspects of socialisation, technical and moral, identified by Greenfield (1985). It is a decision that is also justified by the exploration of competence-based approaches undertaken earlier that revealed the importance of a values base in addition to the competencies needed for effective performance. The third dimension, the increase of knowledge, would also allow for the testing of a knowledge base for headship in England which, although not universally accepted, had some credence as can be seen from the discussion conducted in Chapter 2.

An alternative approach would have been to adopt the categorisation used by the TTA within the national standards for headteachers and to divide the 28 items of the questionnaire accordingly. The TTA listed 16 aspects of knowledge and understanding, 27 job competencies (although they were at pains not to use that word, preferring to use the word 'capabilities' whenever possible) listed under the umbrella term of 'leadership skills' and eight attributes (or personal characteristics) as the essential ingredients of successful headship. Although I found each of the items to be reflected in the standards identified by the TTA, use of the national standards as a framework for the questionnaire would have defeated the objective of my enquiry, which is to explore alternative models of headship preparation and induction. Consequently, the curriculum components from the *Principal Preparation Program Survey*, revised to reflect cultural and linguistic differences, became the base for a new questionnaire exploring the role of prior training and experience on preparation for headship.

The final version of the 4-part questionnaire, entitled *National Headteacher Survey*, was structured as follows. In Part I, respondents provided details about their training and experience prior to and since assuming headship. They were asked to list the year in which they were awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and to then tick boxes to indicate award-bearing courses and professional development programmes they attended as well as work experiences they have had.

In Part II, respondents were asked to assess their level of preparation for headship and identify whether they attributed their perceived degree of preparation to training,

experience, or some combination of both. They first looked at the list of 28 activities associated with headship, which were grouped into three categories:

(a)   Development of Skills,

(b)   Formation of Attitudes and Values, and

(c)   Increase of Knowledge,

and used the following 4-point scale to help them decide how well prepared they were to carry out each activity:

1   =   Not at All Prepared

2   =   Inadequately Prepared

3   =   Adequately Prepared

4   =   Extremely Prepared

Then for each item they rated 3 or 4, they tick a box to indicate their mode of preparation, using a second scale:

1   =   Training Only

2   =   Mostly Training

3   =   Equally Training and Experience

4   =   Mostly Experience

5   =   Experience Only

In Part III, participants wrote short answers to three questions soliciting comments and suggestions for supporting those beginning the headship. Part IV asked respondents to provide demographic information by ticking boxes and writing short phrases to indicate ethnicity, gender, age, length of service and type of school. These variables were determined to reflect largely the outcomes of the discussion conducted in Chapter 2 that illustrated the potential for differentiation in terms of preparation for and induction into headship according to ethnicity, gender and type of school. These variables were confirmed as relevant by headteachers consulted in the formulation of the questions (see below) who also added weight to the arguments for the inclusion of the variables of age and length of service. The significance of the length of service variable was located primarily in the pattern of formal programmes of preparation and support available through government agencies, plus the impact of the Education Reform Act, which provided for the logic of categorising headteachers. Age was hypothesised to be another important variable on the basis that greater experience in life may result in a seasoned view of the challenges facing aspirant and beginning headteachers. A copy of the *National Headteacher Survey* is provided as Appendix 2.

To address some of the issues relating to validity and reliability, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a convenience sample of 30 headteachers drawn from schools within the immediate region of the university. A total of 19 completed responses were received in the period of late Jun to early July, 1998. These respondents were then asked to complete a second version of the same questionnaire some six weeks after submitting the first response. These returns were checked against each other in order to reveal consistency of answer which was deemed to be a measure of reliability.

Expert guidance on the validity of the questions was sought from a further cohort of serving headteachers and from other professional colleagues familiar with headship. An opportunity group of serving headteachers was established from volunteers who were members of the MBA in Educational Leadership at the University of Lincoln. Nine members of the group each completed one of the draft questionnaires in September, 1998 and were subsequently interviewed the next day. Face-to-face interviews were conducted on an individual basis, with the interviews tape recorded. Contemporaneous interview notes were made, with the tapes being used later to confirm or clarify responses. Further guidance was sought from a recently retired headteacher (with over 20 years experience as a head) and two serving headteachers (of two and five years experience, respectively), by means of a series of meetings and discussions held over a two-month period between September and November, 1998. In all there were 18 working versions of the questionnaire tested, discussed and trialled before the printing and distribution of the final version in February, 1999.

Identifying the sample

A 10 per cent stratified random sample was drawn from a list of individuals serving as headteachers in England's state-maintained schools at the time of the study. The decision to sample 10 per cent of the population of headteachers in each subgroup rests in part on the observation that utilising larger samples in a study increases the accuracy "of the inferential leap from sample to population" (Krathwohl, 1993: 125), especially when dealing with heterogeneous populations. After conducting a preliminary analysis of the wide range of preparation options which have been available in the past to aspiring English headteacher, I concluded that the population of headteachers from which the sample was drawn was extremely likely to reflect a

high degree of variability in this area and could be reasonably defined as "heterogeneous". Additionally, given the anticipated low survey return rate coupled with the relatively small size of certain sub-populations (i.e., First-with-Middle: 'n' = 15 and Middle-deemed-primary: 'n' = 18), electing to sample 10 per cent of the headteachers in each subgroup would help ensure that the characteristics being explored in this study were adequately represented in the sample.

The decision to stratify the sample was based on several reasons. First of all, I anticipated the survey would elicit a sufficient variety of responses among headteachers at different types of schools (the stratifying variable) to warrant looking at ten populations instead of one; stratifying guarantees that no one type of school will be over- or under-represented in the sample (Wiersma, 1986). Stratifying also allowed an opportunity to explore relationships between the stratifying variable (type of school) and the variables of interest in the study, while at the same time permitting comparisons among subgroups. Krathwohl (1993: 132) provides a further reason for choosing to stratify, recommending stratification as long as it can be done "easily", pointing out it will always produce a sample at least as good as that obtained by simple random sampling while ensuring representativeness of the stratifying variable.

The sample was obtained from an educational mailing centre which specialised in the distribution of selected sampling lists. The centre utilised a software program of its own design to apply a simple random selection process within each specified subgroup. Based on 1998-99 figures supplied by the centre, this program generated a total sample of 2,285 headteachers who were to be mailed the questionnaire.

The sample was deemed to have 'population validity' (Bracht and Glass, 1968) on the basis that the sample ('n'=2285) was selected randomly from all maintained schools in England, each of which has a headteacher. There was some degree of attrition ('n'=99) to this sample, including cases where the designation of the title of 'headteacher' was inappropriate to the organisation (e.g. the Head of a Special Unit within a school was also included on the mailing database as 'Head'). In other instances there were Acting Headteachers or vacancies. In two cases the school was no longer in existence. Nevertheless, this still left a significant sample size and the number of responses received ('n'=1405; a response rate of 62 per cent) qualifies it on an overall basis as a survey with population validity.

The claim for population validity still holds up through the strata of the overall sample. In all ten types of maintained school were identified (see Table 3.1, below) which, together, can be categorised into four broad categories: nursery, primary, secondary and special schools. The smallest number of potential respondents ('n'=57) were to be found in nursery schools which of all the types of schools is the only one that is wholly non-statutory. 35 completed questionnaires were received from headteachers of nursery schools, a response rate of 61 per cent. Collapsing Infant, First, Infant-with Junior, First-with Middle, Junior and Middle deemed primary into a single category entitled 'primary' gave a potential respondent number of 1785 of which 1100 responses were received, giving a response rate of 62 per cent in primary schools. Similarly collapsing secondary and Middle deemed secondary into a single category gave a potential sample size of 295 of which 176 responses were received, giving a response rate of 59 per cent in secondary schools. The

number of special schools ('n'=148) form a single category on their own of which 94 responses were received, giving a response rate of 63 per cent in special schools.

Table 3.1 - Subgroups in the Stratified Random Sample of Headteachers

Subgroup	Type of School	Pupil Ages	Number of Schools
1	Nursery	3 to 5	57
2	Infant	5 to 7	238
3	First	5 to 8 or 9	150
4	Infant-with-Junior	5 to 11	1,155
5	First-with-Middle	5 to 12	15
6	Junior	7 to 11	209
7	Middle Deemed Primary	8 to 12	18
8	Middle Deemed Secondary	9 to 13	35
9	Secondary	11 plus	260
10	Special Needs	Varied, according to designation	148
		Total:	2,285

The exclusion of independent schools from the sample was deliberate as the operating conditions were fundamentally different from state maintained schools, particularly in relation to school governance and mandatory issues.

Conducting the survey

The sample of serving headteachers in England was notified of the intention to survey them by means of a letter sent in November, 1998 (Appendix 3). The entire sample were mailed a pack in February, 1999 (Appendix 4) containing a copy of the

questionnaire, together with a covering letter and a reply-paid envelope to be used for completed responses. In addition, each pack contained a Letter of Informed Consent which was to be completed by the respondent. This letter of informed consent was based on the research protocol for projects involving human subjects (see: Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996). Explanation of the purpose of this letter was included in the covering letter which confirmed that all University of Lincoln policies guiding research involving humans would also be followed. Participants were asked to sign the Letter of Informed Consent, which guaranteed them confidentiality, voluntary status and the right to be informed about study procedures, research results, and potential risks, and then return it with their completed questionnaire. Respondents not including the signed letter were contacted either by telephone or letter subsequently to ensure that a copy was lodged with the other data. Two follow-up mailings took place with non-respondents in March and May, 1999, making use of a different covering letter on each occasion (see Appendix 5).

The initial mailing in February elicited a total of 736 completed questionnaires, a response rate of 32 per cent. The second mailing in March elicited a further 453 completed questionnaires, bringing the total response rate to 52 per cent. The third mailing in May brought a further 219 completed questionnaires. The majority of responses ('n'=1385) was received by the end of May and data collection was formally finished in August, 1999 by which time a total of 1405 completed questionnaires had been received, giving an overall response rate of 62 per cent. This pattern of returns corresponded to the "typical pattern of responses" to postal questionnaires suggested by Cohen and Manion (1994: 99) and to the volume which is considered "acceptable" (Mangione, 1995: 60-61). It is a response rate, however, that

I consider to be outstanding for voluntary self-completion questionnaires by serving headteachers in this country who are considered to be one of the most elusive of subjects (Cohen and Manion, 1994).

The total of completed questionnaires was supplemented by information from non-respondents ('n' = 99) that allowed the research team to account for 66 per cent of the sample population. The most consistent reason offered for non-completion was a lack of time. Such a response was not surprising, given the statutory demands on headteachers for information returns, especially on target-setting for their school. The second most popular reason for non-completion was changed circumstances at the school, particularly caused by a change of headteacher. Sixteen messages were received from Acting Headteachers who were, of course, not eligible for the study. The most novel reason for non-completion came from one respondent who had actually completed two questionnaires, but had chosen to clip the serial number from the questionnaire form and was thus repeatedly showing up on the database as a non-respondent.

Limitations

I judge the strength of the questionnaire to have been the extensive trialling and piloting routines adopted throughout the development of the instrument, which took about 12 months in total. The use of the Delphi technique by colleagues from the University of Texas (El Paso) to elicit the original 28 items, coupled with the subsequent adaptation of those questions through the use of expert opinion for use in Part 2 of the survey, demonstrated a commitment to the principle of alignment of questions with grounded and emergent theory. Similarly, the literature review I

undertook for this study supports the claim that the questions were underpinned theoretically. In these ways the questionnaire has been deemed to have internal validity, an assessment further reinforced by the use of open-ended questions in Part 3 of the questionnaire which improved the opportunity of respondents being able to reconcile their world views with those of those, including myself, that contributed to the design of the survey.

The physical design of the questionnaire was a positive contributing feature of the data collection, which was of a high order. By limiting the length and investing in the physical appearance by use of a high quality print finish, respondent interest was deemed to have been heightened and the possibility of fatigue lowered. These approaches were part of a considered strategy utilised to respect the status of respondents and to elicit a good response rate. Potential respondents were notified in advance of data collection, as were the professional associations relevant to headteachers in England, whom I kept informed as a matter of courtesy and expediency. With goodwill from the potential respondents and their professional associations, I anticipated that the potential for eliciting responses from individual headteachers would be increased. This approach, which included carefully worded invitations to participate and follow-up letters to non-respondents, was part of a carefully managed administration system devised for the study that included accurate record keeping. This close attention to detail appears to have paid off in terms of quantity and quality of responses, with over 90 per cent of all respondents providing substantial comments to the open-ended questions used in Part 3 of the questionnaire. Both factors have contributed to the external validity of the survey which thus has a good representative stratified sample, a large number of respondents and a high

proportion of quality responses to the open questions. These factors contributed to the generalisability of the findings.

The same attention to detail was applied to data entry which I monitored through checking a ten per cent random sample of all entries for errors. An error rate of less than 0.01 per cent was detected in those checking procedures, a rate that was deemed acceptable. In addition I edited the data for respondent errors, with obvious errors either corrected or noted when reporting the findings (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). It was common, for example, for a number of respondents to attempt to attribute reasons for their perceived state of readiness in Part 2 of the questionnaire even though they had recorded a score of 'inadequately' to 'not prepared' (i.e. 2 or less). As the subsequent question was only required to be answered if their perceived state of readiness was adequately prepared or well prepared (i.e. 3 or more) such entries were not required and would have contaminated the data regarding attribution of readiness for role. In my processing the questionnaire data such erroneous entries were removed. Where the respondent had made an obvious error (such as one respondent who entered their age on entering headship as 'two years of age') I ignored the responses in subsequent data analysis.

The weaknesses of this questionnaire were located in three key areas: the wording of the instructions, the basic philosophy of data collection and the lack of subsequent data verification or triangulation routines.

A major issue that remained undetected at the time of the survey was the wording of the instructions for completion of Part II of the questionnaire in which I had asked

potential respondents to indicate "how well prepared you feel you were during your first year of headship to carry out the activity". The question is ambiguous and could be interpreted as 'for' the first year or 'during' the first year, with the latter interpretation subsequently describing development activities that happened after appointment. The intention of this question was for respondents to indicate how well prepared they felt on taking up the headship position and was not designed to elicit anything that happened after their appointment other than their ability to deal with the issue. A more accurate wording of the question to reflect the intent would have been "how well prepared did you feel to carry out the activity during your first year as a headteacher?" Whether this latter interpretation was employed by any of the respondents is not clear, although the extensive trialling of the draft questionnaires did not indicate either a potential problem or produce results that indicated an understanding of the question that was different from those intended in the research designs. Similarly, the responses from the actual survey did not indicate an understanding that was different from my intentions.

It must also be recognised that the findings from the survey may reflect only the perceptions of those in post and their interpretation of the questions. This issue relates to the concepts of construct validity and item reliability (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996). The closest the survey came to establishing whether respondents were stating their true opinion (construct validity) was in the piloting stage with one group completing the same questionnaire twice, with a second group being interviewed 24 hours after completion of a pilot version. I did not apply correlational measures to the questions, however, to establish their construct validity with the result that the final questions were modified in the absence of any verification measures. The issue of item

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reliability is not critical, however, when the data are to be analysed and reported at the group level rather than at the level of individual respondents (Gall *et al.,* 1996) which was the case for the items in Part 2 of the questionnaire, although some reservations will be held about the reliability of data emerging from the open-ended questions in Part 3 of the questionnaire.

I did not attempt to employ a respondent/non-respondent analysis, nor did I subject the data to a wave analysis despite the fact that collection took place over a period of several months and required two follow-up procedures to increase the response rate. This represents an important limitation of the survey, as the prevailing organisational context and educational climate were likely to be mitigating factors that could have contributed to variance of opinion from respondents according to the time when they completed the questionnaire. The period of data collection (January to July, 1999) was, like most of the latter part of the twentieth century, a period characterised by frequent policy and legislative changes from government that manifested themselves at the school level as increased demand on headteacher time and capability. Those completing the questionnaire might have felt significantly different about their responses during a school holiday period, for example, than immediately after an Ofsted inspection. Those completing the questionnaire in the third phase of data collection may have done so more out of a sense of guilt than of beneficence.

I also recognise the potential limitation of respondents' capability to recall their feelings over an extended period of time. In many instances the respondents were asked to express an opinion on their perceived state of readiness on taking up the post after a number of years had elapsed. Their ability to recall their perception *at the time*

when they took up post is likely to have been influenced by this consideration and must be taken into account when arriving at comparisons with those whose memory has not been tested in that way. It was highly possible, for example, that the perception held by more elderly or longer-serving respondents of their state of readiness had been tempered by those same factors. Knowing what they know now may well have influenced the perception of readiness proffered here and on that continuum it was just as likely that younger or shorter-serving respondents have the 'ignorance of youth'. This issue is explored in greater depth in Chapter 5 when the same considerations are applied to the actual data.

Finally, the reliance on respondent perceptions of their state of readiness for role ignored other potential views of the respondents' state of readiness. No attempt was made in this study to verify data either with a sample of respondents or with those who are closely associated with them in their professional capacity (e.g. governors, LEA personnel, senior colleagues in school). This lack of data verification and triangulation may limit the claims that can be made for the data emerging from this study.

In mitigation, it needs to be recognised that my close association since the mid-1980s with most initiatives for the training, development and education of headteachers in leadership and management issues has, to some extent, qualified me for the position of informed participant. I have made use of that knowledge and status in establishing the questionnaire and in interpreting the findings from this survey. Nevertheless, there are limitations on the data which are noted and acknowledged.

The framework for reporting findings from the survey

The breakdown of 1405 responses received by the time the survey closed in August, 1999 is shown across the categories of schools in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Breakdown of survey

Type of School	Pupil Ages	Surveyed	Responses	%
Nursery	3 to 5	57	35	61
Infant	5 to 7	238	145	61
First	5 to 8 or 9	150	102	68
Infant-with-Junior	5 to 11	1,155	704	62
First-with-Middle	5 to 12	15	11	73
Junior	7 to 11	209	128	61
Middle Deemed Pri	8 to 12	18	10	56
Middle Deemed Sec	9 to 13	35	22	63
Secondary	11 plus	260	154	59
Special	Varied	148	94	63
	Total:	2,285	1405	62

It is one of the anomalies of English education that there has been no commonality of school categorisation across the nation, as local differences have been allowed under the terms of the 1944 Education Act which, in this respect, only required LEAs to ensure sufficient school places existed for children of compulsory age for schooling (which was 5 to 16 years at the time of the survey). The consequence was that schools had been organised according to different criteria and educational philosophies across the country long before the introduction of a national curriculum

based around the notion of progression at each Key Stage (KS1 = 5 to 7 years of age; KS2 = 7 to 11; KS3 = 11 to 14; KS4 = 14 to 16). Thus we had middle schools, for example, that spanned Key Stages 2 and 3, and yet some of these were deemed primary and some secondary. Although there had been some examples of LEAs reorganising to match the age bands associated with each Key Stage [Bradford, for example, reorganised in 2000 to primary (5 to 11 years) and secondary (11 to 16 years) schooling which meant the re-designation of middle-deemed-secondary to become primary schools], such variations were still common. Meanwhile Leicestershire retained middle-deemed-secondary schools for pupils aged 9 to 13 years. This potentially made reporting the data difficult.

As the maintenance of separate categories of all schools listed in Table 3.2 (above) in the reporting and analysis of data was deemed confusing, I adopted an alternative method of categorisation for the purpose of this study. The normal way of distinguishing between schools was to use the primary/secondary divide where primary schools deal broadly with pre-school and Key Stages 1 and 2 (children aged 3 to 11 years), with secondary schools dealing mostly with Key Stages 3 and 4 (children aged 11 to 16 years). That allowed for the combining of secondary schools with middle-deemed-secondary schools into a single category. This also overcame any concerns over the generalisability of the findings from the relatively small number of respondents ('n'=22) in the original category of middle-deemed-secondary schools.

A similar strategy of combining categories of schools was employed within the primary phase so that small non-representative numbers of respondents were removed, as with middle-deemed-primary ('n'=10) and first-with-middle ('n'=11).

The simplest way of doing this was to align the original categories of schools broadly to the Key Stages of English education. Nursery schools are pre-school (children under 5 years of age); first (children aged 5 to 8 or 9 years) and infant schools (children aged 5 to 7 years) are broadly Key Stage 1 only; infant-with-junior (children aged 5 to 11 years) and first-with-middle (children aged 5 to 12 years) are broadly Key Stages 1 and 2 combined; junior (children aged 7 to 11 years) and middle-deemed-primary (children aged 8 to 12 years) are broadly Key Stage 2 only. Such a re-categorisation also had the advantage of bringing together schools of a similar nature and size for the purposes of analysis and interpretation.

The end result of this process of re-categorisation was to establish six different reference groups based broadly around pre-school provision, Key Stage 1 only, Key Stages 1 and 2 combined, Key Stage 2 only, Key Stages 3 and 4 combined and Special schools (who by dint of their designation frequently made provision for all ages of children, from 2 to 19 years). That gave a total of six categories in all (as opposed to the 10 in the original sample) which are listed below. For ease of reference it was decided to use the most common and familiar designation for each of the new categories which are:

Nursery   (pre-school)

Infant   (broadly KS1 only)

Infant with junior (broadly KS1 & 2)

Junior   (broadly KS2 only)

Secondary   (broadly KS3 & 4 combined)

Special   (Varied ages)

There were still potential problems with this re-categorisation in that some schools had now been combined with others which, arguably, were not similar in nature. The size, organisation and structure of a middle-deemed-secondary, for example, may well be significantly different from a mainstream secondary school which does not have any children below the age of 11 years. It could be argued equally, however, that there are many different types of 11 plus secondary schools including, for example, those who were operating post-16 provision or were operating selection policies which could also affect the findings. This study did not seek to explore those potential differences and, in this category, focused only on the collective response of those headteachers in post at schools officially designated as secondary.

The outstanding remaining difficulty with the re-categorisation was the distinction between nursery and other designated primary schools. Inevitably a number of primary schools made provision for pre-school children, either in the form of 'rising fives' (children who were under the age of 5 years, but due to have their fifth birthday during that current academic year) or through a special nursery education (usually for children aged 3 to 5 years). In reporting the 35 responses from headteachers of nursery schools it was recognised that this study did not provide valid data on all those headteachers running nursery provision and limited its findings to those headteachers who ran nursery schools that were separate and distinct from other primary schools with nursery provision.

With those limitations placed on the new categories, the responses from the survey were analysed via the categories listed in Table 3.3 (below).

Table 3.3: Re-categorisation of the survey

Type of School	Pupil Ages	Surveyed	Responses	%
Nursery	3 to 5	57	35	61
Infant	5 to 8 or 9	388	247	64
Infant with Junior	5 to 12	1170	715	61
Junior	7 to 12	227	138	61
Secondary	11 to 16	295	176	60
Special	Varied	148	94	63
	Total:	2,285	1405	62

Presentation of the findings

The questionnaire was in four parts, with Part 1 focusing on training and experience and Part 4 seeking to discover demographic details including ethnicity, gender, age and type of school. One core purpose of the questionnaire was contained in Part 2 which provided a range of 28 questions examining the perceptions of serving headteachers as to their level of preparation for headship. Answers were offered on a four-point scale with a score of 3 equalling 'well-prepared' and a score of 4 equalling 'extremely well prepared'. Those headteachers who felt well prepared or extremely well prepared for the post on entry were then asked to complete an associated question as to whether they attributed their perceived degree of preparation to training, experience or some combination of both. This time they used a five point scale with a score of 1 equalling 'training only', a score of 2 equalling 'mostly training', a score of 3 reporting an 'equal training and experience', a score of 4 equalling 'mostly experience' and a score of 5 equalling 'experience only'. Part 3 of the questionnaire allowed the respondents to write short answers in which they gave suggestions for improving the preparation and induction of new headteachers. This

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study has reported on the findings from Parts 2 and 3, using the data from Parts 1 and 4 to further differentiate between replies from respondents in the same category of schools.

Gender: 1374 respondents indicated their gender (98 per cent) of which 748 (53 per cent) were women and 626 (47 per cent) were men. The balance of responses was different to the proportion of headteachers in service, where just under half were women (Department for Education and Employment, 1998b). DfES statistics (see Table 3.4, below) showed a gradual increase in the proportion of women headteachers between 1993 and 1997, although their figures did not distinguish between categories of schools in the primary sector.

Table 3.4: Headteachers in Service

		1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Nursery & Primary						
	Men	50.2	49.7	47.7	46.6	44.9
	Women	49.8	50.3	52.3	53.4	55.1
Secondary						
	Men	78.1	78.1	76.4	75.8	75.1
	Women	21.9	21.9	23.6	24.2	24.9
Special						
	Men	63.9	63.8	63.0	60.9	58.8
	Women	36.1	36.2	37.0	39.1	41.2
Total						
	Men	55.7	55.2	53.2	52.0	50.5
	Women	44.3	44.8	46.8	48.0	49.5

Source = Department for Education and Employment, 1998b: 28-29.

The difference in response rate between men and women on the survey began to explain the differences between the proportion of women respondents (60 per cent) and the proportion of those in the total population (49.5 per cent - Department for Education and Employment, 1998b). What was also discovered through the survey was that the proportion of women was much higher than men in schools with younger children, whereas the proportion of men to women increases with the age of children. The proportion of men and women respondents from secondary and special schools in the survey were broadly in line with those from the total population of headteachers.

Table 3.5 – Gender of headteachers in different types of schools (1374 responses)

Type of school	**All**	**Women**	*%*	**Men**	*%*
Nursery	33	31	*94*	2	*6*
Infant	244	220	*90*	24	*10*
Infant with Junior	696	368	*53*	328	*47*
Junior	138	48	*35*	90	*65*
Secondary	169	39	*23*	130	*77*
Special	94	42	*45*	52	*55*
Total	1374	748	*54*	626	*46*

Age: A total of 1328 respondents (95 per cent) disclosed their age. Age ranged from 28 to 63 years.

Table 3.6 – Age Profile of Respondents

Age	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special	**All**
<30	-	1	-	-	1
30-35	1	23	-	-	24
36-40	1	65	4	4	75
41-45	13	200	33	16	265
46-50	11	361	62	23	465
51-55	7	266	48	26	349
56-60	2	111	18	2	133
61-63	0	9	5	2	16

(14 erroneous responses; 49 no response)
Entire Database: Range = 28 to 63; Nursery: Range = 35 to 56; Primary: Range = 28 to 62;
Secondary: Range = 39 to 62; Special: Range = 38 to 63.

Ethnicity: No attempt has been made to differentiate responses according to ethnicity as the overwhelming majority of the 1351 respondents who recorded an entry in this section reported themselves as 'White' ('n'=1232) or 'Irish' ('n'=101), a proportion of 99 per cent of respondents. Of the 18 who reported themselves to be of a different ethnicity than White or Irish, there were four Black African, two Black Caribbean, one Black Other, four Indian, two Pakistani, one Bangladesh and one Chinese. In addition two reported themselves as 'Mixed Race European' and one as 'Pomeranian'. In the absence of any national database on the ethnicity of teachers and headteachers it is hard to say whether these figures were representative, although the validity of the original sample size for this survey suggests that this is most likely a true reflection of the ethnicity of headteachers in England. More importantly, however, the very small numbers in each category did not allow for generalisation.

Years of service: 1364 respondents (97 per cent) supplied details of their length of service as a headteacher. The range included three headteachers in their first year of service to one who had served for 30 years. Details of the range are displayed in Table 3.7 (below). In terms of reporting the findings the following categories were used: 0 to 2 years, 3 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years and 11 years plus. The rationale for this categorisation was that these divisions aligned themselves to the following criteria:

- headteachers in the first two years of service were eligible for Headlamp funding of £2500 from the DfES between 1994 and 1999, when the survey was conducted,

- it was expected that headteachers of between three and five years of service would have completed their Headlamp period and would have been eligible, during the period 1998-99, for LPSH funding and programmes,

- in addition to being eligible for LPSH funding and programmes, headteachers with between 6 and 10 years of service had also not necessarily served in a pre-LMS environment (although in some LEAs, notably the former Inner London Education Authority, this may not have been true as the implementation of LMS was staged until 1994),

- Headteachers of more than 11 years service were almost certain to have served in a pre- and post-LMS environment.

Table 3.7 - Years of service for serving headteachers

Years of service	Number of respondents	Overall per category
0	3	229
1	103	
2	123	
3	90	272
4	82	
5	100	
6 to 10	411	411
11 plus	452	452

Data presentation

The questions from Part 2 have formed one of the frameworks for reporting on the responses. The quantitative findings from Part 2 which report on the responses to the development of skills (Questions A1-18), the formation of attitudes and values (Questions B1-4) and to the increase of knowledge (Questions C1-6) are reported in Chapter 4.   In each section of Chapter 4 there will be an overview of the responses which was achieved, in the first instance, by providing an average score for each question. The five columns that follow in that initial table report how those who felt either well prepared or extremely well prepared attributed the level of preparation to training or experience or some combination of both. Figures are expressed as a percentage of respondents. Percentages were rounded up or down in the conventional manner to whole figures only. Entries showing zero per cent do not, therefore, necessarily mean that there had been a nil response. Similarly, neither do the figures always add up to exactly 100.

Subsequently comparisons will be made between different categories of respondents through the use of tables presenting mean ranks and rankings. There are four categories of respondent in each section according to: type of school, gender, age and length of service. Significant differences (where 'p' < 0.05) will be reported between respondents from the different categories.

The findings from Part 3 of the questionnaire were largely qualitative in nature and have been reported in a different fashion, in Chapter 4. The questions again formed a

framework for the reporting of the findings which were analysed for emergent themes
and subsequent coding of the data.

Chapter 4

Survey Findings

Most headteachers in England have managed their own development, usually by learning on the job, and generally had not been a participant in formal programmes of preparation or induction. The decision to undertake a survey of serving headteachers in 1999 was based on the premise that most notions of headship had made use of appropriated theory, empirical research from other school systems and occupations, or were based on a number of assumptions. The conclusion reached in that discussion was that there was an absence of a commonly accepted theory of headship. This gave rise to the need to further investigate the position with a view to extending understanding of the challenges faced by aspirant and beginning headteachers.

Given the methodological issues discussed in Chapter 3, the survey sought to establish a generalisable picture of headteacher perceptions as to their state of readiness for the role on appointment and, when that was considered adequate or well prepared, to investigate how they attributed their preparation. The survey also sought to elicit views from respondents as to the type of help that first-year headteachers might need to make them more effective and the level of support that would be helpful during their first two years. In addition, respondents were given the opportunity to add other comments, if desired. This chapter reports on the findings from the survey which was conducted through a self-completion questionnaire that sought both quantitative and qualitative data. The findings are reported accordingly.

Data analysis

Quantitative data (yielded by Parts I, II and IV of the questionnaire) were analysed using SPSS for Windows. Statistical tests were mainly conducted using the Kruskal-Wallis Test, a test used to establish whether the mean rankings of the variables are the

same where more than two groups were being compared (Cramer, 1994). The 'H' test is reported. Separate two-tailed tests were used for the comparison between respondents, employing the Wilcoxon signed rank test, Mann-Whitney U test (see Siegel, 1956) and the Two-Sample Kolmorgorov-Smirnov Test.

Qualitative data (yielded by Part III of the questionnaire) were subjected to content analysis by the author who generated a number of emergent themes through the use of open coding (Strauss, 1987). The resulting codes were refined by repeated analysis and then used to define recurring themes and patterns, resulting in the creation of core categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This inductive process enabled emergent elements of the data to be analysed. The emergent categories were used by an independent rater to obtain measures of inter-rater reliability. Agreement ranged between 85 and 96 per cent. Disagreements were resolved by discussion.

Quantitative findings

This section has been divided into three sections, reporting the findings from questions in Sections A (Development of Skills), B (Formation of Values and Attitudes) and C (Increase of Knowledge) in Part 2 of the questionnaire.

A. Development of Skills

All respondents

An examination of all responses shows a majority to have felt either well or extremely well prepared in 11 of the 18 skills identified for this survey (See Table 4.1, below).

Table 4.1- Development of Skills

Question	%	Attributable to (%):				
		Training only	Mostly training	Equal	Mostly exprnce	Exprnce only
A1: Putting vision into words	**57**	1	6	41	41	10
A2: Ensuring that all people with an interest in the school are involved in the school mission	**57**	1	6	41	42	10
A3: Building community/parental involvement	**73**	0	1	25	51	23
A4: Working effectively with adults	**82**	0	1	27	52	20
A5: Working with the under-performing teacher	**24**	2	8	34	39	18
A6: Identifying children with special needs	**73**	1	8	54	25	12
A7: Using student performance data to plan curriculum	**30**	0	11	51	29	9
A8: Maintaining effective school discipline	**90**	0	1	28	41	29
A9: Resolving conflict/handling confrontation	**66**	0	2	32	43	23
A10: Using effective communication techniques	**78**	0	3	39	40	18
A11: Conducting a meeting	**72**	1	4	34	37	24
A12: Forming and working with teams	**77**	0	3	37	41	19
A13: Applying educational law to specific situations	**19**	5	21	50	18	6
A14: Planning for future needs and growth	**44**	1	8	53	31	6
A15: Assuming responsibility for school management	**36**	3	12	46	26	13
A16: Organising school administration	**46**	1	5	42	35	17
A17: Constructing timetables	**68**	1	3	27	38	31
A18: Using information technology and other tools in the management process	**29**	4	10	44	24	18
MEAN	**57**	1	6	39	36	17

The highest ranked individual skill was the maintenance of effective school discipline (Question A8) with 90 per cent of respondents indicating themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared for this aspect of the role in their first year of headship. Three other skills were identified by over three quarters of respondents as ones for which they felt more than adequately prepared:

- working effectively with adults (Question A4: 82 per cent),

- using effective communication techniques (Question A10: 78 per cent),

- forming and working with teams (Question A12: 77 per cent).

In the remaining seven skills where the majority of respondents felt themselves to be more than adequately prepared, all scores were in the third quartile (see Table 4.1, below)

The least prepared aspect appears to be in the application of law (Question A13) to specific situations with only 19 per cent of respondents scoring this as a 3 or 4 on the rating scale. There were three other areas where under a third of respondents felt confident in their level of skills:

- working with the under-performing teacher (Question A5: 24 per cent),

- using information technology and other tools in the management process (Question A18: 29 per cent),

- using student performance data to plan curriculum (Question A7: 30 per cent).

The three remaining aspects of skill in which fewer than half of respondents perceived themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared were:

- assuming responsibility for school management (Question A15: 36 per cent),

- planning for future needs and growth (Question A14: 44 per cent),

- organising school administration (Question A16: 46 per cent).

The influence of training was deemed to be minimal by respondents in all categories, with just seven per cent indicating that mostly training or training only had been the principal factor in the development of the skills identified in this survey. Of those who felt themselves either well prepared or extremely well prepared in the development of skills, 53 per cent attributed this mostly or entirely to experience rather than training. In only one skill, the application of law to specific situations (Question A13), the one for which respondents felt least prepared, did more than a quarter of those who felt well prepared indicate training as being the key factor contributing to their readiness. Only three other skills scored more than 10 per cent, with the overall figure established at seven per cent.

Different types of schools

There were differences between respondents from the six different types of schools identified in terms of their perceived level of skills. Respondents from secondary schools felt better prepared for the range of skills with 65 per cent of respondents indicating themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared for the range of skills and ranking first in 15 of the 18 questions (see Table 4.2 below). Headteachers from special schools ranked second in this respect with 63 per cent of

respondents indicating themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared for the range of skills, ranking first in the remaining three skills and second in 11 of the other skills. Those from the primary sector were closely matched behind these two, although headteachers from both nursery and junior skills ranked sixth in seven of the 18 skills.

Table 4.2 Development of Skills: Rankings and mean rank according to type of school

Question	Sec		Nursery		Special		Infant		Inf/Jun		Junior	
	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
A1	1	2.76	2	2.66	3	2.57	4	2.53	5	2.49	6	2.43
A2	1	2.69	4	2.57	3	2.61	2	2.62	5	2.52	6	2.42
A3	5	2.80	2	2.97	1	2.98	3	2.96	4	2.81	6	2.70
A4	1	3.14	4	2.97	3	3.02	2	3.06	6	2.92	5	2.94
A5	1	2.17	6	1.74	5	1.87	2	2.06	3	1.92	4	1.88
A6	6	2.43	4	2.74	1	3.76	2	3.08	3	2.90	5	2.75
A7	3	2.20	2	2.24	1	2.25	4	2.06	5	1.99	6	1.99
A8	1	3.34	5	3.14	2	3.26	4	3.19	3	3.21	6	3.07
A9	1	3.03	6	2.65	2	2.88	5	2.66	4	2.66	3	2.70
A10	1	3.15	6	2.83	2	3.01	3	2.91	4	2.89	5	2.84
A11	1	3.31	6	2.63	2	3.04	5	2.79	3	2.85	4	2.80
A12	1	3.23	4	2.83	2	3.01	3	2.92	5	2.84	6	2.83
A13	1	2.03	3	1.82	2	1.96	4	1.81	6	1.76	5	1.80
A14	1	2.59	3	2.50	2	2.49	4	2.36	5	2.32	6	2.23
A15	1	2.47	6	1.88	2	2.35	5	2.09	4	2.10	3	2.15
A16	1	2.83	3	2.35	2	2.45	6	2.26	5	2.28	4	2.32
A17	1	3.14	6	2.55	2	2.80	3	2.73	4	2.71	4	2.68
A18	1	2.26	6	1.84	2	2.01	3	1.98	5	1.95	4	1.96

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

The least prepared skill identified by secondary headteachers was the identification of children with special educational needs (42 per cent), where they ranked last. Special school headteachers achieved their highest mean rank for this skill, with those from the primary sector ranking this skill more highly than their secondary counterparts.

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Headteachers from infant and infant with junior schools ranked their skill level higher than colleagues from nursery and junior schools for Question A6 (Identifying children with special needs), with those from junior schools perceiving themselves to be the least well prepared of those from the primary sector. It was Nursery school headteachers, however, who felt least well prepared for the skill identified in Question A11 (Conducting a meeting).

Statistical analysis demonstrates levels of significant differences (where 'p' < 0.05) between the groups in all 18 questions (see Table 4.3, below). Generally, however, there were few such differences between the headteachers from schools once those from the secondary sector are removed (as can be seen from column 'Type 2' in Table 4.3, below). Nevertheless responses to questions A6 (identifying children with special needs), A7 (Using student performance data to plan curriculum), A9 (Resolving conflict/handling confrontation), A11 (Conducting a meeting), A14 (Planning for future needs and growth) and A15 (Assuming responsibility for school management) still show differences among the remaining schools. Further analysis of nursery and primary schools only (see column 'Type 3' in Table 4.3, below) would suggest that those from special schools are responsible for the differences in responses to questions A7, 9, 11, 14 and 15 as no difference is to be found among those from nursery and primary schools.

Question A6 (Identification of children with special needs) shows that difference between respondents from different types of school is sustained into the Nursery and Primary sector. Further analysis shows significant differences for Question A6 to be

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attributable to respondents from both infant and junior schools. The analysis of nursery and primary schools (see column 'Type 3' in Table 4.3, below) reveals differences between respondents in question A3 (Building community/parental involvement) to be attributable to respondents from both infant and junior schools, in question A4 (Working effectively with adults) to be attributable to respondents from both infant and infant with junior schools and to Question A5 (Working with the under performing teacher) to be attributable solely to respondents from infant schools. The conclusion to be drawn here is that no single group was consistently responsible for the differences between those from schools in the nursery and primary sector.

Of the skills identified by all respondents as ones for which fewer than half the respondents felt well prepared, only four consistently appear for all types of schools:

- working with the under-performing teacher (A5),

- using student performance data to plan curriculum (A7),

- the application of law to specific situations (A13),

- using information technology and other tools in the management process (A18).

It is worth mentioning that Question A15 (Assuming responsibility for school-based management) would also have been applicable to all types of schools were it not for the marginal score recorded by those from secondary schools (49 per cent). Respondents from all other types of schools who considered themselves well prepared for this skill were in the minority.

Table 4.3 Development of skills: Levels of significance between respondents

Question	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Gender[X]	Age	Length
A1	.001**	.244	.348	.069	.001**	.000**
A2	.020*	.490	.084	.000**	.000**	.000**
A3	.001**	.071	.001**	.001**	.001**	.000**
A4	.000**	.451	.049*	.013*	.002*	.000**
A5	.000**	.302	.041*	.000**	.000**	.000**
A6	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**
A7	.018*	.024*	.316	.005*	.000**	.000**
A8	.009*	.736	.115	.288	.023*	.066
A9	.000**	.041*	.923	.805	.327	.000**
A10	.000**	.130	.476	.034	.013*	.000*
A11	.000**	.007*	.772	.726	.000**	.000**
A12	.000**	.113	.356	.001*	.000**	.000**
A13	.001**	.123	.602	.634	.008*	.007*
A14	.000**	.029*	.182	.025*	.000**	.000**
A15	.000**	.018*	.466	.016*	.001*	.000**
A16	.000**	.221	.898	.007*	.435	.098
A17	.000**	.349	.610	.570	.006*	.000**
A18	.008*	.641	.601	.907	.000**	.000**

Type 1 = All schools; Type 2 = All schools except secondary; Type 3 = Nursery and Primary Schools.
[X]Reporting Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon Test

Overall two other skills were considered to be under-prepared when examining the responses of all headteachers in the survey:

'Planning for future needs and growth' (Question A14) shows 45 per cent of all respondents perceiving themselves to be well prepared or extremely well prepared, but closer examination reveals that this outcome is caused by the influence of weight of numbers in the primary sector, specifically those from infant (46 per cent), infant-with-junior (41 per cent) and junior (36 per cent) schools. Colleagues from the

secondary sector perceived this skill as one of their strengths (57 per cent) as did those from special schools (56 per cent) and nurseries (51 per cent).

Similarly, 'Organising school administration' (Question A16) shows 47 per cent of all respondents perceiving themselves to be well prepared or extremely well prepared. Again, the influence of weight of numbers in the primary sector, specifically those from infant (41 per cent), infant-with-junior (43 per cent), junior (45 per cent) and nursery (46 per cent) schools bring the total below 50 per cent, although 70 per cent of those from secondary schools and 52 per cent of those from special schools perceived this to be one of their strengths.

Gender

Overall women considered themselves to be better prepared (see Table 4.4, below) and ranked first in 13 of the 18 skills.

Table 4.4: Development of skills: Ranking and mean ranks according to gender

Question	Men		Women	
	R	*M*	R	*M*
A1	2	*2.50*	1	*2.57*
A2	2	*2.48*	1	*2.62*
A3	2	*2.77*	1	*2.90*
A4	2	*2.92*	1	*3.03*
A5	2	*1.87*	1	*2.04*
A6	2	*2.69*	1	*3.11*
A7	2	*1.97*	1	*2.11*
A8	2	*3.19*	1	*3.23*
A9	1	*2.74*	2	*2.73*
A10	2	*2.87*	1	*2.98*
A11	2	*2.90*	1	*2.93*
A12	2	*2.83*	1	*2.97*
A13	1	*1.83*	2	*1.80*
A14	2	*2.31*	1	*2.39*
A15	1	*2.23*	2	*2.11*
A16	1	*2.43*	2	*2.31*

| A17 | 2 | 2.77 | 1 | 2.77 |
| A18 | 1 | 2.01 | 2 | 1.98 |

Statistically there were significant differences between men and women when using the Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test (see Table 9.3, above) in Question A2 (Ensuring that all people with an interest in the school are involved in the school mission), Question A3 (Building community/parent involvement), Question A4 (Working effectively with adults), Question A5 (Working with the under-performing teacher), Question A6: (Identifying children with special needs), Question A7 (Using student performance data to plan curriculum), Question A12 (Forming and working with teams) and Question A15 (Assuming responsibility for school-based management). Use of the two-sample Kolmorogov-Smirnov test confirmed all these levels of significance except for question A4 and question A15. For the purposes of accuracy, therefore, both questions will not form part of the discussion that follows in Chapter 5.

Age of respondents

There is a close match between the age of respondents to perceptions of their state of readiness (see Table 4.5, below). Those aged 40 years and below ranked first in 17 of the 18 skills, with the highest ranking for the remaining one (Question A13: Applying law to specific situations) being registered by the oldest group, aged 56+ years. Of those 17 skills registered by the younger respondents, those in the category of 36 to 40 year olds ranked highest in 10, one shared highest ranking (identical scores to four decimal places) and six second places. Those aged 35 years and under ranked highest in six of the remaining skills, with one shared highest ranking and six second places.

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Conversely, however, these youngest respondents had the lowest ranking in three of the skills, questions A13 (Applying educational law to specific situations), A15 (Assuming responsibility for school-based management) and A16 (Organising school administration). Those in the three oldest age groups consistently ranked themselves in the lowest three rankings for the majority of the skills. There was a consistent level of significance recorded between the age groups for the majority of questions in Part II, Section A of the survey ranging from 'p' = .000 to 'p' = .032 (see Table 4.3, above). No statistically significant difference was evident between the age groups on questions A9 (Resolving conflict/handling confrontation) and A16 (Organising school administration).

Table 4.5: Development of skills: Ranking and mean ranks according to age

Question	35 & Under		36-40		41-45		46-50		51-55		56+	
	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
A1	1=	*2.83*	1=	*2.83*	3	*2.63*	4	*2.50*	6	*2.46*	5	*2.48*
A2	2	*2.75*	1	*2.89*	3	*2.67*	4	*2.53*	5	*2.44*	6	*2.44*
A3	2	*3.00*	1	*3.06*	3	*2.94*	4	*2.81*	5	*2.81*	6	*2.65*
A4	1	*3.33*	2	*3.18*	3	*3.06*	4	*2.97*	5	*2.94*	6	*2.85*
A5	1	*2.69*	2	*2.12*	3	*2.06*	5	*1.97*	6	*1.81*	4	*2.00*
A6	1	*3.31*	2	*3.26*	3	*3.06*	4	*2.90*	5	*2.84*	6	*2.63*
A7	1	*2.54*	2	*2.31*	3	*2.22*	4	*2.05*	6	*1.87*	5	*1.94*
A8	2	*3.31*	1	*3.39*	3	*3.29*	6	*3.17*	5	*3.17*	4	*3.23*
A9	1	*2.92*	3	*2.75*	2	*2.82*	5	*2.70*	6	*2.69*	4	*2.71*
A10	3	*3.00*	1	*3.06*	2	*3.02*	5	*2.87*	4	*2.88*	6	*2.80*
A11	2	*3.08*	1	*3.25*	3	*3.05*	4	*2.82*	5	*2.79*	6	*2.76*
A12	2	*3.08*	1	*3.13*	3	*3.04*	4	*2.91*	5	*2.83*	6	*2.76*
A13	6	*1.67*	2	*1.88*	3	*1.86*	4	*1.86*	5	*1.70*	1	*1.91*
A14	1	*2.75*	2	*2.60*	3	*2.49*	4	*2.39*	6	*2.22*	5	*2.27*
A15	6	*2.00*	1	*2.38*	2	*2.31*	3	*2.16*	4	*2.06*	5	*2.05*
A16	6	*2.08*	1	*2.45*	2	*2.45*	3	*2.36*	4	*2.34*	5	*2.35*
A17	3	*2.85*	1	*3.01*	2	*2.87*	4	*2.72*	5	*2.69*	6	*2.62*

| A18 | 2 | 2.38 | 1 | 2.43 | 3 | 2.31 | 4 | 1.97 | 5 | 1.81 | 6 | 1.60 |

Length of service

As with the previous category, there was a very close relationship between longevity (time of service) and perceptions of readiness for the range of skills. The shorter the period of service, the higher the ranking of the group (see Table 4.6, below). Those in service less than two years ranked first in 17 of the 18 skills. Those in service for between two and five years were highest ranked in the remaining skills and ranked second in 15 of the remaining skills. The pattern continues through the last two groups, with a near perfect correlation between length of service and ranking.

Table 4.6: Development of skills: Ranking and mean ranks - Length of Service

	0-2 years		3-5 years		6-10 years		11+ years	
Question	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
A1	1	2.75	2	2.68	3	2.45	4	2.38
A2	1	2.85	2	2.74	3	2.48	4	2.34
A3	1	3.03	2	2.96	3	2.81	4	2.68
A4	1	3.14	2	3.08	3	3.00	4	2.81
A5	1	2.28	2	2.00	3	1.93	4	1.77
A6	1	3.22	2	3.10	3	2.90	4	2.62
A7	1	2.41	2	2.25	3	1.93	4	1.80
A8	1	3.31	2	3.25	3	3.17	4	3.17
A9	1	2.90	2	2.80	3	2.68	4	2.62
A10	1	3.09	2	3.06	3	2.89	4	2.77
A11	1	3.14	2	2.97	3	2.97	4	2.65
A12	1	3.12	2	3.07	3	2.91	4	2.67
A13	1	1.90	3	1.79	2	1.86	4	1.73

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A14	1	2.61	2	2.50	3	2.32	4	2.16
A15	1	2.28	2	2.28	3	2.23	4	1.93
A16	1	2.46	3	2.37	2	2.38	4	2.28
A17	2	2.89	1	2.91	3	2.71	4	2.64
A18	1	2.41	2	2.25	3	1.98	4	1.60

Statistically there was a consistent level of significant difference recorded between the groups for the majority of questions in Part II, Section A of the survey (see Table 4.3, above). No significant differences were evident between the groups on Question A8 (Maintaining effective school discipline) and Question A16 (Organising school administration).

Further analysis of the data set revealed that of the 1358 respondents who had revealed their length of service, 235 had been in post fewer than 2 years with 36 of those respondents indicating that they had participated in NPQH. Six respondents who indicated they had undertaken NPQH gave their length of service as longer than 2 years, whilst the remaining 12 of the total of 54 respondents who indicated they had undertaken NPQH did not reveal their length of service. The expectation was that all 54 NPQH respondents would have been in post fewer than 2 years as the pilot training programme did not commence until January, 1997 and I had predicted that no serving headteacher surveyed between February and June, 1999 would have completed more than 2 years service after the introduction of NPQH. Two explanations which could account for this anomaly are that they had either been serving headteachers who had opted to take part in the trials, pilot phase or in the first cohort of NPQH (an option offered under Headlamp, for example) or that these six respondents had merely

incorrectly recorded their length of service as a headteacher. For the purposes of this data analysis, however, these six NPQH respondents plus the 12 respondents who did not record their length of service as a headteacher were removed from the NPQH sample, leaving a population of 36 who had undertaken NPQH and were within their first two years of service at the time of the national headteacher survey.

Newly appointed headteachers (less than 2 years in service) perceived themselves to be better prepared than longer-serving headteachers in all 28 aspects. In all instances the difference between newly appointed and longer-serving headteachers was statistically significant. Separating out those with experience of NPQH ('n' = 36) from the other newly appointed headteachers produced a different profile, however. This profile showed the former group perceiving themselves to be better prepared in 14 of the 18 skills (see Table 4.7, below), in all four of the questions associated with the formation of attitudes and values and in five of the six aspects of professional knowledge and understanding.

The difference between the two groups in four of those skills is statistically significant, but there were no differences among the groups in respect to their perceived state of readiness in sections B (formation of attitudes and values) and C (professional knowledge and understanding) of the survey. The four skills where those with NPQH experience felt better prepared than other newly appointed colleagues were:

A1   Putting vision into words,
A13   Applying educational law to specific situations,
A15   Assuming responsibility for school management,
A16   Organising school administration

Table 4.7: Ranking and mean ranks according to NPQH status of headteachers and length of service

Question	NPQH Participants		Serving HTs 0- 2 years		Serving HTs 2+ years	
	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
A1	1	*2.94*	2	*2.71*	3	*2.48*
A2	1	*3.03*	2	*2.82*	3	*2.48*
A3	1	*3.11*	2	*3.02*	3	*2.79*
A4	1	*3.28*	2	*3.11*	3	*2.94*
A5	1	*2.31*	2	*2.28*	3	*1.88*
A6	2	*3.01*	1	*3.26*	3	*2.84*
A7	1	*2.61*	2	*2.37*	3	*1.96*
A8	2	*3.31*	1	*3.31*	3	*3.19*
A9	1	*2.89*	2	*2.89*	3	*2.69*
A10	2	*3.06*	1	*3.09*	3	*2.86*
A11	1	*3.34*	2	*3.10*	3	*2.82*
A12	1	*3.26*	2	*3.10*	3	*2.86*
A13	1	*2.14*	2	*1.85*	3	*1.79*
A14	1	*2.80*	2	*2.58*	3	*2.30*
A15	1	*2.57*	2	*2.23*	3	*2.12*
A16	1	*2.88*	2	*2.40*	3	*2.34*
A17	2	*2.76*	1	*2.92*	3	*2.71*
A18	1	*2.65*	2	*2.35*	3	*1.89*
B1	1	*3.29*	2	*3.16*	3	*3.08*
B2	1	*3.06*	2	*3.05*	3	*2.96*
B3	1	*2.91*	2	*2.83*	3	*2.69*
B4	1	*2.89*	2	*2.80*	3	*2.73*
C1	1	*2.89*	2	*2.74*	3	*2.42*
C2	2	*2.91*	1	*3.03*	3	*2.71*
C3	1	*3.09*	2	*3.08*	3	*2.79*
C4	1	*2.88*	2	*2.81*	3	*2.57*
C5	1	*2.94*	2	*2.76*	3	*2.63*
C6	1	*3.15*	2	*3.05*	3	*2.60*

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

B. Formation of Attitudes and Values

All respondents

Analysis of all responses reveals that the majority of headteachers (74 per cent) perceived themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared in the formation of their values and attitudes (See Table 4.8, below). Training seemed to play a minimal part in achieving this perceived state of readiness, with only two per cent of respondents indicating that training as being mostly responsible. Those willing to nominate training as being wholly responsible numbered fewer than 10 in total, less than 1 per cent.

Table 4.8 – Formation of Values and Attitudes

Question	%	Attributable to (%):				
		Training only	Mostly training	Equal	Mostly exprnce	Exprnce only
B1: Behaving in ways consistent with your values, attitudes and beliefs	**84**	0	1	28	38	34
B2: Promoting ethical practices in the school	**80**	0	1	32	40	26
B3: Encouraging respect for life-long learning	**63**	0	2	34	37	27
B4: Creating a community of learners	**66**	0	3	38	37	22
MEAN	**74**	0	2	33	38	27

The highest score recorded in this part of the survey was for question B1 (Behaving in ways consistent with your values, attitudes and beliefs), with 84 per cent considering

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themselves well prepared or extremely well prepared for this aspect of their role when taking up post. Scores remained in or above the third quartile for the other three questions with less in the way of significant differences between groups (see Table 4.9, below) than had been the case in the previous section which explored the development of skills.

Table 4.9: Formation of attitudes and values - levels of significance between respondents

	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Gender[x]	Age	Length
B1	.054	.030*	.518	.054	.351	.035
B2	.256	.293	.358	.006*	.427	.108
B3	.101	.563	.030*	.000**	.152	.003*
B4	.003*	.190	.001**	.000**	.681	.005*

Type 1 = All schools; Type 2 = All schools except secondary; Type 3 = Nursery and Primary Schools.
[x]Reporting Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon Test

Different types of school

It was headteachers from nursery schools who felt best prepared in the formation of their values and attitudes with 82 per cent perceiving themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared overall, ranking first with 77 per cent in question B3 (Encouraging respect for life-long learning) and first with 77 per cent in question B4 (Creating a community of learners). Respondents from secondary schools felt better prepared in the first two of the four aspects included in this section of the questionnaire (see Table 4.10, below), with 73 per cent perceiving themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared overall and ranking first with 89 per cent in question B1 (Behaving in ways consistent with your values, attitudes and beliefs) and first with 82 per cent in question B2 (Promoting ethical practices in

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schools). Conversely, secondary school respondents ranked only fifth on question B3 (Encouraging respect for life-long learning) and question B4 (Creating a community of learners). Despite more respondents from Infant schools (79 per cent) than secondary perceiving themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared overall, they were never ranked in first place. Infant-with-junior schools and junior schools ranked lowest in this section of the survey.   Headteachers of junior schools consistently rated themselves as least prepared, ranking sixth in all four aspects.

Table 4.10 Formation of attitudes and values: Ranking and mean ranks according to type of school

Question	Sec		Nursery		Special		Infant		Inf/Jun		Junior	
	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
B1	1	*3.23*	2	*3.14*	4	*3.11*	3	*3.12*	5	*3.08*	6	*3.01*
B2	1	*3.05*	2	*3.06*	3	*3.02*	4	*3.01*	5	*2.96*	6	*2.90*
B3	5	*2.67*	1	*2.89*	3	*2.76*	2	*2.79*	4	*2.73*	6	*2.60*
B4	5	*2.67*	1	*2.97*	3	*2.77*	2	*2.87*	4	*2.74*	6	*2.60*

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

Analysis of the responses showed few levels of statistically significant differences between the groups (see Table 4.9, above). Those from special schools appear to be responsible for differences between the groups in question B1 (Behaving in ways consistent with your values, attitudes and beliefs) as no differences were recorded in Type 1 schools (which include respondents from secondary schools) or Type 3 schools (respondents from nursery and primary schools only). There were differences recorded between respondents in Type 3 schools in question B3 (Encouraging respect for life-long learning) which analysis revealed to be inconsistent, with no single group being responsible consistently. Responses to question B4 (Creating a community of

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learners) suggest that the difference recorded between respondents from all types of schools is probably caused by the differences recorded for Type 3 schools, as the differences were not significant when only secondary schools were withdrawn from the equation.

Gender

Women felt themselves to be better prepared in the formation of their attitudes and values, ranking first in all four aspects of this section and with the highest overall mean rank (see Table 4.11, below). These results demonstrate differences for questions B3 (Encouraging respect for life-long learning) and B4 (creating a community of learners) on both the Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon and the two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Tests.

Table 4.11: Formation of attitudes and values: Ranking and mean ranks according to gender

Question	Men		Women	
	R	*M*	R	*M*
B1	2	*3.06*	1	*3.13*
B2	2	*2.93*	1	*3.03*
B3	2	*2.61*	1	*2.82*
B4	2	*2.64*	1	*2.85*

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

Age of respondents

Those respondents younger than 35 years were the most confident of their ability to act in conjunction with their attitudes and values, ranking first in three questions (see Table 4.12, below). Although the age group 36-40 years ranked second in all four questions, there was little to choose between respondents in the remaining categories. There were no significant differences between the age groups (see Table 4.8, above).

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Table 4.12: Formation of attitudes and values: Ranking and mean ranks according to age

Question	35 & Under		36-40		41-45		46-50		51-55		56+	
	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
B1	1	*3.23*	2	*3.19*	3	*3.18*	4	*3.07*	5	*3.07*	6	*3.06*
B2	1	*3.08*	2	*3.05*	3	*3.05*	5	*2.96*	6	*2.94*	4	*2.99*
B3	5	*2.69*	2	*2.73*	1	*2.82*	3	*2.71*	6	*2.64*	4	*2.71*
B4	1	*2.85*	2	*2.81*	3	*2.81*	4	*2.73*	5	*2.71*	6	*2.71*

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

Length of service

Those in post the least amount of time rated themselves as well or extremely well prepared in the formation of their attitudes and values (see Table 4.13, below). There was little to choose between those in post for 0-2 years and those in post for 3-5 years. The lowest levels of confidence in their perceived state of readiness was shown in those who have been in post longer than 11 years, with respondents ranking themselves fourth in all four questions. Differences can be found between the groups in questions B1 (Behaving in ways consistent with your values, attitudes and beliefs), B3 (Encouraging respect for life-long learning) and B4 (Creating a community of learners).

Table 4.13: Formation of attitudes and values: Ranking and mean ranks - Length of Service

Question	0-2 years		3-5 years		6-10 years		11+ years	
	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
B1	2	*3.18*	1	*3.18*	3	*3.10*	4	*3.03*
B2	2	*3.05*	1	*3.05*	3	*2.96*	4	*2.91*
B3	1	*2.85*	2	*2.78*	3	*2.68*	4	*2.64*
B4	2	*2.82*	1	*2.86*	3	*2.71*	4	*2.68*

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

C   Increase of Knowledge

All respondents

The majority of respondents felt themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared for the six aspects of knowledge identified in this survey, with all scores confined to the third quartile. Whilst training again seemed to play a minimal role in this perceived level of readiness (see Table 4.14, below), in this instance respondents did not indicate that experience was the main causal factor. An equal mix of training and experience was recorded as the main influence for each aspect of knowledge increase.

Table 4.14 – Increase of Knowledge

Question *Knowing and understanding*:	%	Attributable to (%):				
		Training only	Mostly training	Equal	Mostly exprnce	Exprnce only
C1: ways in which reflective practice develops healthy organisations	**52**	2	12	55	23	7
C2: the process of matching student learning styles with appropriate teaching methods	**60**	1	7	56	25	11
C3: how the planning and selection of appropriate curriculum affects student learning	**74**	1	7	57	27	8
C4: how educational trends and issues influence organisational change	**59**	3	14	54	22	6
C5: how values and attitudes affect the way people view educational issues	**62**	1	7	43	35	13
C6: the basic principles which guide assessment and evaluation	**65**	1	13	60	19	7
MEAN	**64**	2	10	54	25	9

Analysis demonstrates there to be statistically significant differences between types of respondents (see Table 4.15 below).

Table 4.15: Increase of knowledge - levels of significance between respondents

	Type 1	**Type 2**	**Type 3**	**Gender^X**	**Age**	**Length**
C1	.000**	.000**	.091	.001**	.000**	.000**
C2	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**	.004*	.000**
C3	.000**	.000**	.031*	.000**	.004*	.000**
C4	.000**	.000**	.172	.009*	.025*	.000**
C5	.006*	.003*	.053	.000**	.060	.000**
C6	.000**	.000**	.002**	.000**	.000**	.000**

Type 1 = All schools; Type 2 = All schools except secondary; Type 3 = Nursery and Primary Schools.
^{X}Reporting Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon Test

Different types of school

Seventy-one per cent of respondents from secondary schools perceived themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared overall, with those from nursery schools reaching 74 per cent and special school headteachers 69 per cent. Despite this it was headteachers of special schools who perceived themselves to the best prepared of the sample, with two first placed rankings, a further two second places and no ranking below fourth. Those from secondary schools ranked first in three of the six questions in this section, with those from nursery schools ranking first in just question C6 (Knowing and understanding the basic principles which guide assessment and evaluation). Headteachers from infant, infant-with-junior and junior schools consistently ranked fourth, fifth or sixth for all six questions in this section.

Analysis shows there to be differences between respondents from all types of schools in questions C2 (The process of matching student learning styles and appropriate teaching methods), C3 (How the planning and selection of appropriate curriculum affects student learning) and C6 (The basic principles which guide assessment and evaluation). There were no differences between respondents from primary schools in questions C2, C4 (How educational trends and issues influence organisational change) and C5 (How values and attitudes affect the way people view educational issues), although differences still remain between secondary and special schools in relation to those from nursery and primary schools.

Table 4.16: Increase of knowledge: Ranking and mean ranks according to type of school

	Sec		**Nursery**		**Special**		**Infant**		**Inf/Jun**		**Junior**	
Question	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
C1	1	*2.73*	3	*2.53*	2	*2.58*	4	*2.53*	6	*2.39*	5	*2.44*
C2	6	*2.64*	2	*2.97*	1	*3.09*	3	*2.91*	4	*2.72*	5	*2.66*
C3	3	*2.93*	2	*3.03*	1	*3.14*	4	*2.88*	5	*2.78*	6	*2.77*
C4	1	*2.86*	4	*2.57*	2	*268*	3	*2.65*	6	*2.54*	5	*2.58*
C5	1	*2.82*	2	*2.83*	4	*2.70*	3	*2.70*	5	*2.62*	6	*2.56*
C6	2	*2.87*	1	*2.91*	3	*2.85*	4	*2.78*	5	*2.61*	6	*2.54*

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

Gender

Women felt themselves to be better prepared with their levels of knowledge and understanding, ranking first in all six aspects of this section (see Table 4.17, below). These results are of statistical significance for all questions in this section on the Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test (see Table 4.15, above), although there are different results from the two-sample Kolmorogov-Smirnov test for question C1 (Ways in which reflective practice develops healthy organisations); for C2 (The process of

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matching student learning styles and appropriate teaching methods); for C3 (How the planning and selection of appropriate curriculum affects student learning); for C5 (How values and attitudes affect the way people view educational issues), and; for C6 (Knowing and understanding the basic principles which guide assessment and evaluation). In this instance there was no difference for question C4 (How educational trends and issues influence organisational change).

Table 4.17: Increase of knowledge: Ranking and mean ranks according to gender

	Men		Women	
Question	R	*M*	R	*M*
C1	2	*2.40*	1	*2.55*
C2	2	*2.64*	1	*2.88*
C3	2	*2.71*	1	*2.96*
4	2	*2.56*	1	*2.66*
C5	2	*2.59*	1	*2.73*
C6	2	*2.58*	1	*2.78*

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

Age of respondents

There was a close correspondence between the age of respondents and their perceived confidence in the levels of knowledge and understanding required for the job with those aged 45 and under ranked between first and third place (see Table 4.18, below). Overall scores saw the respondents ranked in ascending order of age. Although there was a distribution of ranks among the youngest three age groups in terms of individual questions, there was a greater consistency of distribution between the more elderly respondents. There is a statistically significant difference recorded among the groups in five of the six questions (see Table 4.15, above), with only Question C5

(How values and attitudes affect the way people view educational issues) showing no difference among the groups.

Table 4.18: Increase of knowledge: Ranking and mean ranks according to age of respondents

Question	35 & Under		36-40		41-45		46-50		51-55		56+	
	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
C1	1	2.77	2	2.73	3	2.66	4	2.46	5	2.39	6	2.30
C2	3	2.85	2	2.88	1	2.89	4	2.77	5	2.72	6	2.58
C3	3	2.92	2	2.93	1	2.98	4	2.85	5	2.77	6	2.72
C4	1	2.85	2	2.78	3	2.69	4	2.61	5	2.53	6	2.52
C5	3	2.69	1	2.81	2	2.77	4	2.64	6	2.61	5	2.63
C6	3	2.85	1	2.99	2	2.92	4	2.68	5	2.56	6	2.36

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

Length of service

There is uniform consistency about the distribution of scores for this grouping of respondents, with those in service for the shortest amount of time showing the highest levels of confidence in the levels of knowledge perceived necessary for the post of headteacher (see Table 4.19, below). Similarly, there is a uniform consistency for differences among the groups, with the Kruskal-Wallis Test showing all six questions recording the same level of statistical significance in all instances (see Table 4.15, above).

Table 4.19: Increase of knowledge: Ranking and mean ranks according to length of service of respondents

Question	0-2 years		3-5 years		6-10 years		11+ years	
	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*	R	*M*
C1	1	2.75	2	2.64	3	2.45	4	2.22
C2	1	3.02	2	2.88	3	2.72	4	2.59
C3	1	3.09	2	2.94	3	2.87	4	2.63
C4	1	2.83	2	2.65	3	2.64	4	2.45
C5	1	2.80	2	2.73	3	2.66	4	2.55
C6	1	3.07	2	2.94	3	2.67	4	2.33

R= Ranking; M= Mean Rank

Qualitative findings

There was a high response rate to the open ended questions contained in Part 3 of the survey, with over 96 per cent of respondents taking the opportunity to provide written answers to at least one of the questions. Table 4.20 demonstrates the proportion of responses received for each of the three questions from headteachers of the different types of schools identified for this study.

Table 4.20: Proportion of responses received to questions in Part 3 of National Headteacher Survey.

	Secondary *(n = 176)*	*Nursery* *(n = 35)*	*Special* *(n = 34)*	*Infant* *(n = 247)*	*Inf/Jun* *(n = 715)*	*Junior* *(n = 128)*
Question 1	96%	97%	97%	97%	96%	96%
Question 2	94%	94%	95%	93%	94%	92%
Question 3	55%	74%	55%	60%	58%	52%

The majority of responses were confined to Question 1: 'What do you think would help first-year headteachers be more effective?' and Question 2: 'What level of support would be helpful during the first two years of headship?'. Response levels for the more open Question 3: 'What other comments would you like to make?' were lower, but still substantial both in nature and in length. There was a consistency of response rate from headteachers from all types of school, with full statements as the norm.

What do you think would help first-year headteachers be more effective?

Table 4.21 indicates responses to the question asking headteachers what they felt would help headteachers to feel more effective in their first year of headship.

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Mentoring and training were the dominant themes, with support from the LEA and/or peer group, induction, work shadowing, time to reflect and opportunities to develop leadership and management skills whilst still a deputy emerging as minor, but important themes. A smaller level of response was also received regarding the nature of entering a new school and making an impact as a headteacher. Other, sometimes pithy, statements emerged which are discussed as well.

Mentoring was seen by the respondents as the opportunity to discuss school management issues with a colleague who had knowledge, appreciation and preferably experience of headship. The relationship was to be non-judgemental and would form a core part of individual development for the beginning headteacher. Such criteria ruled out personnel from LEA advisory/ inspection teams and from members of the headteacher's own staff or governing body. This principle was exemplified in the response of one special school headteacher who urged the mentor to be:

> a fellow headteacher rather than LEA support which can be too dogmatic and overbearing when you are trying to find your feet.

References to *training* were largely non-specific, often referring to the development of generic management and leadership skills. Some references were made to the need for specific training in finance/budget-setting as well as legal or personnel related issues.

Responses indicating *peer group support* referred to the need for informal, regular meetings of newly appointed headteachers or with more experienced colleagues who could share thoughts, concerns and issues with colleagues in similar positions.

Induction was defined as the process of becoming familiar with the expectations and demands of the LEA and was deemed to be administrative, rather than professional. It also differs from *LEA Support* which mainly referred to adviser and officer support, but also took account of LEA systems (including handbooks/guidance documents).

Work shadowing was defined as the opportunity to observe headteacher behaviour in practice and it differs from mentoring in that there was no expectation expressed of personal reflection in the company of a more experienced practitioner. Time to *reflect on practice* was exactly that i.e. time out to take stock, review and re-conceptualise.

The opportunity to enter headship through a process akin to apprenticeship was the central theme of mentions regarding the nature of *deputy headship*. This theme was particularly evident in the primary sector where, typically, deputies were also classroom based teachers who had minimal release time to engage in leadership and management tasks. The calls for greater flexibility and opportunity for deputy headteachers in this respect was the major concern of respondents, with many also calling for serving headteachers to create meaningful development opportunities for their deputies.

A small number of respondents (11 primary and 2 secondary) drew attention to the issues associated with joining a new school and pointed out the importance of getting to know the organisation, the people within it and in working with the governing body. Advice offered included spending time in the school before officially taking up

post, allowing time once in post to get to know people, develop relationships and systems within the school and to take stock before initiating change.

Keeping to the theme of identifying what could be helpful to headteachers in their first year, some respondents urged a sense of proportion when faced with the task of being a headteacher, for example:

> [Having] the confidence to ask when you don't know and the maturity to realise that you don't know what you don't know.

whilst others offered more practical suggestions, such as the need for a 'healthy dose of cynicism' or 'a good bottle of whisky and pots of luck'.

Table 4.21: type of support suggested (first year)

Type of support	% of mentions					
	Secondary	*Nursery*	*Special*	*Infant*	*Inf/Jun*	*Junior*
Mentoring	40	28	31	27	31	31
Training in specific skill areas	29	30	36	39	33	35
Peer group support	7	9	6	7	8	8
Induction programme	9	9	6	4	4	4
Work shadowing	5	11	4	7	6	7
LEA support	6	9	10	5	8	4.5
Reflecting on practice	2.5	2	3	1	1	2
Specific training during deputy headship	-	-	4	9	9	9

Percentages recorded in Table 4.21 have been determined by corresponding mentions of a single topic against the total of responses recorded for all items mentioned in the categories used. So, for example, secondary headteachers deemed mentoring to be the

single most important element of support needed for the first year in post, with 90 mentions out of a total of 225 recorded responses to items to Question 1 in Section 3 of the questionnaire. Headteachers from all other types of schools also deemed mentoring to be highly important with those from nursery making 15 out of a total of 52 mentions, those from special schools making 48 out of a total of 155 mentions, those from infant schools making 107 out of a total of 393 mentions, those from infant with junior schools making 320 out of a total of total of 1043 mentions and those from junior schools making 54 out of a total of 177 mentions.

There were more varied responses amongst the respondents who cited the need for further training during the first year of post. In terms of specific skills, the most frequently cited area was finance (secondary = 15 mentions out of 65; nursery = 3 mentions out of 16; special = 8 mentions out of 56; infant = 36 mentions out of 153; infant with junior = 72 mentions out of 346; junior = 9 mentions out of 62). Personnel issues (including help with under-performing teachers and subsequent capability procedures) was the next most important skill cited by respondents (secondary = 7 mentions out of 65; nursery = 1 mention out of 16; special = 5 mentions out of 56; infant = 18 mentions out of 153; infant with junior = 31 mentions out of 346; junior = 4 mentions out of 62). Requests for more training and support with the law and legal information were less obvious (secondary = 8 mentions out of 65; infant = 8 mentions out of 153; infant with junior = 19 mentions out of 346; junior = 3 mentions out of 62). No respondents from nursery or special schools identified this as a specific training need.

The figures for the other categories listed in Table 4.21 are considered self-explanatory.

What level of support would be helpful during the first two years of headship?

Virtually the same categories of responses are evident for the responses received to this question, with no separate themes emerging, although the issue of providing development opportunities for deputies was no longer evident. As can be seen from Table 4.22 (below) differences recorded in responses were in terms of volume rather than content.

Table 4 .22: Type of support during first two years of headship

Type of support	% of mentions					
	Secondary	*Nursery*	*Special*	*Infant*	*Inf/Jun*	*Junior*
Mentoring	52	27	39	44	41	39
Training in specific skill areas	21	29	18	22	22.5	23
Peer group support	16	29	18	14	14	17
Induction programme	1.5	2	2	1	1	2
Work shadowing	2	2	3	-	1.5	2
LEA support	13	10	13	16	16	10
Reflecting on practice	1.5	-	2	1	2	6

Headteachers from all types of schools, except those from nursery, saw the role of the mentor as becoming more important throughout the first two years in post. Proportionately more of those from secondary schools (52 per cent: 100 mentions out of 192 as opposed to 40 per cent in Table 4.21), for example, saw this aspect of support as significant, a response that can be seen from respondents from the other categories.

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Less importance was placed on further training, with those responses in favour being mainly non-specific in nature. The majority of calls were for generic management and leadership courses. Peer group support became more important for respondents as did the role of the LEA in providing support. The importance of work shadowing, induction and time to reflect were perceived to be less than that recommended for headteachers during their first year in post.

> [Recognising that] it is only after about 6 months in the job that you begin to appreciate what you don't know.

Three comments were received from respondents in primary schools and one in a secondary school that referred to the need to assimilate themselves into the organisational culture.

What other comments would you like to make?

Just over half the respondents ('n' = 808; 58 per cent) chose to make additional comments. Three major themes emerged from the analysis:

- comments on training provision for headteachers,
- the nature of headship, and,
- reflections on early experiences as a headteacher.

Other, minor themes also emerged:

- comments regarding the support and development of deputies,

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- the changing nature of government policy and expectation,

- working relationships with school governors, and,

- adjusting and effecting the culture of the school.

Of the major themes, *training* attracted the most comments with 30 per cent ('n' = 246) of respondents providing written answers. A common request was for training programmes to recognise the importance of previous experience and/or expertise and to provide development opportunities which are relevant to the participant's working context, e.g.:

> Training should build on current expertise and should be relevant to the individual – it should not be a case of merely jumping through pre-determined hoops. (Special school)

> NPQH is a step in the right direction but very demanding. Experience and personal ability is *[sic]* vital. (Secondary school)

> Experience supported by academic study is the best preparation. (Secondary school)

> Good headteachers survive more by luck than judgement at present. There is a desperate shortage of structured preparation for management and no recognition of the time and support needed to do the job properly. (Infant-with-junior school)

> Headship preparation does not prepare you to work as the leader of a specific school and it is the specific school culture aspects that take up so much time and energy during the first few months. (Infant school)

> Each headship is so different it would be impossible to cover all eventualities in preparation. (Infant school)

> Headship, more than any other role in education, is undoubtedly very personal. No amount of training can really take the place of hands-on experience. (Infant school)

> Training is essential, but nothing beats the experience of actually doing the job on site. (Infant school)

Experience and sharing experience, problems and issues are the main factors for me. (Secondary school)

In addition, there were calls for greater support after taking on the role. Mentions of the Headlamp programme were generally supportive in this respect, although many suggested the need to extend the availability of the funding beyond the first two years in post as the first year was so intense. Typical of these two issues are the following two quotations:

[Headship] is like driving a car – you learn when you get on the motorway if you can drive or not – but sometimes that is too late! Much more support is needed. (Infant-with-junior school)

Headlamp funding is excellent, but needs to be for three rather than two years. The first year provides a very steep learning curve and it can take that long to decide where the funding can best be spent. (Infant school)

Twenty-four per cent ('n' = 196) of respondents made comments on the *nature of headship*. These comments indicated a concern for the lack of understanding of the issues, pressures and tasks that headteachers face in their role. One concern was that there was little appreciation of the difference between the requirements of the role and that enjoyed prior to appointment. Among the responses were the following examples:

Being a headteacher is very different from being a teacher. (Infant-with-junior school)

No amount of training prepares you for the actual total responsibility of headship. (Junior school)

None of us is prepared for headship. (Infant-with-junior school)

There were many mentions of the loneliness of the job and the fear that accompanied many as they set off in their new role, e.g.

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There is nothing more frightening than finding yourself alone in your office the week before your first term and realising you haven't got a clue about what being a headteacher is really about. (Infant school)

I am enjoying [the headship] very much but I am lonely. People do not really see the agendas I am having to work to. (Secondary school)

Being a headteacher can be lonely. The headteacher is continually working on the self-esteem of pupils and staff. Help with personal self-esteem is occasionally crucial in order to carry on. (Infant school)

This is a very lonely, isolated, crisis-driven and stressful job. I get support from colleagues in school, but I should really be giving them support. (Infant school)

The culture shock of moving into the role was also noted by respondents with the following types of comments:

It is not easy to learn the real skills until on the job – then the learning curve is vertical. (Secondary school)

I am not sure whether there is anything which would really avoid the sense of in at the deep end. In some ways I have learnt most through just having to sink or swim, but the personal cost of this is horrendous. (Secondary school)

The role of headteacher is a most peculiar one. I cannot think of one that is so all-embracing – leader, administrator, social worker, marriage guidance counsellor, financial wizard, builder, plumber, public speaker – you name I have done it and continue to do it. (Secondary school)

The ideal headteacher is seven feet tall, captain of the rugby club, steam coming out of his ears and is a lapsed agnostic. (Infant-with-junior school)

Many commented on the changing nature of the role over recent years, e.g.:

The job of headteacher now bears no resemblance to that which I took on in 1985. (Secondary school)

Headship has really changed in 12 years. To run a school really well takes more time and commitment than anyone should give to a job at the expense of self and family. (Infant-with-junior school)

The job is becoming impossible: too many people to please, too many things to do that take one's attention away from what is happening in the classroom. (Infant school)

The silly demands of headteachers have stopped several of my talented friends from applying for positions as headteachers. (Infant-with-junior school)

Sometimes these pressures led to dire consequences, involving physical and mental stress (including one admission of attempted suicide). Representative of those concerns were the following quotations:

Without a doubt, if I were appointed to my post now I would have a breakdown within the first term. It is only because I have grown into [the headship], and because of my experience, that I survive. (Infant-with-junior school)

65 [years of age] seems an interminable time away nailed to the headship mast. How do you keep a headteacher alive after 15 years of headship? The pressures of management are so intense. (Infant-with-junior school)

I am so fed up, demoralised and exhausted after two and half years in headship that I have resigned. The job is too much for one person to do and there is too much pressure – dull, grim, overwhelming – and I am supposed to be very good at the job! (Infant-with-junior school)

In the nine years I have been head the job has become much more difficult and stressful. I am sure that if I have to work until I am 60 I will have either a heart attack or a stroke. This is not a job for the old or weak. (Infant-with-junior school)

As a consequence, some were looking forward to retirement, e.g.

At 57 I am nearing retirement and although I will miss my links with the classroom I will be relieved to leave the pressures of administration behind. The title 'headteacher' is now a misnomer as we are moved further from teaching. (Infant school)

Despite all of this, some were still enthusiastic, e.g.

This is still a brilliant job despite everything thrown at it. (Infant-with-junior school)

Although the majority view is perhaps best summed up by the following response:

> If I knew then what I know now I would have stayed a class teacher. (Infant-with-junior school)

Eighteen per cent ('n' = 145) of respondents commented on their *early experiences* either prior to or on taking up the position of headteacher. Typical amongst these responses was the perceived impact of those experiences on the respondents' readiness for the role of headteacher:

> I had little or no preparation for headship with a poor role model. All has been learned on the job. (Special school)

> I had very little preparation and was appointed just before ERA was introduced. The Local Management of Special Schools came a few years later. I almost died! (Special school)

> Twenty years ago experience was the preparation for the job – and the ability to interview well. (Secondary school)

> Filling in this questionnaire brought it home to me how strongly unprepared I was. I think it took me seven years to feel confident and effective. How random my selection was. The governors interviewed six candidates all day, breaking for lunch for two hours in a hotel. I was interviewed last. (Secondary school)

> I had one day of training when I was appointed. I was isolated and didn't know who to ask. It is only after several years that I feel secure in the job. If more help is given earlier this should not be the case nowadays. (Special school)

> I have reached each phase of my career with no training and no induction for it. This breeds a culture of self-help which is ultimately not enough. (Secondary school)

> In both my headships it has been a case of feeling that you have got the job and you are left to get on with it. I always felt quite confident but felt uneasy that the LEA knew nothing about how I or the school was progressing. (Nursery school)

Of the minor themes, the need to provide effective development opportunities for aspirant headteachers, particularly *deputy headteachers* was an issue for six per cent of respondents ('n' = 46). In this instance, however, this need was identified by and confined to the primary sector. The following comments are typical:

> Too many headteachers have not had adequate training as a deputy for challenges ahead. Too many remain classroom bound. (Junior school)
>
> The situation will not improve whilst deputy headteachers in primary schools have a full teaching load which makes curriculum delivery so central and restricts access to managerial skills. (Infant school)
>
> Non-contact time of at least 50 per cent is needed for deputy headteachers. A teaching commitment is needed but often prevents the deputy from enjoying the training and experiences required of a prospective headteacher. (Infant-with-junior school)
>
> All headteachers should give aspiring headteachers as many training opportunities as possible within the school and with outside school trainers. (Infant school)

The second largest category of comments amongst the minor themes concerned the issue of *change* and its perceived impact on the role of headteacher, with three per cent of respondents pointing to the influence government policies and expectations have had on their everyday reality. Uppermost among their concerns was the bureaucratic burden of government initiatives, e.g.:

> Successive governments are hitting all teachers with too many initiatives. As a headteacher of only 19 weeks I feel overwhelmed by the vast amount of administration and all the documents I have to read and respond to. This needs to be managed carefully so that we can get back to managing teaching. (Special school)
>
> The level of bureaucracy directed at headteachers by Ofsted, QCA, TTA, Fair Funding, LEA, the diocese plus changes to the law on education and the curriculum means it is difficult for a new headteacher to establish sure footing with constant change. (Infant-with-junior school)

The pace of introduction of the plethora of new government initiatives needs to stop in order for headteachers to be able to focus effectively on raising academic standards, have time to lead and manage their school and view accepted good practice. (Infant-with-junior school)

In the first year it is difficult to address the needs within the school – it takes time to assimilate your new position. This is made worse by the constant need to respond to incoming demands. You simply become reactive rather than proactive. (Special school)

Some concern was expressed at the intrusive nature of politics, whether from central or local government, on schools' operations:

The level of totally political interference in school management has become insufferable and counter productive. (Secondary school)

Creativity has been squeezed out of the job by political intervention. (Infant-with-junior school)

As a daughter of a headteacher I was fortunate to have gained a sound knowledge of the role in my early years. However, what was not discussed at home were political issues nor the processes of local government which affect a successful education service. This came as a great shock. (Nursery school)

The hardest aspect of the job is managing incredibly high expectations from governors, staff and parents while having little real power. (Secondary school)

Some pointed to the consequences of political intrusion, e.g.:

Headship is a privilege. Sadly, successive administrations have heaped more and more onto headteachers to the point where there has been an alarming decrease in the numbers applying for vacancies. There is no longer time to enjoy being a headteacher and appreciate the privilege. (Infant-with-junior school)

It is only just beginning to sink in to those in power (i.e. government) that it is counter-productive to constantly criticise and that this reflects an appallingly poor management style. If I used the same style within my school I would watch it fail. (Infant-with-junior school)

A few respondents (21 primary, 6 special, 2 secondary) referred to the need to understand, adjust to and (ultimately) adapt the *culture of the school*. The key issues

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in becoming effective were for headteachers to have the support of staff, particularly the deputy and other senior members of the school community. Immense problems could be faced where existing staff did not welcome the incoming head, as illustrated by one respondent from a special school:

> My first years were made very difficult by a deputy who bitterly resented my appointment over his head. Experience since has shown me that my case was by no means an isolated incident.

They also needed to be aware that the school context was unique, to recognise the centrality of the headteacher to all decision-making and the necessity to exhibit leadership, e.g.:

> All schools are different and your style of leadership and management must adapt to circumstances as they change. (Secondary school)

One primary respondent highlighted the problem of being judged against the previous headteacher. Difficulties with staff attitudes to change were reported as were difficult staffing situations, including disciplinary procedures against incompetent teachers. Unreasonably high staff expectations affected another respondent.

A small number of respondents (one per cent) pointed to the need to maintain and extend working relationships with *school governing bodies*.

> One of the areas not covered in your survey is working with governors and making the governing body more effective – necessary skills today for headteachers for which they have received no training. (Secondary school)

> Headteachers should know that governors are never confidential. (Infant-with-junior school)

Remaining comments were of an individual, sometimes idiosyncratic, sometimes amusing, nature:

> With the ever-changing role of headteachers it is vital not to lose sight of the true purpose of the job which is the education of the children. (Infant school)

> I think, on balance, I preferred the 1960s! (Secondary school)

With the final, damning statement on the role provided by the respondent who suggested the best way to deal with the demands of the job is to:

> Don't even think about it in the first place. (Infant-with-junior school)

Chapter 5

Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

The findings from the questionnaire survey I conducted for this study have been presented in Chapter 4. The intention of the survey was to collect perceptions from serving headteachers in England as to how well prepared they felt for the post on taking up appointment and to seek recommendations for headteacher preparation and support through the first two years in post. The questionnaire was designed to measure their perceived level of preparation on criteria defined from previous empirical investigations in the field of headteacher preparation and induction, described in Chapters 1 and 2. Provision was made in the questionnaire for respondents to identify issues that were not pre-defined through the use of open ended questions that invited comments on the type of support that would help headteachers in their first two years in post. Respondents were also given the opportunity to make any other comments they felt to be relevant. The open-ended questions thus allowed for the emergence of issues and themes that had not been evident in previous research or relevant literature. The findings will be discussed in this chapter by drawing on the conceptual framework established in Chapter 2.

The conceptual framework indicated that the successful transition to the post of headteacher was effected along three dimensions: personal, organisational and occupational. In other words, for the newly appointed headteacher to be able to make the transition to the demands of their new job, consideration needed to be given to issues arising from these three dimensions in the formation of their new personal and occupational identity. Previous empirical research into the nature of the career transition to headship, coupled with literature and theory from other occupations and school systems, indicated that for each dimension a number of issues would be

evident in the data emerging from this study. The issues most likely to be evident from those three dimensions were:

Personal

- development needs in relation to gender, ethnicity and age,

- the formation of values and attitudes,

- feelings of isolation and surprise,

- investiture and divestiture,

- a period of individual cognitive dissonance;,

- changed behaviour patterns in relation to personal and social life.

Organisational

- a period for understanding the culture of the organisation ('sense-making'),

- the influence of the previous incumbent,

- opportunities to explore alternative structures and systems.

Occupational

- a range of interpersonal and technical skills,

- differentiated needs according to phase of schooling,

- appropriate previous learning experiences,

- the exploration of personal values and attitudes in concert with others who understand or have experience of the role,

- a staged approach to the formation of occupational identity.

The findings from the survey will be applied to these dimensions in the remainder of this chapter, which is organised accordingly. Each of the three dimensions will thus form a major sub-section within the chapter, with each section beginning with a general overview of the findings before conducting a close examination of the issues relevant to each dimension.

The range of skills identified for Part 2 of the questionnaire are further categorised as either interpersonal or technical in nature for the purposes of interpreting the findings. Nine of the questions thus relate to aspects of personnel management or the need to establish and maintain effective working relationships as a headteacher and are thus deemed to be interpersonal in nature (A2 "Ensuring that all people with an interest in the school are involved in the school mission", A3 "Building community/parental involvement", A4 "Working effectively with adults", A5 "Working with the under-performing teacher", A8 "Maintaining effective school discipline", A9 "Resolving conflict/handling confrontation", A10 "Using effective communication techniques", A11 "Conducting a meeting" and A12 "Forming and working with teams"). Another eight are deemed to relate to the development of technical capabilities that are adjudged as not reliant on personal interaction by the headteacher (A1 "Putting vision into words", A6 "Identifying children with special needs", A7 "Using student performance data to plan curriculum", A13 "Applying educational law to specific situations", A14 "Planning for future needs and growth", A16 "Organising school administration", A17 "Constructing timetables" and A18 "Using information technology and other tools in the management process"). There are a range of other interpretations that could be applied, especially to the categorisation of skills as

technical in nature, and the content of one question that does not fit comfortably into either category (A15 "Assuming responsibility for school-based management"). The categorisation of the skill identified in question A1 "Putting vision into words" as technical, for example, arguably could not be exhibited without personal interaction between the headteacher and others in the school and so could also be considered as an interpersonal skill. The stance taken here, however, is that the end product, in this case putting vision into words, is a personal rather than an interpersonal act by the headteacher and the skill will thus be regarded as largely technical in nature. A similar argument is applied to questions A14 "Planning for future needs and growth", A16 "Organising school administration" and A17 "Constructing timetables", where the processes of each require interaction with others, but the ultimate action taken is personal. The question that does not fit either category of interpersonal or technical skill is A15 "Assuming responsibility for school management" as this relates more to the adoption of the occupational identity as headteacher than as a single skill. It will thus be discussed in the section on the occupational dimension.

The Personal Dimension

The findings from Part 2 and Part 3 of the survey indicated that respondents perceived themselves to be well prepared for some of the issues associated with this dimension of career transition to headship. This was most evident in the formation of values and attitudes where high scores were evident in the responses to questions that were focused on skill development in the survey.   Conversely there was ample evidence, mainly from responses to the open questions, to support the expectation that those beginning headship would have to deal with issues of investiture and divestiture, experience feelings of isolation and surprise and would pass through a period of

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individual cognitive dissonance as they came to terms with the demands of their new post. There was also evidence to suggest that those appointed to the post of headteacher experienced pressures that affected their behaviour in personal and social circumstances. There were differences in perceptions in relation to respondents' gender, age and length of service, although it was not possible to provide any meaningful comparative data through the variable of respondent ethnicity as the numbers of those who were not White British or Irish were too few to allow any statistical analysis. The fourth variable employed in the analysis of data, the type of school, also revealed differences in perceptions between respondents.

Development needs according to gender, ethnicity and age

The quantitative data gathered from the questions in Part 2 of the questionnaire indicated that women were more confident in virtually all aspects of their skill development, formation of values and attitudes and their levels of professional knowledge and understanding. In terms of specific skills there were six questions for which statistically significant differences were recorded. Four of these skills were interpersonal (A2: "Ensuring that all people with an interest in the school are involved in the school mission", A3: "Building community/parental involvement", A5: "Working with the under-performing teacher", and A12: "Forming and working with teams"), a finding in keeping with arguments associated with the identification of 'feminine' styles of management (e.g. Gray, 1989; Shakeshaft, 1987). Women also ranked themselves as better prepared in the formation of their values and attitudes and with their levels of knowledge and understanding. Reasons for the emergence of these findings were not evident from the data, but given the nature of these differences it is reasonable to suggest that the conclusions reached in Chapter 2 were upheld by this

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survey. Hall (1996), for example, had suggested there to be a pervasive quality present in the gender socialisation of women that lent itself to the establishment of higher levels of empathy, warmth, genuineness and concreteness in their interactions with others, qualities which, in turn, are considered as integral to the enactment of effective interpersonal skills (Murgatroyd and Gray, 1984). The findings from this survey do indicate a potential for differentiation between women and men in terms of formal preparation for the job and in the type of support that could be offered through the early years in post, the implications of which will be explored in the next chapter.

Scrutiny of the data suggests that, in terms of mean rankings, those below the age of 45 years and those who were older could be viewed as two distinct groups. Those below 45 years generally ranked themselves higher in regard to their state of preparedness than their older colleagues. A similar pattern was established with length of service, where those in service for the shortest amount of time typically ranked themselves at a higher level than longer-serving colleagues. A close relationship was noted between the responses of those aged 45 or more and those who had served six years or more. This is almost certainly due to the mean age of all respondents being 48.2 years (SD = 7.05) with their mean age on appointment being 39.6 years (SD = 6.13). By simple calculation it can be shown that those who had served for six years or longer would typically be 45 years or older. Approximately three quarters of respondents to the survey were aged 45 years or more, a factor that is of importance when drawing conclusions in regard to the whole population of headteachers. A large majority of respondents thus enjoyed the position of having experienced and, in most instances, resolved the challenges presented during the early stages of headship; furthermore, they were at a stage of their headship where

reflection was more likely to be evident than idealism (Day and Bagioklu, 1996). Their views are not only in the majority, therefore, but can also considered to be more informed, with due weight to be applied when assessing the implications of the survey findings.

The findings demonstrated younger headteachers (approximately a quarter of all respondents) consistently rating themselves as better prepared than their more elderly colleagues. Those under the age of 40 years ranked first in 17 of the 18 skills, for example, whilst those aged 51 years or more consistently rated themselves as least well prepared. Much the same pattern could be discerned with the formation of values and attitudes, although the youngest three age groups (those aged 45 years and under) shared the top rankings for the increase of knowledge. There are three possible reasons for these differences: the period of anticipatory socialisation experienced by all who become headteachers, changes to the maintained school system in England and attitudes related to experience.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the period of anticipatory socialisation includes all conscious and unconscious learning experiences engaged in by the aspirant headteacher. In identifying discernible differences between the age groups questions are raised as to whether the preparatory experiences of the younger age band were markedly different, as they felt themselves to be better prepared. The evidence to suggest that younger respondents and fresh appointees had assiduously prepared themselves for the new role was not evident, however, in regard to the proportion who had undertaken postgraduate study. Deeper examination of the data showed that of those respondents in the survey who indicated their age, 45 per cent aged 40 years or

under had gained a postgraduate qualification, whereas 48 per cent of those aged 41-45 years, 36 per cent of those aged 46-51 years, 40 per cent of those aged 46-51 and 31 per cent of those aged 56 or more years had also achieved a similar qualification, leading to the conclusion that there was little difference in the proportion of those with postgraduate qualifications between the age bands. The absence of a formal preparation programme was a constant for all but 54 of the respondents who participated in the early cohorts of NPQH, a situation suggesting that there was little likelihood of there being any major differences in formal or theoretical preparation activities for the vast majority of respondents to this survey, irrespective of their age or length of service. Whilst it can be reasonably sure that some respondents had engaged in conscious anticipatory socialisation and had thus prepared themselves for the position of headteacher, the random nature of the population sample should have avoided any skewing of the data in this regard. The conclusion reached is that it is unlikely that there were discernible qualitative differences in preparation for the majority of respondents to this survey.

Perceptions of those aged 45 years or more may have been formed, therefore, in relation to changes in the maintained school system in England, particularly those that were manifested in the last decade of the twentieth century. Given the close correlation between age and length of service, the majority of those aged 45 years or more had most probably been in service for six years or longer and would thus have been appointed before 1993. The data emerging from this survey indicated those 45 years and older perceived themselves not as well-prepared as those appointed subsequently. Circumstances were different for those appointed to headship prior to 1993 for a number of reasons, with the likelihood that there was a difference in

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perspective amongst the respondents. The continued introduction of new legislation during the closing years of the twentieth century changed the levels of school accountability. As noted earlier, the key piece of legislation dominating the nature of maintained schools in the latter stages of the twentieth century had been the 1988 Education Reform Act which changed the governance and management responsibilities for schools in England fundamentally, shifting the power base for decision-making from the LEAs to the outer edges of the school system, either in the form of central government or the school as an organisation. The changes that followed, described in Chapter 1, showed national policies replacing local discretion, particularly with regard to the curriculum, and greater control of expenditure moving to the school level. Subsequent legislation strengthened those new structures, raising the levels of accountability further. Foremost among the consequences of this legislation was the 1992 Education Act that subjected all schools to the formal, inspection procedure operated by the newly created Ofsted. The joint impact of the 1988 Education Reform Act and Ofsted inspections were deemed to be the principal factors in changing the nature of headship, increasing the levels of responsibility and accountability of the postholder to much higher levels (Bolam, 1997). The consequences for those entering the job after 1993 were that probably they would have done so with an awareness of the likely demands of the increased levels of responsibility and accountability emanating from the demands of the new era. This is supported by the results of an empirical study I conducted in 1996 (Male and Merchant, 2000). Conversely, learning experiences undertaken in the period of anticipatory socialisation of aspirant headteachers prior to these times had not required such consideration of the levels of managerial responsibility and accountability with the consequence that many could justifiably claim they were not

prepared for the job that now existed as exhibited through the remark of one secondary school respondent, reported in Chapter 4, who stated "the job of the headteacher bears no resemblance to that which I took on in 1985" .   Most headteachers in post between 1988 and 1994 had faced new circumstances and new requirements that forced them to take on new tasks and responsibilities, frequently without guidance and support. They were pioneers for a new age of headship for which definitions of job requirements and preparation programmes were some years away. It is possible, therefore, to understand how older or longer-serving respondents to this survey may have rated themselves as less well prepared when reviewing their perceived level of preparedness with the benefit of current knowledge.

A further consideration is that those in post for six years or more had a refined view of what they considered to be a state of preparedness. Knowing what they know now may have tempered their memory of what they needed to know on taking up appointment. In other words, with the benefit of hindsight and experience they realised that they were not as prepared as they should have been for the demands of the job. Meanwhile, the younger and shortest-serving respondents may be exhibiting unfounded confidence. Older or longer-serving respondents would have passed through the stages of preparation, accession and early incumbency to arrive at or beyond the states of idealism, uncertainty and adjustment associated with the first three years of those beginning headship as described by Day and Baglioku (1996). This is the phase of headship identified by Weindling (2000: 13) as the final stages of consolidation (five to seven years) and the beginning of a 'plateau' where the headteacher of seven to 10 years' experience in the same school was considering new approaches or a move to another school. The likelihood is that whatever their long-

term intention, they were at a stage where critical reflection of their experience was likely to be a more prominent feature of their behaviour, as were the criteria by which they judged success, arguments that suggest the distinctive difference identified between older and longer serving headteachers and their younger colleagues may be due to differences in perception, with the younger age groups not really understanding or appreciating the true demands of their new job.

Identifying whether differences between older and younger respondents in terms of their perceptions of readiness for the job are attributable in part or in total to any of the three factors discussed above is not possible, however, from the data collected for this survey. Each can be considered to be a causal factor, with the balance between anticipatory socialisation, changes to the school system and attitudes related to experience indeterminable without further research in the field.

The formation of values and attitudes

Seventy-four per cent of respondents adjudged themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared in the formation of their values and attitudes, with life and job experiences, rather than training, being deemed the critical components in achieving this status. The responses to question B1 (Behaving in ways consistent with your values, attitudes and beliefs) are interesting in that so many (84 per cent) considered themselves either well prepared or extremely well prepared in this respect. Given the amount of externally derived changes facing headteachers over the last quarter of the twentieth century it would have been reasonable to expect some conflict here between personal ideologies and the aims of schooling determined by central government for the maintained sector. The high numbers of respondents indicating

their ability to sustain behaviours that match their own moral code suggest, at least, that enough flexibility still exists in the school system for diversity of response to be an option at the personal and organisational level. The responses also indicate that individuals achieving the status of headteacher perceive themselves as secure in their personal values, attitudes and beliefs and feel sufficiently confident to sustain those aspects of their moral code in action.

There was no pattern of response evident from respondents in different types of schools across the four questions in the survey relating to the Formation of Values and Attitudes, although a greater proportion of those from nursery and primary schools perceived themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared in their responses in relation to those from secondary schools (see Table 4.10). Headteachers from secondary schools indicated higher levels of perceived ability to act in accord with their personal values (B1) and in promoting ethical practices in schools (B2), but did not rate themselves so highly in regard to life-long learning (B3) or in creating a community of learners (B4). Respondents from special schools were consistently ranked in the middle of all types of schools for all four questions, whilst those from junior schools had the lowest perceived level of preparation for all four questions. The results from junior schools prompted a further round of analysis seeking to explore the potential for there being something unusual about responses from junior schools, but the differences were found not to be statistically significant. The data secured from the survey have not indicated any pattern of response between those from different types of schools, leading to the conclusion that the major influences in the formation of values, attitudes and beliefs are not related to the type of school in

which respondents presumably have served the major part of their career before being appointed as headteacher.

The findings relating to gender show women perceiving themselves more prepared in the responses provided to all four questions, with all but the first question (on behaviour that is consistent with their own value set) being statistically significant. The responses in this section of the survey reinforce the idea that women perceive themselves as being better prepared than their male colleagues.

In terms of age, those below the age of 45 generally ranked themselves higher in regard to their state of preparedness than their older colleagues for all four questions relating to the formation of values and attitudes, although there were no statistically significant differences noted among all age groupings. A similar pattern can be determined with length of service where those in service for the shortest amount of time typically ranked themselves at higher level than longer-serving colleagues. Those who had served between six and 10 years ranked third in their responses to the same four questions, whilst those in service for longer than 11 years ranked themselves the least well-prepared in the formation of their values and attitudes. These findings reflect the existence of differences between younger and older respondents, and reinforce the possibility that those serving longer than six years were at a stage of headship where their experience had affected their view of how well prepared they really were on taking up post.

The findings from this survey confirm the view commonly evident in the literature that values and attitudes are largely personal, rather than vocationally formed or

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oriented. The data also revealed, however, that over half the respondents claimed to understand the benefits of reflective learning as an ingredient of healthy organisations, a finding that suggests that their values were under constant review.

Feelings of isolation and surprise

Relatively large numbers of respondents ('n' = 196) commented on the isolated, varied and frightening nature of early experience in headship in their responses to the open questions in the questionnaire. Moving into headship caused the incumbent to experience a sense of isolation as a part of the culture shock of coming to terms with the demands of the job. Comments reported in Chapter 4 demonstrated a range of responses from nervous anticipation to genuine bewilderment and fear. Contributing to those feelings were fear of the unknown, the levels of responsibility envisaged for the new job by self and others, the lack of understanding from others as to the intensity of the job and a growing realisation by individuals that the job demanded more from them than was encompassed in the terms and conditions of service. There was evidence to demonstrate adverse effects to them personally and to their social life outside of school. One respondent from a primary school, for example, drew attention to the additional hours needed at work with consequent effect on family and social life. Fears of illness, examples of stress and one admission of attempted suicide are indications of the demands of the job which led some to resign, others to question how they would sustain themselves physically and mentally as they age and to wonder whether the post would remain an attractive career option for others in the future.

These findings indicate that the stresses and strains of the job can exceed the boundaries of the contracted time and occupy or intrude into personal time.

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Government commissioned research into teacher workload in the early part of the new century showed headteachers not only to commonly work more hours per year on average than other managers and professionals, but also to have a more consistent commitment to the job throughout the year. Managers and professionals in other occupations typically did not work in periods of the year designated as holidays, whereas headteachers not only work around 60 hours per week during term-time, but also for some 130 hours per year on average during holiday periods (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2001). The conclusion drawn from the government sponsored teacher workload study, and the data gathered through this study, is that headteachers perceive and enact the job as a year-round commitment. The intrusion of work commitments on personal life thus appears to be a regular feature for most headteachers.

Investiture and divestiture

The responses from the open question that related to issues of investiture and divestiture were made in two ways. Firstly, there were comments that illustrated the nature of headship as an occupation, with an attendant issue of the appropriateness of previous experience. Secondly there were pressures emanating from the particular context or school in which newly appointed headteachers took up their post.

Comments relating to the nature of headship referred to the shift in emphasis from learning and teaching to administration with increased bureaucracy and the regular imposition of externally driven initiatives, moves which had made the transition to headship less attractive (e.g. "the silly demands of headteachers have stopped several of my talented friends from applying") and problematic ("the learning curve is

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vertical"). Further analysis of the data emerging from this survey, and conducted subsequently (Male, Bright and Ware, 2002), showed there to be a virtually identical pattern of perceived levels of preparation between inexperienced (i.e. with less experience than the mean) and experienced (i.e. with longer experience than the mean) deputy headteachers, findings that suggested that all incoming headteachers were facing circumstances that were new to the occupation of headteacher. Previous career experiences were reported, however, as not always relevant to understanding the nature of the job (e.g. "being a headteacher is very different from being a teacher") and, particularly for many in the primary sector, becoming effective, with 46 respondents commenting on the inadequacy of experiences as a deputy to equip them for their new job

Comments received from 28 respondents indicated that experiences and expertise developed in one school prior to taking up the headship were not always transferable to their new school. Some newly appointed headteachers were required, by force of circumstance, to divest previous behaviours in favour of behaviours that were more appropriate to the context in which they found themselves after appointment. The importance of adopting a leadership style that was relevant to the school and the need for newly appointed headteachers to recognise the unique nature of each school were evident from the data.

General changes to the nature of headship have made it difficult for all newly appointed headteachers to be invested without adaptation to their personal capabilities, that previous experiences, both in teaching and management, sometimes bore too little resemblance to the demands of headship and that the culture of the

school or system to which they have been appointed means they may need to divest previous behaviours in order to be successful in their new context.

A period of individual cognitive dissonance

Evidence of individual cognitive dissonance emerged from responses to the open question in the questionnaire with notions of 'sink-or-swim' induction processes, allusions to the complexity of the role and to a "culture of self-help". Extensive comments on the inadequacy of preparatory experiences illustrated that a period of uncertainty of purpose and function existed for many beginning headteachers. In part, these responses looked to be associated with the changing nature of the job in that there was a perceived lack of clarity in policy decisions from central government, which seemed to be locked into a cycle of new initiatives that were not always coherent, and partly because there was a welter of information and expectation that left respondents confused as to their purpose and priority. These feelings were exacerbated by what was perceived by respondents as distrust and animosity exhibited by politicians, the media and the general public toward the maintained school system in total and to them as individual leaders within the system. In other words, headteachers did not feel they were valued and respected for their efforts in a time when performance was being judged more on outcomes than intent.

The Organisational Dimension

There was little evidence emerging from the questions on skill development in the questionnaire that could be applied to the issues of entry to the organisation, with the exception of a few questions that could be applied to the issue of exploring alternative structures and systems. More could be gleaned from the response to the questions on

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the formation of values and attitudes, particularly the ability to behave in a way that was consistent with their fundamental beliefs (question B1).   The majority of respondents rated this aspect of their preparedness very highly, with a mean score of over 3 on all questions from respondents. They were also extremely confident of their ability to promote ethical practices in the school (question B2), encourage respect for life-long learning (question B3) and create a community of learners (question B4).

These findings suggest that the majority of respondents felt confident of their ability to influence the culture of the organisation not only in line with their own values and beliefs, but also on issues that relate to the occupational mores of headship and to society in general. Questions B2-4 can be adjudged as value statements, gleaned from the literature and the empirical research conducted in Texas (see Chapter 3), that match the occupational and societal expectations of the context in which they were devised.   The adaptation of those value statements to the context of headship in England was effected through the extensive piloting of the questionnaire, as detailed in Chapter 3. The conclusion, therefore, is that these three statements constitute the occupational and societal expectations to which respondents to this survey will subscribe. The perception from the majority of respondents that they could enact these values in practice suggests they felt prepared to meet the challenges offered by the culture of the school to which they had been appointed.

Given that the responses were consistent across most variables employed in the analysis of data it is reasonable to suggest that the majority of respondents were answering from a perspective of hindsight. In other words, they were retrospectively viewing their state of preparedness on appointment to influence the culture of the

school, a perspective that allowed them to make judgements that had been tempered subsequently by reality. The scores for respondents do show marginally lower scores on all four questions for those longer in service, yet the mean scores still stay on the high side of the four point scale indicating that the resolution of anticipation with reality has not led to a radical revision of their views. It is interesting to note, for example, that the top ranked score for three of the four questions is with the group who had been in post three to five years (see Table 4.13), further reinforcement of the conclusion that beginning headteachers do perceive themselves as capable of influencing the culture of the school on these issues.

Understanding the culture of the school

The argument conducted above suggests that there are higher order issues that transcend the individual organisation and become part of the occupational dimension of the transition phase. Nevertheless, there are issues of culture that relate to each school that present a challenge for beginning headteachers that are illustrated through comments received in the open questions in the questionnaire.

The need to become familiar with the culture of the organisation was directly commented on by a small number of respondents, particularly in respect of getting to know the people within it and in establishing effective working relationships with the governing body. Entry to the school caused a number of concerns for respondents who indicated that making an impact, particularly in the early stages following appointment, was a critical part of establishing their credibility and sustaining their authority. The issue of working well with the existing members of the organisation,

particularly those in senior positions and from the governing body, was frequently highlighted by respondents.

The relationship of the headteacher with the governing body who are, by definition, representative of the local community was not a specific feature of the survey, but is one that did emerge through the responses to the open questions in the survey. The issues of working relationships generally related to overt issues in the responses received, but allusions to covert issues were made by one primary respondent who raised the lack of confidentiality inherent in his/her governing body as a matter of concern for all beginning headteachers. Here a warning was being given, designed to alert beginning headteachers to the propensity for some governors to work in a clandestine manner in order to disadvantage the headteacher. These emergent data are important, given the nature of power distribution inherent in the school system where governing bodies are the legal decision-makers in the school. Building successful relationships with the governing body was deemed important by some respondents, although there were other comments to suggest that a number of governing bodies had assumed their work was over once they had overseen the appointment of the new headteacher. Headteachers cannot afford to ignore the centrality of the governing body, howvere, and help, advice and guidance in building the working relationship should feature in the preparation and induction of headteachers.

A range of advice was offered, particularly in response to the second open question in Part 3 of the questionnaire, that focused on the need for the incoming headteacher to get to know the people, develop relationships and take stock before initiating change: in other words, to take time (at least six months, according to one respondent) to get

used to the culture of the organisation. Securing the support of staff, particularly the deputy and other senior members of the school community, was seen as central to the process of understanding, adjusting to and adapting the culture of the school. Although some difficulties experienced could have been anticipated, such as the disaffected deputy referred to by one respondent from a special school, respondents pointed to the need to recognise the intensity of such challenges to the incoming headteacher's personal authority. Further advice offered by respondents focused on the need to take account of the unique context of the school in choosing an appropriate and effective style of leadership and management.

Influence of the previous incumbent

It is inevitable, perhaps, that all incoming headteachers will be compared with their predecessor, but only one respondent (from a primary school) commented specifically on an issue of comparison with the previous incumbent which had caused difficulty. This response serves as an example of a disjunctive transition where the behaviours of the incoming headteacher are contrasted with a previous incumbent who was held in high regard by the members of the school community. The absence of further responses in this aspect of the organisational dimension does not mean the notion of serial-disjunctive transitions does not exist in England, but it may mean that there is an organisational and societal belief in the authority of the headteacher that limits discussion in this regard. This issue raises the prospect that the esteem in which headship in England is held creates latitude for individual differences in behaviour that can supersede organisational expectations of the new headteacher.

Opportunities to explore alternative structures and systems

The major concerns that emerged related to staff attitudes to change, difficulties with incompetent staff and challenging staffing situations. Questions from the questionnaire that related to this aspect of the organisational dimension show that respondents felt well prepared for traditional expectations of change (A2 "Ensuring that all people with an interest in the school are involved in the school mission", A3 "Building community/parental involvement", B4 "Creating a community of learners" and C2 "the process of matching student learning styles with appropriate teaching methods) and less well prepared for expectations emerging in more recent times (A5 "Working with the under-performing teacher", A7 "Using student performance data to plan curriculum" and A16 "Organising school administration"). The term 'traditional' is used in this respect to describe change issues that are deemed to have been present in schools for almost as long as there has been a system of compulsory education. Challenges emerging from more recent legislation, government policy and new technologies can thus be differentiated in terms of 'newness', with the contention being that dealing with the under-performing teacher (A5), using electronic data sets for planning purposes (A7) and the organisation of school administration (A16) are more contemporary skills that needed to be learned through a process of investigation and practice rather than building upon previous experience.

In respect of 'traditional' change issues the majority felt capable of ensuring the involvement all stakeholders in the school mission (A2), nearly three quarters of respondents perceived themselves capable of building parental and community involvement (A3), two-thirds felt confident in creating a community of learners (B4) and 60 per cent indicated they knew how to match student learning styles with

appropriate teaching methods (C2). There was little to choose between respondents in different types of schools in terms of mean scores on these two aspects of skills (A2 & 3), although those dealing with very young children (nurseries and infant schools) scored higher when seeking to create a community of learners (B4). Respondents from special schools felt most capable of matching student learning styles with appropriate teaching methods (C2), with the perceived level of capability descending in line with the age of children in the school. Women ranked themselves higher in all four aspects of these traditional change issues, with all scores demonstrating significant statistical differences. The pattern of declining levels of confidence in accord with increasing age and length of service of respondents, noted earlier, was once again evident when comparing these four aspects.

The perceived level of preparation was much lower for the change issue skills that have emerged more recently with fewer than a quarter confident of their ability to work with the under-performing teacher (A5), only 30 per cent ready to use student performance data to plan the curriculum (A7) and fewer than half considering themselves capable of organising school administration (A16). Respondents from secondary schools felt better prepared than others on two of these skills, although it was those from special schools who felt most confident in planning the curriculum. This finding corresponds to the perceived ability of those from special schools to match student learning styles to appropriate teaching methods (C2), with this emerging pattern suggesting that this group feel they have more expertise in these domains. Women ranked higher in the interpersonal aspects of these change issues (A5 & 7), but ranked lower than men in their perceived ability to organise the school's administration. In keeping with previous discussion, this finding

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corresponds to the suggestion that women felt more confident in their ability to deal successfully with people than their male contemporaries. The general pattern of declining scores in line with increasing age and length of service was again evident with these three skills, although one anomaly to this pattern did occur with those aged 35 and under ranking themselves lowest in terms of organising school administration (A16). There is nothing in the data on the attribution of skill development that would suggest this to be a lack of experience on their behalf so, given the higher levels of confidence, it may be an issue of self-confidence amongst the younger respondents who might find it difficult to deal with people who are older than themselves.

Interestingly, although training seemed to contribute very little to the development of these capabilities, in all four aspects of these change issues respondents indicated that a combination of training and experience was an important factor. The range of attribution in this respect was from a quarter when involving parents and community (A3) to over half of the respondents who considered themselves either able to match student learning styles with appropriate teaching methods (C2) or use student performance data to plan the curriculum (A7). It is likely, therefore, that the attribution of their perceived capability to training and experience indicated that respondents had developed an ability to manage these change issues through the consolidation of functional training programmes with practical experiences and had extended their understanding through learning processes such as reflection, coaching and mentoring.

The Occupational Dimension

Accumulating interpersonal and technical skills

The majority of respondents (57 per cent) perceived themselves to be either well prepared or extremely well prepared in the skills included in the questionnaire, with a majority considering themselves to have achieved the same level in 11 of the 18 individual skills identified for the survey. The least well prepared skills are those that correspond to recent developments in education, with the exception of the application of law (Question A13). All other skills in which fewer than a third of respondents felt prepared are also explained as being a consequence of recent changes to school leadership and management in England. Whilst working with the under-performing teacher (A5) has always been an expectation of headteachers, it was only within the last few years of the twentieth century that the accountability processes within the state system (e.g. Ofsted inspections) began to demand a prompt and efficient response to the improvement of sub-standard performance from an individual teacher. It was not surprising, therefore, to discover that so many headteachers felt less than well prepared in this respect. Similarly, the use of information technology as a leadership and management tool (A18) was a new phenomenon for most headteachers and particularly those who had been in post for more than 11 years at the time of the survey. The 1988 Education Reform Act brought with it the responsibility to manage the major portion of the budget at the site level, a responsibility that had previously been with the LEA. Using computer technology for that reason was not an essential part of the job until the legislation began to take effect; neither was computer equipment a regular feature of school based management and administration, both because the level of financial and data analysis had not warranted computerisation within schools and there was limited availability of the necessary hardware and

software to undertake such activities. The demand 10 years after the 1988 Education Reform Act for compulsory target-setting, introduced in 1998, brought with it an urgent need for headteachers to become capable in student performance data analysis and interpretation, a skill that was not a major requirement for the vast majority of this sample when they were appointed.

It was a surprise, therefore, to find that an aspect of headship that had always been an essential element of the post, the ability to understand and apply the law to specific situations (A13), had so few headteachers perceiving themselves to be ready for that aspect of the role in their first year of service. In the absence of further data, it has been possible only to speculate as to the reason for this perceived lack of skill. It was unusual to see this aspect of knowledge and skill included in accredited postgraduate programmes, although this aspect did feature as part of the professional knowledge and understanding required by the national standards for headteachers and was a core element of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act, 1991 which required that headteachers "must carry out their duties in the light of educational and other relevant legislation" (Woodard, 1998). It may also be that aspirant headteachers do not understand or appreciate the full importance and responsibility of the role until they actually occupy the position of headteacher, as I suggested in the outcomes of the joint study I undertook in 1996 (Daresh and Male, 2000). The likelihood was that the recognition of ultimate responsibility resident in the headship was the only time when the need to apply the law to specific situations became a necessity.

The lowest score of the three remaining questions in Part 2 of the questionnaire, where fewer than half the respondents felt adequately or extremely well prepared, was

given to the assumption of responsibility for school management (A15). The findings relating to that particular question are discussed in the section on the occupational dimension of career transition (below). For the other two questions, "Planning for future needs and growth" (A14) and "Organising school administration" (A16), the overall scores are affected by the differences among respondents from different types of schools. As indicated in Chapter 4, respondents from secondary and special schools perceived these two skills to be among their strengths and were joined in that perception by respondents from nursery schools for question A14. The implication arising from these findings is for a differentiated approach to the preparation of aspirant headteachers, in this case according to their previous school-based experience.

The distinction between women and men in terms of their skill development is evident in the overall rankings that show women to rank themselves more highly in 12 of the 17 skills under consideration in this section, with one equal ranking. In eight instances these skills are interpersonal, with only A9 "Resolving conflict/handling confrontation" showing men as ranking themselves more highly in this regard. For that skill the ranking is a slightly higher mean score (0.01) and is a difference that is not statistically significant. Of the four technical skills where women rank themselves more highly there is a much wider gap between mean scores, although only one of these differences is statistically significant (A7 "Using student performance data to plan the curriculum"). The differences between five of the interpersonal skills where women ranked first are demonstrated as being statistically significant on both tests applied (A2 'creating vision', A3 'community/parental involvement', A4 'working with adults', A5 'under-performing teachers' & A12 'teams'). These findings support

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the conclusions in Chapter 2 with regard to the range of skills more commonly found in women lemd further weight to the argument for a differentiated approach to the development of skills for women and men.

The general pattern of declining scores in line with increasing age and length of service was again evident in the development of skills, although a new dimension emerged in that those who had engaged with NPQH ranked themselves highest in relation to all other headteachers, including those who had been in post for less than two years, in 13 of the 17 skills explored in this section. Statistical analysis demonstrated significant difference with three of these skills where NPQH candidates ranked themselves first, all of which were technical in nature (A1 'Expressing vision', A13 'Law' and A16 'School administration'). The same analysis also supported the perception of NPQH candidates as being better prepared for assuming responsibility for school management (A15), although the findings relating to this question will be addressed more fully in the discussion below. Although the proportion of those with NPQH experience was small in relation to the total number of respondents, the findings do suggest the formal preparation process is considered by participants to have added to the development of skills.

The attribution by respondents of the preparation activities that allowed them to develop the range of skills identified in the questionnaire illustrate experience as being the key and demonstrate the limited influence of training. Although the combination of training and experience is a significant factor in all instances of the 17 skills under consideration in this section, the major formative feature in 12 of these skills was experience, a finding that seems to highlight the importance of relevant

experience during preparation for headship. The five skills (A6 'Identifying special needs', A7 'Using performance data', A13 'Law', A14 'Planning' & A18 'Using ICT') where a combination of experience and training was offered as the main causal factor in skill development, however, are technical in nature. It is likely, therefore, that in many instances the development of these skills has required respondents to consolidate practical experiences through formal learning processes, or vice-versa. The implications of these findings are that the development of some technical skills may require to be consolidated through formal training or simulated learning experiences in addition to practical experience.

Differentiated needs for different types of schools

There were clear differences among responses from types of schooling in the development of skills. Primary school respondents generally rated themselves at a lower level of skill than their colleagues in secondary and special schools. There were few differences, however, once the responses from secondary schools were not included in the analysis. When responses for special schools were also removed, differences of a statistically significant nature were still evident between responses from those in primary and nursery schools in just four of the skills (A3 'Community/parental involvement', A4 'Working with adults', A5 'Under-performing teachers & A6 'Identifying special needs' – see Table 4.3), but there was no pattern associated with any one type of school. The conclusions to be drawn are that respondents from secondary and special schools have skewed the overall scores in several of the questions and that there seems be differential requirements in terms of skill development among those from secondary, special and primary schools.

Greater variety was exhibited in the rankings from the analysis of the formation of values and attitudes in which those from nursery schools indicating they felt most secure overall in their perceptions of preparation, with those from junior schools consistently ranking lowest in their responses to all four questions although this difference was not shown to be of statistical significance. The analysis also showed that no single type of school was consistently responsible for differences across the four questions. Consequently it can be concluded that whilst there was not a general pattern there were aspects in the formation of values and attitudes that were affected by the type of school. Secondary respondents, for example, were very confident of their ability to behave in ways consistent with their values, attitudes and beliefs (B1) and in promoting ethical practices in schools (B2), but were less confident with issues relating to student learning (B3 & 4). Meanwhile, respondents from nursery schools scored highest on the issues relating to student learning and highest overall in the formation of attitudes and values.

Similar findings emerged from the responses to questions relating to knowledge and understanding (C1-6) in that rankings varied according to the issue examined by the question. The highest rankings for individual questions were shared between those from secondary, special and nursery schools whilst the highest ranking achieved by those from the primary sector was third on one question.

Patterns thus begin to emerge from responses to the range of questions in Part 2 of the survey that illustrate differences among types of schooling. Special school headteachers, for example, consistently rate themselves highly on issues relating to student learning. They rank themselves most capable of identifying children with

special needs (A6), in matching student learning styles with appropriate teaching methods (C2) and in planning and selecting appropriate curriculum (C3). In addition they also ranked themselves highest overall in terms of building community and parental involvement (A3). These findings may reflect the experience of teachers within special schools where each child will have a statement of special education needs, a requirement originally arising from the 1981 Education Act and consolidated in the 1993 and 1996 Education Acts. It is increasingly recognised that working with pupils with special educational needs requires specialist knowledge, skills and understanding (Department for Education and Employment, 1997). Research indicates that at least half of teachers working with pupils with special educational needs hold additional relevant, specialist qualifications (e.g. Male, D., 2003), findings that correspond to the higher levels of postgraduate qualifications amongst respondents in this study being held by special school headteachers (60 per cent: 56 of 94 respondents). The legislation requiring the statement of special educational needs also has increasingly been written to enhance parental involvement in the decision-making process regarding provision for children with special educational needs (Male, D., 1998). It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that headteachers of special schools consider themselves to have more experience and expertise in matching student learning styles with appropriate teaching methods, planning and selecting appropriate curriculum and in building community and parental involvement than their counterparts in other types of maintained schools.

Secondary school headteachers, meanwhile, ranked themselves highest on 20 of the 28 questions in Part 2 of the questionnaire, a situation that might be caused in part by the greater opportunity to engage in high-level managerial activities during the period

of anticipatory socialisation. A further pattern does emerge, however, that relates to the nature of a secondary school in operation when examining the responses to questions on which they ranked themselves lowest. In the development of skills, formation of values and attitude and the levels of professional knowledge and understanding, the areas where secondary school headteachers ranked themselves lower mostly corresponded to their lack of proximity to the action. In terms of skill development, for example, they felt least confident about identifying children with special needs (A6), building community/parental involvement (A3) and using student performance data to plan curriculum (A7). In the formation of their attitudes and values and in their professional knowledge and understanding, they were less confident in practical issues relating to student learning (B3 and 4; C2 'Matching student learning needs with appropriate teaching') than they were with the development of their values and in dealing with issues which have to be resolved by other members of their organisation.

The technical skill of applying the law (A13) had the least number of respondents indicating they felt well prepared (19 per cent) of all the areas investigated. Those from secondary and special schools did, again, rank themselves more capable than their primary colleagues although there were no differences of statistical significance between all schools once responses from secondary schools were removed. The overall score was affected by those from the primary sector who formed over two-thirds of the total responses and scored just 16 per cent for this skill. Secondary school respondents scored 29 per cent and special school respondents scored 27 per cent, suggesting that their experience of working in those schools was a factor in feeling better prepared, although the data were not present in this survey that would

allow me to determine the reason for these differences. This was one of the few skills which, of those respondents who felt they were well prepared, only a minority attributed that state to experience. Twenty-six per cent of all respondents indicated that training was the main causal factor in their state of preparedness for this skill, with 50 per cent indicating that a combination of training and experience had led to their perceived state of preparedness. Whilst it can be concluded that this does not indicate a need for a differentiated approach to preparation according to the type of school, the low score overall and the importance of combining training and experience does have implications for prior learning experiences.

The conclusion to be drawn is that differences were observed among respondents that identified three broad categories of school types. Those from secondary schools indicated they felt better prepared in skill development and some aspects in the formation of attitudes, values and appropriate knowledge, particularly those in areas that were indirectly related to student learning. Meanwhile those from special schools indicated a higher perceived level of preparation in relation to student learning and to working with parents and other members of the community. Primary school respondents felt the least well prepared overall. Given that the vast majority of respondents indicated experience to be the key in the development of skills, particularly in those skills which are viewed as established or traditionally associated with the headship, the implications for preparation and induction appear to be mainly focused on providing appropriate prior learning experiences for those from the primary sector, a finding that is explored in the next section of this chapter. Further implications for each type of schooling are more specific, with a need, for example, for aspirant secondary headteachers to be more capable on issues relating to student

learning. The variation among respondents within these three types of school is limited, however, which may mean that a generalised response may not be practical as the development needs are more likely to be specific and personal, requiring individuals to identify their own learning need and to have the opportunity to fulfil that need subsequently. The implications of this conclusion would be for the personal identification of learning need and the provision of resources, either individually or systemically, to satisfy that need either as a part of their preparation or during the induction period.

Appropriate previous learning experiences

In both the development of skills and in the formation of values and attitudes, respondents who felt well prepared or extremely well prepared attributed this perceived state of readiness mainly to experience and it was only in the increase of knowledge, where an average of 64 per cent of respondents perceived themselves to have had the levels of knowledge and understanding necessary for the post, that they attributed a combination of experience and training as being the joint contributory factor. The conclusion is that learning through practical experience seemed to be the major factor in terms of preparation, for one respondent solely through life experiences. The vast majority of respondents who deemed themselves to be adequately prepared indicated their perceived state of readiness as not being attributable to training. These findings bear out the conclusions reached in Chapter 2 of prospective headteachers taking responsibility for their own preparation, particularly by engaging in school-based leadership and management activities at a variety of levels and in different organisations.

That conclusion may be overly simplistic, however, and consideration needs to be given to the ratio of respondents who indicated that a combination of training and experience was an important factor in all aspects of skill development, in the formation of attitudes and values and the accumulation of relevant knowledge and understanding. At least a quarter of all respondents attributed the equal combination of training and experience as being the causal factor in being well or extremely well prepared. The ratio increased in relation to around half for some technical skills (A6 'identifying special needs', A7 'using performance data', A13 'law', A14 'planning', A16 'school administration' and A18 'using ICT') and was typically over a half for the increase of knowledge (questions C1-6). Bearing in mind that very few were prepared to attribute their perceived state of preparedness solely to training, these findings are important when planning systemic responses for the preparation of headteachers. Training on its own was not deemed to have a major impact; experience was seen to be the single most significant development aid; and, a combination of training and experience was also considered to have been effective for at least a quarter of respondents in all instances and became more important for the development of technical skills.

The opportunity to engage directly, or indirectly, with leadership and management skills was thus highlighted implicitly through the attribution provided by respondents to the survey, but was also an issue that was explicitly identified in the responses to the open questions contained in the questionnaire. Elements of practical, guided experience were seen as key components in headteacher preparation, with respondents from all types of schools indicating that a good role model or a period as a deputy or acting headteacher was of critical importance in their development, particularly where

their previous headteacher had encouraged their engagement in critical leadership and management issues. These responses alluded to notions of apprenticeship, a concept that brings together issues of mentoring, coaching, work shadowing and reflection on practice as well as training in specific skill areas.

In terms of gaining appropriate experience, there were concerns from those in primary schools, however, about the lack of time available for deputies to engage in leadership and management activities as they were classroom-based, with 46 respondents taking the opportunity to comment on this need. The most obvious conclusion to be drawn from these data is that, typically, limited opportunities exist for those from primary schools to gather direct management experience during the preparation period and influences their perceived ability to take on the new tasks and responsibilities of headship. Similar findings emerged from respondents in special schools who, although having the highest proportion of entrants with a postgraduate degree, also reported lack of opportunities to engage in whole-school management responsibilities or to adopt meaningful leadership roles prior to taking up post (Male and Male, 2001).

Interestingly, it appeared that those who had undertaken NPQH perceived themselves to be better prepared in a range of skills (see Table 4.7 above) for which other serving headteachers perceived themselves to be less than well prepared (Male, 2001). The tentative conclusion reached in that analysis was that NPQH may be making a difference in terms of skill development, particularly in relation to technical skills and those management and leadership issues that emerged in the last years of the twentieth century. This would suggest that aspects of the NPQH process, with its integral assessment tasks, is supporting the development of candidates who perceived

themselves more capable in a range of skills than their contemporary colleagues and to the creation of more effective learning environments for aspirant headteachers. Some caution needs to be exhibited here as the numbers of NPQH participants used for that analysis were low in comparison to the entire population surveyed (36 of 1405 respondents) and they would have come from cohorts who engaged in the process prior to 1999 when the NPQH was reviewed and considerably adapted. Conversely, however, the differences between NPQH participants and others were statistically significant.

In terms of volume, the two main issues to emerge for helping first-year headteachers to be more effective and supporting headteachers throughout their first two years in post were, firstly, the need for those beginning the role to have access to a mentor and, secondly, to have the opportunity to undertake focused training in specific skill areas. The mentor was deemed by the respondents to be someone who could provide a non-judgemental, yet challenging presence that allowed the newly appointed headteacher to reflect on their experience and explore unresolved issues. The two issues of mentoring and training were consistently mentioned by headteachers from all types of schools, although there was considerable variation between the respondents with regard to identifying the focus of further training. Many responses recommending further training either lacked focus or were so wide-ranging that they diluted the intensity of those demands. Effectively, that left the recommendation for mentoring as a core element for those beginning headship as the only major factor to emerge from this part of the survey. The findings thus supported the conclusion reached in Chapter 2 that mentoring was likely to be a key element in effective learning for aspirant and newly appointed headteachers as it provides an opportunity for the

expression and examination of dilemmas, and provides support for the resolution of conflicts, whilst also allowing for continuing the formation of occupational and personal identity.

Training that matched the developmental needs of headteachers, both in terms of their experience and their work context, was a strong recommendation. The respondents indicated that they had too many experiences of poor provision and were recommending a much more flexible and adaptive approach from trainers who appeared to have been presenting a restrictive experience. Good quality professional development programmes featured a consideration of participant context and learning styles. The respondents in this study were calling for such an approach as being one of the most productive ways of supporting colleagues in the first two years in post.

Exploring personal values and attitudes in concert with others

The questions relating to the formation of attitudes and values in Part 2 of the survey were structured in a way that did not indicate the ways in which aspirant and beginning headteachers explored their personal values and attitudes in concert with others. Responses received from the open questions were much more helpful in this respect and demonstrated a distinct need for collaborative learning. Collaborative learning included role modelling and guided experiential learning during preparation as well as peer group support and networking with headteacher colleagues once in post. Mentoring also featured very highly amongst respondents as a way of reconciling the demands of the new job with their personal transition into headship.

References to role modelling alluded both to experiences in the aspirant headteacher's own school and to those found through work shadowing in another school. Although these experiences were generally reported in favourable terms, there was some evidence to suggest that role modelling was sometimes in antithesis to the model offered; in other words, some aspirant headteachers' viewed their models negatively and created their own models through deliberately avoiding behaviours witnessed in others. These findings are in keeping with those registered in other studies of serving headteachers when reviewing their learning experiences prior to taking up headship (Ribbins, 1997; Weindling and Pocklington, 1996). The conclusion reached from the findings accumulated here suggest that any exposure to role models is beneficial in helping aspirant and beginning headteachers form their own occupational identity, whether those models are positive or negative.

Guided experiential learning, from the evidence accumulated through this survey, appeared to be opportunistic, incidental and a matter of good fortune rather than a systematic feature of headship preparation and induction. The respondents who drew attention to the opportunities afforded them by their previous headteacher were strong in their praise of the wisdom and foresight exhibited that allowed them to develop experience and expertise that was relevant to the job of headteacher. Conversely, there were those who talked of 'sink or swim' environments. It appeared that those who made it through to headship did so for one of three reasons: they were self-motivated; they were encouraged by the existing headteacher and other significant professional figures in the field; or, they were thrust into the job in the absence of other suitable candidates. As a system, this had generally worked well in terms of filling posts, although there had always been concerns about the quality of some of

those in post.   The conclusion reached by examining the data emerging from this study is that there is too little in the way of structured guided experiential learning available to aspirant and beginning headteachers, a finding that leaves the school system subject to the chance emergence of capable headteachers rather than the systematic approach inherent with a process of succession planning. Lending itself to this debate are the statistics on headteacher recruitment in one of the NCSL annual reports which showed about 10 per cent of primary and secondary schools advertising headteacher posts in 2002 (National College for School Leadership, 2003). This was reported as being higher than a decade ago and indicates that headteachers are, on average, spending fewer years in post. For the same period, re-advertisements for headship posts were at about 34 per cent for primary schools and 24 per cent for secondary schools. The figure for primary schools marks the highest recorded level, while those recorded for secondary schools has fallen slightly. The implications are that for an adequate supply of headteachers the system can no longer rely on there being sufficient candidates who are self-motivated or emerge through the beneficence or wisdom of experienced colleagues, so there will need to be a greater investment in succession planning, which these findings suggest should be particularly through guided experiential learning.

Peer support, networking and mentoring were all identified by respondents as key elements of preparation and induction into headship. Mentoring was the most regularly cited activity deemed to help newly appointed headteachers to be more effective in their first year and was the leading support mechanism identified for the first two years of headship. All three activities featured strongly in the responses to the survey, allowing the conclusion to be drawn that opportunities to relate to others

with experience and knowledge of the demands of headship were important features for the effective preparation and induction of headteachers. LEA support also figured in this respect, although it was possible to identify the difference respondents placed on finding relevant information (usually through LEA officers) and being offered occupational advice and guidance (usually through LEA Advisers, Inspectors or Improvement Officers). The implication is that aspirant and beginning headteachers need regular access to someone who can offer opinion, advice or guidance from perspectives that equate to the situation(s) being experienced by the aspiring or neophyte headteacher.

It is interesting that a number of respondents had personally reviewed their commitment to the job in the light of external, largely political, pressure and intrusion into their occupational domain. The recommendation that came through from respondents was for there to be a greater level of understanding exhibited, especially by politicians, of the demands and expectations of the job. The inference to be drawn from these comments is that with greater realisation amongst politicians and the lay public in general there would be fewer demands on headteachers and fewer occupational casualties.

In summary, therefore, the data indicate that aspirant and beginning headteachers learned most from practical experience, particularly where they had the opportunity to practice and experiment whilst still in the preparatory stage of headship or where they had the opportunity to explore dilemmas and challenges with fellow practitioners once in post. The findings thus confirm the conclusions of the benefits of collaborative

learning that emerged from the review of empirical evidence and theory drawn from other school systems or aligned occupations conducted in Chapter 2.

Staged approach to identity formation

Responses to how well prepared headteachers felt for assuming responsibility for school management, question A15 in Part 2 of the questionnaire, show only just over one third perceiving themselves to be ready for this dimension of the job on appointment. The notion of organisational responsibility, and with it accountability, was the principal emergent issue that related to the successful transition to the new occupational identity of headship evident from the discussion in Chapter 2. Various stages had been identified by contributors to that debate and summarised in the work of Weindling (2000) who differentiated between Preparation (Stage 0) and Induction, which covered Entry and Encounter (Stage 1), Taking Hold (Stage 2) and Reshaping (Stage 3). The early stages of adaptation to the new occupational identity generally happened in the first two years according to this analysis. The data emerging from this study confirm this analysis.

The period of entry and encounter was characterised by Weindling as one of 'sense-making' and it can be seen from responses to the open questions in the questionnaire how many respondents had struggled with this period. The realisation that the job was more demanding than imagined was matched by the trepidation felt by many individuals. Similarly, there was ample evidence to support the notion that the newly appointed headteacher was not prepared for the inherent demands of the job and the demands emanating from a changing system. Evidence also emerged that the period of entry and encounter was followed by a time of taking hold (Stage 2) which was

indicated by respondents to be some six months into the job. The responses received from open questions reinforced the notion of a staged approach to identity formation that was evident in the work of Weindling and others. The implications are for a more realistic set of learning experiences prior to appointment, both in terms of opportunity and intensity, and for systematic levels of support to be available through the first two years at least. The issue of opportunity relates back to the discussion in relation to appropriate learning experiences, whilst the notion of intensity relates to the engagement of participants in guided experiential learning during preparation, both of which were conducted above.

Conclusions

The data emerging from this survey illustrate some of the challenges associated with preparing and entering headship in England at the end of the twentieth century. Foremost amongst these challenges was the need to ensure a continuing supply of willing and suitably qualified applicants for headship as evidence was growing, in terms of the numbers of re-advertisements for vacant positions, that the post was not being perceived as an attractive career option. The process of succession planning is one of importance at the macro level to national and local governments, both of which carry the responsibility for ensuring school performance is not impaired by inadequacy in headteacher preparation and induction. The process of succession planning is equally important at the micro level, especially to the school community, as the capability of the headteacher has been demonstrated to be central and 'pivotal' in affecting school performance.

Preparation for most headteachers in England at the turn of the century was demonstrated to be an informal, sometimes unconscious, process that has combined personal and job experiences during the period of anticipatory socialisation for their new job. Formal training or opportunities for guided learning played a very small part in the preparation of those who responded to the self-completion questionnaire employed in this study. The evidence that emerges from this survey is that the majority of respondents perceived themselves to be adequately prepared or well prepared for the majority of the skills and for all aspects involved with the formation of values, attitudes and increase in knowledge identified for this study. The responses to open questions contained within the questionnaire demonstrated, however, that headteachers still perceived themselves to be inadequately prepared for a range of issues that accompanied the transition to headship. The examination of responses in the survey reveal the issues to be associated with the provision of appropriate learning experiences to aspirant headteachers, coupled with a need for differentiation for suitable candidates according to gender, school type and previous experience. The conclusions I can draw are that in preparing for headship learning needs to be an individual, guided process that provides opportunity for practical experience in circumstances that challenge the candidate's existing knowledge and understanding. No single mode of preparation can be seen as applicable to all aspirant headteachers, with distinctions evident from the survey findings of differential needs between personal experience, men and women and phase or type of schools.

The process of preparation can be seen to assist with the move to headship, but greater help is also needed with induction into post as many of the individual challenges of headship only begin to be manifested at this time. Issues relating to the personal and

organisational dimensions of the career transition are seldom addressed before entering headship, it seems, and inadequately supported afterwards. The view that the vast majority of headteachers become effective (Office for Standards in Education, 2002b) is a greater tribute to individual resilience and resourcefulness than the provision of systemic mores to support the transition. Mentoring, particularly by peers, and networking with headteacher colleagues were seen by respondents as important ingredients, particularly during the period of entry and encounter, which typically covered most of the first year in post. The period of adjustment to the new occupational identity of headteacher and the context to which they were appointed needed support from a range of individuals and agencies that would assist the individual along the personal, organisational and occupational dimensions of the career transition. The findings from this survey indicate that newly appointed headteachers needed to develop new skills and develop effective working relationships with new colleagues, including their own governing bodies. The centrality of the school governing body to decision-making was highlighted as an emergent issue in the occupation of headteacher, where it did not figure in studies of career transition in other occupations or school systems. In addition, where development training needs were identified, the call from respondents was for training to be focused and precise, findings that suggest that all too often the quality of provision was inadequate for the learning needs of beginning headteachers.

In the next and final chapter of this study I will review the progress that has been made in terms of preparing and supporting aspirant and beginning headteachers since this survey was completed. Central to that analysis will be the policies of central

government and the actions of its agencies in relation to the findings I have reported here.

Chapter 6

Conclusions and recommendations

This study surveyed a sample of serving headteachers in England in 1999 with regard to their perceived state of preparedness for headship on appointment and, where the respondents deemed that to be adequate or better, asked them to attribute their preparation to experience or training or a combination of both. Respondents were also asked to provide suggestions as to how systems and processes could be further developed to assist that state of preparedness. The survey was conducted by means of a self-completion postal questionnaire, employing a 10 per cent random sampling technique, and is thus deemed representative and generalisable.

Very few ('n' = 54) of the respondents had been through the only formal preparation programme for headship available in England, the NPQH, which had been first introduced in 1997. This finding, coupled with the historical review of development opportunities for aspirant and beginning headteachers conducted in Chapter 1, led me to conclude that at the time of the survey most headteachers in England had self-managed their preparation and induction to headship.

The responses to the pre-defined questions in Part 2 of the questionnaire showed a high proportion of headteachers perceiving themselves to be adequately or well prepared for headship in terms of skill development and the formation of values and attitudes, and to have attributed this state of preparedness largely to experience rather than training. Only a very small proportion of those who considered themselves well prepared in this regard were willing to attribute that wholly or mostly to training and it was only within the category of increased knowledge and understanding needed for headship that a balance of experience and training was deemed the major influence for the majority of respondents. The conclusion is that when headteachers felt adequately

prepared or better it was experience, rather than training, which had been the greatest influence, findings that suggest the process of preparation and induction to headship in England during the twentieth century had been characterised by informal and iterative processes of learning.

Conversely the responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire demonstrated that few felt as well prepared for the job as their answers to the pre-defined questions may have indicated. Those partaking in the survey were given the opportunity to provide advice and guidance as to how first-year headteachers might be helped to be more effective and what level of support would be helpful during the first two years of headship. In addition they were given the opportunity to express any other related thoughts. Over 90 per cent of respondents provided substantial answers to the first two questions and over 54 per cent added further comment through the third open question. The responses produced a wealth of data that, after content analysis, showed there to be many issues confronting newly appointed headteachers that had not been addressed by the pre-defined questions contained in the survey. After analysis and interpretation of the data there is a close correlation between these findings and other studies reported previously (Weindling and Earley, 1987) and subsequently (Earley, Evans, Collarbone, Gold and Halpin, 2002), both of which indicated that few headteachers felt adequately prepared or better on taking up their first post. The Weindling and Earley study had found just 15 per cent of headteachers feeling they were adequately prepared for the challenges of their first headship whilst the study conducted by Earley *et al.* showed a slightly higher figure of 17 per cent considering themselves to be at a similar level of preparation. Although there were arguments to suggest limitations on their data, with the 1987 study focusing solely on

secondary headteachers and the 2002 study having to undertake a further round of data collection some time after the original set was deemed not representative, both sets of findings were subject to triangulation and can be considered as reasonably robust.

The consequence is that my findings are also demonstrating concerns from headteachers that support for preparation and induction to their first post are inadequate in some aspects of the personal, organisational and occupational dimensions of the career transition to headship in England. The findings from the survey identify two main issues: that there were aspects of headship where proportions of the headteacher population felt unprepared on appointment, and; that the processes of preparation and induction to headship in England could be better supported. This concluding chapter delineates the issues emerging from the survey findings presented in Chapter 4 and the interpretation for understanding conducted in Chapter 5 in order to identify the implications and recommendations for action by individuals, school communities and local and national government for the preparation and induction into the occupation of headteacher in the maintained school system in England.

Implications

Aspirant and beginning headteachers need to build capability to take charge of the school to which they have been appointed. The process of 'taking charge' was defined in Chapter 2 as establishing mastery and influence, where 'mastery' is the acquisition of a grounded understanding of the organisation, its tasks, people, environment and problems and 'influence' is where the newly appointed formal leader

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makes an impact on the organisation, its structure, practices, and performance (Gabarro, 1987). In achieving this status the aspirant and beginning headteacher will need to engage with issues that stem from who they are as individuals, the culture of the school to which they are appointed and that relate to the nature of headship as an occupation.

Earlier discussion in this study, particularly in Chapters 1 and 5, demonstrate that the level of guidance, advice and support available to aspirant and beginning headteachers during the twentieth century had been incidental, rather than planned, and had been dependent on individuals accumulating the necessary expertise through learning opportunities that were all too often unconscious and chance experiences. The typical consequence was that aspirant and beginning headteachers managed their own learning and experienced isolation and duress during the period of induction, circumstances that were not conducive to effectiveness in the early stages of their headship.

This situation was compounded by the absence of a common job definition. At the time the survey was conducted for this study, the only formal requirement for headship in a maintained school was for the applicant to have qualified teacher status. Any other criteria that were applied to the selection process were arbitrary and in the purview of the appointing body. Custom and practice had determined a fairly standard view of what expertise was required for the job, however, and it was possible to identify some traits and characteristics that were indicative of a likely successful candidate. There had also been a considerable investment of time, effort and resources during the latter stages of the twentieth century into the development of

competences and competencies for headship, as described in Chapter 2. This activity, it was argued, had largely underwritten the National Standards for Headteachers, first published by the TTA in 1997.

The work on headteacher competence and identification of standards had concentrated on the skills, attributes, knowledge and understanding needed for the post, aspects of personal development that were classified in Chapter 2 mainly as within the occupational dimension of the mid-career transition to formal school leadership. The introduction of NPQH, based as it was on the national standards, consolidated the centrality of the occupational dimension in the preparation of headteachers. Smaller amounts of attention had been directed to the personal and organisational issues associated with the mid-career transition, with only the short-lived Headteacher Mentoring Scheme of the early 1990s being directly focused on providing advice, guidance and support to beginning headteachers. All other schemes or resources funded by central government, including the Headlamp scheme, had been indirectly focused and subject to varied levels of engagement and impact.

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, it was argued in Chapter 1, the nature of the job had evolved substantially and required new skills, attributes, knowledge and understanding in addition to those traditionally associated with the job of headteacher. The job required a greater level of leadership and management capability than had been the case in the previous century, thus forcing serving headteachers to extend their range of activity and for aspirant headteachers to demonstrate a profile that matched the new era. The impact of NPQH, as reported in Chapter 4, suggests that participants in that programme considered themselves better prepared than previous

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candidates for headship, with the scheme addressing the emerging needs of the new era, in this occupational dimension, more effectively than for previous and contemporary colleagues. The higher levels of perceived capability were mainly located in the technical skills, it was argued in Chapter 5, and still did not address some of the issues contained in the personal and organisational dimensions of the mid-career transition. The conclusion is that aspirant and beginning headteachers in England are not guaranteed access to the levels of advice, support and guidance appropriate to their needs as they prepare for and enter the headship at the start of the new century. The implications are for there to be more effective systems and processes in place, particularly for personal and organisational related issues, to support aspirant and beginning headteachers and to make them more effective in the early part of the new career.

This conclusion is especially important when applications for headship are reducing (National College for School Leadership, 2003) and those appointed to the post may not exhibit the same high level of commitment to personal development that seems to have characterised an earlier age. Where in the past, for example, we may have seen a conscious pattern of anticipatory socialisation or, in its absence, have detected an appropriate unconscious socialisation in aspirant headteachers that made them eligible candidates, in times of headteacher shortage some appointments to headship have been made from applicants who were unprepared, maybe even unwilling. This explanation may go some way to account for the Ofsted figures of inadequacy in 5 per cent of headteachers in secondary schools and in 8 per cent of primary schools (Office for Standards in Education, 2002b). Irrespective of truth in that regard, attention needs to be given to ensuring that those who take up headship have the combination

of skills, attributes, knowledge and understanding necessary for effecting the mid-career transition successfully. In other words, those entering headship do so with the capability to 'take charge' early in their career and without having to experience many of the difficulties and challenges that have been demonstrated to accompany adaptation to the post.

The principal response by central government, through its agencies, has been to establish national standards and then develop the NPQH as a vehicle for preparing the next generation of headteachers. Secondary responses, in that they have not been so focused, have been on the provision of funding mechanisms through which newly appointed headteachers can determine their own development needs during the early stages of their headship. Featured in this category during the closing decade of the previous century have been the Headteacher Mentoring Scheme and Headlamp. The type of support available to beginning headteachers at the time of writing this study is in a state of flux with the introduction, in September 2003, of the Headteacher Induction Programme (HIP) to replace Headlamp. HIP has a number of distinctive features, has been designed to be more prescriptive than Headlamp, but is still only in the very early days of implementation with attendant issues preventing a full-scale evaluation of its likely effectiveness at this stage. What we do know is that HIP provision is expected to take account of and build on the experiences of NPQH in an attempt to provide a stronger link between pre-service and in-service provision for headship, thus taking account of the strong steer in this direction provided by the Ofsted report on leadership and management training for headteachers (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a).

NPQH has been presented as a guarantee of suitability of candidates to headship by its authors and promoters, the central government agencies responsible for headteacher development, especially since making the qualification obligatory from April, 2004 (Department for Education and Skills/National College for School Leadership, 2002). Initial strategies for recruitment to the NPQH programme based on encouragement thus have now been replaced by statutory obligations that require governing bodies to appoint headteachers who either have achieved the qualification or are registered for the award when making an application. Completion of the qualification is expected after appointment if the applicant is part way through the award. The NPQH experience is further reified by the expectation that most HIP provision is to build upon the NPQH profile of the newly appointed headteacher. If NPQH remains the sole funded response in terms of preparation, however, then the danger remains that the next generation of headteachers will be no better prepared to be effective in the early stages of their headship than previous generations. My findings suggest that the NPQH neither addresses the full range of learning experiences identified in this study as necessary antecedents, nor does it fully prepare aspirant headteachers for the challenges of entering the job.

An optimistic view of NPQH, based in this instance on the response of 36 eligible participants used in this study, is that the qualification will address most of the shortfalls in skill development, the formation of values and attitudes and the increase of knowledge apparent in the data accumulated for this study. The literature review presented in Chapter 2 demonstrates, however, that neither the components of the NPQH curriculum nor the learning processes associated with the achievement of the qualification are sufficient to allow the successful application of that learning to

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practice. That conclusion is reinforced by the findings emanating from the responses to the open questions contained in the survey conducted for this study which were presented in Chapter 4 and interpreted in Chapter 5. Key in the equation that emerged for successful transition to headship were a number of factors that related to a sense of self (the personal dimension) and to the culture of the school where the applicant was to take up post (the organisational dimension). Many of the issues that emerged on each of the dimensions could have been anticipated and could have been incorporated into the programme of preparation. Conversely, there were other issues that could not have been identified in advance and for which support could be identified only after appointment. At this stage the issues relating to preparation will be discussed, with the issues relating to induction and the formation of occupational self to be discussed subsequently.

Preparing for Headship

The arguments and discussion put forward in Chapter 2 demonstrate that in the preparation for headship there is a need to engage aspirant headteachers in conscious anticipatory socialisation processes along the personal, organisational and occupational dimensions of the transition to leadership if newly appointed headteachers are to be capable of 'taking charge' of the school at an early stage of their new career. The findings from the data accumulated for this study indicate that there has been a varied impact by existent preparation processes along these three dimensions, with some aspects well catered for and others left untended.

The finding that the majority of serving headteachers considered themselves adequately prepared or better in terms of skill development, the formation of values

and attitudes and the levels of knowledge and understanding measured by the pre-defined questions in the survey should not obscure the fact that some respondents did not feel prepared for these pre-defined categories of headteacher behaviours and attributes. The issue is whether aspects of the headteacher profile created through the closely defined questions contained in the survey instrument can be shown to be generic, systemic needs or whether such perceptions of inadequacy are personal or transitory needs. Where a majority of perceptions of inadequate preparation existed, the conclusion reached was that the aspects identified tended to be transitory in nature. In the seven skills identified as having fewer than half the respondents indicating adequate preparation or better, for example, six were adjudged as being due to contemporary issues and to be disappearing phenomena. The perceptions of younger and shorter-serving respondents indicated they were better prepared in these skills whilst, and perhaps more importantly, those who had participated in NPQH showed few signs of perceived weakness. The one aspect of skill where no such conclusion could be drawn was the application of law to specific educational circumstances, a finding that suggested a need to ensure inclusion of the basic principles of law into the programme of preparation.

Perceptions of adequacy do not necessarily indicate capability, however, but the evidence from Ofsted suggested that levels of incompetence amongst headteachers continued to fall as we enter the twenty-first century (Office for Standards in Education, 2003). In part this improvement will be related to growing familiarity with the demands of school leadership and management over the last decade of the twentieth century which has allowed serving and aspirant headteachers to develop expertise in activities which were novel when first introduced. Such opportunities

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have combined with the growth of NPQH as the formal and centrally funded preparation programme for headship. The conclusion is that the introduction of the mandatory requirement for NPQH, together with a growing familiarity with the requirements of the job, means that the next generation of headteachers should be well prepared in the technical and social skills associated with the job. With the exception of learning the basic principles of law, therefore, any extension or expansion of the development processes associated with achieving mastery in the range of skills contained within the occupational dimension is not deemed a priority.

The data do suggest, however, a need for the NPQH process to account for differences between candidates in terms of gender and type of school, aspects of personal and occupational dimensions respectively. The findings from this study show women as perceiving themselves to be better prepared in most skills, particularly those deemed personal in nature, in the formation of attitudes and values and with the knowledge and understanding required for the job. These findings thus reflect the contemporary theory base, demonstrated in the literature review in Chapter 2, that suggests women are more successful in interpersonal skills and tend to apply only for jobs for which they feel capable and for which they feel, therefore, better prepared (e.g. Shakeshaft, 1987). In terms of the way in which the type of school affected respondent perceptions we can see from the data that those from primary schools generally felt less well prepared in terms of skills development and in developing the levels of knowledge and understanding required for the job. Respondents from special schools, meanwhile, rated themselves as more capable in matters to do with student learning whilst also displaying a sense of inadequate preparation in some technical skills. Those from secondary schools consistently rated themselves higher in terms of skill

development and in the formation of values and attitudes, but displayed some perceived inadequacies in relation to student learning.

These findings thus challenge the nature of the NPQH process as devised for the early cohorts from 1997-99 when there was an expectation that the programme was universal in its application, with all candidates being required to complete all parts of the assessment process after they had joined the programme. Cohorts were mixed in terms of school phase and training materials were devised that were applicable to all types of school. The need for differentiation which arises from this study has subsequently been reflected in two activities undertaken by central government agencies. The first was the revision of the NPQH conducted by the DFES in 1999 and the second was a result of data gathered through the TTA sponsored programme for serving headteachers, the LPSH.

The NPQH review took account of the lessons from the early stages and the work undertaken by Hay McBer, a firm of business consultants, for both the TTA and the DfES on headship, the outcomes of which provided "better information than ever before about effective headship, what constitutes readiness for headship and how to train and develop tomorrow's school leaders" (Collarbone, 2000: 6). Following the review, NPQH was to run in three phases: the Application/Access Phase, the Development Phase (Phase 1) and the Confirmation Phase (Phase 2). During the application /access phase a candidate's development needs are analysed and, where necessary, they are directed to Access modules that were to be available on-line. Three routes were delineated for progression to the qualification: for those with relatively limited experience in senior management (Route 1), for those with sound

senior management experience and achievements (Route 2) and for those who are considered close to headship (Route 3). The minimum time to complete the NPQH was established at six months (Route 3) and the maximum time at two years (Route 1). Meanwhile, research conducted by the Hay McBer group on the LPSH in implementation started to identify different profiles of competence needed for leading small, medium to large and special schools (Hay McBer Associates, 2000). The consequence was that they managed to provide a differentiated profile of the effective headteacher according, for example, to whether the school was a small primary (fewer than 200 pupils), medium to large primary or was a designated special school.

The need for differentiation, particularly between candidates from different types of school, is thus accepted as a concept and has been embedded in the NPQH process through the initial assessment. Applicants are able to present a personal profile of professional development which could exempt them from parts of the training programme. No one is to be exempt from the final, summative assessment, but the relaxation of training requirements has provided candidates with the opportunity for their individual experience and expertise to be recognised. The onus is on individuals to present their application to be registered on NPQH in a manner that recognises the capability and the experience they bring to the programme.

Whilst this is a step forward, the NPQH process still does not account for the reconciliation of previous learning experiences with those needed for the type of school to which the candidate aspires. The need for appropriate previous learning experiences was highlighted as a key aspect of the occupational dimension in Chapter 2, with the findings from this study demonstrating that respondents frequently felt

their experience as not being directly relevant to many of the challenges that confronted them when they began their first headship. These feelings of inadequate preparation ranged from a lack of opportunity to engage in leadership and management activities that would develop their technical and interpersonal skills (mainly primary and special school respondents), to not having the opportunity to experience the true intensity of the challenges presented by headship and only finding out the extent of those demands after having taken up post. Addressing those learning needs during the preparatory stage was demonstrated, through the data collected for this study, frequently to be a matter of chance, or as a result of the beneficence of serving headteachers who ensured that aspirants had opportunities to engage in leadership and management activities in such ways as to prepare them for the reality of the job. Respondents to this survey, particularly those from primary schools, indicated that the provision of time to engage in leadership and management activities was as an important factor in the development of headteachers, whilst also indicating that their staffing resources often did not allow for the provision of such time. In addition to time, and probably more importantly, was the indicated need to engage in activities that required the aspirant headteacher to experience the intensity of the challenge felt by beginning headteachers. The NPQH process requires candidates to demonstrate their capability through presenting evidence of personal leadership and management in effecting school improvement, a requirement that supposes the candidate has the time to engage with such issues and has done so in an appropriate manner. In order for the NPQH process to be judged as appropriate to the needs of beginning headteachers the onus is on the assessment requirements being rigorous enough to demand that level of commitment and engagement. The data accumulated from the open questions in the survey suggest that the majority of headteachers in

England did not feel adequately prepared for the demands of headship through their previous experiences, a finding that suggests a need for strengthening the assessment requirements of the NPQH.

In demonstrating their individual capability for headship, NPQH candidates are asked to provide evidence accumulated in their previous or current school, yet their headship will be in a school with which they are unfamiliar. This factor holds true from the data in this study even when the candidate has been a senior member of staff or deputy in the same school for which they have become headteacher. The conceptual framework developed in Chapter 2 and the data collected for this study suggest that the adaptation to headship requires the new headteacher to engage in the building of relationships with others who do not necessarily accept them as formal leader in the first instance. In other words, followership is not an automatic response from the members of the school to which the new headteacher has been appointed, even when they have served in a senior position previously. The findings from this study suggest that aspirant headteachers need to be given the task of establishing themselves in environments where they have to build relationships, rather than depend on existing relationships.

Other school systems, notably in the USA, have developed models of internship where prospective principals have been required to undertake a form of apprenticeship, where the aspirant works alongside an experienced, capable and confident principal. The data collected for this study indicate how limited was the aspirant headteachers' appreciation of the demands of the role, a finding leading to the recommendation for a period of work shadowing or internship with the requirement

for the candidate to undertake real professional duties in an unfamiliar climate, whilst still enjoying the security of not being ultimately accountable. In this way candidates could try out their leadership and management approaches, ideas and styles without the pressure of ultimate responsibility and learn how to effect change in an institution where they would not enjoy the familiarity of relationships and circumstance present in their existing school. Respondents to a DfES-sponsored study conducted early in the twenty-first century reinforced this view in suggesting the provision of opportunities for aspiring headteachers to gain experience in the role through undertaking an acting or shared headship role (Earley *et al.*, 2002).

Beginning headship

National systems of support for beginning headteachers have not been formulated in the same manner as for NPQH, with the result that induction has often been a personal, idiosyncratic and localised experience, even though LEAs have a responsibility to induct new headteachers (Department for Education and Employment, 2000). The expectation detailed by the department's guidance note is that newly appointed headteachers should be inducted into LEA services, procedures and practice free of charge. Ofsted's investigations demonstrate some LEAs offer a comprehensive induction programme, while others offer a very limited programme (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). In addition most LEAs are Headlamp registered and, as shown in Chapter 2, are the most active providers in the scheme (Blandford and Squire, 2000). Ofsted's judgement was that induction support was good in 10 LEAs, satisfactory in 14, unsatisfactory in 14 and poor in five of the 43 LEAs inspected (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a).

Ofsted did draw a distinction between induction to the LEA and Headlamp provision, an important distinction and one that is interpreted here as the difference between induction to a school system and induction to an occupation. The LEA responsibility is to induct all newly appointed headteachers to their school system and familiarise them with the authority's services, procedures and practices. Such an induction process has a different remit than Headlamp or HIP, therefore, which serves only those headteachers who are entering their first headship. Occupational induction thus has a particular target group and has greater breadth in that it has the potential to provide support along the three dimensions of career transition. The ability of LEAs to recognise the distinctiveness of the two induction processes was not good, according to Ofsted, with a blurring of responsibilities. In two-thirds of the LEAs inspected, for example, there was an assumption that needs assessment had been carried out as a part of NPQH or Headlamp with the consequence that planned programmes of training and development did not match identified needs (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). LEA induction for beginning headteachers was deemed to be good in just a quarter of those inspected while almost one in nine of all authorities provided very little.

The reality for most beginning headteachers was that most spent the Headlamp money on a mixed programme of support and courses, from LEAs, universities and private consultants (Office for Standards in Education, 2002b). This led to support programmes for new headteachers exhibiting widespread inconsistency and insufficient structure to take account of the different pressures and problems of primary, secondary, nursery and special schools. Within the LEAs inspected, it was found support for primary headteachers was commonly more effective, although this

was attributed by Ofsted to the focus placed by LEAs on their needs as primary headteachers who were in the vast majority. The consequence was that programmes frequently lacked differentiation to the detriment of those from particular circumstances, such as challenging or small schools and different personal or cultural backgrounds. In occupational terms, the conclusion reached by Ofsted was a need to tie support programmes for beginning headteachers more closely to the national standards for headteachers and to the outcomes of NPQH. Headlamp was supposed to be a bridge between NPQH and LPSH (Department for Education and Employment, 2000) but, in practice, there was no clear progression through the programmes (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a).

Ofsted's judgement was that the general inadequacy of LEA induction processes, and the lack of specific attention to the needs of beginning headteachers by the LEAs, often resulted in headteachers remaining unclear about the different Headlamp providers and what training qualified for funding (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). The picture established from the data emerging from this study, largely through the responses to the open questions in the survey, is one where the beginning headteacher muddles through the early stages of their new career and, whilst invariably reaching a level of capability commensurate with the expectations accompanying the job, finds inadequate levels of support available through the system during the early stages of their incumbency. It seems the blurring of LEA responsibilities has often reduced the intensity and focus of the Headlamp scheme in assisting with aspects of the occupational dimension of the career transition and little attention seems to have been paid to issues emanating from the personal and organisational dimensions.

The data also demonstrate that induction to the point where beginning headteachers have achieved their occupational identity, the stage at which they feel capable and confident, broadly mirrors the theory base established in Chapter 2. Beginning headteachers experience feelings of isolation and surprise, investiture and divestiture and a period of cognitive dissonance along the personal dimension of career transition. In the organisational dimension, they need time to understand the culture of the school and overcome the influence of the previous incumbent before they can begin to explore alternative structures and systems. In coming to terms with the demands of their new occupation they frequently find their basic value set being challenged by people or events and move from a period of idealism to a state of pragmatism, passing through several stages of development along the way before moving to the Model 2 behaviours identified by Argyris and Schön (1974) that recognise the inherent complexity and ambiguity of their new job. The data also identified the emergent issue of school governance, not evident in studies of other school systems or occupations.

The conceptual framework developed in Chapter 2 suggests that a combination of induction processes to the school system and to the demands of the occupation will provide the most effective support for beginning headteachers. Effective methods of induction to the school system include the opportunity for early contact with the school of appointment and access to relevant documentation prior to taking up post, the facilitation of introductory meetings to key personnel, direct support from an attached adviser and the involvement of experienced headteachers. Effective support for entrance to the occupation include mentoring, networking with peers and more

experienced headteachers, the identification of specific training and development needs and the provision of programmes and other support that are differentiated according to those needs.

The major need indicated by respondents in this study that would assist newly appointed headteachers was for mentoring to be readily available, provision that can be demonstrated as supportive in all three dimensions of career transition. The mentor, defined in Chapter 2, was to be a non-judgemental colleague who could provide the opportunity for the newly appointed headteacher to explore issues and would be able to provide advice, guidance and support in the establishment of their new occupational identity (Bolam *et al.*, 1993). Mentoring was seen by respondents to the survey as important both to help first-year headteachers to be more effective and as a key factor in supporting headteachers during their first two years in post. Such a relationship would provide support principally along the personal and occupational dimensions, but could also provide effective support on the organisational dimension particularly when the mentor was also familiar with the LEA which maintained the school and could use their own knowledge of the school system to assist with the induction.

The benefits of mentoring thus can be demonstrated through both the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and the data accumulated for this study. Respondents indicated, explicitly and implicitly, that mentoring was of particular use in providing a forum in which the beginning headteacher could reconcile concerns over a number of issues that limited their effectiveness in the early stages of their new career. Along the personal dimension of career transition, for example, incoming headteachers

typically experienced feelings of isolation as they had no peer within the school. When faced with difficult decisions, it seems school-based colleagues are often likely to cede formal leadership responsibility to the headteacher, probably as a consequence of the social mores resident in English society, as argued in Chapter 1. Consequently there was often no one at hand who had experience of the challenges and dilemmas facing headteachers who, because of their centrality to the decision-making process, have multiple and competing demands placed on them. It seemed that only a headteacher, or a colleague who understood the pressures of headship, could provide the forum for personal fears and emotions to be explored in an empathic manner. Such a relationship would also allow opportunities for the reconciliation of other factors emerging from the personal dimension of career transition, such as issues of investiture and divestiture and the resolution of cognitive dissonance, as well as issues emerging from the organisational and occupational dimensions. Mentors could, for example, provide information about strategies that had helped themselves and others settle into a new organisation. They could also jointly explore, in a non-judgemental way, strategies and scenarios that might be applicable to the newly appointed headteacher's school. A mentor with experience of headship could also jointly establish the conditions where the newly appointed headteacher explored their personal values and attitudes which, it was shown, come under duress as they establish themselves in their new occupation.

The definition of mentoring is critical at this point as the benefits outlined above could be provided by a number of people and agencies. Some personal issues, and indeed organisational and occupational issues, may best be explored with friends and families. Similarly other issues may best be explored in conjunction with people and

agencies where emotion is not a factor. Understanding the administrative requirements of a new system, for example, should require engagement more at a level of intellectualism than emotion. The definition of mentoring employed in this study was defined in Chapter 2 as a generic term, covering a variety of activities, all aimed at providing support for new entrants to a job. The list of such activities includes advising, counselling, coaching and training which were both non-evaluative and non-prescriptive (Bolam *et al.*, 1993). Respondents in this study typically identified experienced headteacher colleagues as mentors who could meet with them individually at regular intervals to explore issues that were relevant to their development through the early stage of induction. There was also recognition that others from outside the school could operate in a similar manner, including people from LEAs, institutes of higher education and other occupations. The critical distinctions between mentoring and other types of support was the individual, often confidential, nature of the discussion and that it was not a relationship dependent on friendship. It was also a relationship for which there was a cost implication, in terms of finance, opportunity and time.

The major implication for this finding is to ensure that resources exist in sufficient quantity to allow beginning headteachers to locate and make effective use of mentoring throughout the early stages of their incumbency. Resources, in this instance, refer to both money and opportunity. It could be argued, for example, that the provision of mentoring for newly appointed headteachers is an occupational responsibility for which there is no direct payment. In other words, experienced headteachers should provide counselling advice, counselling, coaching and training free to their newly appointed colleagues in much the same way as a master and

apprentice model. Much of the success of the Headteacher Mentoring Scheme run by the SMTF in the early 1990s, however, was posited on the relationship being formalised through the provision of training and development for mentors and recompense for time and expenditure incurred. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, once specific funding for the scheme finished so did most mentoring activity on a national scale. Ofsted report that although some LEAs run formal mentoring schemes, the effectiveness of these was extremely variable and they were rarely well developed for beginning headteachers (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). Effective mentoring schemes usually feature a selection process with formal training for mentors, written guidance for new headteachers and their mentors, structured and purposeful meetings with clear agendas, careful costing including funding for supply costs and monitoring and evaluation of the process in seeking improvement (Bolam *et al.,* 1993). Two resources that seem central for the provision of effective mentoring schemes are, therefore, suitable training and development for prospective mentors and funding to support the process on a more substantial footing than one based on goodwill.

The Headlamp scheme can be shown to have been effective in this regard through the provision of funding that allowed flexibility of expenditure for candidates, with 80 per cent available to be spent on approved providers. Theoretically, therefore, it was possible for newly appointed headteachers to recompense formal mentors for their time and expenses through the scheme. Similarly, from September 2003 newly appointed headteachers can make use of their HIP funds to pay for mentoring services. In both schemes the provision of mentoring was expected to be in response to formally conducted needs assessment exercises. Ensuring that adequate numbers

of adequately prepared mentors existed to meet those needs was more problematic, however, with many volunteers and nominees not having been required to engage in any screening or preparation processes. This is an issue that is still being resolved for HIP by the NCSL at the time of writing. The College is attempting to ensure that all providers on their sponsored programmes match a range of generic criteria in relation to their capability to meet the learning needs of programme participants, as well as requiring such providers to engage in specific training relevant to the programme on which they will work. In time, therefore, we can anticipate sufficient numbers of adequately trained and suitable mentors will be available to HIP participants.

Other critical factors identified in Chapter 2 that support beginning headteachers were networking with peers and more experienced headteacher colleagues, the provision of effective LEA support and opportunities for those new to headship to see others at work, especially more experienced headteachers. Although responses were not so frequent on these issues, the data from this study did confirm these issues to be important in assisting the career transition.

Networking was perceived as a means by which beginning headteachers could explore a number of the aspects of all three dimensions of the career transition and was viewed as complementary to the individualised mentoring process. Respondents suggested the provision of informal and regular meetings with their peers, with more experienced colleagues or with both categories of colleagues in order to share thoughts, concerns and issues. Ofsted reported very few new headteacher groups in existence, pointing out that where they develop it is usually as a result of participants on Headlamp or NPQH continuing to meet. More formally constituted groups within

the school system, such as the cluster of a diocesan grouping, were deemed useful in understanding and becoming more effective with the services, processes and practices of the system, but did not directly contribute to the development needs of beginning headteachers (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). The implication of my findings, which mirror the conceptual framework developed in Chapter 2, is for newly appointed headteachers to be encouraged to meet regularly and for them to have access to funds that can support such meetings. Funding has been accessible for this purpose through Headlamp and continues to be available though HIP. Encouragement for such groupings has been less obvious, with only the very best of LEA provision demonstrating such activity, typically where an adviser had specific responsibility for headteacher induction (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). NCSL has made a significant contribution in this regard, however, with the formulation and rollout of the New Visions programme since 2002. The programme brings together newly appointed headteachers from several LEAs and provides facilitation of participant learning that matches their needs and circumstances and thus reflects the need for networking. The programme qualified for HIP funding and by the end of 2003 had enrolled 300 participants from an anticipated national appointment of 1500 beginning headteachers (National College for School Leadership, 2003). The recommendation from this study is that beginning headteachers should be funded and encouraged to engage either in New Visions or similar programmes, modelled on the same principles.

As the study focused on maintained schools, the issue of LEA induction and support was an important feature among the responses received to the open questions in the questionnaire. The issue of induction to the school system was mentioned by over 60

respondents as being important for helping headteachers to be effective in their first year, although its importance decreased as time went by with fewer than 20 seeing it as an important factor in the second year of headship. Conversely LEA support, defined in Chapter 4 as the provision of adviser/officer support and appropriate documentation and guidance notes, was seen as being of more importance once the initial entry to the school system was complete. The issue of LEA support featured in approximately 200 responses to the question as to what type of support would help headteachers in their first two years of service where only some 90 respondents saw it as important in helping first-year headteachers to be more effective. The issue of induction to the school system needs to be strengthened, therefore, as can be demonstrated by the data from this study that support the recommendation from Ofsted that an adviser be given specific responsibility for the induction programme (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). Comments on the level of LEA support were generally favourable in relation to the advice and guidance offered by advisers and officers, particularly for the link adviser. The emphasis on improvement of LEA support was for the provision of relevant and comprehensive documentation. My findings match those reported by Ofsted who found that most LEAs provided an entitlement to a link adviser who was generally effective in assisting the headteacher with their individual development needs (Office for Standards in Education, 2002a). The conclusion reached is that LEAs should continue to provide at least the same level of support into the future, with the target of improving documentation and guidance.

A significant number of respondents also drew attention to the importance of work shadowing as a means of helping beginning headteachers come to terms with the

demands of the job, particularly during the first year. Work shadowing was defined in Chapter 4 as the opportunity to observe headteacher behaviour in practice. Although deemed a different activity to mentoring, the shadowing of a mentor could be included in this process. The benefits of seeing others do a similar job is recognised as an important option in staff development and provides the opportunity for comparison of personal practice against other examples of practice and can be useful even when the observed practice is not effective. The recommendation emerging from the data in this study is for such opportunities to exist, particularly for headteachers in the first year of their new occupation. There are a number of such opportunities that exist through the requirement or support of national agencies. The revised NPQH requires candidates to visit other schools, particularly those with Beacon status. The NCSL, together with the British Council, sponsors headteacher visits overseas to observe leaders in other school systems and there is a range of schemes that bring headteachers together with executives from other occupations. These schemes are open to all headteachers and it is unlikely that a first-year headteacher would be in a position to apply for and engage in such activities, so more local options would seem to be more likely. There is nothing integral to the advice offered to the beginning headteacher or explicit in the requirements of HIP, however, that would lead to this activity becoming central to their development. The recommendation, therefore, is to include work shadowing as an activity within HIP.

Summary and recommendations

Responsibility for supporting the career transition to headship is shared between individuals, the school community to which the new headteacher is appointed, LEAs and central government. The level of support available to aspirant and beginning

headteachers in England has changed substantially since the survey was conducted in 1999, mainly through the provision of specific programmes of preparation and support funded through central government agencies. The NPQH has been influential, it seems, from the conceptual analysis and limited data emerging from the survey findings, in providing a firmer knowledge and skills base for headship than the informal processes of anticipatory socialisation that were typical in the previous century. Headlamp funding provided the opportunity for beginning headteachers to seek the range of support necessary for their individual and contextual needs, while its successor, HIP, has a greater focus on virtually all aspects of the personal, organisational and occupational dimensions of the career transition to headship. In total, therefore, the support for aspirant and beginning headteachers has been enhanced significantly through these two, national initiatives. My findings and conclusions demonstrate that there is room for further improvement in the preparation and support of those entering headship in England, however, and that the responsibilities for providing that support extend beyond central government and its agencies and includes individuals, the school community and LEAs.

Individuals have a responsibility to not only seek out appropriate learning opportunities as they proceed through their career, but also to catalogue and present their prior learning as evidence of their capability to move into the job. The opportunity exists with the NPQH initial assessment for individuals to present claims for advanced standing, so the responsibility in this regard lies primarily at the individual level. The evidence from the survey also shows that serving headteachers have a responsibility for the development of potential headteachers of the future

through allowing access to appropriate experience and learning opportunities through the early stages of their career.

The conceptual framework indicates that the *school community* has a responsibility to allow early contact with the school and access to school documentation for the newly appointed headteacher, before they officially take up post. The findings from the survey indicate a need for the relationship between governing body and newly appointed headteacher to be productive and supportive, with governors being more proactive in the formation of the relationship.

LEA responsibility has been confused by its role as Headlamp provider, with the findings of Ofsted demonstrating that LEAs are generally falling short of their statutory responsibilities to induct newly appointed headteachers to their school system. The recommendation from Ofsted was for LEAs to appoint an officer or adviser to be responsible for induction and to provide better documentation and guidance. The findings from this survey demonstrate a need for link adviser support in the early stages of headship and a growing need through the first two years for officer guidance and support on specific issues.

Central government has accepted the major responsibility for the preparation and support of aspirant and beginning headteachers through the statutory requirement for NPQH and through the appointment of a limited number of HIP providers who are in a formal contractual arrangement with the NCSL, the responsible non-departmental government body.

The findings from the survey show the NPQH to have added to the effective development of personal and interpersonal skills appropriate for headship, to have assisted and consolidated the formation of values and attitudes and to have enhanced the levels of knowledge relevant to the job. The recommendation is for the NPQH processes to continue in this regard, with only the call for greater knowledge of the application of law to be included. Other recommendations for NPQH that emerge from the conclusions reached are focused on other aspects of headteacher preparation, notably the need to offer differentiated routes through the award and to ensure there are appropriate learning experiences during the process. Differences in anticipatory socialisation processes were identified between men and women and between those from primary, secondary and special school backgrounds that had implications for the configuration of learning opportunities through the NPQH programme. Although the initial assessment process provided the opportunity for different routes through the programme, there was still room for differentiation within the programme. The configuration of groups and the tasks required were two areas where further consideration needed to be given to the construction and implementation of the programme. The findings from the survey also indicate that greater challenges should be introduced to the practical tasks to be undertaken at school level, based on the principle of NPQH participants being required to engage in leadership and management activities in a safe environment and with people they did not work with on a day to day basis. That challenge could be met in a variety of ways, including through internship or apprenticeship models.

Support for beginning headteachers, which was largely idiosyncratic under the auspices of Headlamp, has been enhanced by the introduction of HIP although the

programme was still in need of further refinement at the time of writing. The findings from the survey show that beginning headteachers need support along all three dimensions of career transition, with access to the possible range of support being determined by their personal and organisational context as much as by the demands of the occupation. Mentoring, networking, work shadowing and specific training and development activities were the most frequently cited mechanisms for support, with the appropriate configuration varying according to individual need. HIP has created the opportunity for all these aspects to be supported through the requirement for a rigorous needs analysis and provision of funding that can be used flexibly in response to those identified needs and, with its New Visions Programme, has created the type of learning environment recommended for beginning headteachers by the conceptual framework. NCSL has also required all those working for HIP providers to match specified criteria to be included as a trainer/consultant and to undertake specific training for those aspects of the programme on which they will work. Where HIP may need further revision is with the insistence that the programme should build on NPQH profile and by specifying training modules that are generic in nature. As the findings from this study demonstrate, doubts still remain over the validity of the NPQH process in providing total support for beginning headteachers, so the building of a subsequent programme on that premise may be flawed. The findings from this study also demonstrate that the range of training needs required by beginning headteachers was extremely wide and could not be contained within a common, specified programme. Furthermore, it was the quality of the training rather than the content that was the issue, with headteachers particularly valuing their time away from school and requesting high quality provision. The recommendations of this study are, therefore, that HIP continues to be refined in relation to the NPQH profile

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and that specific training programmes of an appropriate quality are offered to beginning headteachers as an option, rather than an obligation.

In summary, therefore, the prospects for aspirant and beginning headteachers in England being adequately prepared and well supported in post are considerably greater at the beginning of the twenty-first century than they have been before. There is still more to be done by individuals, school communities, LEAs and central government, however, if we are to ensure that the newly appointed headteacher can make the adaptation to the job effectively and efficiently in the desire to take charge of their new school.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Participation figures for NPQH and Headlamp

National Professional Qualification for Headship (May, 1999)

	1998	Percentage	1999	Percentage
Total registered	**3390**		**5668**	
Men	1514	45%	2410	42.5%
Women	1876	55%	3258	57.5%
Primary	1788	52.7%	3021	53.3%
Secondary	1411	41.6%	2228	39.3%
Special	158	4.7%	270	4.8%
Unknown	33	1%	0	0%

Sources = House of Commons, 1998; Internal DfES Document, 1999.

Headteachers' Leadership and Management Programme (Headlamp) April 1995 – May 1999

Total number of headteachers registered for Headlamp	6035	
Number of headteachers who have completed Headlamp	3406	
Men	1951	(32.3%)
Women	4084	(67.7%)
Primary	4900	(81.2%)
Secondary	884	(14.6%)
Special	251	(4.2%)

Source = Internal DfES Document, 1999.

Appendix 3

Letter to Potential Respondents

30 November 1998

Dear Colleague,

We write to inform you of the **National Headteacher Survey**, which will be carried out by means of a self-completion questionnaire early in 1999. This is an independent research project, wholly funded by this university, which is being conducted solely for academic reasons. The intention is to publish the findings from this survey as part of the debate surrounding the professional development needs of headteachers.

We are seeking your involvement in this project by asking you to answer the questions contained within the questionnaire and return it to us in an enclosed pre-paid envelope. You have been chosen as one of a 10% random sample of all headteachers in the country. This makes it the largest independent survey conducted on the role of the headteacher in recent times.

The questionnaire will be sent to you through the post in mid-January. Our pilot studies show that the questionnaire will take about 20 minutes to complete. By taking part in the survey, you will be making a significant contribution to the body of knowledge about the preparation of headteachers which will inform future practice and be of benefit to the profession.

Notice has been given to the Secretaries of relevant professional associations, together with a copy of the questionnaire, but please feel free to contact us in the meantime if you require further clarification on this survey

Yours sincerely,

Trevor Male   Marianne Hvizdak

            (Project Directors)

29 January 1999

Dear Colleague,

We would value your expertise as a participant in our research on headteacher preparation. The National Headteacher Survey is an independent research project, wholly funded by this university, which is being conducted solely for academic reasons. The intention is to publish the findings from this survey as part of the debate surrounding the professional needs of headteachers.

We are seeking your involvement in this project by asking you to complete the enclosed questionnaire. There are four parts to the questionnaire, which should take no more than twenty minutes to complete. Part I asks questions about your academic and professional experience; Part II investigates how well prepared you felt you were for the role of headteacher on first taking up post; Part III gives you the chance to offer your opinion; and Part IV seeks some demographic details. In addition, we ask you to sign the enclosed Letter of Informed Consent which guarantees you the right to protection and confidentiality. A prepaid envelope is enclosed for your reply. You were chosen as one of a 10% sample of all headteachers in the country. This makes it the largest independent survey conducted on the training of headteachers in recent times. In completing this questionnaire, you will be making a significant contribution to the body of knowledge about the preparation of headteachers which will inform future practice and be of benefit to the profession.

Copies of the questionnaire, together with an explanatory letter, have been sent to the Secretaries of NAHT and SHA. You are welcome to contact us if you have any questions about the research or the survey. Correspondence should be addressed to

If you would like to receive a short report of the major findings of this study when the analysis is completed, please tick the box at the end of the questionnaire. We look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire and Letter of Informed Consent. Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Trevor Male and Marianne Hvizdak (Project Directors)

NATIONAL HEADTEACHER SURVEY

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I volunteer to participate in a survey which focuses on discovering what kinds of training and prior experience have best prepared headteachers for their management role. I will be asked to complete a questionnaire and return it along with this letter.

• I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, and that at the end of this project, I will be given any additional information I desire about this research.

• I understand that there are no apparent risks or direct benefits to me by participating.

• I understand that data I provide will be kept confidential. I am being assigned a numerical code, and I will not be personally identifiable in any way in reports.

I have read the information provided and understand what I am being asked to do. For further information, I can contact Trevor Male or Marianne Hvizdak at the following location:

_____

Signature

Please return your signed Letter of Informed Consent along with your completed questionnaire. Thank you.

Dear Colleague,

National Headteacher Survey

We recently sent you a questionnaire which is our main means of gathering information for this survey of Headteachers. Unfortunately, we do not yet seem to have received a return from you. We enclose another copy for your use in the hope that you can find the few minutes necessary to complete the form. Our pilot studies show it takes about 20 minutes to answer all the questions.

The first response to the survey has been good in that we received about 33 per cent of returns in the first few days, but this flow has now slowed. We need a higher response rate if we are to be able to draw significant conclusions from the data. You may recall that you were one of a 10 per cent random sample of all headteachers in the country. It is important for the status of the final report, therefore, that we get as many of the returns as are possible and ask that you send in your completed form as soon as possible.

We do realise that you are subject to a large number of requests for information, but we ask that you remember that by taking part in the survey, you will be making a significant contribution to the body of knowledge about the preparation of headteachers which will inform future practice and be of the benefit to the profession. This is an independent research project, wholly funded by this university, which is being conducted solely for academic reasons. The intention is to publish the findings from this survey as a part of the debate surrounding the professional development needs of headteachers.

Please find a reply paid envelope enclosed for mailing back the completed survey form and your signed letter of consent. Please free to contact us if you require further clarification on this issue

Yours faithfully,

Trevor Male   Marianne Hvizdak
            (Project Directors)

May, 1999

NATIONAL HEADTEACHER SURVEY

Once more we write with reference to this survey as we do not seem to have received a reply from you. We enclose another copy of the questionnaire in the hope that you can find the few minutes necessary to complete the form. Our pilot studies show it takes about 20 minutes to answer all the questions. As on previous occasions, we have included a reply paid envelope for mailing back the completed survey form.

We have had a significant increase in the response rate following our first reminder. 53 per cent of the random sample of all headteachers in the country have now responded. Currently, we have on file 1211 completed questionnaires, and we thought it would be interesting for you to see the level of response from each phase:

Nursery Schools = **58%** (33 from 57)
Primary Schools (inc. combined) = **54%** (956 from 1785)
Secondary Schools = **49%** (145 from 295)
Special Schools = **52%** (77 from 148)

As previously indicated, it is important for the status of the final report to get as many returns as possible. While 53 per cent is a very good response rate for a non-compulsory, self-completion questionnaire and already provides an excellent basis for demonstrating significant issues, more completed responses will provide even greater levels of significance to the findings. If you really cannot find the time to answer the questions, then it is nearly as important for us to be informed that you will not be taking part, as that information also adds to the significance of the study.

We offer apologies to any Acting Headteachers who have received this questionnaire, but sadly they are ineligible for this study. We have made every effort to keep our records up to date (making use of data published in January, 1999), but circumstances do change. Many Acting Heads have kept us informed of their school circumstances, and that is very important information for us. So if you are an Acting Head, please let us know

Yours faithfully,

Trevor Male   Marianne Hvizdak
(Project Directors)

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